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THE EFFECTS OF NAZI PUSH: REVISION FOR ALLIED STRATEGY

Brunt of Fighting and Heaviest Ahead for American Forces

Step-up in draft and in war production. Delay likely in Pacific campaign

If the war against Germany is to be won in the West, the main burden of winning it will be upon the American Army. That Army must supply the bulk of the forces, bear the brunt of the fighting and suffer most of the losses. These facts are more than ever apparent in the light of the big German offensive.

The inside story of that offensive and of the disposition of opposing forces preceding it emphasizes the role of America in the war on the Western Front. The Germans, in selecting a 100 per cent American segment of the front for attack, recognized that this war is mainly a struggle for mastery between Germany and the U.S.

Thus, the effects of the German offensive fall mainly upon this country. Among the principal ones are these:

The time schedule of the war has been upset. The Germans have gained their first objective of throwing out of gear Allied plans for an all-out winter drive on the Western Front. Probably they have forced a delay of such a general assault until spring.

Costs in casualties have soared under the impact of the attack and in the strug-

GENERAL VON RUNDSTEDT
Gambled for high stakes

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gle to close the 50-mile gap that was torn in the American line Now, this country faces the prospect of continued high losses in a prolonged war.

Drafting of men for replacements in the armed services will have to be stepped up. More troops will be needed, especially for the infantry

War production in the United States must be pushed to maximum levels and kept there for another year.

The Germans' will to fight on has been strengthened. Ever since 1918, they have been afraid of America's military might. In this drive, for the first time, they have sent American armies reeling back. German propaganda gains a weapon.

The Pacific war job now has been greatly complicated. The tight pinch in shipping is made even tighter. If the needs of the Western Front should keep on skyrocketing, troops earmarked for the Pacific might have to go to Europe. That, in turn, would slow up the timetable of the war against Japan.

The story just now coming to light about what really happened on the Western Front reveals that there has been danger of consequences to America far graver than these. The fact is that the German drive threatened the Allies with outright disaster. Here is the way that threat developed:

What the Germans attempted. General von Rundstedt evidently believed that General Eisenhower's armies were almost ready to launch a general attack. The German leader saw that he could upset such an Allied plan if he could break

GENERAL EISENHOWER
Time schedule upset

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through the Allies' lines at the right place. An inviting objective was the Belgian city of Liege, through which German armies had swept in 1914 and 1940.

This time, Liege had a new importance. The bulk of supplies for the Allies was coming in through the big port of Antwerp. Liege was a natural transportation hub between Antwerp and a large part of the Allied armies that were strung out along the 400-mile front. If the Germans could capture Liege, they would win a smashing victory.

The Germans centered their efforts on Liege because its capture would dislocate the whole Western Front. The armies from Aachen northward would have to retreat or face danger of entrapment. The way would be open for a drive to capture Antwerp. A "second Dunkerque" would be possible. Even without capturing Liege, a drive to the south might roll up the whole southern end of the Allied line.

Forces facing the Germans. In order to gain any of their objectives, the Germans had to break through an Allied line manned by formidable forces. The preponderance of American troops in this line gave the Germans a chance to strike a blow against their most-feared enemy. The line-up of Allied strength, as shown by the map, was about like this:

Great Britain held a limited sector in the North. Of organized divisions, she had about 14, including about 210,000 men.

Canada, with about six divisions, held positions to the north and west of the British. Including two divisions of Czechs, Poles, Dutch and Belgians, the force totaled about 120,000 men.

France had seven divisions, about 105,000 men, on the southern part of the front. Most of these were colonial troops, with only replacements drawn from France.

The United States had an admitted 44 divisions, or about 660,000 men out of the Allied total of 1,100,000. This meant that six out of every 10 men on the Allied front were Americans. These forces included the Ninth and the First Armies, forming the great center of the drive beyond Aachen toward Cologne and the Ruhr. They included also the Third Army, driving on the Saar, and the Seventh Army, pushing along the Rhine toward Karlsruhe.

Forces the Germans had. For their last-ditch stand on their border, the Germans mustered a force that was estimated to total 70 divisions. Many of those divisions had been completely re-equipped with the latest and most powerful weapons and had been brought up to full strength numerically. The German Western Front land force, not counting hastily thrown

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together units of home guards, probably totaled about 900,000 men.

How the Germans broke through. The Germans' excellent intelligence service revealed to them that parts of the Allied line, running from Monschau on the north to Trier on the south, were thinly held by elements of the U. S. First Army. The German agents undoubtedly reported to Nazi headquarters every point of American defensive weakness, including any instances of carelessness or failure to install adequate defenses that they could find.

Under cover of darkness, the Germans assembled a powerful striking force. A few divisions were shifted from other parts of the front. But, apparently, most of this force consisted of reserves from inside Germany. At any rate, an attacking army of about 25 divisions struck the thinly held parts of the American line. Under cover of thick fog that grounded the Allied air forces day after day, the Germans drove ahead many miles.

German success in achieving at least the first objective of upsetting Allied plans brought with it a gamble. In sending the flower of their troops out of fixed defenses and deep into the Allied lines, the Nazis ran the risk of having those forces trapped and destroyed. With the front again in motion, they also ran the risk of being unable to resume their strong defensive positions in the Siegfried Line.

America's forces, more than those of her Allies, are placed under strain by this new turn in the war. It is true that Britain is calling up 250,000 more men than previously had been planned; that France is appealing for equipment for a new French Army, and that the 350 Russian divisions on the Eastern Front still are expected to strike at Germany from their side. But the fact remains that this country must undertake the biggest share of the job of repairing the damage on the Western Front.

What has happened is that the U. S. Army already has suffered a real defeat. The far-reaching effects of that defeat, and of the struggles to overcome it, are going to be felt in nearly every home in the United States.

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