

Course of World War II

Class 7

William A. Reader

williamreader40@gmail.com

Cargo Cults

Cargo Cults - 1

- A cargo cult is a religious movement that emerges in technologically-primitive tribal and isolated societies after they have had an encounter with a foreign and technologically-advanced society
 - One aspect is a focus on magical thinking and a variety of intricate rituals designed to obtain the material wealth or “cargo” of the technologically-advanced culture that they encountered
- Cargo cults exemplify the third law of Arthur C. Clarke: that any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

Cargo Cults - 2

- American (and Australian) military operations in the South Pacific and New Guinea brought GIs with 20th century technology into contact with island natives who were still living in the Stone Age
 - The Americans built bases on South Pacific islands and recruited the natives to help construct airfields, hospitals, jetties, roads, bridges, and Quonset huts – all of which were strange and wondrous to the natives
 - The natives also observed aircraft descending from the sky and delivering crates full of clothing, tents, weapons, tools, canned goods, and other goods – the likes of which they had never seen before
 - The natives learned that the Americans referred to this stuff as “cargo”

The Cargo Cults - 3

- In exchange for the help provided to them, the Americans gave some of this “cargo” – radios, watches, iceboxes, Coca-cola, SPAM, canned goods, and candy -- to the natives
- In many cases, some of the natives got to know individual Americans who had a key role in summoning and distributing the cargo
- The natives also observed the Americans engaging in certain behaviors that seemed to summon the cargo
 - Putting on radio headsets and erecting antennas
 - Engaging in marching around with rifles on their shoulders

The Cargo Cults - 4

- Then, all of a sudden, the Americans left – as their bases moved closer to Japan or when the war ended
- The South Pacific and New Guinea natives had beliefs that, in interaction with American GIs, their cargo, and their technology, generated the new cargo cult religions
 - That their dead ancestors could influence the well-being of the living
 - That their ancestors would one day come back to life and distribute to them unimaginable wealth
 - Consequently, the American GIs had connections to their own ancestors since they had this wondrous cargo – that they, like their ancestors, were gods

The Cargo Cults - 5

- To facilitate and inspire John Frum and his fellow GI “gods” to return with planeloads and shiploads of cargo, the natives created the “cargo cults” which engage in such ritualistic behavior as military-style parades, building landing strips and figurines of American airplanes and airfield-related equipment, hoisting the American flag, and eating ritual meals.
 - One symbol of the John Frum cargo cult was a Red Cross, adopted from the Red Cross emblem on wartime ambulances
- Some of these cults have persisted, despite the efforts of Christian missionaries and Western-educated politicians to wean the natives away from the cargo cults
- In some cases, the cult has persisted but the beliefs have changed

John Frum Cult Altar



John Frum Cult Marching



John Frum Cult Flag Raising



The Central Pacific -1

- While MacArthur's soldiers and Halsey's marines were island- and site-hopping in the South Pacific and New Guinea, Nimitz's forces were island-hopping in the Central Pacific
 - Makin and Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands – November 1943
 - Eniwetok and Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands – February 1944
 - Saipan, Guam, and Tinian in the Mariana Islands – June-August 1944
 - Saipan – Invaded 15 June 1944
- The invasion of Saipan led the Japanese to send their First Mobile Fleet (carriers and escort ships) to attack the American Task Force supporting the landing on Saipan

The Central Pacific – 2

- Battle of the Philippine Sea – 19-20 June 1944
 - The and battle saw 15 carriers commanded by ADM Marc Mitscher against 9 carriers commanded by ADM Jisaburo Ozawa
 - While the Japanese discovered Mitscher's carriers first, his fleet's fire control radar, fighter control, and superior F6F Hellcat fighters enable the Americans to shoot down 243 out of the 373 attacking Japanese planes at the cost of only 29 American planes – the “Great Marianas Turkey Shoot”
 - Later, American submarines and aircraft sank 3 Japanese carriers, damaged 2 others, and sank 2 cruisers
 - The sunk carriers included the *Taiho* (Japan's newest and largest carrier) and the *Shokaku* (veteran of Pearl Harbor)

Conquest of the Marianas

- The Battle of the Philippine Sea basically destroyed Japan as a major naval air power
 - It prevented Japan from reinforcing the garrisons it had on Saipan, Tinian, and Guam
- The conquest of Saipan and Tinian (and the liberation of Guam) provided bases from which the new B-29s could engage in strategic bombing of Japan
 - These islands also provided a base for attacking Iwo Jima
- Saipan was the first conquered island with a large Japanese civilian population
 - 2/3rds of the non-combatants (mostly women and children) committed suicide

North Africa & Italy

The Rationale for Operation Torch

- Rommel's victories in Cyrenaica and Tobruk plus his invasion of Egypt had several consequences
 - Led the Americans to divert airpower from India (where it was en route to China) to Egypt
 - Led Stalin to release Polish POWs and civilians deported to Central Asia for the creation of a Polish Army in Egypt
 - Led Roosevelt and GEN Marshall to agree to Operation Torch – an invasion of French North Africa to ease the pressure on Montgomery and enable the Allies to catch him in a vise between the British in the East and the Americans & British in the West

Rommel at El Alamein

- In his march into Egypt, Rommel suffered from lengthening supply lines, the decreasing ability of the Italian Navy to protect his supply line, and the greater amount of supplies and tanks available to the British 8th Army
 - By August 1942, the number of men, tanks, and aircraft were turning decisively in Britain's favor
 - Montgomery had 1,350 tanks, supported by 900 guns and 530 aircraft
 - Rommel had 500 guns and 350 aircraft, but of his 11 divisions, only 4 were German
- On 23 October 1942, Montgomery launched an offensive
 - After 10 days, the British broke through, forcing the Axis to retreat on the coast road to the West

The Impact of El Alamein

- Montgomery's victory at El Alamein ensured both the safety of Egypt and the Suez Canal
- It enabled the British to invade and conquer Libya
 - The Allied invasion of French West Africa forced the Axis to abandon Libya and head for Tunisia in order to prevent the destruction of the Axis forces in North Africa
 - Tunisia was close to Sicily and could be more easily supplied by the Axis than could Libya
 - With mountains, Tunisia was much more defensible than Libya

Operation Torch

- The size of Operation Torch was the outcome of two factors
 - The Allied shipping situation, which because of the U-boat menace, precluded very large scale operations in 1942 and 1943
 - A dispute between the British and the American military over how many resources should be committed to North Africa
- What resulted was a 3 task force operation (35,000 to 40,000 men each) to land at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers under the command of LGEN Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - The landings were successful and Vichy French resistance was quickly overcome
 - The failure was to get to Tunisia before the Germans

Hitler's Response to Torch & El Alamein

- The defeat at El Alamein and the Torch landings made North Africa untenable for the Axis
 - Rommel knowing this had advised evacuation
- Hitler, however, decided to pour men and materiel into Tunisia
 - This delayed Axis defeat in North Africa until May 1943
 - It helped ensure German defeat at Stalingrad by drawing Axis forces (and air transport) to North Africa at a time of crisis on the Eastern Front
 - When defeat came, it resulted in the surrender of 250,000 Axis troops (half of them German)
 - Partly because of the Tunisian Campaign, it forced the Allies to abandon their plan to invade Northern France in 1943, postponing D-Day until 1944

Casablanca Conference

- From January 14-24, 1943, Roosevelt, Churchill, and their respective military staffs met at Casablanca
- At this conference, the following key decisions were made
 - After victory in North Africa, the Allies would invade Sicily
 - Top priority would be given to winning the Battle of the Atlantic
 - The U.S. would join Britain in the strategic bombing of Germany with the British bombing by night and the Americans by day
 - The only terms the Allies would accept from Italy, Germany, and Japan would be unconditional surrender

The Impact of Axis Defeat in North Africa

- The growing British-American naval presence and the inability of the Germans to capture Soviet oil fields in the Caucasus exacerbated the Italian Navy's shortage of oil
 - This made it impossible for the Italian Navy to interfere with the Sicilian invasion
- By the end of the North African campaign in May 1943, over 350,000 Italians had become POWs
- The loss of so many of its best divisions in Africa, combined with the disaster suffered by the Italian 8th Army (220,000) at Stalingrad drove the Italian high command and the king to begin plotting the removal of Mussolini

The Overthrow of Mussolini

- While the vast bulk of the Italian and German forces were able to escape from Sicily, its capture secured the Allied lines of communication through the Mediterranean
- Its loss persuaded Italy's ruling elite that it must change sides
- On 25 July 1943, a vote of the Fascist Grand Council resulted in the king summoning Mussolini to the royal palace where he was arrested and imprisoned
 - King Victor Emmanuel assumed direct command of the armed forces and Marshal Pietro Badoglio became Prime Minister
- The new government entered into direct negotiations with the Allies on 5 August with an armistice signed on 3 September

Consequences of Mussolini's Overthrow

- It led the Germans to disarm the Italian army and to occupy areas of Europe formerly occupied by Italy
- It left Italy divided between a southern Italy controlled by the Allies and a central and northern Italy controlled by the Germans
- It led to a major partisan movement in areas under German control
 - The resistance was led by the Communists but also included Catholics and Conservative Nationalists who hated the Germans
 - The prime beneficiaries of the resistance were the Communists who were successful in recruiting large numbers of urban workers and the Christian Democrats

Invasion of Italy

- On 3 September, the British landed at Reggio Calabria
- On 9 September, the Americans landed at Salerno
- The Italian Campaign, however, proved a hard and costly slog since Italy's mountainous terrain was ideal for defense
 - The Allies did not enter Naples until 1 October 1943
 - The Allies did not enter Rome until 4 June 1944 despite a landing at Anzio which was only 30 miles south of Rome
 - The Allies did not capture Florence until 12 August 1944
 - The Allies did not reach Lombardy, Genoa, or Venezia until April 1945

From D-Day to Victory

German Strategy for 1944

- Hold the front in Italy as far south as possible
- Hold as well as it could in the East against Russia
- Concentrate forces in the West sufficient to crush an invasion attempt
- After crushing any invasion attempt, transfer forces from the West to the East for a major counter-offensive against the Russians
- Take advantage of the time gained to deploy new submarines, jet planes, and rockets which could prevent any subsequent attempt to invade in the West

German Forces in France & Belgium

- The Germans had 60 divisions in France and Belgium, 10 of which were panzer or motorized infantry divisions
- The German military commanders were divided over the strategy to be followed
 - Keep the panzer divisions in a central reserve and deploy them after the landing
 - Deploy the panzer divisions near the beaches since deploying them from a central reserve would subject them to Allied air power
- Hitler decided to split the difference – 2 near Calais, 1 near Normandy, and 3 in a central reserve to be deployed only with the approval of Hitler's operations staff

Why Normandy as the D-Day Site

- Allied choice of a landing site was dictated by the operational radius of a Spitfire, the most numerous Allied fighter
 - The radius reached from the Pas de Calais to the Cotentin Peninsula in Normandy – Places east of the Pas de Calais and west of the Cotentin Peninsula were thus eliminated
 - Within the radius zone, many beach areas were unsuitable because of wetlands or high & steep cliffs
- Thus the two logical landing sites were either the Pas de Calais or Normandy
 - The Pas de Calais had the attraction of sandy beaches, close proximity to England and the channel ports, and a short route into Germany.

Allied Deception Operations

- The massive Allied superiority in airpower prevented Luftwaffe aerial reconnaissance beforehand
- In addition, the Allies had broken the German Enigma code while the Germans had not broken the Allied Army codes
- Finally, all the German agents in England had been “turned” by British counterintelligence so all their reports to the Germans were valueless and misleading
- This made it possible for the Allies to engage in a massive deception operation which convinced Hitler that Normandy would be only a feint while the real invasion would be at the Pas de Calais

The Normandy Landings

- Initial plans called for landing 3 divisions with airborne units on each flank
- Eisenhower wanted to land 5 divisions with the airborne brigades increased to 3 airborne divisions
- This near-doubling required a proportionate increase in the number of landing craft, which delayed the landing from May to June

After the Landings

- Once the Allies landed at Normandy, it became a race between the Allies and the Germans to bring reinforcements and supplies to the battlefield
 - What made the invasion a success was that the Allies' transport capability across the English Channel greatly exceeded the carrying capacity of French roads and railroads beset by Allied airpower
 - Thus it took German units a longtime to reach the battlefield
- By June 26th, the Allies had 25 divisions ashore with another 15 on the way opposing 14 German (including 8 Panzer) divisions
 - What delayed the Allied advance was the failure of the British to take Caen and the hedgerows of *bocage* country which greatly favored the defense

American vs German Arms

- Unlike most German infantry divisions (which still depended on horses), the American infantry divisions had both trucks and tracked personnel carriers, which made them much more mobile
- The German Panther and Tiger tanks were far superior to the American Sherman tanks
- Other German weapons were superior to American weapons
 - The German MG-42 machine gun outfired the American Browning Automatic Rifle
 - The German Panzerfaust hand-held antitank weapon was superior to the American bazooka (which could not penetrate the front armor of German tanks)

Why the Germans Lost the Battle of France

- A major Russian offensive, Operation Bagration, prevented the Germans from sending troops from the East to the West
- Overwhelming Allied air superiority greatly curtailed German mobility
- Thanks to their trucks and tracked vehicles, American infantry divisions were far more mobile than German infantry divisions
- American troops were well-trained, well-supplied and had excellent artillery support
- A device invented by an American Sergeant enabled Sherman tanks to plow through the hedgerows into the plains of Brittany and southern Normandy
 - This enabled 7 divisions under GEN Patton to encircle and nearly destroy two German field armies in a pocket around Falaise

Breakout & On to Paris

- With the American breakout at Avranches into Brittany and southern Normandy, Hitler ordered an attack to cut off Patton's forces.
 - The attack was defeated which created the possibility of encircling the whole German 7th Army and 5th Panzer Army
 - Although the Allies were unable to complete the encirclement, they inflicted heavy casualties on the Germans
- With the Germans in retreat, the Paris police force and the Maquis revolted
 - This led Eisenhower to order the French 2nd Armored Division to enter Paris which it did on the evening of 23 August. On 25 August, the German garrison of the city surrendered

Parisians Cheering the French 2nd Armored Division



American 28th Infantry Division Parading in Paris



Allied Advance Towards Germany

- After the liberation of Paris and the crossing of the Seine estuary, the Allied armies advanced into northeastern France and Belgium, but in September began meeting increasing German resistance and increasing supply problems
- By December, the Allies had reached the Westwall and had seized Aachen, but the advance stalled for the following reasons:
 - Hitler's garrisoning of the 12 channel ports, so that all Allied supplies had to come in via Cherbourg and Marseilles and be transported by truck to the Front
 - The lengthening of Allied supply lines
 - Hitler's ability to reconstitute the German forces in the West
 - The Allied manpower problem

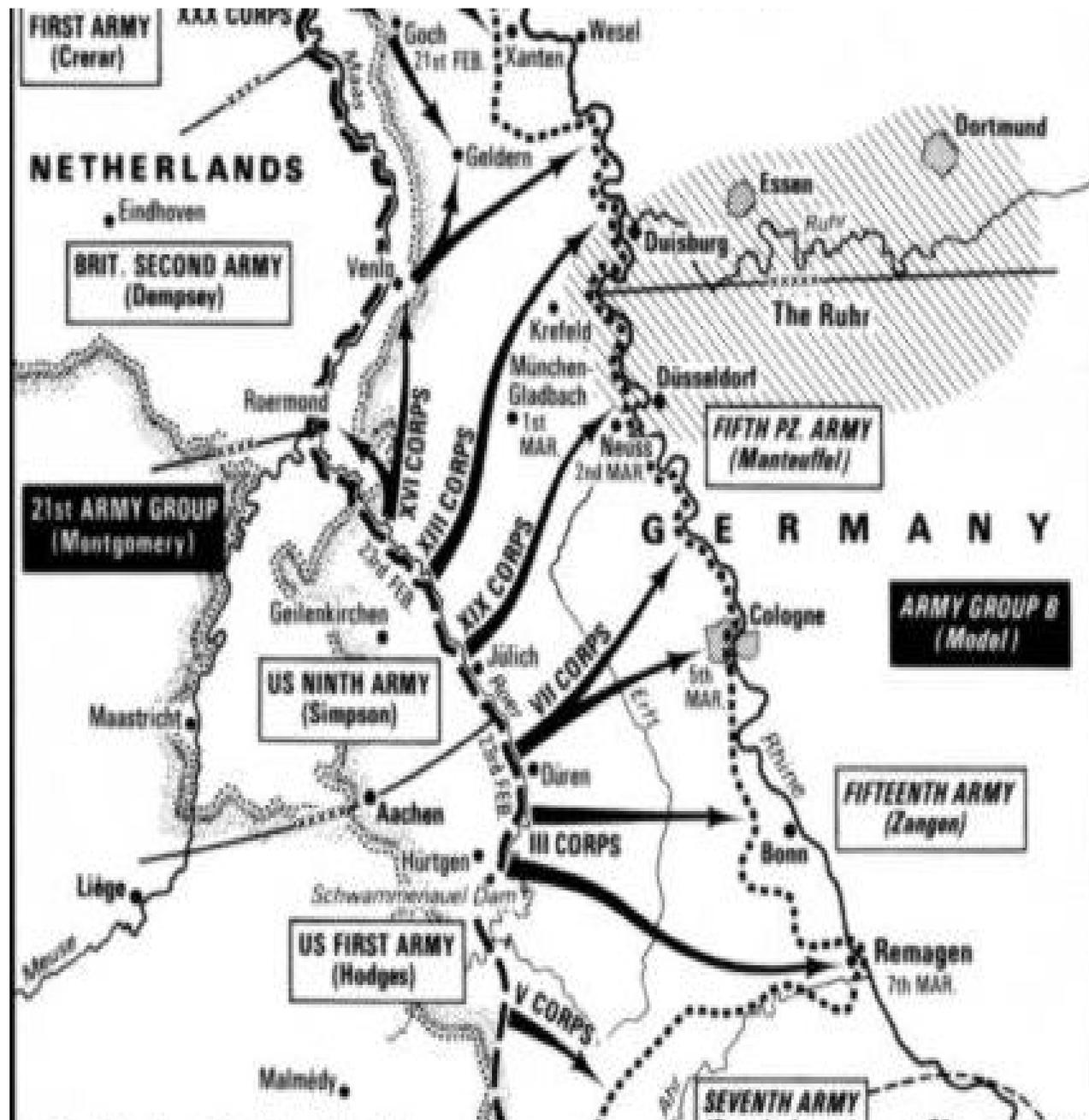
Battle of the Bulge

- Hitler believed a surprise offensive could break through and seize the port of Antwerp and equalize the balance of forces on the Western Front
- The main thrust was to be made by the 6th SS Panzer Army in the north and the 5th Panzer Army in the south with the 15th and 7th Armies providing flank support
 - In the North, the Americans held, but in the South the Germans broke through, advancing to Bastogne
 - The failure to take Bastogne caused the advance to slow until it was stopped by Allied air power and the counterattack of the American 3rd Army

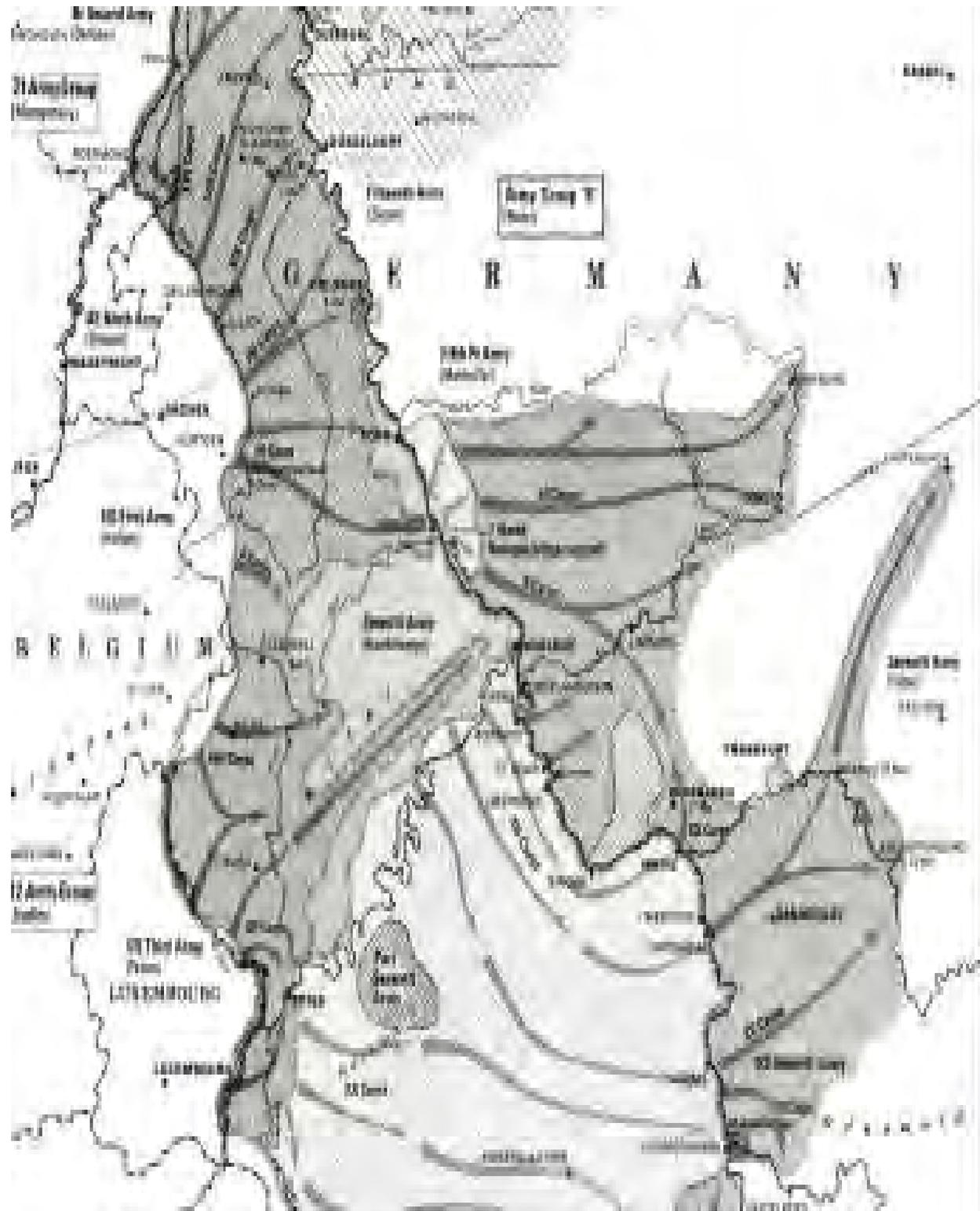
Battle of the Bulge - 2

- Casualties on both sides were heavy, but the Allies could replace their losses while the Germans could not
- The Battle of the Bulge had three major repercussions
 - It showed that determined and well-led American troops could face Germans with better tanks and hold their ground
 - The hesitation of Montgomery compared to the dash of Patton allowed a German army to escape when it could have been cut off.
 - This delayed an end to the war and created bad blood between the British and Americans
 - It paved the way for a rapid advance by the Red Army because the Germans had no reserve forces to throw into the breach

Allied advance to the Rhine, 7 Feb to 7 March



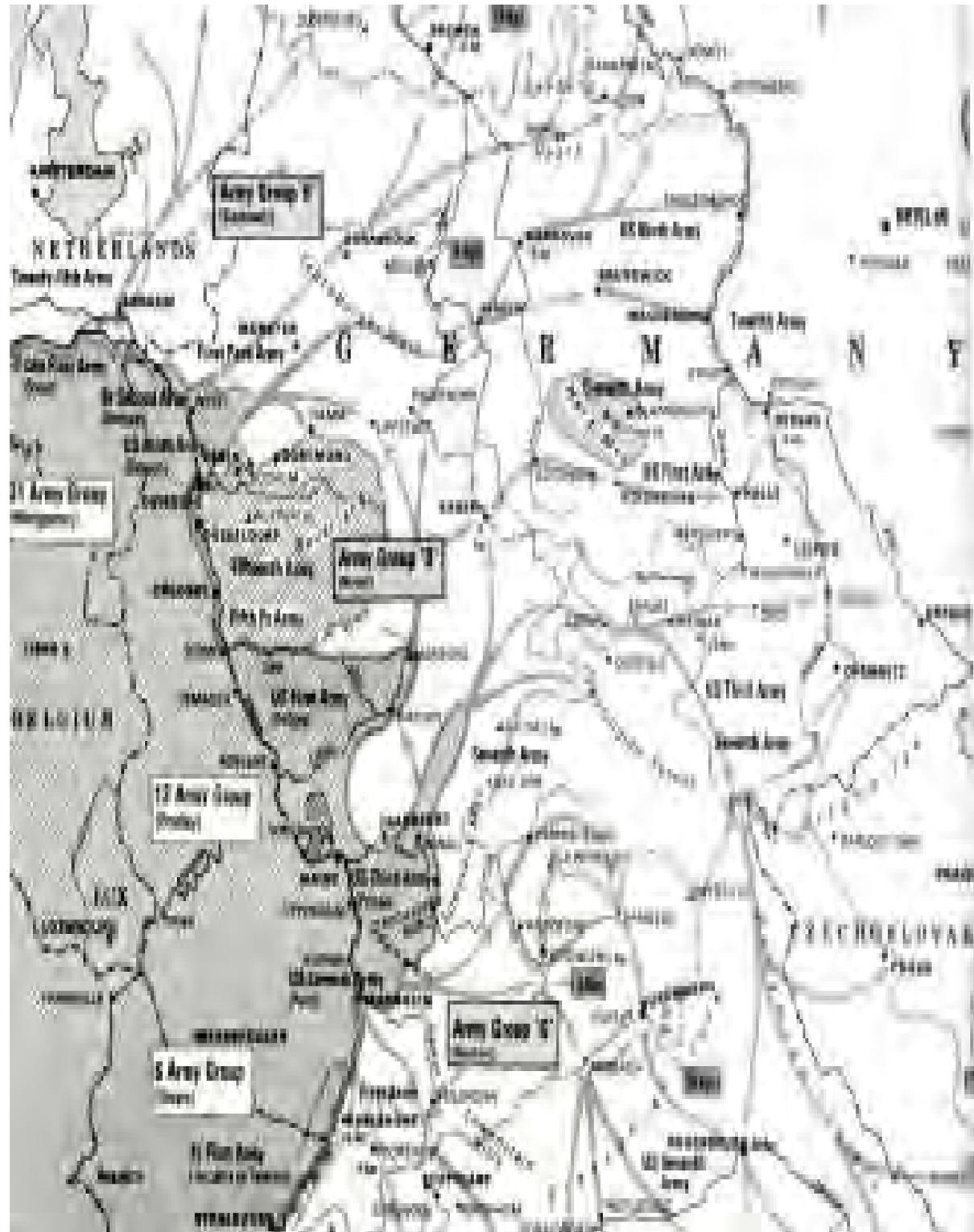
Allied advances 7 Feb to 28 March



Allied Advances

- In January, Allied armies gradually chipped away at the bulge created by the German advances in the Battle of the Bulge
- In February, Allied armies advanced into Luxembourg, eastern Belgium, through the Siegfried Line, and to the Rhine
- In the first week of March, the American army captures Trier and Cologne and crosses the Rhine at Remagen on 7 March
- By the end of March, Allied armies had crossed the Rhine in several places, advancing into Bavaria and the Ruhr

**From the Rhine to the Elbe
29 March-7 May**



Japan – The End Game

Invading the Philippines

- Having decided to invade Luzon rather than Formosa, the next step was Leyte
 - The conquest of Leyte would provide land-based air support for the invasion of Mindoro and then Luzon
 - From Luzon, amphibious landings could be made in the Bonin Islands (Iwo Jima) and the Ryuku Islands (Okinawa)
- The Japanese saw retention of the Philippines as vital to protect their lines of communication with Southeast Asia
 - This was to precipitate the largest set of naval battles in history in which the remainder of the Japanese Navy was sunk

The Philippines Campaign

- The Philippines Campaign was long and costly for several reasons
 - First, the Japanese resisted with fierce determination, especially on the island of Luzon (where there were 280,000 Japanese troops) and in the city of Manila which saw fighting on a destructive scale reminiscent of Stalingrad and Berlin
 - Second, MacArthur's decision to use the 8th Army to liberate the islands of the Central and Southern Philippines liberated the Philippines from Japanese rule, but prevented the 8th Army from supporting the 6th Army fighting on Luzon
 - As a result, fighting went on in Luzon until the final surrender of Japan
 - The campaign in the central and southern Philippines involved 50 amphibious operations
 - Third, the Japanese began using kamikaze tactics en masse

Strategic Bombing

- After the capture of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, strategic bombing of the Japanese home islands began in the Fall of 1944
- Initially, strategic bombing, even with the new B-29s, was ineffective due to the need to bomb from high altitudes
- Two factors later made strategic bombing much more effective
 - First, the seizure of Iwo Jima allowed bombers to fly a direct path to Japan and also have fighter protection
 - Second, B-29s began dropping incendiary bombs from low altitudes rather than explosive bombs from high altitudes
 - Fire, not explosives, proved to be the great destroyer of Japanese factories and cities

**Raising the flag on Mt
Suribachi on Iwo Jima**

Of the six men in
the picture, only
three survived
the battle.



Okinawa

- Okinawa had large airfields, an excellent harbor, and was within easy range of the Japanese home islands
- The Japanese had over 100,000 men to defend the island
 - They established their defense lines in the mountainous southern portion of the island where they expected to hold the Americans while kamikaze attacks on their ship-borne supply system was expected to drive off the American Navy, leaving the Americans without supplies and vulnerable to a Japanese counterattack
- Fighting on Okinawa lasted from 1 April to 22 June 1945
 - There were 75,000 American casualties
 - The Japanese launched 2,000 kamikaze attack sorties

Japanese Surrender

- Despite having its cities destroyed by incendiaries and its islands blockaded by American ships, Japanese leaders were determined to continue the war
- Two factors led to the surrender
 - The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
 - The entry of the Soviet Union into the war
- Only then did Japan decide to surrender, provided the imperial system remain, and even then it almost did not happen

The Emerging Cold War

The Emerging Cold War

- Political scientists note that all nations seek security
- They also note that things a nation does to enhance its own security can often seem threatening to other nations
- This is the situation that arose after World War II
- Neither the Soviet Union nor the Western Allies wanted a recreation of the unstable international situation that led to World War II
- Both groupings wanted a stable world in which they could achieve their international objectives
- The problem was that the Western Allies and the Soviet Union had radically different views as to what a post-war world should look like

Diverging Goals

- Stalin's goals
 - To ensure that no external threat would ever again place his country at risk
 - To rebuild the war-torn Soviet Union
- The first goal meant attempting to dominate the European continent as thoroughly as Hitler attempted to do
 - This meant the creating of pro-Russian regimes in Eastern Europe and Germany
- Roosevelt's goals
 - To establish democratic regimes in Eastern Europe and eventually in Germany
 - To establish a new global economic system which would prevent the recurrence of the Great Depression
 - To deter and, if necessary, punish aggression by the creation of a new collective security organization

Poland

- The only way to reconcile Stalin's and Roosevelt's requirements would be if all of the Eastern European countries had been willing to elect leaders who were willing to follow a pro-Russian policy
 - This Czechoslovakia and Finland did, but Poland could not follow this path since Stalin's prior actions had eliminated any possibility that a Polish government subservient to the Soviet Union could sustain popular support
 - The Nazi-Soviet Pact
 - The murder of some 4,000 Polish officers at Katyn Forest in 1940
 - Doing nothing when the Nazis brutally suppressed the 1944 Warsaw uprising even though the Red Army was on the outskirts of Warsaw at the time
 - Soviet taking of a third of Poland's territory after the war

Poland - 2

- Since Poland would never elect a pro-Soviet government, Stalin decided to impose one
 - This resulted in a permanently resentful Poland
- Stalin's imposition of a Soviet-style government on Poland in violation of his promises at Yalta convinced the Americans and British that Stalin could not be trusted
 - As a disillusioned Roosevelt put it, "Stalin has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta"

Occupied Germany

- It had been decided at Yalta that Germany would be divided into separate occupation zones, with Berlin (even though it was in the Soviet zone) similarly divided
 - The Soviet zone contained a third of Germany's population, but few of its industrial facilities
- Stalin believed that the Soviet zone with its Marxist-Leninist government would act as a magnet for Germans in the western zones
 - This, Stalin believed, would cause the West Germans to elect leaders who would eventually unify the country under Soviet control

Occupied Germany - 2

- There were two big problems with Stalin's plan
 - The brutality of the Red Army in occupied East Germany
 - Mass expropriation of property and extraction of reparations on an indiscriminate scale
 - The rape of 2 million German women
 - The way the Soviets had handled their affairs in Eastern Europe and in their zone of Germany made the British and the Americans wary of cooperation with Moscow
 - Thus the Western Allies refused Russian demands for reparations from their zones
 - This led the Western Allies to follow a policy of preserving their zones of Germany under Western rule rather than risk the danger that all of Germany fall under Soviet control

The Far East

- The events in Eastern Europe and Germany in turn convinced the United States to exclude the Soviet Union from any role in the occupation of Japan
- The Soviet decision to declare war on Japan and invade Manchuria and North Korea had two major impacts
 - It resulted in the partition of Korea
 - It persuaded the Japanese to surrender
- The Atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki intensified Stalin's insecurity and led him to institute a crash Soviet A-bomb program to catch up with the United States

The Kennan Telegram

- On 22 February 1946, George F. Kennan, a junior Foreign Service officer at the American Embassy in Moscow, sent an 8,000 word cable to the State Department
 - In it, Kennan blamed Russian intransigence on the internal necessities of Russia's Stalinist regime and that nothing the West could do could alter that fact
 - To Kennan, Soviet leaders had to treat the outside world as hostile because this provided the only excuse "for the dictatorship without which they did not know how to rule, for cruelties they did not dare not to inflict, for sacrifices they felt bound to demand"
 - The American response should be a "long-term, patient but firm and vigilant *containment* of Russia's expansive tendencies.

The Marshall Plan

- The Economic Recovery Program, which Secretary of State George C. Marshall announced in June 1947, committed the United States to the reconstruction of war-torn Europe
 - Marshall believed that the greatest threat to western interests in Europe was the risk that hunger, poverty, and despair would lead Western European voters to elect Communists to power, creating a Communist Europe.
 - The goal of the program was to get Western Europe back on its feet and it succeeded marvelously
- Stalin refused to accept such aid or allow its Eastern European satellites to do so
 - It led to the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia

The Full Emergence of the Cold War

- The Communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia and the blockade of Berlin persuaded the Western European recipients of Marshall Plan aid that they needed military protection as well
- This led the Europeans to request the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
 - This committed the United States for the first time ever to the defense of Western Europe
- It also led to the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany [West Germany]
 - This in turn led to the creation of the Democratic Republic of Germany [East Germany]