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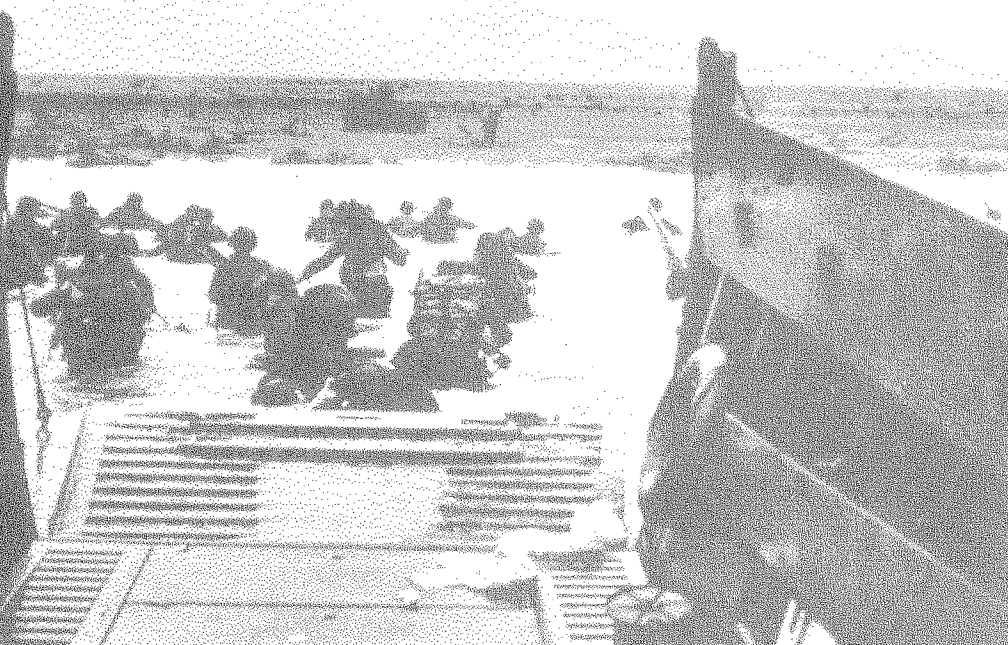
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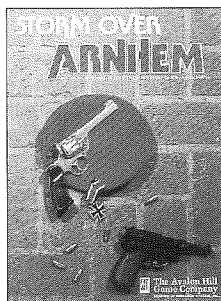
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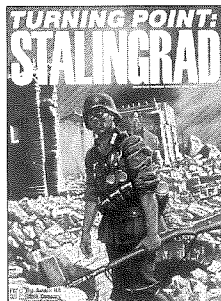
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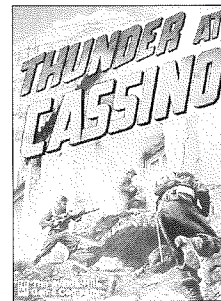
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MILITARY HISTORY, STRATEGY & ANALYSIS

SEPT-OCT 1993

ISSUE 24

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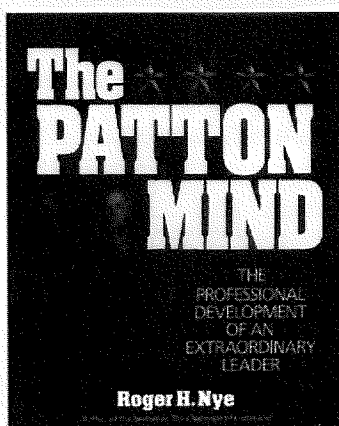
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A Note From the Editor

Your votes for issue no. 22 came in this way, ranked from highest to lowest.

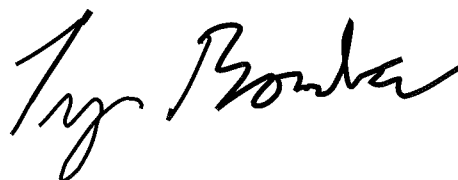
Yugoslavia in World War II	7.40
Antietam.....	7.00
Issue no. 22 overall	6.85
Short Rounds.....	6.53
The Normandy Campaign.....	6.48
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Russian Rifle Corps	6.02
New Kind of War	5.82
US Special Forces Today	5.17

In comparing issue 22 with issue 21, a solid 32% thought 22 was superior; 18% felt 21 was the better of the two; 44% thought they were of about equal worth, and 6% couldn't express an opinion because they hadn't seen issue no. 21.

Without any doubt, the "Yugoslavia in World War II" piece generated the most written comments. One guy wrote on his card: "Yugoslavia article too confusing: who were good guys and who were bad guys?" Exactly.

Since I wrote the sidebar on Tito and his partisans, several people asked me why I didn't discuss his ethnicity. Simple — I just forgot to mention it. Thinking about it later, though, I decided the omission was probably appropriate. If anyone deserves the description: "He was Yugoslavian," it certainly has to be Tito. He may well be the only one who ever really deserved such a label. (Actually, he was of mixed Slovene and Croat descent.)

It was nice to see a non-20th century topic (the Antietam article) score in the sevens, even if it was just barely. I noticed I also forgot to ask you to evaluate issue no. 22's cover art — oops. (Notice I've added that question to this issue's survey so we can keep our data record complete.)



Ty Bomba
Editor, *Command Magazine*

SHORT ROUNDS

Movers & Shakers...

James H. Doolittle: Visionary of Victory

On 18 April 1942, Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle led 16 lightly-armed B-25 bombers off the pitching deck of the *USS Hornet* to execute the first Allied airstrike against Japan. That extraordinary feat was a key psychological victory for the US, and a first step toward Allied success in World War II. But as is often the case, that one famous event has distracted historians from Doolittle's many other contributions that also helped defeat the Axis.

Doolittle had in fact resigned his commission in the Army Air Corps in February 1930 to pursue opportunities in private industry. From his new position as the head of Shell Oil's Aviation Department, he aggressively lobbied the corporate management to develop high octane aviation fuels.

The resultant 100-octane fuel greatly improved engine performance over the standard 87-octane. Using 100-octane fuel, a P-51 Mustang's engine produced 1,310 horsepower, while the Germans' Me-109 could only equal that performance after a 25 percent increase in engine displacement. That greater engine displacement had to be achieved at the expense of range and ammunition.

In an effort to increase the octane rating of their own synthetic fuels, the Germans were forced to add an ingredient called an "aromatic." This boosted the octane rating, but also had several side effects. The

higher quantity of aromatic forced the pilots to increase the mixture of fuel to air, which led to further range decreases and increased maintenance requirements.

Finally, the process involved in increasing the quality of German fuel inevitably decreased its overall availability to all but frontline units. That meant there was less fuel for German pilot training. In 1942, both Allied and German pilots had roughly equivalent flight hours before entering combat squadrons. By 1944, fuel was in such short supply for the *Luftwaffe* the average new pilot had only about 25 hours in the cockpit, while having to fly against Allied pilots with about 250 hours. That gave the US and its Allies an important edge as the airwar in Europe became a battle of attrition. (By the end of the war, US technology developed the equivalent of 140-octane fuel, which resulted in even higher performance.)

Another vital contribution Doolittle made was in increasing our pilots' ability to fly using instruments only. In September 1929, Doolittle had executed the first such flight in the NY-2, a craft modified with specially developed instruments to allow for "flying blind." His success helped establish both instrument quality standards and instrument layout patterns for easier reading under arduous conditions. One of the over two dozen flight instruments developed at the time

included the artificial horizon, now a standard cockpit instrument.

In 1939, Doolittle toured Germany, and judging war to be inevitable, presented his dire impressions to his friend Gen. H.H. Arnold upon his return stateside. During the meeting he stressed the need to include instruments-only flight training for air corps pilots. Arnold agreed with the idea, and that training orientation gave the US another advantage in the poor weather often prevalent over the European continent.

Combined with the reduced training time for the German pilots due to fuel shortages, instrument-only flying became another significant factor in the daylight bombing campaign's success. German Gen. Adolf Galland, head of the *Luftwaffe's* fighter arm, was asked after the war why there had often been such limited responses to the maximum-effort missions of the 8th Air Force. He responded: "Our forces couldn't always take off on operations, sometimes because of weather."

In fact, the Germans' increasing shortage of well-qualified pilots finally forced Reichmarshall Hermann Göring to institute a policy of flying against the Allies only when the *Luftwaffe* had a clear advantage in numbers. That stratagem in turn forced Doolittle to make what he viewed as the "most important and far-reaching military decision" of his wartime career.

Before Doolittle had taken command of the 8th Air Force, the Allied fighter groups' main responsibility had been to escort the heavy bombers to and from their targets. Doolittle had been an early supporter of fighter escorts, despite Gen. Ira Eaker's dogmatic insistence that

unescorted bomber formations could be successful. Eaker did not acknowledge the role of the fighter squadrons in the air campaign; in fact, he'd told Arnold: "We downplay the destruction of enemy fighters as the secondary job, our primary job being to deliver our bombloads well aimed, on their targets." Doolittle came to disagree with that because the *Luftwaffe* had changed tactics and armament.

The Germans had begun arming their fighters with cannons and rockets with greater ranges than the standard 50 cal. machinegun. It became common for them to stand-off, out of range of the bombers' guns, and lob rockets into the formations. Only after the Schweinfurt mission, with the loss of 60 bombers and 600 crewmen, did Eaker relent. But his conversion came too late; he was transferred to the backwater North African theater in January 1944.

Doolittle was picked to replace Eaker as commander of the 8th, and he quickly reassessed the way it would prosecute its airwar over the continent. He saw that since the new German tactics were aimed at conserving their fighter strength, the Allies had to take the fight to them if the *Luftwaffe* were to finally be destroyed as a threat. Accordingly, Doolittle met with Gen. William E. Kepner, commander of 8th Fighter Command, and gave him the following new mandate: "We'll still want a reasonable fighter escort for the bombers, but the bulk of your fighters will go hunting for Jerries. Flush them out in the air and beat them up on the ground on the way home. Your first priority is to take the offensive." If the German fighters would not seek combat, the US fighters would hunt them down in the air and on the ground.

This change in policy in the prosecution of the airwar, coupled with

the arrival of the first truly long-range US fighter aircraft, were the final elements necessary for winning the airwar over Europe. In the opinion of Galland, when Doolittle freed the fighters to search out and destroy those of the *Luftwaffe*, the airwar was effectively over. Doolittle had recognized the war in the skies over Europe had changed fundamentally. Its early period, which had climaxed in "The Fall Crisis," with its heavy losses on missions like Regensburg and Schweinfurt, was over — the battle for air superiority had become one of attrition.

—Lawrence C. Jackson

Sources

Doolittle, James H. *I Could Never Be So Lucky Again*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991.

McFarland, Stephen L., and Newton, Wesley P. *To Command The Sky*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1991.

Behind the Lines. . .

The Mutiny That Never Was

Mutiny is a word that was coined centuries ago to describe a combination of conspiracy and revolt against military authority. In earlier times, such uprisings were often the only recourse soldiers had against the terrible repression and hardships to which they were routinely subjected. Mutinies were nearly always born of desperation. In more recent times, however, the term has almost become inapplicable: mutinies hardly ever arise, and strikes (their modern counterpart) can usually be averted.

The last recorded instances of mutiny involving British troops occurred in September 1943, near the Allied beachhead in Italy at Salerno, and in May 1946, at Camp Muar in Malaysia. In both cases, when a unit of disgruntled men tried to draw attention in an orderly way to an intolerable situation, they found "group complaints" were banned by regulations. When they

persisted, they were court-martialed and convicted of mutiny.

Because the Malayan incident happened after the end of World War II, security had slackened, allowing the British public to be alerted. The government was immediately swamped with petitions to review the case, with the result that all 255 individual convictions were set aside.

Those involved in the "mutiny" at Salerno were less fortunate. By 1959, when details of the incident surfaced in a Sunday newspaper and the public learned that 191 veteran soldiers of Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery's illustrious 8th Army had been branded as "treacherous mutineers," the response was only half-hearted. By that time, public feeling about the war had diminished and most seemed to be trying to forget it had ever happened.

Thus in 1961, when writer Hugh Pond's reminiscences about the

Battle of Salerno appeared on the bookstands, there was only a faint ripple of interest and no one commented on the glaring discrepancies between it and other accounts of the incident. Some of those accounts relied on newspaper articles appearing at the time to give them the story, while others accepted the later book as gospel — especially since it included the recollections of a senior officer, Lt. Gen. Sir Richard McCreery (commander of British X Corps), who claimed to have been present at the mutiny and to have spoken to the mutineers.

"Dick" McCreery, an ex-cavalryman and enthusiastic steeplechaser, was not known for his understanding or forbearance for ordinary foot soldiers. When it was reported to him that some Highland and Northumbrian Division infantry replacements from an 8th Army transit camp in Libya were unwilling to join either of those divisions in his corps, he did what anyone in his position would have done: he sent a subordinate to deal with the matter. But when he later heard that his deputy's attempt to resolve the issue had failed, McCreery reacted by trying to cover up the whole thing.

Seventeen years after, when interviewed by Pond in connection with the Salerno book, McCreery couldn't resist portraying himself as a kind of hero in the affair, and the soldiers as villains. He described himself going to the scene and finding "a huge crowd of mutinous troops sitting on the sand entirely surrounded by armed military police."

After a quick consultation with members of his staff, the general said he drove his jeep close to the crowd and stood up, inviting them to state their case. He said that in discussion with them he admitted things had not been going well for the Allies in Italy; the US/British landings on September 9 had met with strong resistance from German forces — Allied replacements were urgently needed at the beachhead.

McCreery also claimed he made an offer to return all the replacements to their own units, but it was greeted with derisive laughter, and he was constantly interrupted by jeers and whistles from the throng of undisciplined men bent on mutiny. He said he then left the scene, offering to give the men a chance to talk things over. When he learned 191 still refused to be posted back to the front, he had no choice but to order their court martial.

The truth of the matter is different. The 191 "Jocks" and "Geordies," many still recuperating from wounds and illnesses incurred during earlier service in Africa and Sicily, while ostensibly under orders to return to their original units, had instead been posted on an emergency basis to the Allied 5th Army in Italy. Just as the replacements reached Salerno, the German forces there began a withdrawal to new positions inland — the crisis was over. For four days the men were left to their own devices, pretty much wandering the Allied rear area from place to place and with no one in charge.

With no emergency situation any longer dictating otherwise, the men felt duty bound (in line with centuries-old English army tradition) to be returned to their original divisions in 8th Army. When no one in authority would listen, they took the

only course open to them; they stood their ground and resisted all exhortations to join units in 5th Army.

The court martial records show, however, that according to the testimony of several junior officers present, those exhortations were not delivered by McCreery (who was never on the scene), but by his deputy. Further, those same witnesses explained the men were "perfectly quiet and absolutely obedient" to all orders except those to join units in 5th Army. Thus the "mutineers" actually kept faith with their traditions and training, remaining loyal and obedient to their division leaders.

If Lt. Gen. McCreery had also kept that faith and put things in

proper perspective, he would have seen the incident for what it was — an honest attempt by good soldiers to overturn an administrative injustice. Instead he chose to make needless scapegoats of them, sending 191 of them back to bases in North Africa, there to await trial and punishment on capital charges.

Out of the entire number, three "ring leaders" were sentenced to death, involved NCOs were given 10 years at hard labor, and the privates were sentenced to seven years. After judicial review all the sentences were eventually commuted, and the men were returned to fighting units in Italy — though not to their original divisions.

— D.J. Collier

Might've Beens...

Wind, Sound, and Hurricane Guns

During World War II, German scientists developed a plethora of unusual weapons to counter the Allies. The *Panzerfaust* anti-tank weapon, the Hs-293 flying bomb, and the V-2 rocket were all notable examples of German scientific genius.

Initially the "wonder weapons" were well thought out devices developed along practical lines. For instance, when normal propeller planes proved too slow to counter the Allied bomber threat, the Germans worked at building jet fighters. When too many German U-boats began being destroyed while on the surface to recharge their batteries, the Germans invented the "snorkel," a device that allowed the boats to perform that operation while submerged.

As the war continued, however, and Allied combat power continued to grow, the course of German weapons research became more and more unusual. Scientists and weapons manufacturers were encouraged to pursue even the most bizarre R&D paths in the hope one of

their experiments would turn up some unexpected miracle weapon that would turn the tide of war back in the Reich's favor. That search led to the design of several highly innovative kinds of weapons.

The first of these was the wind gun, which was meant to fire a jet of compressed air and water, instead of a steel shell, at aerial targets. The cannon had a large angled barrel with an elbow shape to it, and was mounted on a railway gun carriage. Its jet of air was created by an explosion of oxygen and hydrogen. The two elements were mixed in specific molecular proportions in the firing chamber, so that when released they pushed a plug of super-compressed air and water through the barrel.

The gun was taken to a test range for evaluation, and during the first firing a 25mm-thick wooden board was shot in half at a distance of 200 meters. The next test, against a slow- and low-flying target plane, was unsuccessful. The cannon proved unable to put the compressed air/water squarely on the plane,

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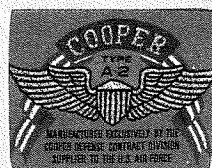
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and anything less than a direct hit had little effect.

The wind gun was deemed to have potential, but obviously needed refinement. The trouble was, of course, time was not on the side of the Germans, and the project was cancelled. To get some use out of the world's only example of a wind gun, it was towed to the approaches of an Elbe River bridge and emplaced there. Since there are no reports on record from the Soviets about their having lost any planes to an air/water blast, we must assume the gun was unsuccessful in its mission.

Around the same time an Austrian scientist, one Dr. Zippermeyer, developed an artillery shell intended to create an airborne tornado (or "wind sheer") when detonated aloft. His design was based on several well known principles. He packed a shell with coal dust and placed an explosive charge in the center of it. The shell was fired from a large mortar sunk in the ground. Upon detonation its forward movement forced out the dust into a large cloud shape. The same explosion, a split second later, was also supposed to ignite the cloud.

The inventor hoped that by shooting such rounds into bomber formations, the ensuing wind sheer would cause the planes to spin out of control and crash. If a targeted plane didn't crash, it might at least lose control long enough to swerve into other bombers in the formation and thus be destroyed that way. However, the war ended before this idea could be properly evaluated and perhaps applied.

Not all German research was directed toward developing anti-aircraft weapons. The Eastern Front, with its huge numbers of Soviet troops, was also the concern of weapons scientists. In an effort to affect the fighting there, Dr. Richard Wal-lansch worked on a weapon designed to kill or incapacitate masses of ground troops with sound.

The sound cannon connected two 10-foot parabolic reflectors to a combustion chamber. The main chamber itself was composed of several smaller firing chambers, each loaded with a mixture of methane and

hydrogen. The length of each of those mini-chambers was exactly one-quarter of the wave length of the sound waves produced by their explosion. As each chamber was set off, they set up a series of sound waves that, when reflected by the parabolic reflectors, generated a high intensity shock wave.

The cannon could send out a shock wave of over 1,000 millibars, exposure to which could kill a man at 50 yards in 30 seconds. At 250 yards, the wave might not kill a targeted soldier, but its effects could still incapacitate him. Though several successful tests were carried out on laboratory animals, this became just one more frustrated scheme when the war ended before the gun could be deployed and used operationally.

In conclusion, we can see that the Germans, when faced with a crumbling military situation, attempted to use every means available to redress the balance of power through the application of advanced science. Though none of the weapons fielded proved decisive, their sinister novelty and ingenuity certainly warrant consideration in any study of the final stages of World War II.

— Timothy J. Kutta

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Behind the Lines...

The Ruhleben POW Compound

An old English adage has it that one Englishman, alone and without contact with any of his countrymen, will make the best of his lot but will do little to change the world around him. But put two Englishmen together and they will immediately draw up rules to regulate their society. Put half a dozen, a hundred, or a thousand in the same confines, and their bent for social organization will know no bounds.

Never was this better shown than during the autumn of 1914, only weeks after the Great War had erupted. Several thousand Britons, many of them German-born but with British passports, were still on German soil. Added to those thousands were crews of British ships, including one from South Africa, and the Germans had some 5,000 enemy citizens on their hands.

The problem was where to intern those men until hostilities ended (which, everyone suspected at first, wouldn't be long). A race course at Ruhleben, near Spandau, a suburb of Berlin, was finally selected.

"Horse Boxes," as they were called, each built to house 27 thoroughbreds, were assigned as living quarters for 365 men. There was very little electricity, no heat, no blankets, no bed clothing, and no place to store personal possessions. That autumn saw the heaviest rains in a generation, and the race course grounds quickly became a sea of mud, making walking about nearly impossible.

Left to their own devices, the prisoners selected officers from among their number. The officers called on the Germans to provide walkways. Lumber was brought in and paths were laid down from one horse box to another, then to the latrines and the kitchen. The center of the camp was soon dubbed "Trafalgar Square," and radiating from it was "Bond Street" (East and West), "King Edward Street," "Regent Street," and "Fleet Street."

The winter cold soon brought other problems. The single water tap in each box froze, and the stalls themselves were open to the weath-

er. When James W. Gerrard, US Ambassador to Germany, visited the camp, he reported his shock over the conditions to the German authorities. Through that intercession, more lumber and tools were brought in, and the prisoners began to work in earnest to make their primitive existence bearable.

More and more, the internees took over their camp's internal affairs, without objection from the Germans. At the same time, the Germans began to do their best to honor the Geneva Convention. Food was allowed to be brought in not only by the American and British Red Cross Organizations, but also by the neutral Dutch. All of it appears to have been promptly delivered, as was the men's mail. Soon other things were brought into the camp: clothes, blankets, books, sports equipment, and even a printing press.

Artists among the prisoners formed a dramatic group, putting on plays by Shakespeare and modern dramatists such as Shaw. A Sherlock Holmes piece was also presented. There were cricket matches and a boxing competition. Not only did the German camp officers begin attending the events, they often brought their wives as well.

At its greatest extent, the camp population exceeded 7,000. The wooden pathways were extended until they reached the limits of the 20-acre race course.

One prisoner, Albert Kamps, asked the Germans for permission to set up an internal postal system that would not only carry personal messages from one prisoner to another, but also enable the sponsors of the various activities to better contact those interested in it. The Germans didn't oppose the idea, and Kamps and his selected "postal officials" were soon allowed to visit Berlin to obtain the needed postal supplies.

English-speaking guards were chosen to accompany the postmen, which led to some odd incidents. Several times, Germans, overhearing English being spoken, summoned police to arrest the "spies."

By the summer of 1915, then, living conditions had much improved.

The Ruhleben Camp Library boasted 5,000 volumes. Thirty prisoners were employed by what had become the "Ruhleben Express Delivery Service," and that firm even managed to show a profit. In its first month of operation, July, it carried 5,151 pieces of mail. By December, 7,499 items were carried.

Still the British prisoners continued to work to make their camp life closer to the ones they might have enjoyed if they were still free. Before the year had passed, the men formed political parties, which took the names of those back home, and a camp election was set for 3 August 1915. The Conservative candidate was Alexander Boss, a well-to-do prisoner from Surrey. The Liberals nominated Israel Cohen, from Manchester.

The Suffragettes named Reuben Castang, home undeclared, who entered the lists primarily to add some humor to what was otherwise becoming a serious contest. His platform was a simple one. Since the Red Cross had been so efficient at bringing tinned goods into the camp, he claimed he would import "tinned girls." ("No! We want real girls!" the assemblage shouted back.)

The election campaign so occupied everyone's attention even some German guards began attending the speeches and betting on the final outcomes.

A fictitious group, the "British Wives and Sweethearts League in London," then put out propaganda promising to immediately sue for divorce if the Suffragette candidate were elected.

Those who felt none of the three candidates was representative of their desires demanded the right to name others, and at a 15 July rally, the "Sailors Party" put forward a Mr. Henriksen, who declined, asking his friends to support Cohen. The "Socialist Party" nominated a Mr. Delbosq, who enthusiastically promised to share all he owned — his food parcels, his money, and the shirt off his back — if he were elected. No one, however, offered to second his candidacy.

Costang, the Suffragette, was the eventual winner, with 1,220 votes. The German press reported the elec-

tion, but falsely claimed Costang won because of his stance against British entry into the War — no mention was made of his promise to import "tinned girls."

On the darker side, the Germans originally permitted Jewish prisoners to occupy their own quarters to make their preparation and eating of kosher food easier. Not all accepted the option, but as the months went by and life in such confined conditions began to inflame prejudices, some anti-Semitic incidents occurred. In time, all of the Jews in the camp were in Barracks 6, which came to be called "the ghetto."

During the summer of 1915, the Germans offered to let any of the Englishmen who had been born in Germany volunteer for service in the Kaiser's armed forces, and thus earn their freedom that way. There were no takers.

As the British blockade of Germany tightened, the German populace suffered more and more from inadequate food. It didn't help matters when local newspapers began reporting the Ruhleben prisoners were continuing to eat well off Red Cross canned food. Even the guards began to resent the well-stocked larders of the British. Years later one of the ex-prisoners recalled that late in the war he had seen German soldiers searching "through our garbage, picking out odd pieces of bacon and fat. They were particularly fond of the fat in the corned beef tins, which they scraped out and ate with relish."

The prisoners, in fact, generated an illegal source of funds for themselves by selling some of their food to the German guards, who sold it on the black market or ate it themselves once away from camp. This might have been the only time in history food was smuggled out of a prison camp rather than into one.

It was the Ruhleben postal system that brought about the camp's eventual undoing. The German authorities had first paid little attention to "postmaster" Kamps' efforts, but one guard who was also a stamp collector thought the activity novel enough that he mentioned it to a professional philatelist he knew. The guard was asked if he might

obtain some of the Ruhleben "postage stamps" to be sold to German collectors. The dealer advertised them for sale in a stamp collector's magazine, and the Imperial German Post Office, which had abolished all private postal systems in Germany in 1900, reacted with indignation.

Kamps was arrested, tried, and found guilty of infringement of German law. He was sentenced to three weeks in solitary confinement,

and his delivery service was abolished.

Of course, other forces were also at work to destroy the Ruhleben camp. By 1917 many prisoners had been allowed to leave Germany via Holland. By the end of that year, the only ones left were military men, and they were then dispersed to other, regular, POW camps to await the end of the war.

—Herman Herst, Jr.

I Remember...

With the 1st Ambulance Company in WWI

When we entered World War I in the spring of 1917, I was living and working in Milwaukee. My friends all joined the engineers, but I wanted to learn how to drive a motor vehicle, so I got myself into an ambulance company they were forming in Whitefish Bay.

A sign in the recruiting office of the Wisconsin National Guard said you had to be at least 18-years-old to enlist. When I admitted to the man at the front desk that I was only 16, he said just tell the men in the next room I was 18 and they would let me join. He was right; it worked, and I got in.

Our initial muster was on the Marquette University campus. Then we went to Whitefish Bay, where we drilled along with the *121st Field Artillery*. We also got our ambulances there and learned how to drive them. From there we went to Camp Randall, in Madison, and finally to Fort Douglas. The drive to Camp Randall in our ambulances was on dirt roads and took five hours — today it's a 90-minute highway trip.

After finishing our training we moved to Waco, Texas, where the Wisconsin National Guard combined with the Michigan National Guard to form the *32nd Division*. After we'd trained as a division, we went to New Jersey for our trip to Europe. The *32nd's* first boat, the

Martha Washington, took the commanding officer and two battalions of crack troops. It was torpedoed off the coast of France and sank with great loss of life. The ship I was on had better luck and docked safely in Brest on 14 February 1918.

From Brest we went by train to a quiet sector of the front in southern France near the Swiss border. There we occupied some trenchlines and learned how to patrol and raid the enemy lines. It turned out to be the only true "trench warfare" we saw during the war.

After we'd got some combat experience, Pershing shifted us north to Chateau-Thierry. From that point, we stayed in the frontline lines until the end of the fighting. The *32nd* fought at Soissons, the Argonne Forest, and the Meuse.

I was a private in the *1st Ambulance Company*, and most of the time we were assigned to the *125th* or *126th Regiment*. Our ambulance company was one of the first in the world to have motor vehicles. Before then mules and horses had been used to pull ambulance wagons. Those early ambulances didn't even have windshields, but I remember I thought they were real nice at the time. Ten casualties could sit along two benches in the back. If we had to transport litter patients, the benches folded down and you could hang four stretchers. At times we had to

overload, and then those who could rode on the fenders.

I spent most of my time in the front lines treating the lightly wounded there and bringing the others back to the ambulance. We had no drugs or penicillin; all I carried were two sizes of compress bandages and a package of 5-inch gauze pads. We aid men weren't supposed to clean any wounds. If a shell went through a soldier's clothes, we put the bandage directly over the clothes where the wound was. That was to stop the bleeding and keep the dirt out until we got him back to the aid station.

Some times it seemed the Germans weren't trying to kill our soldiers, but just wanted to shoot them in the legs so they couldn't walk. That tied up more of our manpower, since it took four guys to carry one back. Other times it seemed the Germans were making sure to kill our guys.

I never carried a weapon. I had a red cross armband, but I kept it in my pocket, since I knew the Germans would take out any first-aid man they could, because then our wounded would get no help.

I saw very few gas casualties because we had a good system for preparing for gas attacks. Areas likely to be gassed were well marked and there you carried your mask around your neck so you could put it on quickly. Outside the danger areas, you carried your mask at your side.

If you were in charge of horses, regulations required you put the masks on the horses before putting on your own. Horse gas masks looked like big feedbags — we saved a lot of horses with them.

The gas cases I saw came when we were advancing across open ground and the Germans would hit us with a sudden barrage of the stuff. Since no two shells ever land in the same place, the temptation was to dive into the closest new shellhole for safety. But when every third or fourth shell was a gas round, you had to stay put and watch the crater for a moment to make sure no gas vapors were coming out. Only then it was safe to jump in. That took some self-discipline.

I was lucky to never be hit by enemy fire, but I did hurt myself badly one time lifting a litter into the ambulance. My vertebrae were put out of place, and I still have to walk a certain way. I get veteran's compensation for that.

We sometimes had to directly attack German trenchlines, but we never let things bog down into real trench warfare. Our way was to hit them hard, break through, and keep moving. We didn't give the Germans time to regroup, and that way they kept losing ground, men and supplies. Once we got them out of their trenches, we'd keep the pressure on them continuously. Our 75mm and 155mm guns would lay down a barrage and we would advance behind it. The Germans would let us get close before they opened up with their machineguns — that's where we took most of our wounded. We would fight back with trench mortars and hand grenades. At night, wherever you'd stopped for the day, you'd dig a fox-hole for yourself and get ready for the counterattack.

Usually in the afternoon the planes would come out. One group would come out to scout and the other side would come out to try to shoot them down. You could always tell if an approaching plane was German by the sound of the motor. I saw lots of dog fights. When we were fighting at a place called Reddy Farm, we passed a corpse next to the wreckage of an American plane. We didn't think much of it at the time, but later we heard the dead pilot was Quentin Roosevelt, the son of Teddy Roosevelt.

We had to deal with a lot of barbed wire. The Germans tied tin cans and other things to the wire, so when you tried to cross they'd rattle and they'd know you were out there. Occasionally they tied cow bells to the wire, and when the wind blew it sounded like a heard of cattle was nearby. We had snips to cut the wire, but if you were in a hurry to get through you'd use boards or a mattress, or anything you could find, to press it down. Sometimes we'd shoot an old horse so it would fall on the wire and the men could hop over it. Some times the Germans

tried to make pathways over the wire using dead bodies.

We saw a lot of German prisoners, and I had to treat the wounded ones. Many of them were glad to be captured, and most seemed to be either real old or real young — they all looked like they'd been starving.

Our morale was high because we believed we were going to end the war. And Gen. Foch's insults, his calling us "boyscouts," motivated us. We weren't content to sit in the trenches like they had for four years — we wanted to finish the job. Nobody ever doubted we would win. If the war had lasted another four or five months, we'd've been in Berlin.

Our officers were excellent. They went into the line wearing nothing to identify their rank so snipers could single them out; but if you look at the casualty lists, you'll still find a lot of officers died. That's because they were always in front, leading their men. Pershing himself used to visit companies that had made excellent progress.

Shortly before the armistice was signed, I think the officers knew what was coming. We no longer pushed so hard, and we didn't encounter the resistance we'd seen earlier. Early on, the commanding officer would normally say something

like: "One mile from here is the rubble of a building. That will be my headquarters tonight." Then we'd go out and take it for him. But come November they stopped giving such orders, and I thank God for their good judgment.

On the 7th of November a false rumor went around among the Germans that an armistice had been signed, and we had to shoot at them so they'd understand the war was still on.

Our division had initially all come from two states. When the 32nd went into battle and took casualties, Wisconsin and Michigan families were hit hard. But our losses were replaced by men from all over the United States, and by war's end I don't think more than one in 10 of the front line troops were from the Wisconsin or Michigan National Guard.

After the war, I returned home on the battleship *Virginia*. When the ship put out to sea one of the naval officers mustered us all on deck and asked if any of us wanted to get home as fast as possible. A bunch of us raised our hands, and he sent us down to help stoke the boilers. I arrived back in the US on May 21, 1919.

— John Pavlik, as told to Rick Schultz

Weapons Update...

Not Only the Pros Use Wooden Bats

These days German sporting goods shops are having a hard time keeping up with the demand for that symbol of America's national pastime — the wooden baseball bat. In German police evidence rooms, lying between switchblades and Molotov cocktails, are some of the radical right's favorite new weapons, the deadly and much-feared *Baseballschläger*.

According to police reports, the American baseball bats have become the radical skinheads' weapon of choice. Because the 1.75 lb. bats can do a lot of damage, they've

become the implement those neo-fascists like to use for their deadly "sport" of beating up foreigners and rival gang members.

Since 1985, when some Hamburg skinheads first used baseball bats to beat to death a Turkish immigrant, German police have recorded an ever growing number of attacks made with them. Since German law doesn't classify the hickory wood bats as "weapons," they can be carried openly, and the skinheads can't be arrested for merely wielding them.

— Peter Warnock

Czechoslovakia '38

What If They'd Fought?

by Dr. Peter H. Gryner

[Ed's Intro: Peter Gryner's father was a staff officer in the Czechoslovakian army in 1938. Gryner himself eventually made his way west, finally settling in the United States. In preparing this article, he made several trips back to his homeland to conduct research in the archival material that's become available there since the fall of Communism. His story here is not about the complex political and diplomatic maneuvers involved with the Munich Agreement; rather, he presents the military and strategic factors that surrounded and underpinned that act of appeasement.]

The Coming of World War II

"Operation Green," the German codename for their planned attack on Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1938, was an inevitable part of the political and military development of European affairs that led to World War II. Throughout this story, the paramount fact remains Adolf Hitler was an evil and ruthless politician, an unscrupulous nationalist, and a man determined to enforce his will and accomplish his goals by whatever means available.

Hitler had clearly defined his ideas in his book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), and today we can only regret the democratic statesmen of his era didn't bother to read it. Those men lived in a world ruled by a system based on reason, traditional values, mutual understandings, and political horse-trad-

ing. Hitler did not play his game by their rules. He set out to rearrange the map of Europe, retaliate against those who had humiliated Germany at Versailles, establish a new world order under Nazi rule, move east by force of arms to capture the breadbasket of Europe, and enslave any nations that attempted to stand in the way.

His plan might have been aborted without starting a new general European war until the *Anschluss* of Austria (see sidebar). From that point on, Hitler's affairs ceased to be simply a matter of internal German politics. The annexation of Austria was the first step, a carefully prepared and well staged political move, a part of the planned "*Drang Nach Osten*" ("Urge to the East"). The *Anschluss* was aimed at upsetting the balance of power in the Danube basin, and at eroding the security of Czechoslovakia. To clear the road to the east, both Austria and Czechoslovakia had to disappear as independent political entities.

A few months after Austria's submergence, Hitler issued an ultimatum demanding the Czechs cede the Sudeten border area to the Reich. Prague declared a full mobilization of its armed forces on 23 September 1938. Other European countries followed suit: France ordered a partial mobilization, Great Britain called up its reserves, and even the Soviet Union declared its support for the Czechoslovakian cause. For a while it looked as if a great alliance had been formed to thwart the Germans.

But the rattling of swords proved misleading. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, didn't want to go to war "for a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing." A few days after that statement, the infamous Munich Conference was begun, and the treaty resulting from it sealed the fate of Czechoslovakia. The document was signed by the representatives of Germany, France, Britain, and Italy — the Czechoslovakians and Soviets were not even invited.

Abandoned by France, its primary ally, and virtually blackmailed by a Britain unprepared for war, Czechoslovakia was now effectively isolated. The Czechs faced a terrible choice: resist the Germans alone or capitulate.

The Prague government chose to capitulate. That decision was announced on 30 September, against both the will of the Czech general staff and people. On 1 October, the German army occupied the Sudetenland without having to fire a shot, and in doing so dealt the Czechoslovak Republic a vir-



tual death blow. With the forfeiture of the Sudetenland, the Czechs suffered an irreparable loss of strategic territory, industry, resources, and modern fortifications that were the key to the defense of the entire country.

Paris and London were overwhelmed with joy; Chamberlain and Daladier (the French Prime Minister) became the media heroes of the day —

the champions of “peace in our time.” But anti-Fascists all over the world wondered in dismay whether the sacrifice of democratic Czechoslovakia would truly prevent war.

That question was answered in the negative on 14 March 1939, when the German army occupied the remainder of western Czechoslovakia, simultaneously abetting the creation of a puppet Slovak

Anschluss: The Annexation of Austria

Austria in the 1930s was anything but the country of tolerance and *Gemutlichkeit* (coziness) it's usually portrayed as today. In fact, Nazism gained far quicker acceptance in Austria and neighboring Bavaria than it had in northern Germany. The Austrian Republic suffered heavily during the Great Depression, and its citizens never seemed to support it in earnest. Surveys showed that most of its people longed for a return of the Hapsburgs, or for union with Germany — both specifically forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles.

The two major Austrian political parties, the Christian-Socialists (supported by the Catholics and conservatives) and the Social-Democrats (who leaned strongly to the left), existed in a state of struggle so intense it might be described as latent civil war. Open conflict, in fact, finally broke out in 1934. The government of Chancellor Dolfuss supported the right, and the Social-Democrats were defeated and suppressed. Dictatorial measures were put into force, and the Austrian Nazi Party, strongly supported by Berlin, began to gain the upper hand. Austria was left politically prostrate and open to a Nazi takeover.

The Austrian Nazis started their *Putsch* (coup) by assassinating Dolfuss on 25 July 1934, but they were quickly defeated by government forces. Temporarily frustrated, Hitler openly withdrew his support for the Austrian Nazis and retreated into demagoguery.

On the very first page of *Mein Kampf*, Hitler had written: “German Austria must return to the German motherland.” But on 21 May 1936, he told the Reichstag: “Germany neither intends nor wishes to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria, to annex Austria, or to conclude an *Anschluss*. ”

On 11 July 1936, the two governments signed a so-called “Gentlemen’s Agreement,” whereby normal political relations were re-established. That move also paved the way for closer cooperation between Hitler and Mussolini, since the latter has cast himself as the guarantor of Austria’s independence.

Shortly thereafter, the Spanish Civil War and the Italo-Ethiopian War began to divert world attention away from Austria, and by 1937, Hitler had a new scenario in motion. On 5 November, at a meeting with his top military and political aides, he declared that since it was impossible for Germany to become self-sufficient within its present borders, and because Britain and France would never permit peaceable German expansion, it had become necessary to acquire the extra

Lebensraum (living space) by force of arms. He went on to target Austria and Czechoslovakia as the immediate objectives, and ordered all the necessary prerequisites for their conquest be ready before the end of 1938.

The Austrian Nazi Party, under the leadership of Arthur Seyss-Inquart, played an important role in the new plan. Just as the Sudeten Nazis would later be used in Czechoslovakia, the Austrian Nazis became a subversive and anti-government element insisting on union with Germany.

In January 1938, during a police raid on the Austrian Nazi Party headquarters, evidence was discovered of a plot to overthrow the Vienna government and install Seyss-Inquart as chancellor. Austria protested, and Hitler countered by inviting Schuschnigg, the Austrian premier, to come to Germany to discuss and solve all problems existing between the two nations. On 12 February, Schuschnigg yielded to demands for Nazi participation in the Austrian government and for freedom to conduct political activities throughout the country.

Encouraged, Hitler delivered an inflammatory speech to the Reichstag on 20 February, demanding complete “self-determination” for the Germans of Austria and the Sudetenland. Schuschnigg announced his government would resist all further pressure from Germany. Rioting broke out in Graz, spreading from there across much of western Austria. Once again, Austria appeared to be on the verge of anarchy.

In a plebiscite scheduled for 13 March, the voters were to be given a chance to decide on the future of independent Austria. Hitler was unwilling to risk another setback, and vowed to block the voting by invasion if necessary. Breaking under the strain, Schuschnigg resigned, and Seyss-Inquart became head of a new government. He immediately requested Hitler send in German troops to “prevent bloodshed.”

On 12 March 1938, German forces occupied Austria. They met no resistance and the majority of the population rushed into the streets to express their joy at the *Anschluss*. The French and British governments issued impotent protests, while Mussolini declined a French invitation to initiate some kind of concerted action. The next day, Seyss-Inquart declared Austria a province of the German Reich — Ostmark. The Austrian army was incorporated into the German; Hitler added 9 million new citizens to his empire, acquired important industrial and natural resources, and, most importantly, out-flanked Czechoslovakia.

Republic in the east. All this happened in direct violation of the Treaty of Locarno and the Munich Agreement.

Only the Czech *3rd Battalion* of the *8th Border Regiment* put up a brief fight, trying to stop an advancing SS column. All other Czech soldiers laid down their arms, and their country ceased to exist. World War II had effectively begun.

Europe in the 20s & 30s

On 1 December 1925, an international treaty was signed in the Swiss town of Locarno. That signing finally and definitely ended the First World War; its repudiation 11 years later helped precipitate the Second.

Locarno was, at least on paper, a good treaty. Peace between France and Germany was guaranteed by Great Britain and Italy. That pleased all four of them, especially Italy, which in signing gained greatly in status. France reaffirmed her existing alliances with Poland and Czechoslovakia, and it was further agreed that French action under those alliances would not constitute aggression against Germany.

At the time, Locarno was widely considered to have made a new general European war impossible. It was expected that the climate of mutual trust the document was aimed at fostering would lead to the withdrawal of Allied troops then occupying the Rhineland, and would later enable Germany to

Potential German Allies in 1938

Hungary

Since the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, which settled the frontiers of Hungary by depriving that country of almost two-thirds of her former territory, the government in Budapest had expended great political effort to regain the lost areas.

Czechoslovakia was one of the big gainers from the treaty. In addition to the provinces of Slovakia and Ruthenia, military and economic factors had led to demarcation lines that put a considerable Hungarian population under Prague's control. Though the rights of the Hungarian minority were protected by Czechoslovakia's democratic constitution, Budapest refused to renounce its demands for a frontier revision.

Germany therefore viewed Hungary as a natural ally in its anti-Czech program and officially supported Budapest's claim on the south Slovakian lowlands. Despite some thaw in relations after the 1936 death of the Hungarian right-wing leader Gen. Goemboes, in 1938 the Czech general staff still officially classified Hungary as a hostile nation. Southern Slovakia was guarded by four Border Sector units, plus one mobile (*3rd*) and two infantry divisions (*10th* and *11th*).

Throughout the years of the "Little Entente," the general staffs of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania prepared no fewer than 16 plans for countering potential Hungarian aggression. The last one, drawn up just after the Austrian *Anschluss*, called for the deployment of 22 Romanian and Yugoslavian divisions along the southern and southwestern borders of Hungary, ready to drive toward Budapest at the first sign of an invasion of Slovakia.

In September 1938, Hungary did in fact mobilize its first-class reserves and conduct large-scale field exercises near the Slovakian border. This move was taken as the result of pressure applied from Berlin, and after Munich the Hungarians were rewarded for their anti-Czech stance when southern Slovakia was turned over to them. In spite of the feigned willingness to invade, however, documents and military intelligence reports

that have become available since the fall of the Communist regimes in Europe indicate Hungary was not really eager to go to war in 1938.

Poland

To the northeast stood another hostile neighbor — Poland. Its quarrel with Czechoslovakia also began immediately after World War I. The crux of it was the rich mining district of Teschen. The majority of the population there was ethnically Czech, and after some bitter fighting in 1919, Prague's forces had occupied the territory without waiting for approval from Versailles. Later arbitration resulted in Poland being awarded some of Teschen, but Warsaw never forgave the Czechs' earlier "injustice."

Another bone of contention had arisen between the two nations during the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-20, when leftist Czech railway workers went on strike in support of the Reds, and refused to ship war supplies coming from France to Warsaw at a critical moment in the fighting. Afterward the Czech government was slow in offering apologies, and Gen. Pilsudski, the virtual dictator of Poland in the 1930s, hated Prague's democracy and never showed the slightest interest in improving relations.

In September 1938, after a curt exchange of messages between Moscow and Warsaw regarding the Soviet help for Czechoslovakia in case of a German attack, the USSR issued a warning to the Polish government. The note was in fact an ultimatum: any move by Polish forces against Czechoslovakia would result in the immediate cancellation of the Soviet-Polish Friendship Treaty that had been signed in 1932. At the same time, four Soviet armies and two air armies began to deploy along the Polish border.

After that show of Soviet force, the Poles quickly cooled whatever ardor they otherwise might have had for invading Czechoslovakia in partnership with the Germans. Still, Hitler appreciated their good attitude, and the Munich Agreement finally (though, as it turned out, very temporarily) awarded control of all of Teschen to Poland.

join the League of Nations. Both those expectations proved correct soon afterward.

The treaty, however, had one weak point; it did not address Germany's refusal to accept the status quo along her eastern frontiers. Berlin had accepted the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, but its insistence on separate "arbitration treaties" with Poland and Czechoslovakia, leaving open the door to future negotiations and changes, was of great concern to the governments in Warsaw and Prague (which were not signatories to the main Locarno treaty). Those governments were also concerned with France's apparent renunciation of her right to go to war with Germany unless the League of Nations agreed some member state had been attacked without provocation. Both the Czechs and Poles, feeling their mutual defense treaties with France had suddenly declined in value, spoke of a "sellout."

The Czechoslovak Republic had always been accepted by the West as one of the most successful creations of the Paris Peace Conference. Her constitution, ratified in 1920, was a modern document of democratic principles that even Thomas Jefferson would have admired. It included guarantees of personal liberty, equality, and a balanced distribution of government powers. During the inter-war period, no questions were ever raised regarding the freedom or propriety of Czechoslovakian elections, the workings of its judiciary, or the authority of its National Assembly. The Czechoslovak Republic, in fact, established a reputation for democratic development, against a background of relative political tranquility, that contrasted strongly with the situation in the other countries of the area.

Polish democracy gave way to the coup of Gen. Pilsudski in 1926. In Bulgaria, progressive democratic developments were brought to a halt by assassination in 1923. In Austria, Engelbert Dolfuss imposed dictatorial measures in the early 1930s. Yugoslavia, in the midst of a crisis in Serb-Croat relations, became a virtual monarchist-dictatorship by 1929. Hungary was under the dictate of Adm. Horthy and his ultra-conservative elite. Romania had its political development stunted by the increasingly authoritarian King Carol. The fate of democracy in Germany and Italy is, of course, too well known to need rehashing here. But while all those countries succumbed to pressures from the far right (generated in response to the perceived threat of Communist revolution), Czechoslovakia continued to move slowly and cautiously along the path of democracy.

In the field of foreign policy, Czechoslovakia resolutely and consistently worked for peace, international arbitration, collective security, and friendly relations with her neighbors. Czechoslovakia was a loyal member of the League of Nations, an original signatory of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact outlawing aggressive war, and stood ready at all times to fulfill her obligations resulting from the



The soldiers of a Czechoslovakian infantry division march in review, September 1938.

acceptance of the system of collective security. At the League's headquarters in Geneva, her representatives opposed the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and China, and the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Edward Benes, was also president of the Assembly of the League when it voted sanctions against Italy in response to that nation's invasion of Ethiopia.

From the moment the Nazis gained power in Germany, the Czechs recognized their final aims and the threat to European peace they represented. In early 1932, Benes warned the Italians their support of the Nazis' rise to power would eventually work against them. At the same time, he also conferred with Poland's Foreign Minister, Jozsef Beck, proposing revisions of the existing agreements regarding their frontiers and establishing a basis of military cooperation against Germany.

In July 1932, Benes returned to Prague from the World Disarmament Conference then being held in Geneva. He summoned the Czech general staff and the minister of defense and warned: "In spite of our efforts for the success of the Disarmament Conference, everything I have already seen and heard inclines me to...[believe it will fail]. A dreadful crisis is inevitable.... I give you four years. The crisis will probably come in 1936 or 1937. By that time the Republic has to be prepared militarily."

In October, Benes received a report on the "Volta Conference" just held in Rome. There Italy and Germany agreed to work toward large-scale revisions of existing peace treaties. Benes reacted by proposing closer military and political cooperation between his country, Romania and Yugoslavia. This was the so-called "Little Entente" that had been loosely formed in 1920-21. After the Volta Conference, the time seemed right to strengthen and intensify those agreements.

On 16 March 1933, the Little Entente pact was strengthened, but two days later, Mussolini proposed a new "Four Power Act." Under its provisions, Germany, Italy, France and Britain would agree to allow the revision of earlier treaties. This act of revisionism was obviously directed against the Little Entente. To get Paris and London to agree to the general legitimacy of treaty revisionism, the Fascists and Nazis were maneuvering the two democratic powers to abandon their interests on the continent in favor of concentrating on the overseas affairs of their colonial empires.

The Four Power Act was signed in Rome on 15 July 1933. It was strongly rejected by public opinion in both Britain and France at the time, and of course by the states of the Little Entente and Poland. The French and British parliaments, in fact, never ratified the treaty — but still, it can easily be seen as a precursor and model for the Munich Agreement of 1938.

In October 1933, Germany withdrew from the World Disarmament Conference and from the League of Nations. Czechoslovakia responded by stepping up her national defense program.

The Sudeten Germans

In 1938, Czechoslovakia had an ethnically heterogeneous population of approximately 16 million. Besides the Czechs and Slovaks, who together made up 67 percent of the population (according to the 1930 census), there were Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Ruthenians, and others. Forming slightly over 22 percent of the population, the Germans were the most significant minority group. They were also politically organized, economically powerful, and internationally recognized.

The border region of Bohemia is formed by several mountain ranges, called *Sudety* in Czech and the *Sudetenland* in German. Germans had begun to move into the area in the 10th century, and had definitely settled and colonized it by the 17th, when Bohemia fell to the Hapsburgs. At that time the Germans acquired large estates, founded industries, joined the Austrian bureaucracy in great numbers, and generally played an important role in the political life of the Hapsburg Empire.

They also became the area's *Kulturtragers* — the cultural elite — and showed unconcealed contempt for everything Czech. During the 19th century, as the Czechs increased agitation for political, national and cultural independence, the antagonisms between the

two groups grew ever more intense.

With the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, the privileged position of the Sudeten-Germans also crumbled. Overnight they found themselves turned into a despised minority inside a Slav-ruled state, and tensions became even stronger. Their leaders organized financial support from both Berlin and Vienna to aid irredentist activities and new political parties, all of which had one thing in common: an implacable hostility toward the Czechoslovak Republic.

During the depression the Sudeten region suffered more than the rest of the country. That was not only because it was predominantly an industrial area, but also because the Prague government gave preferential assistance to the Czech, rather than the German, portion of the populace.

Still, records show that no other country on the continent offered their minorities better treatment than Czechoslovakia. Statistics reveal, for example, that the number of German-language schools in relation to the percentage of population was high. German was the



Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten German Party, takes pistol practice early in 1938.



"Wir wollen heim ins Reich!" (We want a home within the empire!) reads this banner at a Sudeten-German street rally.

Czechoslovakia's Strategic Importance

Hitler had military, economic and political reasons for invading Czechoslovakia. Her geographic position made her the most important country in central Europe. Her territory was a gateway to the east as well as to the Danube basin. In 1868, after Prussia had defeated Austria in a war fought mostly in Bohemia (see *Command* no. 21), Otto von Bismarck warned: "Whoever is master of Bohemia is the master of Europe. Europe must, therefore,

official language in all court districts where 20 percent or more were ethnic-Germans. German political parties enjoyed freedoms equal to those of Czech parties, and some of them even began to develop a constructive attitude toward the Czechoslovak state.

But the German National Party, along with the Nazis, continued to agitate against the very existence of the Czechoslovak Republic. As early as 1932, a year before they came to power in Germany itself, the Nazi Party headquarters sent secret instructions to the Sudetenland "to be ready to take up arms on the *Führer's* order."

In reaction to the Nazi takeover in Germany, Prague outlawed the Sudeten-Nazi Party in 1933. It was soon replaced, however, by a renamed group under the leadership of Konrad Henlein. He was a physical education teacher who founded a pseudo-gymnastic organization, the *Turnverband* (athletic group), that provided regimentation, unity, and Nazi philosophic education to its members. The *Turnverband* quickly became the core around which a new Sudeten German (read Nazi) Party formed, and quickly spread throughout the German population.

In the Czechoslovakian national elections of April 1935, the new party scored a decisive victory, receiving 63 percent of all ethnic-German votes cast and sending 44 representatives to the parliament in Prague. In the last free Czechoslovakian elections, held in 1938, the results were even more one-sided. The Sudeten German Party received 78 percent of the ethnic-German votes, and practically swept away all democratic opposition within that group.

The Sudeten German Party then began to intensify its demands for territorial autonomy, even while the Czechoslovakian government offered one compromise after another. It soon became obvious Hitler was orchestrating the party's actions, and on 20 March 1938 he personally ordered Henlein to begin making "demands on behalf of the Party that would be unacceptable to the Czechoslovak government."

never allow any nation except the Czechs to rule it, since that nation does not lust for domination. The boundaries of Bohemia are the safeguard of European security, and he who moves them will plunge Europe into misery."

For offensive purposes, Czechoslovakia covered Poland's southern flank, and could also serve as a springboard for operations into the Ukraine and the Danube basin.

For defensive purposes, the western portions of the Czechoslovak Republic represented a deep wedge jutting into the Third Reich. Hitler saw clearly its potential as a possible Soviet army and air force base, bringing those forces within easy reach of the German heartland.

Economically, Czechoslovakia was one of Europe's industrial centers. In 1930, the population of the Czechoslovak Republic was 14.7 million, which ranked it ninth of 25 European nations. By 1938, the population had grown to 16 million, with Slavic Czechs, Slovaks and Ruthenes accounting for 12 million of that total. A German minority of 3 million, plus smaller Polish and Hungarian minorities, played important roles in Hitler's plan of division and conquest.

In 1929, Czechoslovakia produced more pit-coal, lignite, pig-iron and steel than Italy. In 1938 she ranked third in central Europe in industrial capacity — behind only Germany and Italy. That relatively great capacity represented the real basis for Czechoslovakian national defense. Their light machinery and armaments industries were some of the best in the world. The Skoda Works, with plants in Prague, Bruno and Zbrojovka, produced first-class weapons, cars, trucks, tanks and ammunition. The Skoda Works in fact represented the third-largest national armaments complex in Europe, ranking only below the Krupp concern in Germany and Schneider-Creusot in France.

Politically, the Czechs were in the vanguard of various anti-German alliance systems. A strategically and militarily free Czechoslovakia represented the last obstacle to be overcome before the "Urge to the East" could be started in earnest. These, and not the propaganda facade provided by the Sudeten Germans (see sidebar), were the real factors that provided the motive for Hitler's invasion.

Czech-German Relations, 1933-37

Shortly after he came to power, Hitler proposed a German-Czechoslovak bilateral non-aggression treaty. These overtures were immediately rejected by Prague on the grounds that Czechoslovakia was committed to the principles of the League of Nations, already had mutual understandings with other nations within the region, and had outright alliances with still others. Benes stated his country would be unable to enter into such a bilateral treaty with Germany without agreement from all other "interested" European

states. He also informed Britain, Poland, France, and the countries of the Little Entente of Hitler's proposal.

In the fall of 1935, Hitler made another move toward a bilateral treaty with Czechoslovakia. He sent a diplomatic delegation to Prague with the following stated objectives: 1) get Benes (now president of Czechoslovakia) and Hitler to meet personally to agree on the final form of a new policy of friendship between their two countries; 2) work out a non-aggression pact similar to the one signed by Germany and Poland in 1934; and 3) remove all barriers to mutual trust that may have developed as a result of past relations.

The envoys further stated that when those three objectives were accomplished, Germany would recognize, affirm and guarantee the existing frontiers of Czechoslovakia. They also stressed Hitler's desire to negotiate these matters directly with Benes, in private and in absolute secrecy.

Benes agreed this time, stating he would welcome such a German-Czech treaty, and requested a

detailed written proposal. By early the next year, he had such a document in hand, including a clause of recognition of the present frontiers of Czechoslovakia. Hitler only requested "cultural autonomy" be granted the German minority in the Sudetenland, and pledged — everything else being agreed upon — that he would never seek their "territorial autonomy."

But Benes brought the discussions to an end by pointing out that signing the bilateral agreement as it was written would actually require Czechoslovakia to renounce her earlier treaties with France and the Soviet Union. The German diplomats suggested Benes rewrite the agreement in a form that would not affect either nation's pre-existing treaties. The Czech president agreed and submitted his revised document to Berlin in January 1937.

Hitler, though, sent no answer to Benes' revised treaty, and he never allowed his diplomats to approach Prague on the subject again. What had changed was *Der Führer's* adoption of a new course toward relations with Czechoslovakia. Hitler it

German & Czech Strategic Concepts in 1938

The Germans

German strategy in World War I centered on their concept of *Vernichtungsgedanke*. It was the infamous Field Marshal von Schlieffen who had come up with the idea, after developing von Moltke's theory of flanking and encircling moves into a new, all-embracing doctrine of decisive maneuver. *Vernichtungsgedanke* translates as "idea of annihilation," and it has gone into military history as the term for what von Schlieffen believed to be the ultimate aim of any war effort: the total destruction of the enemy's forces by means of swift, decisive blows delivered from the front, flank and rear.

In 1914, the German army's modified version of von Schlieffen's original plan for a wide maneuver to turn the French flank and destroy them from behind almost succeeded. Only the physical exhaustion of the troops, logistical shortcomings resulting from the rapid advance, and a few critical mistakes by local commanders saved France and stopped the invasion on the Marne River.

During the following war years, as the deadly trio of trenches, artillery and machineguns ruled the battlefield, all attempts to break the stalemate in the west and return to swift and decisive maneuver failed. Though the Germans utilized the power of the defense there, the superiority of their mobile strategy was proven in 1915, 1916 and 1917 in the east, when first Serbia, then Romania, and finally Russia were knocked out of the war. Despite the ultimately failed experience on the Western Front, *Vernichtungsgedanke* remained the pillar of German strategy to the end of the war.

The final defeat in 1918 led to some uncertainty in the minds of many German military leaders. They compared their strategy of decisive maneuver with the doc-

trine of firepower-and-fortifications that had dominated the Western Front. Some of the German generals even supported for a time the French theory of the "Gradual Offensive," which was slow but safe. Attacks were to be made only with secured flanks, by infantry supported by tanks and artillery, and even the spearhead units were to be able to go over to the defensive at any instant.

The German debate was not finally resolved until Gen. von Seeckt, head of the Weimar Republic's army, offered his solution. He believed the experience of World War I had shown a need for greater mobility, not less, and that the failure of the German war effort had been caused by mistakes of command rather than by a failure of doctrine. He expressed his idea this way:

The whole future of warfare seems to lie in the employment of mobile armies, relatively small but of high quality, and rendered distinctly more effective by the addition of aircraft and by the simultaneous mobilization of the whole force.... The army of the future must satisfy three demands. First, it must have high mobility. This can be attained by employment of numerous and highly efficient cavalry units, the fullest possible use of motor transport, and the marching capacity of the infantry. Second, it must have the most effective armament. Third, it must have continuous replacement of men and material.

The strategic debate of the German army command was decided in the late 1920s. The successors of von Moltke and von Schlieffen won, and the idea of *Vernichtungsgedanke* survived. The doctrine was reaffirmed and given modern elaboration in a directive on troop command issued late in 1933. Its first page read: "Even war undergoes constant evolution. New arms give ever new forms of combat. To foresee this technical revolution before it occurs, to judge well the influence of these new

seems had rethought his attitude toward the Sudeten Germans and the excellent propaganda leverage their situation presented to him.

The Development of Operation Green

The actual blueprint for the Germans' plans of aggression against Czechoslovakia originated in June 1937 and was given the codename "Operation Green."

On 24 June, Field Marshal Werner von Blomberg, the German Minister of War, issued a secret directive to initiate the armed forces' unified preparation for a war in the east. The part of the directive concerning Operation Green suggested that such an eastern war might start with a surprise invasion of Czechoslovakia to parry or forestall the imminent attack of a superior enemy coalition through the same area.

To justify such an action in the eyes of the international community, necessary preconditions

had to be created politically. The task of the armed forces would be to break into Czechoslovakia quickly, by surprise and with the greatest force possible, leaving the minimum strength necessary as a border shield in the west. The final object of the attack was to be the complete elimination of Czechoslovakia as a military factor in any broader war, which would include denying the Soviet air force operational bases there.

In discussions throughout the autumn between Hitler and his generals, it was further determined the invasion was to be executed with the "speed of lightning." Concerns centered on the strength of the Czech border fortifications (see sidebar). Most disturbing, according to von Blomberg, was the fact the defense line in Northern Moravia was approaching the same magnitude and capabilities as the French Maginot Line. The Commander-in-Chief of the German Army, Gen. Werner von Fritsch, accordingly ordered a study of all the alternatives available for the attack, with a special emphasis given to the breaching of the fortifications.

arms on battle, to employ them before others, is an essential condition for success."

The directive also advocated the use of tanks and motorized transport for penetrations; in contrast to prevailing foreign doctrines it did not restrict those mobile forces to an infantry support role. On the contrary, it stressed that mobile units tied too closely to the infantry would lose their advantage of speed and thus eventually be knocked out by the defenders.

Still, the new doctrine was not truly revolutionary — it was really a modified version of the idea invented in the previous century. Infantry divisions on the march with horse-drawn guns and supply wagons were still seen as the decisive elements of encirclements, and the motorized units and armor were to be subordinated to their ultimate needs. Armor was to be the cutting edge of the flanking attacks, help to penetrate enemy front lines, destroy enemy artillery, disrupt enemy reserves, and finally close the pincers — but the marching infantry would still be critical in tightening the ring and then destroying the encircled forces.

Such was the official thinking in the early 1930s, when Col. Heinz Guderian developed his more radical "armored concept" — what later became known as the "Blitzkrieg" (or Lightning War). The final directives for Operation Green indicate that the attack on Czechoslovakia was planned in the Blitzkrieg fashion. The breakthrough of the fortified line was to be followed by *independent* panzer thrusts, penetrations and exploitations. The Czechs were supposed to be overturned by a lightning mechanized stroke that, it was hoped in Berlin, would not take longer than a week.

The Czechs

The war plans of Czechoslovakia were based on a doctrine very different from that of the Germans. It was a

doctrine of defense conducted behind fixed fortifications, a doctrine heavily influenced by the French military thinking of the 1930s. However, this defensive attitude was somewhat modified by the lessons of mobile defense that had been used by the Czech Legion in Russia.

The basic concepts of the Czechoslovakian defensive doctrine ran as follows: defense behind fixed fortifications, flank counterattacks against penetrations into that first line of defense, mobile defense in the hills and highlands of Bohemia and Moravia during any retreat out of that area, a final halt along the western reaches of Moravia, or at worst, Slovakia.

To aid this strategy, by 1938 the Czechs had fortified their entire border with Germany, covering some parts of it with the strongest fortifications in Europe. Plans also existed to move western industrial centers to Slovakia for reconstitution there. Food supplies from within the rump-defensive area were deemed to be sufficient, and oil and gasoline was to be supplied by rail from friendly Romania.

But fortifications aside, if left alone to fight against Germany, Czechoslovakia's strategic position could hardly have been worse. Her sausage-shape formed a 1,000-kilometer corridor extending deep into German territory. The total length of her frontiers was over 4,000 kilometers, and only 200 kilometers of it bordered on a friendly neighbor, Romania. Half the border area, more than 2,000 kilometers, was shared with Germany; and almost 1,800 kilometers was shared with hostile and unpredictable Poland and Hungary.

Viewed only in the strategic abstract, Czechoslovakia actually appeared indefensible against her real and potential foes. The Czech general staff, then, chose an all-defensive doctrine out of necessity: it was really the only available strategy, regardless of the support that might have eventually been received from outside.

The Czechs' Friends & Neighbors

Czechoslovakia's position between Germany and the Soviet Union was a difficult one. Germany coveted Czechoslovakia as a gate through which to expand to the east and southeast, while for the Soviets Czechoslovakia presented a natural buffer to such expansion.

There was another Great Power that had interest in Czechoslovakia: France. They saw Czechoslovakia as a strong potential threat to the German rear in any new war Berlin might start in the west. By its mere existence, an independent Czechoslovakia also blocked direct German access to the raw materials and fuel resources of southeast Europe. Further, French leadership in continental affairs in the period between the two world wars was based on her influence over the small countries of central and eastern Europe. French withdrawal from those regions, Paris was certain, would bring on immediate German domination, thus reducing France to a secondary power.

Those were the great fundamental strategic considerations determining the foreign policy of Czechoslovakia in the late 1930s. In fact, Benes, who became the republic's second president, often summarized the "three pillars" of his country's foreign policy this way: 1) the League of Nations; 2) the Little Entente; and 3) the alliance with France.

The Little Entente had originally been formed to block Hungary's efforts to regain the territories lost at the end of World War I. Later, many attempts were made by Germany and Italy to break up that alliance so as to be able to deal with each of its member states separately. Those efforts in fact had some success, as can be seen by the fact that

even by 1938 the Little Entente had added no provisions for mutually resisting German aggression against any one of its members.

The story of the Franco-Czech alliance was different. The two countries were in fact linked by a bond stronger than any treaty: they both knew the defeat of one by the Germans would likewise be the death knell of the other.

It was a popular belief in Great Britain at the time that the French commitments in central and eastern Europe were a mistake and might lead to entanglements that actually helped bring on, rather than put off, a new European war. But the suggestion that France should have given up agreements essential to her security was as preposterous as the idea London should give up her interests in the Mediterranean to avoid possible conflict with Italy. Put more simply — Czechoslovakia was France's Gibraltar.

The two nations concluded a treaty of alliance and friendship in January 1924, and the following year the agreement was further strengthened by an annex to the Locarno Treaties, providing for mutual assistance in the case of a German attack on either.

Czechoslovakia's relations with the Soviet Union were not so clear-cut. In May 1935, the Czechoslovakians and Soviets concluded a pact of mutual assistance, and by its provisions the two were bound to go to each other's assistance without waiting for the League of Nations to certify the fact of aggression. However, Soviet military intervention in support of Czechoslovakia was tied to that of France. It was that clause that led to problems in the critical days of September 1938.

After the signing of the 1935 pact, friendly relations began to develop between the general staffs of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, and the anti-Communist stance of the Prague government was put more and more into the background. Military delegations exchanged several visits, Soviet officers inspected the growing Czech border fortifications, some manufacturing license agreements for aircraft were made, and the question of wartime use of airfields in Slovakia by the Red air force was studied. More importantly, the Czech army shared the development of its 105mm field gun, the most modern artillery piece in the world at the time, and the Skoda medium tanks models 37 and 38 were tested at Soviet proving grounds. In the spring of 1938, a Czechoslovakian delegation went to the USSR to study defenses there.

All these activities, of course, were denounced not only in the Nazi press in Germany, but also on the floor of the Czechoslovak parliament, where the conservative parties came out in strong opposition to any kind of cooperation with the Soviet Union. Ultimately, though this dissent among Czech politicians regarding Soviet military help played only a minor role in Prague during the actual Munich Crisis, it did take on major signifi-



Czech refugees fleeing the Sudetenland, October 1938.

The Blitzkrieg Solution

The tactical doctrine of the German army emphasized the fundamental role of small combat teams using infiltration techniques to penetrate enemy lines. "Infiltration" had indeed become a scary word on the Western Front in 1918; for a while, it appeared as if the Germans had finally found a way to break the stalemate of trench warfare.

The essence of the new tactics lay in surprise, speed, and the flexibility inherent in well-trained and heavily-armed combat groups, the so-called *Stosstruppen* (or Stormtroops). These were battalion-size units, armed with automatic weapons, light machineguns, hand grenades, flamethrowers and light mortars, and supported by light artillery. After a short but intensive barrage they moved forward to create narrow penetrations through enemy lines. Any defensive strongpoints were bypassed and left for the masses of regular infantry coming behind. Meanwhile, the stormtroopers continued their advance into the enemy rear area, destroying artillery positions, headquarters, communications, supply facilities, and generally sowing chaos.

The confusion this caused among unprepared defenders often resulted in the breakdown of their entire command structure and the disruption of large units. Their morale was shaken by the surprise and violent attack. Combined with the other factors described above, such an attack could lead to the complete collapse of the defense along the front. The narrow gaps were thus turned into wide penetrations, and the mass of regular infantry moved forward to maintain the momentum.

That was the method Ludendorff used in his offensives of 1918. But the advantage was eventually lost, and the Allies gained enough time to move in reinforcements and restore their lines. That decisive loss of momentum on the German side was caused by the slow pace of their horse-drawn supply columns and the eventual exhaustion of the infantry after the initial penetrations. The postwar development of motorized and tracked vehicles, with their much greater range and speed, removed those shortcomings.

The genius behind the new Blitzkrieg theory that first supplemented and then supplanted the earlier foot-bound infiltration doctrine was Heinz Guderian. To quote the British author Len Deighton from his book, *Blitzkrieg*: "It is unique in military history for one man to influence a design of a weapon, see to training the men who use it, help plan an offensive, and then lead the force in battle."

But Heinz Guderian did just that. Born in 1881, he served in World War I with a telegraph battalion, and was in charge of a large wireless station that provided communications for the cavalry. He also served as a staff officer on the Eastern Front, and after the war was selected to join the Inspectorate of Transport Troops. It was this job that enabled him to study the tactical use of motorized infantry in combat, and elaborate on it from

his experience with battlefield communications. All this came together to make him the German army's leading expert on mobile warfare in the early 1930s.

He read the works of British tank expert J.F.C. Fuller, and from them envisioned the idea of a fully mechanized force striking *independently* and deeply behind enemy lines. It was in making the mobile forces independent of the marching infantry that Guderian's thinking became truly revolutionary and distinct from the classic *Vernichtungsgedanke* concept.

Still, Guderian's basic theory of the Blitzkrieg was at first seldom challenged by his superiors simply because it did largely agree with the classic thinking on mobility, and worked well in the overall scheme of the *Vernichtungsgedanke*. He was first supported by von Blomberg, the German War Minister, and later also by Hitler. The latter, after seeing a prototype of the Panzer I tank at a demonstration in 1935, exclaimed: "That's what I need! That's what I want!"

In October of that year, Guderian was appointed Chief of Staff of the newly created armored forces. From that point on, he steadily elaborated his thinking into an all-embracing doctrine of victory through a mechanized indirect approach, which did generate serious opposition among more conservative elements of the high command.

The doctrine as it finally evolved had three main stages of execution. First, the armored forces, with strong support from the air, concentrates its attack on the weakest point of the enemy line. Taking advantage of surprise, ferocity, and local firepower superiority, it breaks through the enemy line on a narrow front, bypassing strongpoints, which are left to be cleaned out by the follow-on infantry.

Next comes the penetration. The armored force *independently* drives deep into the enemy rear areas, always moving as fast as possible from point to point of least resistance. New defense lines and strong points are again bypassed, and the true direction of the main thrust is disguised by constantly developing decoy penetrations. (Hence the "indirectness" of the approach to the final objective.) Speed and flexibility are the most important factors at this stage; the security of the flanks is at best secondary. The sheer momentum of the attack causes confusion among the enemy and disrupts his command system, preventing him from concentrating enough troops to reform an effective opposition.

The third stage is the exploitation of the tactical gains into a strategic advantage. This is done by a further extension of the indirect approach described above. Now, though, the enemy is eventually entirely destroyed by the disruption and loss of command-control over his own forces. As his units lose direction and coordination, fear, doubt, panic and uncertainty finally and fully shatter morale. The will to fight declines until all organized resistance ceases.

cance in the minds of many British and French politicians, who considered any Soviet moves into Czechoslovakia as tantamount to a Communist invasion of central Europe.

German Army Opposition to Hitler

During the first years of Hitler's regime, he tried not to antagonize the German army's leadership. He claimed the only way to achieve the goals of National Socialism was with the army, never against it. But after 1937 he began to take the steps necessary to implement stricter control and, ultimately, complete subjugation of the armed forces. Those moves arose from Hitler's frustration with his generals over their seemingly increasing oppo-

sition to his policies — in rearmament and foreign expansion in particular.

Those army leaders who in 1933 hadn't shown enough enthusiasm for the Nazis were soon dismissed, and the top defense posts were put into the hands of four men — von Blomberg, von Reichenau, von Fritsch, and von Beck — on whom Hitler thought he could depend fully.

Von Blomberg was a professional soldier with an impeccable career. But he was politically naive, and some who knew him felt he lacked firm character. He saw Hitler as a strong leader and the savior of Germany, and initially supported Nazi policies without hesitation.

Von Reichenau was also a first-class soldier and supporter of Nazi policies. However, he also was an aristocrat and a realist and didn't approve

The Czechoslovakian Army In 1938

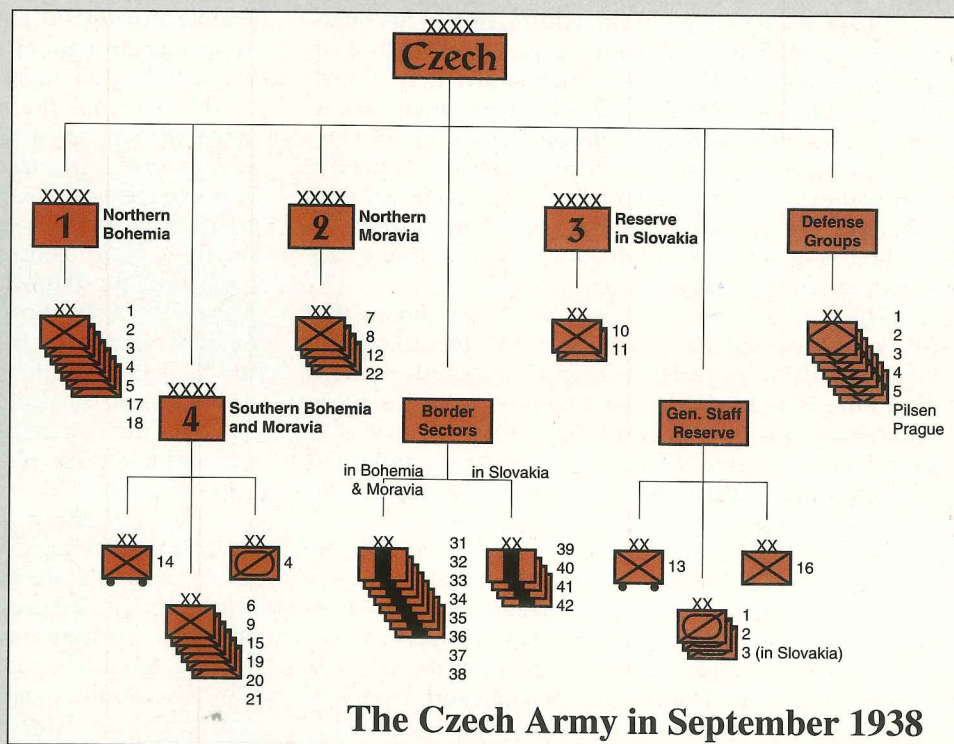
In 1917-18, the exploits of the Czech Legion in Russia (see accompanying article), proved to be of great importance in establishing an independent Czechoslovakia. Its victories and achievements impressed the Allied powers, and the fame of the "Czechoslovak Army," fighting first the Germans and then the hated and feared Bolsheviks, spread throughout the world.

The French in particular began to look on the Czech national claims with greater favor. As a result, Czech and Slovak prisoners of war were released from their camps, and in December 1917 the French government approved the organization of an autonomous national force. In April 1918, the first of its units, the *21st Infantry Regiment*, marched to the front. In Italy a second Czechoslovak Army Corps was formed in the spring of 1918, and its two divisions participated in the victorious Allied offensives there later that same year.

In the spring of 1919, a Communist Republic was declared in Hungary. Many soldiers of the old regime there supported the revolution, since it proved to be more nationalistic than communistic. The Hungarian army attacked southern Slovakia, and the government of Bela Kun proclaimed a Soviet-style republic in the region. The Czech army, commanded by the Italian Gen. Piccione, moved in, and in conjunction with a Romanian attack from the south, forced the Hungarians to retreat, eventually overturning their revolution.

In 1920, the army was reorganized and a draft was introduced. The conscripts served 18 months, and their training was conducted under the supervision of French officers.

The foreign policy of Czechoslovakia, directed by Benes, became increasingly dependent on the French concept of "collective security." That situation was further reflected in the Czech army, which copied the French army's defensive doctrines and absorbed their new faith in fixed defenses. The best graduates from the Prague military academy were encouraged to continue their education at *L'Ecole Militaire* in France.



The Czech Army in September 1938

of the excesses and vulgarity of National Socialism.

In general, all four army leaders initially supported Nazi policies, though each for different personal reasons. The first change in attitude came with the risky and provocative occupation of the Rhineland in 1936, and from then on it was von Beck in particular who cast himself against Hitler, and who conspired with the civilian opposition, such as it was, to change the political decision making process in Germany.

It was the hurried speed of rearmament, the apparent lack of planning and insufficient resources that most worried those generals. They were also concerned about Hitler's dangerous foreign policy and the increasing subjugation of the army to Nazi Party rules. Their protests to Hitler mounted.

By 1938, the army included 45 divisional-equivalent units, though some were incomplete. The divisions generally were built on the triangular system. For example, an infantry division was composed of three infantry and one (or sometimes two) artillery regiments. Each of the three battalions in an infantry regiment had three regular and one heavy weapons or machinegun company. Each regiment had anti-tank, mortar, signals, engineer, and anti-aircraft companies.

Twenty-six of the divisions — 20 infantry, 2 motorized infantry and four mobile— were organized for active operations. The remaining 19 division-equivalents formed 12 Border Sectors and seven Defensive Groups.

The Border Sectors manned the frontier fortifications and defended the gaps between the individual forts. In

Then in early 1938 came the "Fritsch-Blomberg Affair." Von Blomberg married a secretary who, it turned out, was a former prostitute, thus disgracing the honor of the German officer corps. Von Fritsch was falsely accused of homosexuality (the charges were trumped up by Göring and Himmler who, by dethroning generals, hoped to garner more glory and influence for themselves), and by the time he cleared himself it was too late to save his career.

Hitler mastered the affair brilliantly. Though at first hesitant, he moved ahead once he saw the opportunities the crisis presented him. Von Blomberg and von Fritsch were forced to resign. They were replaced by opportunists completely subservient to Hitler. The news was announced over the radio on 4 February 1938 by Hitler himself.

addition to its normal complement, each sector was assigned a Fortress Regiment, trained to man and defend the fixed defenses, and several Border Guard battalions. The latter, composed of customs officers, local police, and the national constabulary, occupied the forward-most lines. The Defense Groups were similar to the Border Sectors, but were assigned to defensive lines in the country's interior, around the major cities.

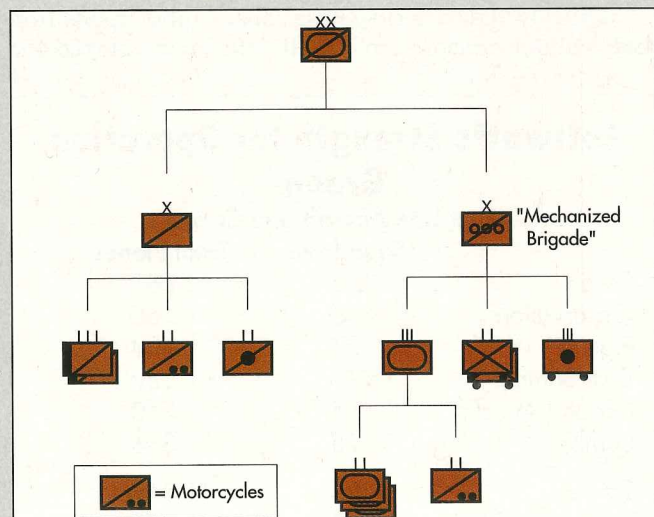
Czech units generally were equal in quality, training, armament and transport to comparable German formations, but there were some differences.

The Germans had a clear superiority in mobile forces, with eleven divisions to Czechoslovakia's six, and in motor transport. Both countries' armed forces would have had to depend heavily on requisitioned civilian motor vehicles in 1938; Germany had over 400,000 cars and trucks, while Czechoslovakia only had about 30,000.

The Czechs had proved fast learners on earlier battlefields, however; and if they had reacted to the German concentrations by bringing together their own tanks in massed formations, they might have created *ad hoc* formations of considerable maneuverability and lethality. The 454 tanks in the four mobile divisions were of the LT34, 35, and 38 types, all of them superior in guns and armor to the available German models.

The Czechs enjoyed an artillery superiority over the Germans, particularly in heavy guns and mortars. Like the Germans, their divisional artillery was mostly horse drawn, but the supporting corps artillery units were motorized.

The superiority of the German air force was undoubtedly one depressing consideration for the Czech general staff. It was not only Göring's number of first-line squadrons, half of them equipped with modern bombers, but also the relatively high rate of output of German aircraft factories that so alarmed Allied observers. Whereas Germany possessed some 36 major aircraft firms spread throughout the Reich, the Czechs had all four of their major factories around Prague. The Czechs also lacked sufficient anti-aircraft guns, though they were well-equipped with heavy machineguns in the infantry.



A Czech Mobile Division in 1938.

Its organization certainly made it comparable to other mechanized formations then operating in Europe; but doctrinally, the Czech high command viewed them as only a faster means to rush defensive reinforcements to areas of

It was a deep and crucial redistribution of power within the political structure of the Third Reich. Hitler personally took over the command of the armed forces. The former armed forces office within the Ministry of Defense became the "High Command of the Armed Forces" with *der Führer* at its head. Once begun, the reshuffling was easy to continue: 16 other high-ranking generals were relieved of their commands and 44 more were transferred.

The annexation of Austria came in the aftermath of the Fritsch-Blomberg crisis and was organized primarily by the Nazi Party, with the general staff being practically shut out. It was the Austrian experience, combined with Hitler's initiation of the Operation Green planning, that finally moved von Beck to plan military resistance.

Von Beck, in cooperation with Carl Gördele, the mayor of Munich and unofficial head of what civilian opposition there was to Hitler, intended to openly demonstrate the generals could at least rein-in Nazi policy excesses. He counted on the support of the army high command. Since the totalitarian regime had eliminated all other checks and controls, von Beck saw it as the army's proper role to change Hitler's course.

But his plan had a weak link: von Brauchitsch. Though he had agreed with von Beck's ideas and had promised to bring to Hitler's attention the material shortages and general unpreparedness for war, he lacked the courage to actually do so.

On 16 July 1938, von Beck wrote a memorandum wherein he urged von Brauchitsch to summon the top generals and together threaten Hitler

The Luftwaffe in 1938

The German air force (*Luftwaffe*), under the command of Reichsmarschal Hermann Göring, was considered to be a potentially decisive force in any German-Czech confrontation in 1938 through its overwhelming superiority in tactical bombardment, ground combat support and fighter strength. This estimate of its abilities was based at least partially on a skillfully-conducted propaganda campaign that had scared the leading air force personalities in England and France prior to Munich, and on the widespread horror stories of terror bombing that had come out of Madrid, Badajoz and Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. But it was also based on the indisputable fact that in 1938 the *Luftwaffe* was the most modern and advanced air force in the world.

The concept of the *Luftwaffe* had originated with the ubiquitous Gen. Hans von Seeckt. He saw to it that the 100,000-man German army of the Weimar Republic (the strength limit set by the Treaty of Versailles) included 180 officers with substantial experience in the airwar of World War I. Von Seeckt himself showed considerable foresight in evaluating the role of airpower in future conflicts, and made sure such advanced thinking had proper representation within the army.

The limitations imposed by Versailles restricted German airpower in all possible aspects. Civil aviation and a domestic aircraft industry were saved only by extensive government subsidies that in turn provided the basis for later air-rearmament. This situation developed so favorably for the Germans that by 1927 her airlines were carrying more passengers and flying more miles than all their British, French and Italian competitors combined. A smooth transition from the civilian *Lufthansa* to the military *Luftwaffe* was further guaranteed by the fact that its leader, Hermann Göring, was Hitler's right-hand man and close friend.

Germany's participation in the Spanish Civil War, and the battlefield experience gained there by the air element of the "Condor Legion," further influenced the rapid development of tactical and strategic thinking

among the *Luftwaffe's* commanders. The development of excellent doctrines for close air support and cooperation with the army came directly from the Spanish Civil War.

Those doctrines were developed by Wolfram von Richthofen (cousin to the more famous Manfred), the Chief of Staff of the Condor Legion. When he arrived in Spain his concept of airwar was not substantially different from that of most other air officers at that time — close air support for the army ranked at the bottom of his priorities. But soon he was forced to reconsider — the stalemate on the ground, the lack of suitable strategic targets, and the great Nationalist weakness in artillery led Richthofen to the decision to give air support to Franco's offensive against the city of Bilbao.

Quickly thereafter, against considerable opposition and without official sanction, Richthofen developed the

Luftwaffe Strength for Operation Green

First-Line Aircraft and Crews

	Squadrons	Total Planes
Recon	5	60
Observation	5	60
Fighter	37	444
Dive Bomber	15	180
Ground Attack	5	60
Bomber	28	336
Totals:	95	1,140
Total of 2nd-Line:	49	588

This does not include:

- Navy and Seaplanes
- Army Observation Squadrons
- Nine Squadrons Still in Spain
- Ju-52 Transport Planes

with their mass resignations unless he ordered an immediate stop to all war preparations. A military *Putsch* was to be considered as a last resort.

The plan failed because Brauchitsch never cooperated actively, and the faltering Western powers never acted strongly enough to bring matters to a head. Embittered and without support, von Beck resigned in August. Both he and Görde-ler were executed during the purge following the July 1944 assassination attempt on Hitler.

More Planning for Operation Green

With those generals out of the way, Hitler had outmaneuvered the last possible domestic opposition, the traditional army officer elite. In gaining

Austria, he had presented the *Wehrmacht* with an advantageous situation by maximizing Czechoslovakia's encirclement.

For the Czech army general staff the reality of the new extended border with Germany created a planning nightmare. They reacted by starting a new line of fortifications along the former Austrian border, and established plans for flooding areas in South Moravia, around the River Dyje.

The new strategic situation also allowed for some rethinking on the German side. On 22 April 1938, Hitler and Gen. Wilhelm Keitel, the head of the OKW, met for detailed discussions. The two agreed an out-and-out surprise attack on Czechoslovakia was probably undesirable because it would generate a hostile world reaction against

(Continued on page 30)

techniques and tactics of close air support for ground forces on the offensive. He set up communications links and recognition devices to ensure rapid communications and reduce the chance of bombing friendly ground units. He also had *Luftwaffe* liaison officers attached directly to frontline ground units to ensure coordinated planning and operations.

The lessons learned from strategic bombing in Spain were not as clear cut and often contradicted each other. On the one hand, some reports emphasized the negative impact bombing had on the morale of the civilian work force and stressed the idea that continuous attacks, even by a small strategic bombing force, could deeply impress and depress a population.

Contradicting that was the testimony of many *Luftwaffe* officers who had been involved directly in the bombings. It was their impression air attacks on objects of little military importance, where women and children tended to suffer the most, were not a suitable means to break the enemy's will to fight. On the contrary, it seemed to strengthen the overall resistance.

As a result of all this, the idea of building a primarily tactical air force, with priority given to the development of aircraft suitable for combat ground support, gained considerable backing. In 1937, the prescribed ratio of fighters to bombers was changed from 1:3 to 1:2.

The Spanish experience also generated some scepticism about the real power of tactical bombing. There were serious doubts about the ability of pilots, no matter how skilled, to dependably hit battlefield targets by day or night. It became obvious that new navigational aids would be needed for both foul weather and night operations.

Even the state of the art for daylight bombing was relatively low. The operable technologies of the 1930s placed severe limitations on both strategic and tactical bombing. The main aspects of the problem were related to range, bombload, and accuracy — and those deficiencies had not been corrected by the time of Operation Green.

It is hard to estimate just what kind of real offensive value the *Luftwaffe* could have contributed to a war

against Czechoslovakia in 1938. The *Luftwaffe* machines were superior to those of the Czech air force — the Me109 was the best and fastest fighter of that time, and the He111 and Do17 bombers were the best light and medium bombers then operational.

But in Poland a year later, despite better trained crews, a 3:1 superiority in planes and surprise attacks on Polish airfields on the opening day of the war, the Germans suffered an astonishing 25 percent loss rate in the number of planes committed. Against Czechoslovakia, the ratio in combat planes would have been around 2:1, and the Czechs were alerted and fully mobilized.

On the ground, even the lightest of the Czech pill-boxes would have been immune to *Luftwaffe* air attack, since the heaviest bomb the Germans had available at the time (500 lbs.) would not have penetrated the "blue concrete" used in their construction.

Most importantly, in 1938 the diving prowess of the German ground support squadrons had not yet attained levels anywhere near that of late 1939, and it was ground support and interdiction that made the *Luftwaffe* famous during the Polish campaign.

Strength of the Czechoslovakian Air Force, 30 September 1938

	1st-Line Aircraft	Reserves	Ready in Factories
Courier	259	99	25
Recon	61	11	20
Fighter	326	74	50
L.Bomber	101	31	8
M.Bomber	54	18	9
Totals:	801	18	112

Note: Of a total of 1,046 aircrews, only 950 were combat ready.

The Czech Fortifications: The Little Maginot Line

In 1918, Czechoslovakia had only one fortress suitable for modern warfare: Komarno (Komarom), on the border between Slovakia and Hungary. It was further modernized in the 1920s, but lack of funds at the time didn't allow for any new construction. Nonetheless, the French military mission, which supervised the Czechoslovak Army until 1926, made extensive studies of the frontier areas. In cooperation with the Czech general staff, new roads and railways were eventually planned and built, and as the international situation became increasingly unstable, the Prague government decided to construct permanent border fortifications.

The idea of all-encompassing border fortifications, heavily pushed by the French, grew until 1936, when Gen. Krejci, the Czech Chief of Staff, was able to put forward an outline plan calling for 10 years of construction. By 1937, international events were at the point where it was decided to accelerate construction in strategically important sectors as much as possible. Accordingly, work took on a furious pace that was continued right up to September 1938.

By the time of the Munich Agreement, fortifications had been erected all around Bohemia and along the northern Moravian border. The southern Moravian border with Austria had also been covered by field works

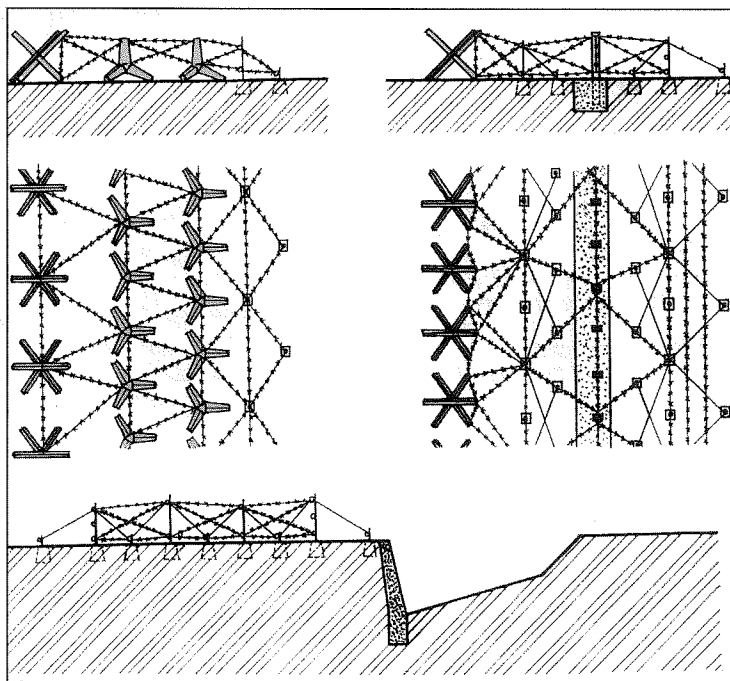
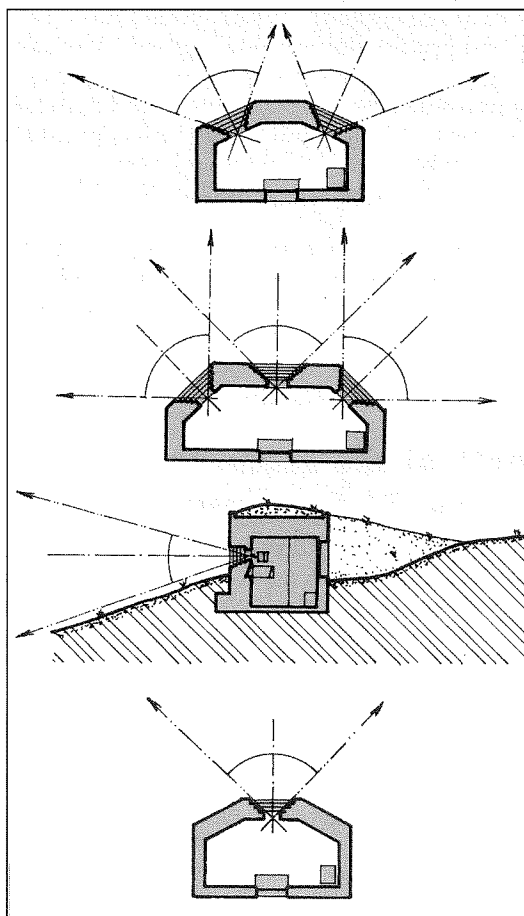
— the German annexation of that country had taken the Czechs by surprise and thus gave them a late start there. Along the Hungarian frontier, efforts were made to fortify all communications centers and Danube crossing points. An extensive system of defenses was also being projected for construction along the Polish border, though in September 1938 there were only a few pillboxes blocking the mountain passes of Slovakia and a chain of emplacements around Teschen.

Technology

The fortifications bore the distinct imprint of Gen. Husarek, a former member of the Czech Legion and a graduate of the technical college in Bruno. He believed that in any determined assault on fortifications the enemy would always find some blind spot or other weakness. He therefore insisted the strongest part of every individual pillbox should face the enemy directly, while protection was provided to its flanks by two or more neighboring emplacements.

Husarek thus developed a fortification system that was basically linear. His staff of more than 400 made extensive surveys of the various sectors and exercised great care in constructing each individual emplacement. By making optimum use of terrain, the Czechs sought to give their works maximum value. The process took extra time and effort, requiring, for example, dozens of kinds of concrete mixtures for the many different designs used at individual sites.

There were three main types of Czechoslovakian fortifications. The first and lightest type were classified



Typical type-36 bunkers and surrounding obstacle fields.

as "field works," and were typified by belts of machine-gun nests and small pillboxes (model 36) containing machineguns and anti-tank rifles. They were protected by surrounding minefields, roadblocks, prepared demolitions, and anti-tank obstacles. Each work was manned by four to seven men.

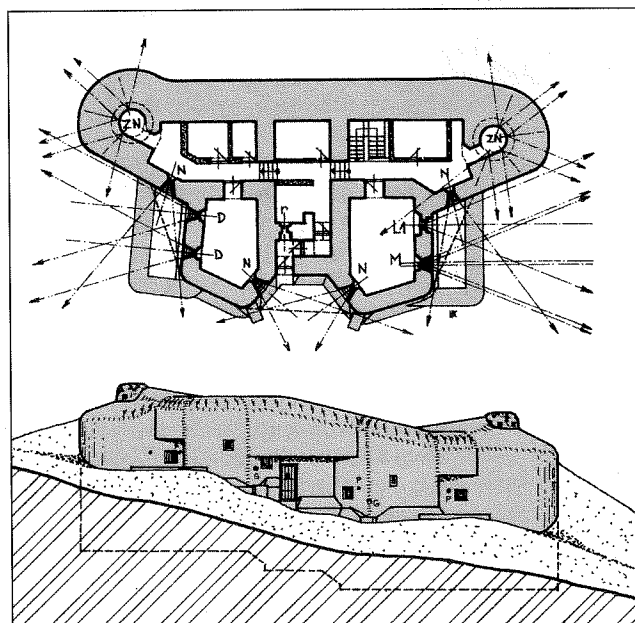
The second and intermediate category of defenses consisted of model 37 pillboxes, built to withstand the fire of field guns and artillery of up to 150mm. Even a direct hit by the heaviest German bombs then available to the *Luftwaffe* (500 lbs.) would not have penetrated or destroyed this kind of bunker. These bunkers had a crew of about 20 and enough supplies for two to three weeks.

The third and heaviest type of emplacement was classified simply as "forts," and were built to withstand even direct hits from the heaviest artillery (of which, by the way, there was an almost complete lack in the German army of 1938). The forts had a complement of 25-40.

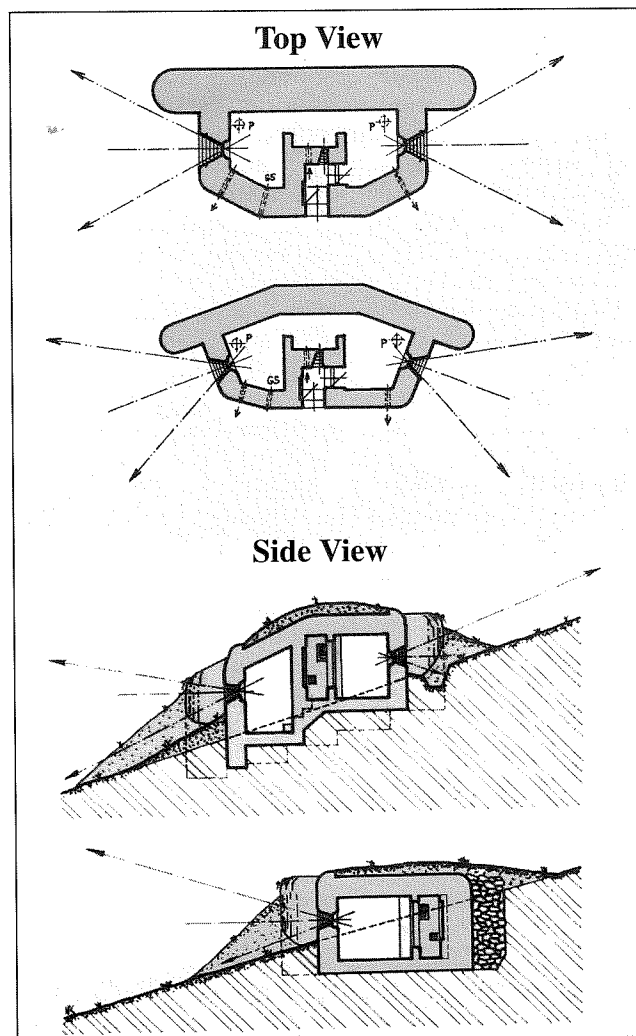
In addition to these bunkers, the Czechs used infantry blockhouses and a variety of lighter, less permanent entrenchments. The blockhouse walls and ceilings were built of reinforced concrete between three and 3.5 meters thick.

Unable to fortify all their frontiers on the same scale carried out in France, the Czechs enjoyed certain advantages resulting from having started later. Whereas the French had taken nearly a decade to work out the technical details of their system, Czechoslovakia was able to build her forts using the most recent French plans.

Even so, technical details were modified whenever the Czech engineers felt it necessary. For example, the embrasures for machineguns in pillboxes were re-



A typical "fort" bunker.



Typical series-37 intermediate bunkers

designed because it was found that hits by armor piercing shells could freeze the bearings of the French designs. For night fighting, the Czechs also replaced the French system of numbered squares with one utilizing detailed maps of terrain and prearranged fire.

From a technological point of view, the fortifications represented the best and most modern designs of the day. During their construction, the Czechs invented their famous "blue concrete." Even the light pillboxes were constructed with layers of concrete interspersed with gravel, so upon impact the top layer "bounced off" the one beneath.

Armament

The medium and heavy works contained artillery, including 47mm anti-tank guns and 100mm howitzers in casemates and turrets. The turrets had 20-30cm of armor.

In the light fortifications, the most powerful weapon deployed was the light machinegun, model ZB26, then better than anything the Germans had. Out

of a total army stock of 39,000 such weapons, about 5,000 were issued to the pillboxes and casemates.

There were also several hundred submachineguns and an unknown number of World War I vintage heavy machineguns. Every pillbox had a few signal pistols, and an abundance of hand grenades that could be released through specially designed chutes.

The 47mm anti-tank guns were also issued with shrapnel shot for use against infantry in the medium and heavy forts. There were 232 such pieces installed by 30 September, backed up by anti-tank rifles in the primary positions.

Evidence from the Czech archives indicates, however, that by 1 October only 48 percent of the intended heavy weapons armament had been installed.

Tactical Layout

The "Little Maginot Line" actually consisted of two parts. The first was referred to as the "forefield," constructed very near the border to block the mountain passes and roads leading into Bohemia and Moravia. The forefield consisted of road blocks, minefields, anti-tank obstacles, machinegun nests and prepared demolitions, and was manned only by border guards. Its purpose was to delay attacking forces long enough to give the units manning the main line enough time to prepare themselves and concentrate their fire.

The second, or main line, consisted of various combinations of the pillboxes and casemates described above. The key positions in this line were the "strongholds," complexes formed of all three types of fortifica-

tions. Each stronghold was directed from its own command blockhouse complete with armored observation turrets.

The strongholds were sited within systems of heavy infantry blockhouses, intermediate casemates and pillboxes, with gun and mortar emplacements interconnected by underground tunnels. Such areas were similar to the heaviest bunker complexes of the French Maginot Line.

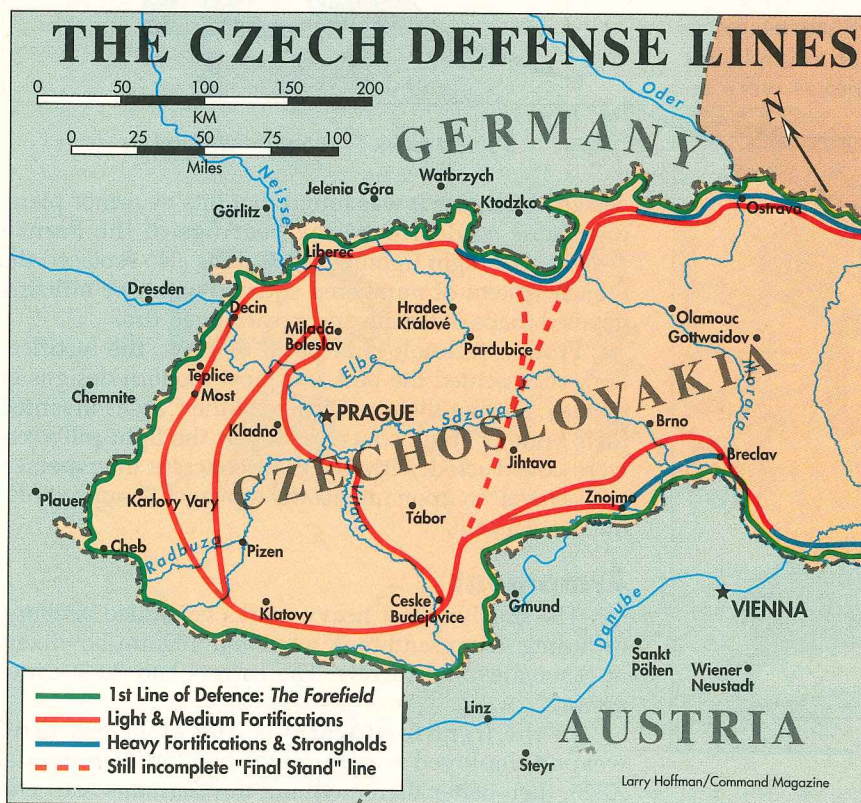
The light and intermediate fortifications probably could not have resisted a prolonged German attack without assistance from the Czech field army. The stronghold complexes, though, were intended to withstand major assaults on their own.

A comparison of the depth of the French and Czechoslovak fortifications demonstrates the differences between the two systems. In the Metz sector of the Maginot Line, for example, there was one grand bunker complex, 38 bunker and small bunker complexes, and approximately 140 casemates. That amounted to a defense complex of some kind every 3.5 kilometers, and a casemate every kilometer. The entire frontier in the Metz region was further built up with field works and smaller fortified positions to an average depth of two to three kilometers. In other portions of the French frontier, their fortifications had depths of up to 11 kilometers. In Czechoslovakia, the strongest fortified positions had depths of only three to six kilometers. In weaker areas, especially in the south, there were portions of the line with a "depth" of only 500 meters.

Strategic Layout

On 30 September 1938, the Czech fortifications had not yet been finished in all sectors. Accordingly, there were a lot of improvisations and inadequacies. Still, unlike the Maginot Line in 1940, there was no way for the Germans to bypass the Czech works.

The fortifications were primarily intended to guard against a German pincer movement from the north and south. Priority was given to the protection of the base of the Bohemian-Moravian "peninsula" jutting into German territory, in the hope this would force the Germans to attack along an east-west axis. If that ploy had succeeded, it would have better enabled the Czech army to withdraw gradually eastward while awaiting help from France and the USSR. For that simple reason, the fortifications were much stronger in



The Czech Fort System in Bohemia and Moravia, September 1938

the north and south than in the west. Heavy sectors also existed in some parts of Southern Moravia and in front of Bratislava.

In anticipation of a German breakthrough in the west, additional lines were built across Bohemia and Moravia on a north-south axis. One major line of fortifications was built in front Prague, continuing southward on the steep slopes on the right bank of the River Vlatava, and joining the southern line near Ceske Budejovice (Budweis). These lines were far from complete in 1938.

Defensive Value

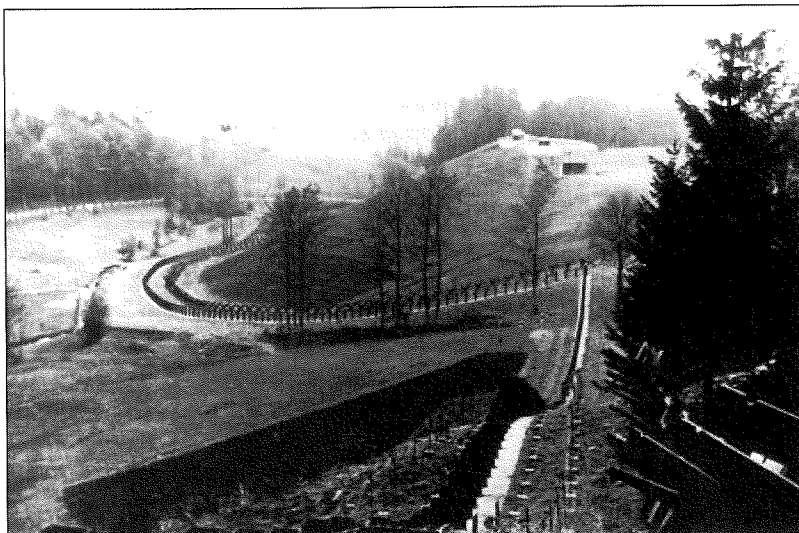
When the Czechoslovakian fortifications were surrendered in October 1938, they immediately lost their military value. Because they were mostly situated in the Sudetenland, they were stripped of equipment by the withdrawing Czech army, and were further dismantled by their new German owners. But the Germans also conducted extensive tests to determine the efficacy of their artillery, and to study various technical problems involved in assaulting such fixed defenses. Since inspection tours were undertaken not only by high-ranking German officers, but also by Hitler himself, it is understandable that the fortifications became the object of considerable speculation.

The major German worry was that their medium and heavy artillery might have proven inadequate for the task of breaking through the fortifications. In particular, they didn't know what effects, if any, their 105mm and 150mm guns would have had on the works.

The tests they conducted after the takeover demonstrated their worries had been justified. Though conducted under ideal conditions, the tests indicated that not even the light bunkers were very vulnerable to artillery fire. Using dive bombers against the fortifications would probably not have been too effective, either, since in 1938 the techniques of dive bombing and the training of the aircrews had not yet reached acceptable levels.

In contrast, though, one Austrian officer writing after the war noted that the Czechs had ignored several important factors about fortifications learned during World War I. Among them were: 1) the problem of defense of the terrain between bunkers at night; 2) inadequate communications among bunkers (they were connected by telephone lines that were vulnerable to enemy fire and cutting by engineer squads); and 3) the absence of comfortable living facilities and adequate exists (by cutting off their electricity and sealing off the few exits, the Germans could have made even the staunchest defenders' lives intolerable in a few days).

These weaknesses were confirmed by the Czech army officers involved in the September mobilization, and by the men of the German field units that marched



The view of the front edge of the Czech fortification line at one of its thickest sectors in northern Moravia.

into the Sudetenland following the Czech withdrawal. For example, the officers of the 10th Infantry Division claimed the fortified line in their sector could have been broken through rather easily. On the other hand, such reports contradict the famous testimony given by Keitel and von Manstein during the Nuremberg Trials. They maintained the only reasonable chance for a German breakthrough lay in places where the construction was still incomplete. They also testified that they considered the most heavily fortified sectors to be "impregnable for all practical purposes."

The location of many of the fortifications within the Sudeten-German frontier zone also lessened their value. The Czech security measures were strict, but many portions of the line could still be directly observed from across the border or from German airspace.

Still another factor that would have worked for the attackers was the tactical doctrine of the Czech army, which advocated defense on a broad front. Though there were plenty of officers at the regimental and even divisional levels who grasped the possibilities of mobile warfare, the far from complete motorization of the Czech army made it impossible to broadly implement such advanced thinking. In 1937, the American military attache to Czechoslovakia observed their maneuvers and reported to Washington that the soldiers, while excellently trained, always tended to disperse across extremely broad fronts.

Even with the Czech archives now open to historians, it is difficult to assess the true defensive value of the fortifications. But the known facts, including the high state of the morale of the Czech army in 1938, point to the inevitable conclusion that any German attack on the Little Maginot Line would have been a costly affair, and its outcome may well have depended on Czech willingness to go on accepting high casualties in critical local actions.

(Continued from page 25.)

Germany. Hitler suggested the attack be launched as the result of some trumped up diplomatic crisis or incident, such as the possible assassination of the German ambassador in Prague.

The two also decided to conduct the attack on several axes, with the objective of penetrating the Czech border fortifications at several points at once. Ground support from the *Luftwaffe* was to be provided for each attacking column, with the mission of aborting enemy counterattacks against the points of penetration, interdicting their flow of reserves, and destroying their communication network.

Hitler also announced he had decided to exploit the internal situation within Czechoslovakia, to provide a basis for thwarting quick involvement by Britain and France. Thus a new propaganda campaign was begun against the Czechs soon after the *Anschluss*. Working under direct instruction from Berlin, Konrad Henlein, the leader of the Sudeten German Party, declared his organization could no longer tolerate the "persecution" of the German minority within Czechoslovakia and began agitating for complete autonomy.

The new composite draft of Operation Green was completed by Gen. Alfred Jodl. It concluded that if it came to war, a decisive German victory should be sought within four days to forestall Allied intervention. Toward that end, most of the army was to be deployed against the Czechs, with only light screening forces left in the west. A simultaneous north/south pincer operation was outlined, to link-up in the general area of Bruno. With Czechoslovakia thus cut in half, the major portion

of her armed forces would be encircled in the "Bohemian Cauldron." The new draft plan also called attention to the desirability of sparing Czech industrial centers so their potential could be added to the Reich's war economy.

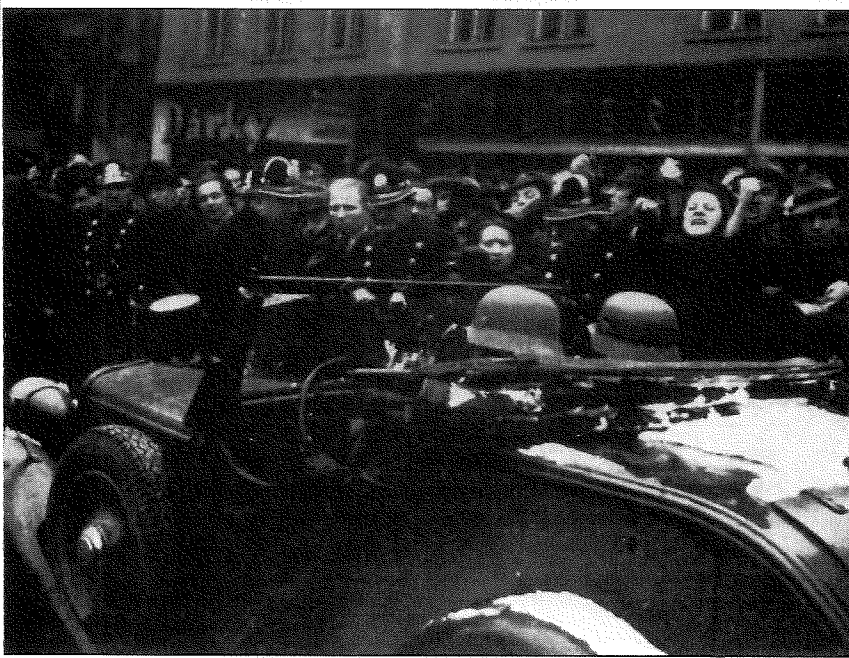
The First Crisis, May 1938

The revised directive for Operation Green, drafted on 20 May 1938, was in effect only one day. On 21 May, Czechoslovakia declared a partial mobilization. All first-class reservists, anti-aircraft defense units, specialists, border regiments and fort garrisons were called up, and the air force was put on alert. The fortress battalions mobilized and moved into the still uncompleted bunkers of the "Little Maginot Line." Prague stated that German troop movements and concentrations in the border regions, as reported by the Czech intelligence service, were the reason for the surprise move.

Other documents indicate the mobilization was actually triggered by a warning from the British to the Czechoslovakian ambassador in London, Jan Masaryk. Other information was passed to Prague by members of the outlawed German Social-Democratic Party. As early as 16 May, reports from them indicated German officers and NCOs in Saxony were being given Czech language instruction. Other reports indicated weapons and ammunition were being distributed to members of the paramilitary Sudeten Freikorps. On the 20th, two Sudeten German couriers who failed to obey an order given by a Czech policeman were shot dead in Cheb (Eger). Riots broke out in the German-speaking areas of the Czech border regions.

As dawn broke on 21 May, then, Europe awoke to face an international crisis. Rumors of a pending German invasion continued to spread. But the central fact in the crisis was that Czechoslovakia, a minor power, had seized the initiative in continental politics. The mobilization was provocative toward Nazi Germany, a state extremely sensitive regarding its prestige, especially military prestige. Prague's decision was a dramatic demonstration to France and Britain that Czechoslovakia would not be a willing partner in their games of appeasement with Berlin. More than that, it forced them to play the Czechs' game, for the risk of immediate war would now be less if the two Allied powers exerted pressure on Germany than it would be if they stood aside as they had with Austria.

Benes had declared shortly before the crisis that if Czechoslovakia and the Western powers stood fast together war could be avoided. But if Germany gained the resources of southeast Europe, they would certainly have to fight later on, and then under much more unfavorable conditions. It had to be made clear to the Nazis, he said, that another *fait accompli* would not be tolerated, as had been the case with Austria, since the entire continental balance of power was now at stake.



The German army enters Prague, 15 March 1939. Note the less than enthusiastic reception from the crowd lining the street.

Under such circumstances, both the British and French governments played the role Benes had cast for them. On 21 May, the French ambassador to Berlin emphasized to that government the dangers that would follow from a German-Czech conflict because of the French-Czech alliance. Premier Daladier summoned the German ambassador to his office and indicated a mobilization order lying on his desk. He warned: "It depends on you, Excellency, whether I sign this document or not."

The reaction from London was even stronger. "Reports from central Europe," wrote the German ambassador there, "let loose such a panic as has not been seen here since 1914." The British ambassador in Berlin went to the German foreign office four times that day, warning if Germany attacked Czechoslovakia, France would undoubtedly be compelled to intervene, and Britain might therefore also be "forced to protect her interests."

It seemed war could come at any moment, but Gen. von Brauchitsch put a severe jolt into those debating in the Nazi government when he reported "categorically" that military preparations were not sufficient to face the risk of war at that time. The British and French then released word of their warnings to the press, which was already full of reports of ominous German preparations and Czech countermeasures.

The Germans, of course, did not attack, and there was elation in Czechoslovakia. The impression was spread in the world press that Prague, closely supported by the British and French (and perhaps by the Soviet Union) had compelled the Germans to call off a planned invasion. The would-be aggressor had been foiled by a "Grand Alliance."

Hitler reportedly fumed for days. It was a tremendous blow to his prestige, but he could not risk a war against Czechoslovakia with France and Britain, and possibly the USSR, also ranged against him. Even more maddening, France and Britain seemed to have been brought closer to agreement regarding central European security affairs than at any time since 1919. (It had been leaked those two nations had agreed to resume regular military staff conversations.)

Hitler instructed Henlein to return to Prague and resume negotiations. Then he summoned his principal advisors to the Reichschancellery to hear a two-hour phillipic: "It is my unshakeable will that Czechoslovakia shall be wiped off the map.... We shall tackle this situation in the east. Then I will give you three or four years' time, and then we will tackle the situation in the west." He went on, instructing that final military preparations be completed in four months, by 1 October.

Orders were also given for a crash program of construction for the "West Wall," a line fortifications along the French border to reduce the risk of interference from that quarter. (By mid-September, 600,000 men were working on those defenses.) Plans were laid to expand the army to 96 divisions.

As great a success as the first crisis had seemed to be for Czechoslovakia, it in fact paved the way for the Munich debacle of September.

Finalization of Operation Green

The Czech mobilization had caught Hitler off-guard. He had not been prepared, when his bluff was called, to launch an immediate strike against a strong and well-prepared opponent. But the first Czech crisis did stimulate in Hitler the fresh determination to crush Czechoslovakia at the earliest opportunity, and a still newer draft of the plan for Operation Green was put into effect.

By 30 May 1938, Gen. Keitel was able to provide the armed forces' commanders-in-chief a revised *Führer* Directive. The new order was to be carried out by 1 October at the latest. The document indicated a more direct approach was to be taken from its very first sentence: "It is my unalterable decision to smash Czechoslovakia by military action in the near future. It is the job of the political leaders to await or bring about the politically and militarily suitable moment."

More concretely, lightning-swift military and political action was to follow as a result of some incident in which Germany was seen to be provoked in some serious way. The element of surprise was also stressed so Czechoslovakia would not be prepared to resist the invasion militarily.

Just as in the 20 May draft, the revised plan still called for the German armed forces achieving decisive results within four days. This was deemed essential to deter any hostile nations that might help Czechoslovakia if the war went on too long. Still, Hitler judged correctly (as was shown later during the "Phoney War" period) that it would take "a while" before the Allies would launch any kind of serious ground action.

Regarding possible intervention by one or more eastern European nations, the following was emphasized:

Among the eastern powers, Russia is not the most likely to intervene...[And if such intervention comes, it] will probably consist of reinforcement of the Czech air force and armaments. However, the decision must not be neglected concerning what measures are to be taken if Russia were to come to the point of starting a naval and air war against us or even begin a penetration into East Prussia through the border states. In the case of a Polish attack we must hold the eastern fortifications and East Prussia, using the Frontier Guard and its formations until the conclusion of the action of Operation Green will give us freedom of movement.

On 12 July, the army high command distributed a new and highly secret schedule of summer maneuvers. This schedule was designed to meet the special needs of the army for Operation Green.

(Continued on page 34.)

The German Army in 1938

In the summer and autumn of 1938, the German army (*Heer*) was not ready for a major European war. There were two main reasons for that unpreparedness. The first was the shortage of trained personnel. Though each successive six-month period increased the general level of individual training and the number of trained reservists, the German army had probably not yet reached the required level of overall proficiency necessary for defeating Czechoslovakia within a short time.

The second, more important, reason was the lack of all kinds of military supplies, including ammunition and fuel. Perhaps the most serious problem was the ammunition shortage. The army high command based its in-stock requirements on a hoped-for lightning war against Czechoslovakia not to exceed one month. In September 1938, however, there was an overall 50 percent shortfall of the called-for requirement, and in artillery and mortar shells that shortfall was even greater — a staggering 70 percent.

The army plan for 1936 called for a wartime army (*Kriegsheer*) of 41 regular and 25 reserve divisions. The latter would be brought up to strength only during mobilization. By the end of 1937 the army had 32 infantry, four motorized infantry and three panzer divisions, one incomplete mountain division, one cavalry brigade, and the 25 reserve infantry divisions, for a total of 66 major units.

Four of the reserve divisions were formed by cadres withdrawn from regular formations, and had reduced allotments of weapons and transport. The other 21 reserve divisions were *Landwehr*, formed from reservists aged 35 and older, veterans of World War I. The *Landwehr* divi-

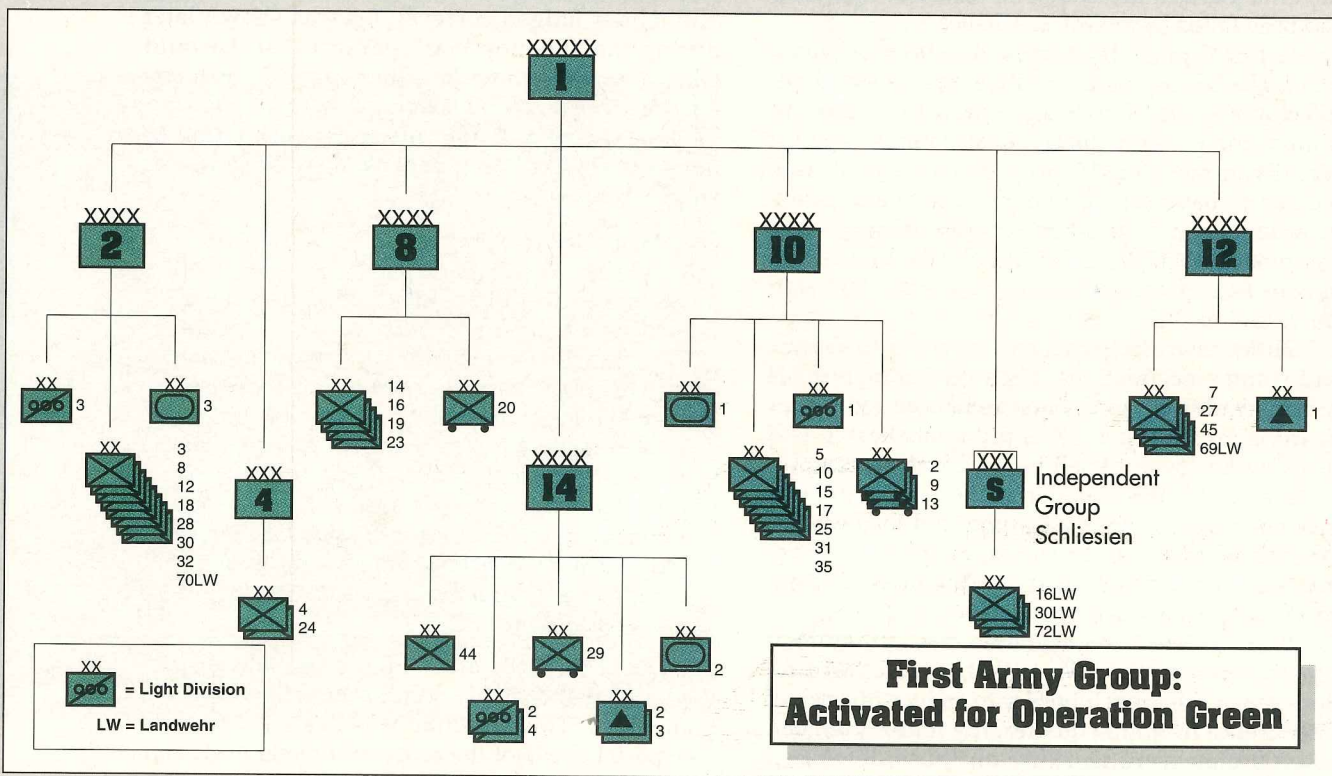
sions were equipped with obsolete weapons, and each had only one artillery battalion and practically no motorized transport. Further, their divisional and regimental commands were understaffed due to the acute shortage of commissioned officers.

By 1938, the situation had somewhat improved, at least on paper. Ten new divisions had been formed (or taken over during the *Anschluss*), of which 6 were motorized or mechanized. In actuality, some army headquarters and many support and administrative units simply did not yet exist. Even the formation of the regular army remained incomplete. In the first-line divisions, 34 infantry battalions of an authorized total of 315 (that is, a 12 percent shortfall) had still not been formed or completed. Approximately the same shortfall existed in the artillery arm.

The actual mobilization of the full paper-strength army would have required an addition of approximately 3 million men, 400,000 horses, and 200,000 motor vehicles.

On the positive side, the organization of the German army in 1938 was logical, simple and effective. The highest command was the army group, composed of two or more armies, each of which had two or more corps. A corps was formed of two or more divisions, which were the largest homogeneous field units capable of sustained independent action and command.

The most outstanding characteristic of this organizational scheme was its flexibility. Divisions, corps, and armies were frequently shifted from higher command to another, swiftly and smoothly, according to operational requirements.



The division was the most important field unit of the German army. These units were self-contained formations with generally balanced compositions of combat arms, though the mechanized units still needed adjusting. There were five types of divisions: infantry, motorized infantry, mountain infantry, light, and armored (panzer).

The first-line infantry divisions had three infantry regiments, each of three battalions, an infantry gun company, and an anti-tank company. The battalions consisted of three infantry companies and a heavy weapons company. The division also controlled two artillery regiments, a reconnaissance battalion, a machinegun battalion, an engineer battalion, an anti-tank section, and an anti-aircraft section, plus supply, medical and administrative services, for a total strength of about 17,000 men.

The single combat-ready mountain division also had an authorized strength of about 17,000 men, but had a smaller artillery component than its regular infantry counterparts to facilitate travel across rugged terrain.

Only two of the four light divisions (the 1st and 2nd) were fully operational in September 1938. At the time they had a motorized reconnaissance battalion with 18 armored cars, two motorized artillery regiments with two sections each, a cavalry regiment of three battalions, a company of engineers, and an anti-tank section. Their cutting edge lay in their tank battalion, which consisted of three companies of light tanks (46 Pzkw Is) and one company of Pzkw IIs (22 tanks), for a total armor strength of 68 vehicles.

The three panzer divisions consisted of a tank brigade and an infantry brigade. The tanks were organized in two regiments of two battalions each, totalling about 330. One company in each battalion was supposed to have medium Pzkw III tanks equipped with 37mm guns. In actuality, though, each division possessed only one company of those machines per regiment (22 tanks). A fourth panzer division was forming at Paderborn, but at the time of Operation Green it had only one tank regiment and no artillery.

The infantry brigade in each panzer division was composed of a regiment of motorized infantry, a motorized artillery regiment, reconnaissance, anti-tank, engineer, and motorcycle battalions, and signals, medical and administrative units.

The 1938 panzer divisions' total manpower came to only 11,500.

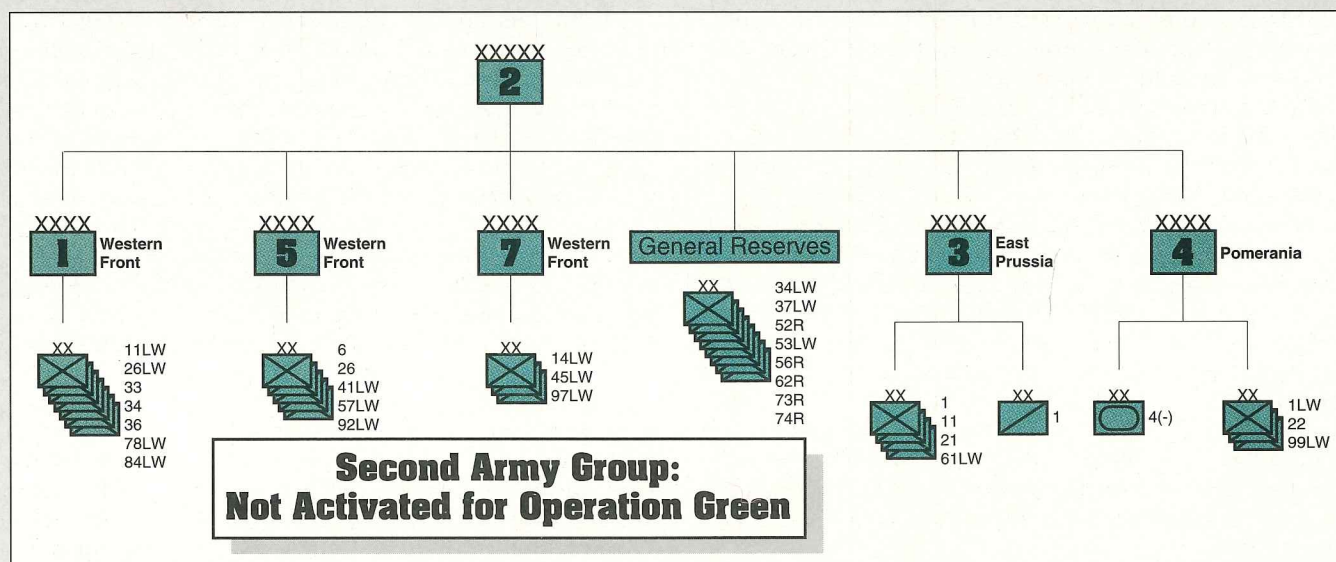
The 7th *Flieger* (paratrooper) Division had only begun forming in 1937, and in September 1938 there was only one battalion of paratroopers and one airlanding regiment ready for operations.

The quality of the army's weapons and equipment left much to be desired. The standard infantry rifle was the Mauser model 98, which was adequate but obsolete. Modern machine pistols and submachineguns were still only in development. Many units were still armed with World War I vintage light machineguns, and no modern heavy machinegun was yet available. Heavy mortars were practically non-existent, and the standard anti-tank rifles would have been ineffective against the armor of the Czech tanks. The only anti-tank gun in service was the 37mm PAK 35/36, and it was also ineffective against contemporary armor — it earned the derisive nickname "the army's doorknocker".

German artillery was divided between divisional and army support units. The standard weapon was a 100mm K18 gun, supported by 150mm and 170mm howitzers. A few 210mm howitzers were available, stationed mostly in the west. All these gun designs dated back to World War I.

The infantry support guns (a specialty of the German army) were produced in both light and heavy models (75mm and 150mm), and were considered adequate for their task.

The only anti-aircraft weapons issued to the army were the light 20mm FLAK 30, but they were not yet available in adequate numbers. The famous 88mm FLAK 18, models 36 and 37, were all under *Luftwaffe* control and only a very few had made their way into the artillery regiments of the panzer divisions.



That is, it put the involved units into favorable dispositions for launching the actual attack.

On 10 August, Hitler summoned the army and air force chiefs and delivered a three-hour speech bashing the officer corps' "defeatism." This tirade was prompted, according to Jodl's diary, by the remark of Gen. Adam that the West Wall could probably only be held for three weeks.

Later that same month, Hitler approved a new memorandum concerning the timing of the attack. The triggering incident had to be used in such a way that the war could begin during favorable flying weather to allow immediate and full-scale deployment of the *Luftwaffe*.

At another conference on 3 September, with the preparation for Green now well along, Hitler

shared his final thoughts on the shape the war-to-come would probably take. He stressed the necessity of utilizing the motorized forces for flanking actions, and summarized the impending attack, in an almost train-of-consciousness monologue as follows:

The 2nd Army Sector is the smallest. The strongest Czech defenses are in that area; thrusts in the 10th Army area are much more promising. Roadblocks are prepared everywhere. [But they are] No reason for hindrance. The Czechs will hold opposite the 2nd Army and keep an assault force ready east of Prague. A thrust against it into the heart of Czechoslovakia is to be made. The thrust in the 14th Army area will fail because of transport difficulties in Austria. Therefore assem-

The Big Variables: Morale & Ethnicity

While military balances can be stated in mathematical terms, no commensurate method can be applied to calculate the performance of Czechoslovakia's multi-ethnic army in a war against Germany in 1938. That would have been a question of crucial importance, since every fifth soldier and every seventh officer in her fully mobilized army was of ethnic-German origin.

As in all the "successor states" that emerged after the First World War, Czechoslovakia's army was made up of heterogeneous elements. The "revolutionary" and dominant influence came from the former legionnaires who had fought on the Allied side in France, Italy and Russia. The "conservative" component consisted of the officers and men who had been in, and remained loyal to, the army of Austria-Hungary. Czechs, Germans, Slovaks and Hungarians existed in both groups. On top of that was the fact the head of the French military mission also served as the Czech army's Chief of the General Staff through 1926.

It was national conscription, however, that most exposed the vulnerability of the multi-ethnic state. In contrast to the broad recruitment for the rank-and-file, the officer corps was entirely dominated by Czechs. For example, according to statistics for 1936, Czechoslovakia could have called a total of 970,000 men to the colors. Of those, about 700,000 would have been of Slavic origin, 200,000 would have been ethnic-German, and another 62,000 ethnic-Hungarian.

The fully mobilized Czechoslovakian army would have contained 43,500 officers, of whom 37,575 would have been Slavs, 5,140 Germans, and 759 Hungarians. Compared to the overall ethnic mix, the Slavs thus made up 86.4 percent of the officers, whereas the Germans and Hungarians, respectively, had a mere 11.8 and 1.7 percent. The "Slav" label is also misleading as to ethnic unity, since the Czech element within that group had acquired a disproportional majority over their Slovak cousins. Whereas there were more than 100 Czech generals, the Slovaks and Germans had only one each (no Hungarians).

Throughout the 1930s, in fact, precisely because of the ethnic situation within the Czechoslovakian army, the British War Office often expressed a low opinion of its cohesion and potential combat morale. Replying to one inquiry from MI-3 on 2 April 1934, the British military attache in Prague, Lt. Col. Denis Daly, suggested the margin of the "actively disloyal population" ranged from a minimum of 5.5 percent (if one counted only Hungarians), to a maximum of 44 percent (Hungarians, Germans and Slovaks together).

The supreme test of the reliability of the Czechoslovakian army came on the night of 23 September 1938, when the general call up was announced nationwide on the radio. While there is no reliable statistical data, most observers at the time agreed that as far as the ethnic-Czechs were concerned, the response was immediate and enthusiastic. Hubert Ripka, a close associate of President Benes, maintains in his memoirs the morale of the Czechoslovakian army in 1938 was exceptionally high and that its mobilization represented the concentrated essence of a united nation.

Ripka also insists that, despite Konrad Henlein's radio announcement from Germany that any Sudeten-Germans who obeyed their Czechoslovakian mobilization orders would be committing treason against their true *Volk*, "apart from a few isolated exceptions," the "Sudeten Deutsch" rallied unhesitatingly, and that many anti-Nazi Germans showed the same enthusiasm as the Czechs.

But primary evidence is now available from the recently opened Czechoslovakian military archives that reveals a rather different state of affairs may well have existed. Those archives show that the First Department of the General Staff, in charge of army organization, was fully aware of the precarious situation created by the multi-ethnic composition of the army.

As early as 1936, two alternatives were feared in the event of war: 1) non-Slav soldiers and reservists might refuse to answer the call up and begin sabotage activities to delay mobilization; or 2) they would rally, but only

ble all motorized and armored divisions with 10th Army and employ them in the thrust there. Once we break through in that area, the southern front — which is built up opposite of 12th Army into three defense lines — will collapse. An army in the heart of Bohemia will bring about the decision. There is a possible repetition of Verdun in the case of 2nd Army. To attack there would mean bleeding to death for a task that cannot be accomplished.

Thus it was agreed the invasion would be spearheaded by 10th Army on the axis Klatovy-Pilsen-Prague. In cooperation with 12th Army, the Czech fortifications in southwest and southern Bohemia would be breached in several places at once.

with the intention of turning their weapons against their commanders to sabotage the army from within.

From that year onward, non-Slav recruits were in fact sent only to non-combat units, and non-Slav officers were shifted out of troop command posts. The General Staff even studied the idea of setting up special "labor camps" to hold non-Slav soldiers who showed themselves to be unreliable. (As events unfolded in September 1938, there was neither the time nor the ethnic-Czech manpower available to undertake the project.)

After the abortive Henlein *Putsch*, the First Department ordered (16 September 1938) that all ethnic-German recruits were to be given their uniforms, but no weapons. During the mobilization, an unknown but probably large number of German reservists, particularly those living in the frontier districts, either deserted or failed to show up. For instance, the 1st Army Corps in northern Bohemia reported that only 30-40 percent of its registered reservists actually answered the call to duty. Other border-area corps also reported reservist absentee rates of 20 to 40 percent.

Some sabotage was carried out by the Sudeten Germans, with most acts centering on the non-delivery of requisitioned cars and trucks. Among those vehicles delivered by their German owners, about 25 percent quickly failed due to mechanical breakdown.

After Hitler's inflammatory speech on 12 September, the Sudeten Freikorps and other militant elements within the Sudeten German Party attempted to start a general uprising. In response, martial law was proclaimed in several districts, and the entire effort was put down quickly and resolutely by Czech security forces. All the ringleaders quickly fled across the border into Germany.

In Germany itself there seems to have been little enthusiasm for war in 1938. The British military attache in Berlin at the time, a Col. McFarlane, expressed hope "that the bad spirit in the country may deter Herr Hitler from risking a war in which the country is not really behind him." He also estimated the German army had "absolutely no wish to embark on a war so long as there is any possibility of its developing into a general conflagration."

On 9 September, while in Nuremberg to attend the annual Nazi Party rally there, Hitler again summoned his generals. This time he placed emphasis on the necessity of preventing the Czech army from retreating intact out of Bohemia and Moravia into Slovakia. This was to be accomplished by grand pincer attacks from 2nd and 14th Armies. The earlier doubts about a "second Verdun" taking place in those sectors seem to have been forgotten; in his notes on the conference, Gen. Halder wrote: "This operation will definitely succeed."

On 16 September, the Germans began moving reinforced border guard battalions into positions along the Czech border. A secret order was issued to the German railroad administration to maintain its rolling stock in such a way as to allow its use in

Indeed, the conservative German generals feared something similar to the chain reaction of 1914, when they were thrown into a two-front war from the very start, was bound to happen again.

Despite the aggressive tone of Nazi propaganda, the mood of the population contrasted sharply with what it had been in August 1914. On 19 September, the Czech military attache in Berlin, a Col. Hron, cabled Prague that morale throughout the *Wehrmacht* was not high, especially among those soldiers who had experienced the First World War. He advised his superiors to stand firm and not yield an inch to diplomatic pressure. On 27 September, after Hitler authorized the movement of units from the 2nd Panzer Division through Berlin to test the mood of its residents, he angrily exclaimed (after no enthusiasm was shown by anyone along the route): "With these people it is impossible to go to war!"

In contrast, though, British Maj. Gen. Pownall, the Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, felt it certain the Germans would obey Hitler and that their morale could be sustained fully for three months of war, if not longer. As for the prospects of Czech resistance, he estimated even under the best circumstances it could not last long, though "a gallant defense will arouse sentimental feelings and increase the clamour to go to her aid."

Pownall concluded that from the military perspective the balance of advantage lay in Britain and France delaying the start of any war, and then added: "Our real object is not to save Czechoslovakia — that is impossible in any event — but to end the days of the Nazi regime." He was unable to see there was no contradiction between those two aims, and that by sacrificing Czechoslovakian democracy the Nazi regime would be strengthened, with only terrible repercussions to follow for the rest of the world.

After Munich, Hitler was completely pleased with himself when his risky gamble resulted in the acquisition of the Sudetenland and the disarmament of the fortifications there. No democratic politician could compete with him in the art of deception and bluff. He triumphantly boasted: "At the moment of ultimate and decisive pressure the nerves of the other side cracked, without any need for us to take up arms at the final stage."



the concentration of the army on or around 28 September.

On 19 September, the armed forces high command sent word to the Sudeten Freikorps in Czechoslovakia to tone down its activities lest they give the Czechoslovakians a pretext to go to a state of alert again.

But the diplomacy of appeasement was also in operation during this period. Having been brought so close to the precipice in May, the French and British had no desire to look over the edge again. On 21 September, the German high command issued an order directing preparations for the invasion be continued, but also stating the various services should be ready for a possible peaceful takeover.

On 28 September, Gen. Schmundt recorded the following in his diary: "At 1300 on September 27, the *Führer* and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces ordered the movement of the assault units from their exercise areas to their jumping-off points. The assault units must be ready to start Operation Green and advance against Czechoslovakia on 30 September."

That same day, Gen. Halder wrote in his diary: "The staff reports about a conference with Göring, who states that a general war can hardly be avoided any longer. It may last seven years, but we will still win it."

But at about 5:00 p.m., there was a sudden

relaxation in the tension. Hitler announced he had decided to accept the idea of a conference with Chamberlain, Daladier and Mussolini in Munich. The immediate danger of a new European war was thus aborted, and the Munich debacle was put in motion.

What If the Czechs Had Fought?

In 1938, Czechoslovakia's population was only one-fifth that of the Third Reich's. The annual output of steel in Czechoslovakia equalled one month's output in Germany. About 75 percent of Czechoslovakia's international trade had to pass through German territory. On the other hand, Czechoslovakia had an excellent armaments industry that could not only provide abundant arms and munitions to the Czech army, but to those of the Little Entente and other nations as well. (In 1935, Czechoslovakia had been the world's leading exporter of small arms.)

To ensure their defense, the Czechs enacted a series of far reaching measures beginning in 1933. They established a "Supreme State Defense Council," with almost dictatorial powers to coordinate economic affairs with defense requirements. In the following year conscription was extended from 18 to 24 months. In 1935 the fortification scheme was started. In 1936 the "State Defense Guards" were set up as paramilitary bodies to support the army in maintaining law and order in the troublesome Sudeten area.

In short, the process of the militarization of ordinary civilian life in Czechoslovakia was well along by 1937. It was with obvious pride and a sense of accomplishment that Benes would later write in his memoirs: "In the summer of 1938, our army was, despite all its shortcomings that I became very well aware of during the Munich Crisis, one of the best in Europe. Its morale and equipment, as demonstrated during the two mobilizations, were up to standard."

That optimistic view was largely supported by the French general staff and by the bulk of evidence reaching the British Foreign and War Offices from Czechoslovakia. The British military attache in Prague at the time, Lt. Col. Stronge, believed the Czech army was "well equipped" and it would be a "great mistake to underrate its value." He speculated that in the event of a serious German breach of the fortified border defenses, the Czech forces could retreat behind the River Vltava, and from there by stages back to the Moravian/Slovakian plateau.

Bohemian geography offered, Stronge believed, "what must almost be a unique succession of natural rearguard positions right into Slovakia — still the last and least accessible stronghold."

Gen. Faucher, the head of the French military mission in Czechoslovakia, shared Stronge's views and expressed his belief in the great defensive value of the Little Maginot Line.

To Gen. Syrový, the Inspector General of the Czechoslovak army, the most important tasks were to run a smooth and rapid mobilization and not to be taken by surprise.

On the other side, the senior officer corps of the *Wehrmacht* did not share Hitler's enthusiasm for a blitzkrieg against Czechoslovakia. Their opposition was exemplified by Gen. von Beck, who believed it would take at least three to four weeks to defeat Czechoslovakia. He repeatedly warned Hitler against the danger of a two- or multi-front war, since he was convinced France was bound to intervene in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. Thus a small war might be transformed into a general European war, with the difference being that Germany in 1938 was less prepared than she had been in 1914 to wage a long fight. Von Beck was supported in his arguments by Gen. Thomas, Chief of the Army Armaments Bureau. Thomas particularly criticized the inadequate provisions for the build up of strategic reserves.

Further, the successful execution of a blitz attack against Czechoslovakia would have depended on a number of imponderables. The blitzkrieg had not yet been tested in its entirety. The *Luftwaffe* required good weather. The timing of the "incident" within Czechoslovakia seemed to have misfired when Prague's forces quickly suppressed the unrest among the Sudeten Germans following Hitler's inflammatory speech on 12 September. The Czechs succeeded completely in their September mobilization, calling over a million men to the colors by 1 October. Thus the chief precondition for the execution of Operation Green, the element of surprise, was simply not available to the Germans on the date of the planned attack.

As for the Czech military leaders, they accepted the prospect of war with a sound professional confidence. That confidence was based, first of all, on the knowledge that due to Germany's only recent reintroduction of conscription in 1935, Berlin could not put more troops in the field than had been trained since. But an even more important element of their confidence lay in their belief the French and Soviets would help if called upon to do so.

When interviewed 30 years later in 1968, Gen. Krejčí (Chief of the Czech General Staff in 1938) said he had estimated the total of Czech forces, including their reserves, would have roughly equaled the strength of the Germans in the expected areas of attack. He also confirmed the assumption the Czech army planned to stage a fighting retreat all the way back to Slovakia.

It appears that Allied assistance, at least in the form of the Soviet air force, would have been a reality. Late in September, preparations were already being made to accommodate between 450 and 600 Red Air Force fighters and bombers. Also, on 24 September, the Romanian government acced-



This map-montage picture postcard sold widely in Germany in the spring of 1939. The slogan translates: "We thank our leader."

ed to requests from Moscow to provide a ground and air corridor for the Red Army and Air Force to facilitate the transfer of machines and manpower to Czechoslovakia in case of a German attack there. Bucharest gave permission for the Soviets to use a railway for the movement of two divisions, including 300 tanks and 700 artillery pieces, within the first two weeks of a German attack. A refueling airfield for Soviet planes was also prepared by the Romanian army near the Czechoslovakian border. The French, though, remained a big question mark.

At the time, both French and British military experts tried to answer the question of how long the Czechoslovakians could hold out alone against German aggression. Lt. Col. Stronge, in a memo dated 3 September 1938, rejected the idea the defenders would go down in three weeks or less. He observed that on the average the Czech army and its equipment were equal to the Germans. He thought the decisive factor would be the morale of the Czechoslovakians. If that broke, the invasion and conquest would not take longer than a week or two; if it held, the defense might last for at least a month. A month would have been enough time for a determined Allied intervention to have made the difference. ★

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A Long Road Home

The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia

by Jonathan Allen

[Ed's Intro: But if the Czechoslovakians had fought, could they have fought well? Of course, we'll never know for certain, but the following piece suggests the answer is yes. The accomplishments of the 70,000 Czechoslovakian Legionnaires who fought their way from the Ukraine to Vladivostok is one of the most remarkable, and possibly least remembered, feats of arms of the 20th century. In fact, to more than one observer at the time, this modern "Anabasis" far surpassed the long march of Xenophon's 10,000 some 23 centuries earlier.]

Background

Prior to 1914, the Czechs and Slovaks had been minority groups within the Austro-Hungarian Empire for almost three centuries. Their native lands had been dismembered at the close of the Thirty Years' War in 1648, and since then their combined numbers had shrunk drastically, from an estimated 3 million to about 750,000. The first half of the 19th century witnessed the beginnings of a Bohemian renaissance, led by poets, priests and scholars in the old capital of Prague. The revolt there in 1848, like the others throughout Europe at that time, was crushed, but the spark of independence it kindled endured.

Repeated efforts by Vienna to "Germanize" its Czech and Slovak subjects led many of them to leave their homeland. Some settled in other Slavic countries, while others emigrated to France, England and the United States, where many began to agitate openly for Czechoslovakian independence.

World War I

The outbreak of war in 1914 found many Czechoslovakian emigres volunteering to serve in the armies of their new homelands, particularly in Russia, France and Italy. The latter two nations quickly formed Czechoslovakian units, but in Russia the formation of a such a brigade was not approved until 1915. However, once begun the process moved rapidly; by October, 1,000 Czechs and Slovaks were serving on St. Petersburg's Southwestern Front, assigned to scouting and reconnaissance duties.

Meanwhile, back in the Czechoslovakian homeland, thousands of others had been conscripted into the Austro-Hungarian army to serve under German-speaking officers. Most had little desire to fight for the cause of the Central Powers, and desertions on the Eastern Front among Czechoslo-

vakian units reached such alarming proportions that special disciplinary measures had to be constantly enforced.

On the Russian side of the lines, the Czechoslovakian brigade played an important role, contacting their countrymen on the other side and interrogating them when taken as prisoners. Thousands of Czechs and Slovaks in Austrian and German uniform either surrendered or deserted, sometimes even forcing their German-speaking officers to accompany them. In the Carpathian Mountain front, for example, the entire Austro-Hungarian 28th Infantry Regiment, originally mustered in Prague, went over to the Russians, complete with heavy equipment, band instruments and regimental colors.

As thousands of Czechoslovakian POWs entered Russia, they were separated from Austrian and German captives, usually at their own request. Most were sent on to industrial cities in European Russia, where they worked in munitions factories. Many of the Austrian and German prisoners, almost all of whom were sent to Siberia, failed to survive the war, but the Czechoslovakians who helped in the Russian war effort were relatively well treated and given considerable liberty.

Most of the Czechoslovakian prisoners also expressed a willingness to serve either directly in the Russian army or in its Czechoslovakian brigade. The Russian Army Council, however, maintained a firm policy of not allowing prisoners of war to enlist, but it did permit a small number to join the hard-pressed Serbian army in the Balkans.

Tomas Masaryk, Eduard Benes and others had formed a "Czech National Council" in Paris early in the war. On 14 November 1915, they issued the Paris Manifesto, co-signed by representatives from France, Russia and Britain, declaring the Czech nation to be independent and in revolt against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Czechoslovakian units fighting on three fronts recognized Masaryk as their leader. Approval for prisoners of war in Russia to enlist was still denied, but at least their applications were being officially accepted in case of a change in policy.

Fall of the Czar

The fall of Czar Nicholas II in the spring of 1917, and the subsequent establishment of the Russian Provisional Government, led to a still

more favorable climate for the Czechoslovakians in the east. A conference of delegates from all Czechoslovakian groups in Russia was called for 6 May, and Masaryk himself arrived from London to attend.

At the congress held in Kiev, the delegates pledged themselves to the cause of an independent Czechoslovakian republic. More importantly, they received permission from the new Russian government to organize an independent Czechoslovakian army corps, into which the POWs could enlist. The corps was to consist of two infantry divisions, a total of 45,000 men, and it quickly became apparent there were more than enough applicants available to fill the ranks.

The corps saw action for the first time in July in the Battle of Zborov. Though the Russian troops involved there were shattered by a German counterattack, the Czechoslovakians acquitted themselves well, taking some 5,000 prisoners. They formed the rearguard during the withdrawal toward Kiev, gathering thousands of rifles, machineguns and other weapons abandoned by the retreating Russians.

The Bolshevik seizure of power from the Provisional Government in November resulted in chaos all along the front. The Russian army virtually disintegrated as its peasant-soldiers rushed home to participate in rumored land distributions. For several weeks late that year, the Czechoslovakian *2nd Division* was employed in rounding up such deserters near Borispol, a task they loathed.

Along the entire front, only the Czechoslovakian Corps remained united, organizing its own artillery and support units as those the Russians had been providing fell apart. The Corps' adopted Czech as its official language, and its organization was changed from a Russian to a French model. When the Bolsheviks opened negotiations with Germany for a separate peace, the Czechoslovakians resolved to continue their struggle with French support.

The Bolsheviks

Inevitably, the Bolsheviks attempted to win over the Legionnaires to the cause of world revolution. However, few Czechoslovakians were attracted to Lenin's banners; they were generally better educated and more western European in outlook than the Russian rank-and-file. Always flexible, though, the Legion adopted a useful ideologic compromise. During combat operations they retained traditional military rank and discipline, but when dealing with the Communists, they sent a committee of elected delegates, since the Reds would not meet with officers.

The Western Allies opened talks with the Reds for the Legion's evacuation from Russia, so it could be committed on the Western Front. For a time the French had favored the idea of re-establishing an active Eastern Front, and therefore brought pres-

sure to bear to keep the unit in Russia to form a nucleus around which other troops might rally. But it soon became clear that was an impractical course, and small groups of Legionnaires were evacuated to France by way of Archangel.

As the German army continued its drive east, only the hard-pressed Legion remained to oppose them. The Germans almost succeeded in splitting the Legion between Kiev and Minsk, but a fierce fight at the railway junction of Bachmach enabled the Czechoslovakians to evacuate in good order along both fronts by 14 March 1918. The four-day battle cost the Legion more than 600 casualties.

At that point the Legion could neither move west, north or south. Further evacuations from Archangel were blocked. The road to France lay east, through Siberia to distant Vladivostok, some 5,000 miles across a hostile continent.

Initially the communists showed a seemingly favorable attitude toward the Legion by granting approval for it to cross Siberia by rail on the condition they surrender their arms and proceed as "free citizens." But the Czechoslovakians were wary of surrendering their weapons, and negotiated the right to keep 168 rifles and one machinegun aboard each train, while all other equipment would be given up at the town of Penza. The Legionnaires hid many more weapons inside their carriages, in anticipation of the fighting all felt certain was to come.

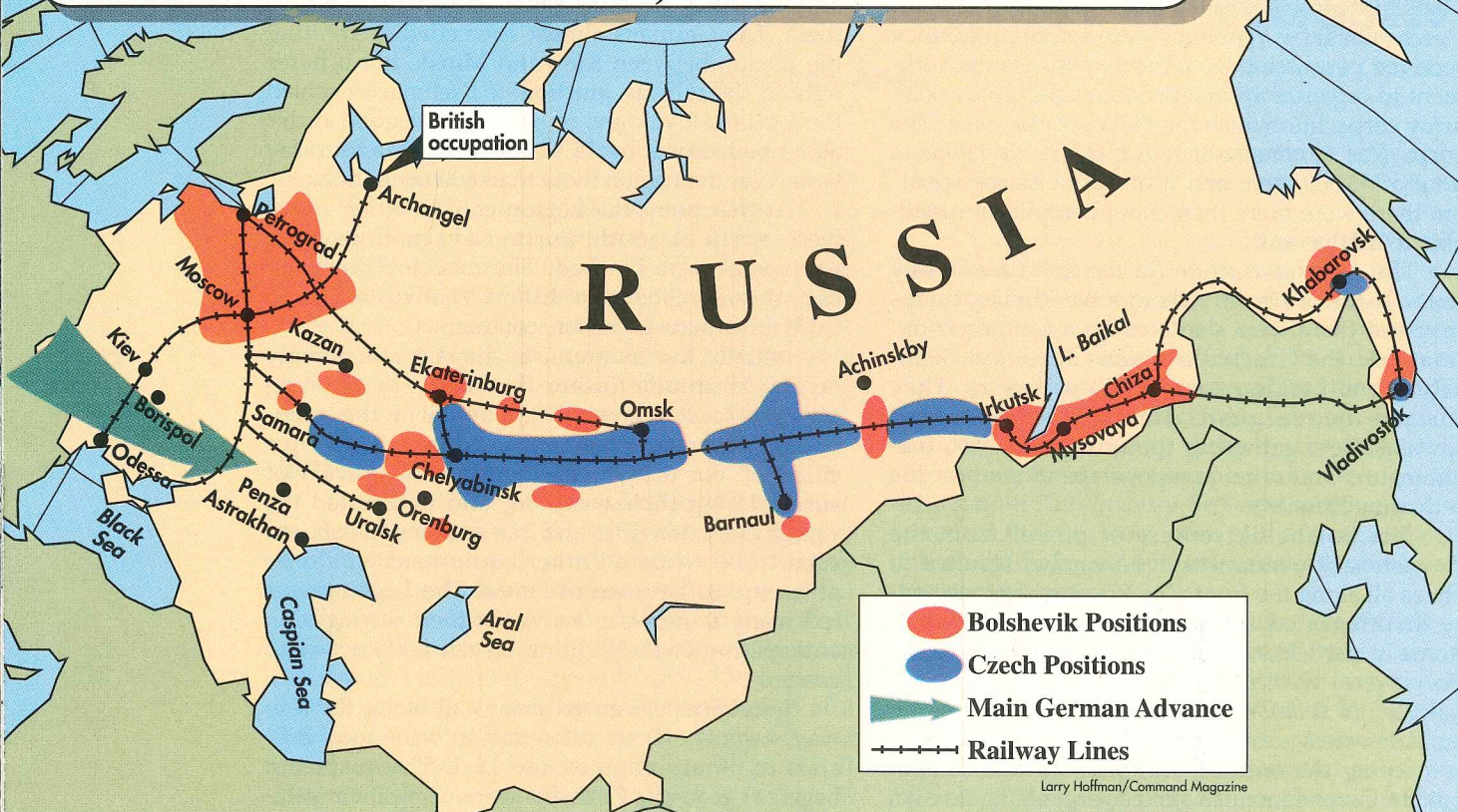
Local Soviets caused delays all along the railway. Legion officers often had to bribe local officials to obtain engines and fuel. The suspicion began to grow the Germans were using their influence to keep the Legion from reaching France, a feeling intensified by the sight of thousands of German, Austrian and Magyar prisoners returning westward from Siberia.

The Russians had captured almost 2 million Central Powers prisoners during the war, and the Bolshevik government seemed to care little if they made their way home. Many of those ex-POWs had armed themselves, either with weapons seized from their former guards, or from stocks made available by Communist recruiters. Clashes between Czechoslovakians and Germans became frequent. In late May 1918, the American Consul at Irkutsk reported seeing several hundred armed Germans attack a Legion train.

The final break between the Legion and the Communists occurred in an incident at Chelyabinsk on 17 May. There a Czech soldier was struck and killed by a piece of metal thrown from a train carrying Austrian POWs. Other Legionnaires reacted by pulling some of the Austrians off their train and executing the one who had thrown the fragment. That eventually resulted in the arrest of several Czechs by the local Bolshevik commander. When the Legion sent a delegation to demand their release, they were also taken into custody. The Legion command finally responded by deploying

The Czech Legion in Russia

Summer, 1918



two battalions into the town and disarming all the Reds there.

The Czechoslovakians learned from intercepted telegraph messages Leon Trotsky had issued an order to all Soviets that the Legion was to be disarmed and its men drafted into the Red Army's labor battalions. On 5 June, the Czechoslovak Army Council declared a state of hostility existed between the Legion and the Bolsheviks, and ordered the seizure of the entire trans-Siberian railway to ensure an open evacuation route to the Pacific. Since the return flow of German POWs was also deemed contrary to the war interests of the Allies, the Legionnaires were to stop them by force.

To Vladivostok

By late June 1918, advance groups of the Legion had reached Vladivostok, thanks in part to the mediation of American and other Western consular officials along the way. The remainder of the Legion, which now numbered about 70,000, was scattered across Siberia at various points stretching from Penza to Khabarovsk. The Legion controlled some long sections of the railroad, but other parts were dominated by Reds, or by Whites attempting to establish new local governments. Shortly after

the Legion captured Omsk, a White "Siberian Provisional Government" was set up there.

The Russian counter-revolutionaries were generally cooperative with the Legion, and the Czechoslovakian commanders experienced little difficulty securing provisions for their troops. But at the same time, open civil war broke out all across Russia that summer, and every Russian leader who could manage to do so began to enlist and conscript troops into private armies. Many German and Austrian POWs were also drawn into the various camps in the same manner.

Differences arose within the ranks of the Legion regarding the Whites and Reds. Most Legionnaires wanted to maintain neutrality, except in situations where that policy might compromise their safety or continued movement east. Czech Gen. Rudolf Gajda, however, who led Legion units in central Siberia, became the leader of a group favoring immediate overthrow of the Bolsheviks. In fact, many of the White Russian factions were to a large extent dependent on the Legion's continued presence, and were accordingly anxious to induce them to remain for as long as possible.

As the Legion began its eastward trek in earnest, it continued to gather strength. Many

Czechs and Slovaks who had not previously joined now came forward. Though the Legionnaires commandeered every train and piece of military equipment they came across, there was never sufficient quantities of anything to go around. All aircraft and artillery had been turned over to the Reds at Penza before the final split, and Legion regiments frequently went into action armed only with a few rifles; many soldiers used clubs until they could wrest a weapon from the enemy. The lack of artillery became an especially acute problem, since all sides began to use armored trains to spearhead their attacks.

Allied Intervention

By mid-June, the question of Allied intervention in Russia was under consideration by the Supreme War Council in Paris, but unanimity was lacking. It was decided to keep the Legion in Russia as a buffer against further Bolshevik expansion, and tentative plans were laid calling for the insertion of British, American, French and Japanese expeditionary forces. The Legion's assigned task was to enlarge its control of the critical trans-Siberian railway, which would keep the Reds split into pockets that could later be easily destroyed by fresh Allied troops.

Japanese forces were the first to land in Siberia, coming ashore from Imperial Navy warships anchored in Vladivostok harbor. They were soon joined by British Royal Marines whose mission was the protection of Allied consulates and nationals in the city. The Communists had already killed a number of foreigners during a looting spree, and they were shipping seized ammunition stocks to their forces in the interior.

At the same time, about 15,000 Legionnaires had arrived in Vladivostok to await, they thought, final transport out. When they learned full-scale fighting had broken out between the Reds and their countrymen to the west, they took control of the city with the assistance of the Japanese. The flow of ammunition to the Bolsheviks in central Siberia was cut off, and the Legion commander in the port decided it was necessary to move back to the west to secure the railway and aid the Czechoslovakian units in the region of Lake Baikal.

Again with Japanese support, the Legionnaires began to advance along both the Siberian and Manchurian branches of the railway. British forces committed to the operation never amounted to more than a few regiments, but they provided a few light naval guns mounted on railway flatcars.

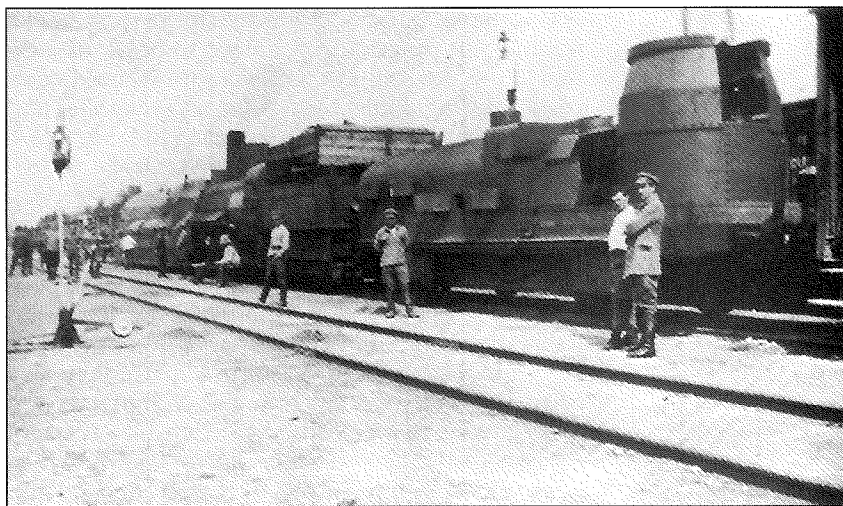
American intervention in Siberia was approved by President Wilson on 17 July, but the number of troops sent were never more than enough to help secure the Legion's lines of communications. Wilson's policy was governed by two considerations. First, the Czechoslovakians had strong popular support in the US, and he very much wanted to help them. Second, he was entire-

ly distrustful of the intentions of the Japanese. Tokyo had agreed to limit its expeditionary force to only 7,000, but had far exceeded that number. Wilson had no desire to use American troops in any way that might involve them in aiding the Japanese to expand their empire.

Irkutsk-Baikal

The principal bottleneck along the 5,000-mile rail line that separated the Legion's two main forces lay in the Irkutsk-Lake Baikal area, where the rugged nature of the terrain had necessitated the construction of some 40 tunnels through solid rock. The tunnels and the natural barrier of the huge lake made it an ideal location for the Reds to launch operations aimed at keeping the Legion split. Communist strength in the region was considerable, and they had a large store of explosives for use in destroying the tunnels if necessary.

The Legion commander there, Gen. Gajda, developed a tactic that proved successful. When-



Two views of Czech Legion armored trains in Siberia. In a war fought with a lack of heavy artillery, such vehicles became the offensive spearheads for all sides.

ever they encountered strong resistance along the railway, some of his troops would swiftly move to outflank the enemy strong points and establish positions several miles beyond them, then turn and attack the Communists from behind. When the Legion main body renewed its advance, the Bolsheviks would be trapped in a crossfire.

But every tunnel along the southern end of the lake was defended by determined revolutionaries. Costly and time-consuming operations were necessary to capture them intact. The decisive moment didn't come until the Czechoslovakians found three large boats along the lake and reconditioned them. Using the boats, they sent an expedition, complete with light artillery, directly across the south end of the lake and captured the town of Mysovaya, which until then had been an important hub behind the Red lines.

Gajda's victory at Mysovaya, coupled with the advance of the other Czechoslovakian and Japanese units out of Vladivostok, resulted in the reunification of the Legion by mid-August. To aid in maintaining its new position, the Legion began sending out punitive expeditions to break up new Red troop concentrations before they could complete forming. One went as far as Mongolia, and some 200 such drives were launched in total.

Kolchak

White Russian and other anti-Communist governments in Samara, Siberia, Orenburg, and Manchuria looked to the Legion for military support. Initially neutral, the slowly migrating Legion found itself in active alliance with anti-Bolsheviks all across the east, while Western Allied policy also grew more determinedly counter-revolutionary.

The Legion was formally ordered to suspend its withdrawal from Siberia, start a westward advance back into European Russia, and open a new front in the Ural Mountains. Accordingly, Samara was soon recaptured from the Reds by a combined force of Legionnaires and former Austro-Italian, Lithuanian, and Romanian POWs.

But the new venture was foredoomed. Both Samara and Kazan had to be abandoned again when 25,000 Bolshevik troops, mustered by Trotsky, began a counterattack. The brunt of the fighting during the withdrawal fell to the Legion, while many of the White Russian commanders kept themselves far to the rear. The Legion fighters were outnumbered three to one. French Gen. Maurice Janin arrived to assume supreme command, but the situation continued to deteriorate since he brought few new troops with him.

Increased Allied intervention, which the Legion had been led to believe would grow to a huge effort, was not forthcoming. The Legion had been in almost constant combat for more than a year; it was only natural morale began to deteriorate. Murmurings and rumors became more prevalent. In November 1918, when the Legionnaires were

told by their new nation's own Defense Minister, Gen. Milan Stefanik, that they might have to hold on alone in Russia, the news became the final stimulus necessary to make all of them want to get back to Vladivostok as soon as possible. By this point the war in Europe had ended, the Czechoslovak Republic had gained its independence, and the Legionnaires wanted only to leave hostile Asia.

That same month Adm. Aleksandr Kolchak, the young and ambitious former commander of Russia's Black Sea fleet, led a *coup d'etat* in Omsk. He overthrew the Siberian Provisional Government and declared himself dictator of all Siberia. He managed to persuade Gajda to bring in his command to keep fighting the Reds. The majority of Legionnaires deplored Gajda's acquiescence, which led to a mutiny in which large numbers refused to go along with the new move. Correspondingly, sentiment among White Russians began to turn against the Legion.

Kolchak received little practical support in Siberia, where new governments were being formed and dissolved constantly by both his followers and foes. His main mistake lay in that he tried to re-establish the principles of Czarist aristocracy, which of course alienated him from the peasantry. His troops usually avoided serious fighting, and by the end of 1919 most of Kolchak's army and civilian aides had deserted him. That left only the Admiral and his personal staff in possession of their large gold reserves.

To the distaste of many in the ranks, the Legion took on the task of escorting the failed dictator, his officers, and the bullion as far as Irkutsk. The various provisional governments along the route were naturally suspicious of the Czechoslovakians seeming to run away with "their" gold. When the train finally arrived in Irkutsk, it was given a double guard of White Russians and Czechoslovakians. In addition to those two detachments, there were Japanese and French military trains at the station, and the situation grew confused and tense.

On 15 January 1920, Gen. Janin ordered the Legion to turn Kolchak over to the Irkutsk Provisional Government. The Admiral was later placed on trial, and was eventually executed on 7 February. Lenin himself called the trial and its prosecutors "stupid, foolish and vulgar," and the Communists subsequently blamed Kolchak's death on the Legion.

Finale

It was now over a year since the Great War had ended in Europe. The Czechoslovak Republic was up and running, with a government under President Masaryk in Prague — but still the Legion remained under French command. Representatives of the new Prague regime did visit the troops in Siberia, officially announced the incorporation of the Legion into their republic's armed forces, and set up regular postal service with the homeland.

The withdrawal to the east continued and accelerated during the winter of 1919-20, in the midst of an increasingly hostile civilian populace and with enemy forces gathering on both sides of the railway. The Legion's 200 trains were much in need of maintenance. Fuel was also a problem as most coal sources had fallen under Communist control. To the west, the Polish Legion, which had been organized after the Czechs, took on the responsibility for the rearguard. (Tragically, most of them never got out. Their trains were blocked by mines the Reds laid at Achinskby.)

The final evacuation of the Czech Legion began in late 1919, under the supervision of its medical officers. Some vessels were provided by the Allies, while others were chartered by the Prague government and the International Red Cross. The wounded were the first to go, including some 300 who had become mentally deranged during the long ordeal.

Most of the transports went by way of the Suez Canal, dropping off their passengers in various Mediterranean ports. Others crossed the Pacific to the US and Canada, where the Legionnaires were given warm welcomes by Czech and Slovak immigrants as they traveled across the continent by train. The full evacuation involved 67,000 men and took the best part of a year to complete. The final group sailed on 10 September 1920, along with many Russians, Serbs, Latvians, and some Poles.

The Legion's achievements and significance have been much debated by historians, but certainly it was instrumental in preventing hundreds of thousands of German POWs from reaching the trenches of the Western Front. The Legionnaires were ultimately misled regarding the scale of the promised Allied intervention in Siberia, but their embattled withdrawal along a 5,000 mile railway through a hostile land will unquestionably remain as one of the great military feats of all time. ★


























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How to Read Unit Symbols.

Unit symbols are a quick and easy way (once you get used to them) to clearly show the makeup of even the largest and most complex military organizations. The symbols are used to show the location of the unit on a map. When combined with other symbols in a wire-diagram, the symbols can be used to show the strength and weaponry of a single unit (a Table of Organization and Equipment, or TO&E) or show all the units commanded by some higher organization (an Order of Battle, or OB).

Each unit is identified by a box. The symbol inside the box indicates the unit's type, meaning the primary weaponry and equipment the unit uses to carry out its missions. Examples of unit types are:




 Infantry	 Rocket Artillery
 Road-Motorized Infantry	 Mortars
 Cross-Country Motorized Infantry	 Anti-Tank
 Airmobile or Air Assault (heliborne)	 Anti-Aircraft Artillery (pre-1945)
 Airborne (or Paratroop)	 Modern Air Defense Artillery
 Marines or Naval Infantry	 Signals or Communication Troops
 Mountain Infantry	 Fixed-Wing Bombers
 Mechanized (or "Armored") Infantry	 Fixed-Wing Fighters
 Combat Engineers	 Attack Helicopters
 Commando or Special Forces	 Supply or Transport
 Horse Cavalry	 Replacements
 Armored Cavalry or Reconnaissance	 Motorized Special Ops
 Motorcycle Troops	 Military Police
 Armored Cars	 Motorized Anti-Tank
 Armor or Tank	 Self-Propelled Anti-Tank
 Assault Gun or Self-Propelled Artillery	 Combined Arms
 Truck-Towed Artillery	 Wheeled Marines
 Horse-Drawn Artillery	 Motorized Marines

Unit Size

XXXXXX - Theater of Operations
 XXXXX - Army Group or Front
 XXXX - Army
 XXX - Corps
 XX - Division
 X - Brigade

III - Regiment
 II - Battalion
 I - Company
 ••• - Platoon
 •• - Section
 • - Squad or Fire Team

Notes

1. If a unit symbol displays a heavy band down its left side, or a portion of its symbology is filled in, that unit is armed with "heavy" weapons. For instance, this  would mean "heavy weapons infantry," while this  would mean "heavy tanks."
2. If there is bracket ([]) atop a unit's size-symbol, that unit is ad hoc in nature, meaning it was/is not a regular organization in its army, but was created for some special (temporary) purpose or mission.
3. The number or word appearing to the side of a unit box is that outfit's numeric or name identity. For instance, this unit  would be the 1st Mechanized Infantry Division.

East and West

The State Of Medicine In The Seventeenth Century

by David W. Tschanz

The armies of Tokugawa Ieyasu and his rivals that clashed at Sekigahara in 1600 were comprised of warriors. In the trains of these armies were the inescapable attendants to all wars — physicians, surgeons and apothecaries. To this group fell the grim task of tending those who had borne the battle, and to fighting the diseases which also accompanied the armies.

There were similarities and profound differences between Japanese and European medical art in the 17th century.

Surgery

Surgeons are concerned with the repair of the body. This can range from lancing a boil to amputating a limb to thoracic surgery. In general the surgeon is not a theorist, but an empiricist: what works is more important than why it works (or why it should work).

The correct approach to most forms of surgery had been deduced by the first century AD. Surgeons knew how to deal with fractures, dislocations and other bone damage, how to stitch wounds, amputate limbs, apply compresses, treat shock, cauterize and perform simple operations such as appendectomies and Caesarean sections. The modern day surgeon's kit includes implements, albeit of different materials, that would be easily recognizable to a surgeon serving with Trajan's legions or Ieyasu's samurai.

Japanese surgery had its roots in Chinese medicine. The most famous surgeon in Chinese history, and the indirect father of Japanese surgery, was Hua T'o (ca. AD 200). He was the

first strong advocate of the need for a systematic physical examination, but his fame rests chiefly on his surgical skill. Unfortunately Hua T'o was put to death by the King of Wei for absconding himself from the royal court without permission. His death coincided with an abrupt end to the surgical progress in China. The doctrine of Confucius that the human body must not be mutilated in any way effectively choked all progress. Operations involving cutting were banned, and dissections, essential to a knowledge of anatomy, were forbidden. Japan, while never embracing Confucianism with the same vigor, also did not undergo any significant advances in surgery.

The greatest challenges facing a surgeon in 1600 were the same facing them today: anesthesia and wound infections.

Anesthesia is the process of making the patient unable to feel pain. This can be done by rendering him unconscious, deactivating his pain receptors pharmacologically or mechanically (such as with a "spinal block").

In the West anesthesia was essentially unknown. A few naturally occurring substances were known to cause unconsciousness, but they were rarely, if ever, used in surgery. Alcohol was tried, but as a surgical anesthetic, alcohol is extremely unpredictable. Seemingly insensate individuals can "sober up" remarkably fast under painful stimuli. The end result was that speed in surgery was more important than anything else.

In China, Hua T'o was the first to make routine use of anesthetics. He used an effervescent powder in wine

to produce anesthesia. On one occasion he used it to remove a gangrenous spleen in a patient who was under its influence. The composition is unknown but it is suspected that it might have been *cannabis indica*. Later Chinese doctors employed *Datura alba*, rhododendron, jasmine and aconite: these plants contain atropine, hyoscyamus, and gelsium aconitin, all of which are known to be capable of causing anesthesia.

Wound infections are the result of microorganisms, usually bacteria, entering a surgical site and propagating. As a result of their growth, the patient can develop fever, septicemia (blood infections), or can die. At the very least, wound infections extend the duration of an illness.

Bereft of any knowledge of the role of bacteria and other microorganisms in the development of infection, surgeons (and physicians) in both the Occident and Orient were essentially helpless when they occurred. No one had any idea what caused them, how to prevent them, or how to cure them. Patients who developed wound infections either got better (most did) or died.

Disease

Infectious disease was a constant threat in Europe. Two and a half centuries earlier the Black Death had swept through the continent, carrying off a third of the population.

Europe's Thirty Years War (1618-48) was dominated by deadly epidemics. In one instance, an epidemic actually defeated both armies before they joined combat. At Nuremberg in 1632,

the armies of Gustavus Adolphus and Wallenstein lost 18,000 dead to typhus fever in a single week, whereupon both armies marched away from their anticipated clash to escape the disease.

Japan, an island nation, was partially insulated from disease contacts with the mainland. This was, however, a mixed blessing. Insulation allowed relatively dense populations to develop, but they were then vulnerable to unusually severe epidemics when an infection succeeded in crossing the water. A number of important and lethal diseases that were endemic in China — such as smallpox, diphtheria and measles, were not fully established among the Japanese until the 13th century.

Medical Theories

What causes disease? Why do people get sick? These were the questions the physicians of the era had to ask themselves. Without a germ theory of disease, physicians East and West arrived at remarkably similar theories.

In the West, Hippocrates of Cos (b. ca. 460 BC) had carefully worked out a theory of the Four Humors. Arguing that human beings were composed of four prime substances that originated in different parts of the body: blood (from the heart), yellow bile (the liver), black bile (the spleen) and phlegm (the brain). Health was the perfect equilibrium among the four humors. When there was an imbalance — usually expressed as an excess of one in comparison to the others, the body tried to rid itself of the excessive substance. For example, people with colds had more phlegm than was good for them, so they sniffled, coughed and so on to rid themselves of it. Persons with a fever turned red — from an excess of blood. The best cure, of course, was to "bleed" them. (Hippocrates also attributed certain personalities to a slight excess of one humor over the others: sanguine (blood), phlegmatic, choleric (yellow bile), and melancholic (black bile.) Galen and the great Arab physician Avicenna further refined these theories.

Other hypotheses explained the causes of disease in terms of factors that upset the balance — miasmas, vapors of disease-causing air, being one of the usual explanations. (Malaria, literally "bad air" was believed to

be caused by the fetid smells arising from swamps.)

In China, equilibrium was again the cause of health — or rather health was an expression of equilibrium. This was expressed in the concept of yin and yang.

Codified in the Nei-Ching — a classic treatise on internal medicine, and possibly the oldest extant medical book, the yin represents the negative side and yang the positive. The interchange between the two (neither existed in pure form) led to the concept of duality within a single thing — the foundation of Chinese medical thought.

According to the system proposed in the Nei Ching, man is divided into a lower region, a middle region and an upper region, each of which is composed of one part yin and one part yang. Treatment of a specific disease or organ depends on its location within a particular part of yin or yang.

In the human body, yang corresponds to the surface and yin to the interior. Because both exist within the body, there is a similar relationship between the two in regard to organs: the absolute yin includes the liver, the lesser yang the gall bladder, the lesser yin the heart, the great yang the small intestines, the great yin the lungs and the sunlight (an analogue to the absolute yin) the bladder.

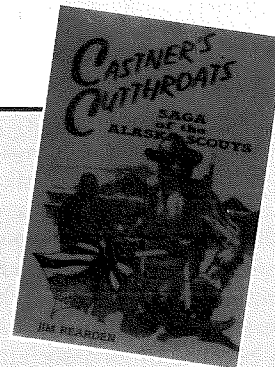
The affinity between yin and yang has a decisive role in man's health. Perfect harmony between the two means perfect health. Disharmony leads to disease or death.

Medicine in Japan was greatly influenced by Chinese medicine. The basic doctrines of Japanese medical practice takes a Chinese form, but is not the same as classical Chinese. Japanese came into contact with Chinese medicine in 561 AD and continued the exchange for centuries.

Sanitation

One huge difference between Europe and Japan in 1600 was in the area of sanitation and hygiene.

Europeans of the 16th century were, to put it bluntly, lousy (meaning covered with lice), foul smelling, unwashed and slovenly by both modern Western and contemporary Japanese standards. The year 1600 represented a sort of low point in the vicissitudes of



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bathing in Europe. Basically Europeans did not bathe, did not like to bathe, did not want to bathe and would not bathe. Bathing was bad for you — it could lead to disease. Bathing was sinful as it caused you to expose your entire body. The Church, still a powerful social institution, abhorred bathing because of its association with the hedonism of the Roman public baths.

If European disinterest in sanitation had been limited to the person's body, it would have been bad enough. But it extended to everything. Clothing was rarely if ever changed. This was partly due to economics — clothes were expensive. Most middle and lower class persons might own two or three changes of clothing at most — one of which was reserved for church ("Sunday-go-to-meeting" clothes). The same shirt, pants and undergarments would be worn for days on end with only the collars and cuffs being changed. Underneath the gorgeous and exquisite gowns of the 16th through 19th Centuries were petticoats that might be changed and washed once a month.

The disposal of waste — human, animal, offal, trash and otherwise was, putting it mildly, casual. Chamber pots in Edinburgh were emptied from second floor windows onto the street below, the only warning to unsuspecting passersby being the shout "Gardé loo." City sanitation consisted of roving herds of pigs and dogs which consumed what the rats and mice did not. Where there were rats, there were fleas. Where there were fleas, there was plague — in 1666, London would undergo the worst outbreak of bubonic plague since the Black Death.

When not beset with plague, typhus or other "exotic" epidemics, there were always the garden variety illnesses. European child mortality in the Seventeenth Century hovered around 40% — four out of every ten children born would not live to see their fifth birthday. By far the greatest killer were the diarrheal diseases — salmonellosis, shigellosis, typhoid fever and dysentery to name a few. (Diarrheal diseases are still the number one killer of children in the world today.) Other common diseases were spinal meningitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis. These diseases had the added effect of weak-

ening their victims, making it easier to succumb to diarrheal disease.

In contrast, the Japanese were fastidiously clean and frequent bathers. It is little surprise that the novelist James Clavell, in the novel *Shogun*, has his character Blackthorne exclaim to Ishido, "But you're all so clean!" Bathing was not only a method of hygiene, but ritualistic as well. Regardless of the reason, bathing as a habit did have a salutary effect on the Japanese disease experience. Another positive influence was the practice of recycling human feces as fertilizer — though still not a good method of disposal, it at least led to better sanitation in the towns.

Epidemics were known in Japan, but on the whole the impact from communicable diseases seems, from contemporary accounts, to have been less than it was in Europe. Nearly every disease known to the West (except plague which did not arrive until the 19th century) was present, but the scope and severity was muted.

The end result was that the Japanese of the 17th century was medically better off than his counterpart in the West. This was not due to greater surgical skill or understanding, nor was it the result of a more accurate understanding of disease processes. The Japanese standard of life was better than his European counterpart, at least in a medical sense — simply because of cleanliness. It would be the 19th century before the West developed similar sanitary practices, just before the discovery by Robert Koch that microorganisms, not humoral imbalances, were the cause of infectious diseases.

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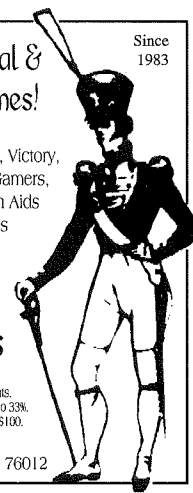
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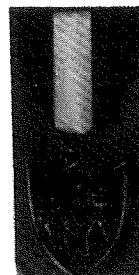
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The War in Nagorno-Karabagh

Background and Developments

by Vern Liebl

Nagorno-Karabagh exists in that most perilous of spots, a geographic crossroads between continents. This crossroads is the Transcaucasus region, the southeastern European land bridge to Asia, and a frequent border march of the various empires that have ruled the Middle East.

The waves of invaders that have washed across the Transcaucasus over the centuries have left behind many different ethnic groups and subgroups, making ethnicity, rather than a modern kind of nationalism, the basis for allegiance in the region. While a few of those groups can trace a presence of several thousand years in the mountains, virtually all of them have been there for at least the last 500.

The major ethnic groups are: Georgians, Armenians, Kurds, and Azerbaijanis. The minor groups include: Russians, Ukrainians, Abkhazians, and Ossetians. These peoples are scattered throughout the Transcaucasus, often living in valleys and villages that are entirely surrounded by another group or groups. The arbitrary boundaries and forced population movements imposed on the region during the Russian/Soviet occupation complicated an already crazy-quilt situation.

Nagorno-Karabagh typifies this ethnic intermingling. That is, though it is ostensibly an Armenian enclave surrounded by Azerbaijanis, in reality much more is involved.

Armenians

The Armenians can trace their ethnic roots back to the Urartu (Hurrian) peoples, who established a kingdom that endured until the 6th century BC in the region of present-day Turkey east of Lake Van. The Kingdom of Armenia, from which modern Armenia is directly descended, was established in 590 BC, and reached its zenith under Tigran II (95-56 BC), stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean.

Armenian greatness was short-lived, however; for most of its existence the kingdom was subject to other powers and was frequently nothing more than a pawn caught between contending outsiders. Caught first between Rome and Parthia, subjugated by Byzantium, overthrown by the Seljuk Turks in the 11th century, then successively invaded by Mongols in the 13th century and Ottoman Turks in the 16th, Armenia's borders remained in flux through a millennia and a half. As a consequence, many Armenians fled abroad or were forcibly

moved out of their homeland at various times. Nevertheless, an ethnic core area remained, landlocked, with its western limit around Lake Van in present-day Turkey, its southern portion extending into northwestern Iran, and its eastern zone bordering Azerbaijan.

Armenia was split between Ottoman and Persian rule from the 16th through the early 19th centuries, when Russia seized the eastern part in a series of campaigns lasting from 1801 to 1828.

The majority of Ottoman-ruled Armenians clustered around Lake Van, many prospering under the initially lenient rule of the Turks. That changed, however, in the mid- and late-1800s, with the coming to power of the "Young Turks" in Constantinople and the Turkic-nationalism they brought with them. From that point, the Ottomans more and more used repression, both direct and indirect, to control their subjects. For example, they often appointed Moslem Kurds to replace Christian-Armenian administrators. The repression escalated, including massacres and mass deportations, until 1915-16, when the process culminated in attempted genocide — an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were killed in those two years.

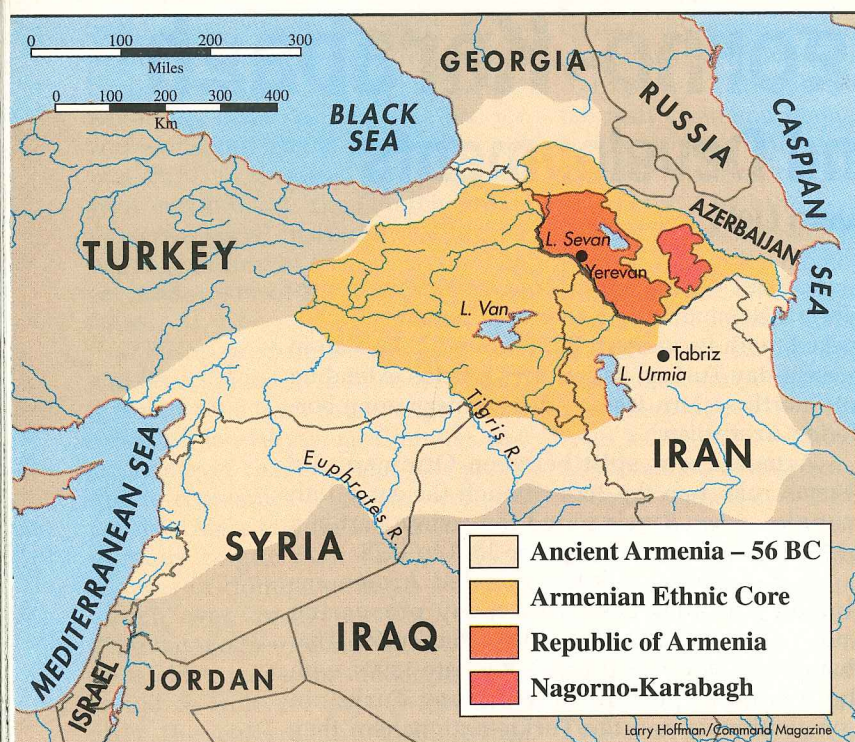
The result was that western Armenia was largely depopulated of Armenians. The survivors fled either to eastern Armenia or places even farther away. But the fall of the Russian Empire in 1917 then brought some of the same pressures to bear in eastern Armenia, when that area fell under temporary Turkish control.

In 1918, in the chaos of World War I's end and the Russian Civil War, "Armenia" (meaning actu-

Christian Armenia

In 287 AD, the pagan Roman Emperor Diocletian succeeded in forcing the Persians from Armenia and placed Tiridates III on the throne under his protection. But Tiridates was converted to Christianity by St. Gregory ("the Illuminator") some years later, which eventually led to the adoption of that religion as the official state theology in 300. The Armenian national church is officially titled the "Armenian Apostolic (Orthodox) Church."

The Armenians' Christianity has created a permanent gulf between them and the surrounding Moslems. During the long centuries of Islamic domination, it was in fact only the church that served as a cultural citadel and refuge, thus ensuring Armenian ethnic and national survival.



ally eastern Armenia), declared its independence and fought for two years to maintain it against the encroachments of Turks, Azerbaijanis, and White Russians, finally losing to the Communists. This brief spell of independence ended with the Reds' 1921 capture of Yerevan and their creation of the "Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic" (ASSR). That same year Moscow and Constantinople fixed the area's new boundaries by treaty.

In 1923 Armenia was included as part of Moscow's new "Transcaucasian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic" (TSFSR), along with Azerbaijan and Georgia. But the TSFSR was broken up (these changes reflecting nothing more than various of Stalin's ideas for handling the "nationalities question"), and Armenia became and remained a "Soviet Socialist Republic" within the Soviet Union until the latter's dissolution in 1991 (23 September is its official independence day).

Azerbaijan

The historical record of Azerbaijan is less clear and has recently been affected by Azerbaijani (or "Azeri") revisionism, by which they have attempted to generate a lengthy regional ethnic history to dispute Armenian territorial claims. At any rate, the Azeris claim to have descended from the seventh century BC Median Empire, the Caucasian-Albanians (not to be confused with the entirely different Balkan Albanians), and other early mountain states.

None of these entities survived beyond 150 BC, and the entire Azerbaijan region was subject to invasion, partition and re-partition, until the 4th century AD, when it formally became a vassal state of Sassanid Iran. The Arabs took over Azerbaijan

in the late 600s, after their Moslem expansion had defeated the Sassanids.

From then through the 11th century, the Azeris' became part of the semi-autonomous eastern Caucasian state of the Shirvanshahs. This was another turbulent period, wherein nominal vassalage was given to the Arab Caliphs, Sunni Islam became the dominant religion, and Turkic peoples began their entry into the area. At its greatest extent, in the 10th century, the Shirvanshah state included all of present-day Azerbaijan, much of eastern Armenia, and Iranian Azerbaijan, including the city of Tabriz.

The Seljuk Turks overthrew the Shirvanshah state in the 11th century, and remained in control there until the coming of the Mongols in the 13th century. During this period, a shadow Shirvanshah dynasty, the Derbend Shirvanshahs, maintained a limited existence as vassals to both the Seljuks and the Mongols. This ended with the rise of the Safavids, who incorporated the entire area into Imperial Persia. From roughly 1400 through 1639, intermittent warfare raged across this Turkish/Persian border area.

The Azeris, who had by this time evolved into an almost entirely Turkic people, under pressure from the Safavids, adopted Shi'ite Islam in the 16th century. This separated them from their Turkic brothers, the Ottoman, who were Sunni. At the same time, Azeri culture became a kind of Turco-Persian blend, which remains unique throughout the region today.

Enter the Russians

The Ottoman Turks officially took over most of Azerbaijan and Armenia in 1639, but their control was tenuous, with frequent border fighting with the Safavids. The Safavid line finally ended in 1747, allowing local rulers to assert their independence, forming small, ethnically and religiously mixed "Khanates." At the same time, the Russians began to make their presence felt from around 1700 on. After another 125 years of on-again, off-again warfare, Azerbaijan fell firmly into Russian hands and remained there almost uninterruptedly until 1991.

Oil had been exported from around Baku for nearly two thousand years (Azerbaijan means "land of fire"), and Azerbaijan's importance within the Russian Empire therefore grew as industrialization and petroleum extraction technology progressed. In fact, the native Azeris had been reduced to near-minority status by 1910 by the influx of Russians, Ukrainians and Armenians to work in the oil fields and oil-related businesses.

The end of World War I and the temporary Turkish ascendancy in the region caused the exodus of many non-Azeris for a while, but the Soviets re-established control from Moscow on 28 April 1920. Along with Armenia, Azerbaijan was incorporated into the TSFSR from 1923-36, then became a Soviet Socialist Republic. The Azeris declared

their independence from the USSR on 30 August 1991.

Armenians vs. Azeris

Obviously, then, the Armenians and Azeris have been intimately associated for centuries, having often suffered under the same conquerors from outside the region. Unfortunately for world peace, this intimacy has not led to friendship, and shows its true nature in the current fighting over Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhichevan (see sidebar).

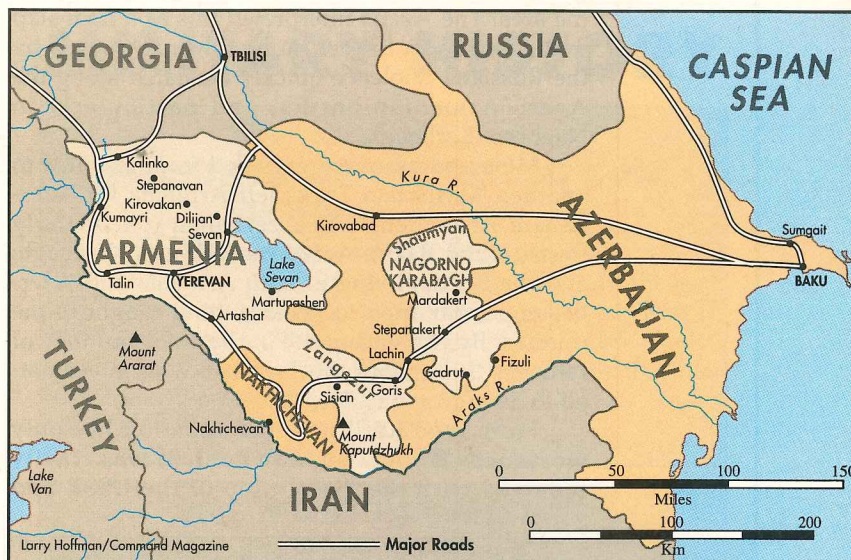
Nagorno-Karabagh (which means "mountainous black garden") had an early history of Armenian settlement, but over the last several centuries Azeri inroads succeeded in splitting it into an upper, mountainous Armenian enclave surrounded by Azeri lowland villages on nearly all sides. By the start of this century, only a narrow strip of Armenian ethnicity connected Armenian Karabagh to the eastern side of the Armenian homeland. That strip ran through the town of Lachin.

The Lachin strip was severed in December 1918, when Azeri nationalist forces — supported by some Turks, and more distantly by a pro-Azeri British policy in the region — captured the place and razed all the surrounding Armenian villages. A planned Armenian counteroffensive died still-born (due to British interference), leaving a determinedly Armenian Karabagh geographically adrift in a sea of Azeris.

When the Russians/Soviets resubjugated the area, they awarded official political control of Nagorno-Karabagh to the Azeris. At the same time, the Azeri-populated region of Nakhichevan was confirmed as part of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, even though the Armenians could and did put forward valid historic claims there. Thus another complicating factor was introduced in that Azeris had to cross the Armenian province of Zangezur when going to and from Nakhichevan.

This geographic mosaic resulted in occasional ethnic clashes even during the Soviet regime, but in the main peaceful co-existence was enforced from Moscow. In 1988, however, an Armenian delegation from Nagorno-Karabagh went to Moscow to protest the continued Azeri domination of their area. Their protest was, of course, greeted by jeers from the Azeris present. Continued indecision in Moscow and increasing misrule, as expectations about *Glasnost* helped bring on the collapse of the USSR, led many Azeris and Armenians to believe only they, by force of arms, could finally resolve the situation.

As 1988 went on, ethnic violence broke out in Sumgait in Azerbaijan, in which hundreds died. The resultant heavy-handed Soviet military intervention was seen to favor either the Armenians or Azeris, depending on the ethnicity of the reporter. Increasing numbers of people from both sides became refugees, fleeing to the presumed safety of their respective core regions. Multiple declarations



of secession and/or independence were issued from both sides, and the violence escalated.

It was in this turbulent political situation that a massive earthquake struck on 7 December 1988. Over 20,000 were killed, and thousands more were left homeless. Though the quake's epicenter was in Armenia, where the damage was most severe and the casualties the heaviest, Azerbaijan was also affected. But the preponderance of Soviet and international aid and attention was focused on Armenia, thus causing the Azeris to feel ignored and slighted, increasing their feelings of fear and tension. At the beginning of 1989, over a quarter-million Armenian and Azeri refugees congested the relief apparatus.

In January, in a too-little-too-late attempt to diffuse the Nagorno-Karabagh time bomb, Moscow instituted direct Kremlin administration over

Nakhichevan

Nakhichevan is an Azeri enclave adjacent to southwestern Armenia, and as such serves as a secondary stage for the clash of those two nations. The region was under Ottoman rule until ceded to Russia in 1828; it was fought over by several military/ethnic forces during World War I and its aftermath, until Soviet control was established there on 28 July 1920.

Nakhichevan's present borders were delineated by the Treaty of Moscow in 1921. That document also contains language that pan-Turkic and other irredentists in Constantinople claim allows them to intervene to ensure the boundaries of Nakhichevan and protect the interests of the Moslems living there.

Prior to 1924, Nakhichevan's population included large numbers of Armenians, possibly making up as much as half the total. Then local Azeris began a harassment campaign, leading many Armenians to emigrate and eventually reducing that element to its present one percent of the population.

the area. The Azeris interpreted this as a final slap in the face and a further tilting toward Armenia by the Russians. Violence quickly escalated along the Azeri/Armenian border, and particularly in Nagorno-Karabagh.

More and more refugees fled from one area to another. Meshktian Turks left Armenia for Azerbaijan; Armenians fled Azerbaijan (particularly from around Baku); Azeris moved from Karabagh; and the Kurds, living in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, simply tried to avoid getting caught in the middle. By the end of 1990, the total number of refugees throughout the Transcaucasus is estimated to have grown to 700,000.

From then until now the situation has only worsened. Soviet/Russian control was finally removed with the dissolution of the USSR and

both states' official independence. Both economies have deteriorated since, though Armenia's situation is the more severe because its main lines of communication to the outside world run through Georgian and Azerbaijani territory. Both countries can only survive for the near future by maintaining a heavy dependence on the Russian economy. The on-the-ground military situation has taken the following course.

May 1991. Azerbaijani "Special Purpose Military Detachments" forcibly deported the Armenian populations of the villages of Chaykend and Martunashen, introducing "ethnic cleansing" to a second area of the world.

June 1991. Azeri troops launched an offensive across the eastern border of Armenian Karabagh. They captured roughly a dozen towns and

The Transcaucasus in World War II

A few months after the German *Wehrmacht* steam-rolled into the USSR in 1941, a member of the Turkish army's general staff visited Hitler and urged him to intercede on behalf of the many thousands of Red Army prisoners of war of Turkic ethnicity. Hitler, ever hopeful of bringing Turkey into the Axis camp, granted permission for the German army to recruit among those POWs to form a "Turkestani Legion."

The recruiting was expanded until four military units (called "legions" by the Germans) made up of men

from the Transcaucasus were formed: the Georgian Legion, the Armenian Legion, the Azerbaidjan Legion, and the North Caucasian Legion. By September 1944, some 102,195 men from the Transcaucasus were serving in the German armed forces (including 18,600 Armenians and 17,795 Azeris), in both combat and rear area battalions.

Hitler had no great trust in the easterners, and he didn't want them to get a true sense of their numbers or potential aggregate strength. He therefore never allowed them to be deployed in any concentration above single battalions. Further, he had many of the units transferred out of the Russian theater of war, to the west or Yugoslavia. There the troops were less motivated to fight, since they'd joined the Germans primarily in the hope of freeing their homelands from the Communists. At best then, the "eastern peoples" combat record was spotty, and at the end of the war all but those few who escaped being handed back to the Soviets were executed as traitors.

— Ty Bomba



A senior NCO in the World War II German army's "Armenian Legion." Photo courtesy of R. James Bender Pubs.



The Mufti of Jerusalem chats with members of the Azerbaidjan Legion. Photo Courtesy of R. James Bender Pubs.

villages, including the important road center of Mardakert. In southern Nagorno-Karabagh, they bombed, but failed to capture, Gadrut.

August 1991. There were a number of ambushes, raids, and individual shootings conducted by Armenian irregulars in the Shaumyan district north of Nagorno-Karabagh inside Azeri territory.

December 1991. The inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabagh voted by 99 percent for independence from Azerbaijan. But the Azerbaijan government declared the voting invalid and continued military operations against the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh.

August 1992. Talks began in Rome to resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh, under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). But the Azeris and Turks immediately walked out of the conference to protest the name under which the delegation from Nagorno-Karabagh had been admitted: "The Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh." They were talked into returning, but the Armenians pulled out three days later.

May 1993. The fighting continues, especially around Kelbajar, the Lachin strip, and Fizuli. Armenian forces had earlier managed to establish a link to the Nagorno-Karabagh enclave, and they are now fighting to expand that corridor and send in more food and ammunition. The Azerbaijan government has claimed that the Armenian offensive has created some 50,000 additional refugees. Azeri shelling of Armenian border regions with artillery and tank fire is increasing. The UN Security Council has denounced the Armenians' action, and the Turkish government has suggested its armed forces may begin conducting maneuvers along the Turkish-Armenian border.

In sum, as with many of the other trouble spots in the post-Cold-War world, this conflict has a long and complex history that defies quick solution. The Soviet attempt to create a "new socialist man" living in a strife-free society failed. Their efforts succeeded only in temporarily holding down — pressure-cooker like — the many ethnic wars now boiling over around the wreckage of their fallen state. ☛

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BACKING INTO EMPIRE

The Growth of Rome

by Richard M. Berthold

Few civilizations have been so thoroughly identified with imperialism as that of the Romans. That is understandable: in terms of longevity and territorial extent, particularly in light of its low technology, the Roman state remains the premier imperial structure of all time. At the same time, however, the nature of that imperium and the policies that led to its establishment are generally misunderstood. The Rome of popular imagination is usually that of *Ben Hur*, the brutal conqueror and oppressor. That view may be comforting to some, but it is incorrect.

In reality, Roman policies were shaped by the "Roman Character," the dominant facets of which were a self-sacrificing sense of duty, an extreme conservatism, and a pre-eminent concern with practicality. The Romans were not given to critical introspection, theorizing or long-range planning; they were inclined toward solving immediate problems and then getting on with day-to-day business.

Because of their conservatism, they attempted to adapt traditional institutions and practices to changing circumstances rather than create new ones. When something no longer worked, they found something that did, usually borrowing it from neighbors or opponents. The result was that the Republican constitution and empire, both developed over centuries, had a haphazard, jury-rigged quality about them — but they worked.

The roots of the classic "Roman Character" are quite familiar: the quest for security, the desire to have no threatening neighbors. War was endemic in early Italy, and Rome, like the other petty states of the central peninsula, existed in constant fear of attack and destruction. That's not to say the early Romans weren't aggressive, but in so far as their motivations are concerned they generally fought defensive wars.

They were, in fact, not permitted to do otherwise. Their own body of regulations dealing with relations with other states — the Fetial Law — defined legitimate *casi belli* and circumstances under which Rome could resort to force of arms. To attack another state that had not first attacked Rome or an ally, or before exhausting a long process of negotia-

tion, would put the Romans in the wrong relationship with heaven, something the conservative early Republic was generally loath to suffer.

Of course, virtually every imperial state in history has claimed it was only protecting itself, and without doubt, the young Republic — existing in a tough world where war was the normal state of affairs — indulged in its share of aggression. The point is, though, there was in Rome's conquest of Italy no plan of expansion, no consistent policy of imperial aggrandizement. Seen as a reflection of her national character, Rome's expansion was essentially haphazard, taking form as she reacted to the threats of the moment. Only in the final stages, when facing the Greek-dominated south, did the Senate begin to look beyond the immediate. Even then, it was not from a desire to conquer the area, but to prevent the emergence of a strong power that might threaten central Italy.

The plan-less Romans ended up dominating the Italian peninsula because of the way they waged their wars and dealt with the defeated. However they got into a war, they prosecuted it in an offensive and aggressive manner, and unless pressed elsewhere, their inclination was to end the threat for good by completely smashing the enemy. Because of that, the terms extended to beaten foes were almost always unconditional surrender. This allowed the Romans complete freedom in determining the post-war environment when they were victorious — and they were victorious most of the time.

Phase I: Conquest of Italy

What the Romans imposed on their conquered enemies was a system that not only secured her position, but also fueled further conquests. A surrendered state was compelled to accept an "alliance" with Rome, and while the details of those treaties varied, there were always two inevitable clauses: the new ally had to send troops when Rome called for them, and had to give up its foreign policy. Other than that, the Romans made no demands and did not interfere in their allies' internal affairs, as long as a broad measure of civil order was maintained. All the alliances were per-

manent — even for the states that joined voluntarily. Failure to honor the provisions brought immediate and generally brutal responses from the Roman army.

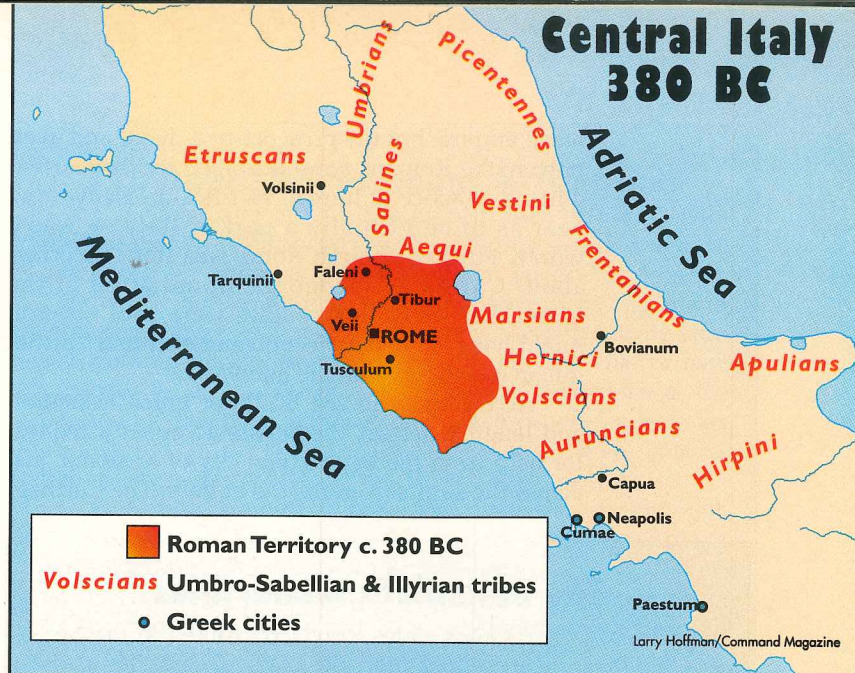
These arrangements provided Rome not only with security, but also a growing base of power — each new victory ultimately meant access to more Italian manpower, and thus an increase in the military force available to Rome.

This system also led to further expansion, since each new ally brought Rome into contact with new potential foes, and the enemies of her ally became her enemies. Obligated to defend her allies, Rome might then be drawn into other conflicts, ending only in the creation of still more allies further afield. In this way the alliance structure continually expanded Rome's military frontier, even though the Senate had no plan and little desire for empire-building throughout Italy.

The Roman state itself also grew, but not nearly as quickly as its military confederacy. The Senate was generally reluctant to confiscate territory, since it caused lasting resentment among the locals from whom the land was taken and further strained the Republic's overburdened administrative apparatus. Most confiscated real estate was taken to punish allies who had revolted against Rome. The early Romans were — judged by the standard of their times — more than typically lenient to defeated foes, but they were also — judged by that same standard — more than typically harsh to those who betrayed their trust.

Another reason for the direct confiscation of territory was strategic. The Senate was not keen on garrisons because of the expense and the fact the Roman army was then still a short-service citizen-militia, though a few were established in some of the Greek cities in the south. Normally, when a piece of territory was too critical to leave in the hands of an ally, the Senate confiscated the area and planted a Roman colony, which then became a kind of live-in garrison.

The success of the confederacy was due far more to its positive elements than it was to the members' fear of the legions. For one, while it was clear Rome called the shots and the allies were unequal dependents, they were nevertheless allies and not subjects. The unmistakable signs of naked imperial subjugation are foreign garrisons and tribute, and with the exception of a few of the Greek cities both were absent in the confederacy. The only people who paid direct taxes to Rome were Romans, and the allies were allowed almost complete local autonomy. Aside from surrendering control over their foreign policy — which in practice at the time meant little beyond warring with your immediate neighbors — the sole burden imposed on the allies was military support. True, the allied troops served under Roman officers in wars decided on by Rome, but they fought alongside the legions and shared in the glory and spoils.



Most importantly, the Roman system provided peace within Italy and a unified front against threats from outside the peninsula. The lack of constant warfare led to growing prosperity and mutual interests, which led in turn to the development of a corporate identity. The Romans did not deliberately export their culture, but it spread anyway — particularly the Latin language — and the alliances evolved steadily toward the creation of a Roman-Italian nation. The central Italian core of the confederacy remained loyal to Rome even in the dark days following Cannae, and in 90 BC when virtually all the allies revolted, it was not to escape Roman control, but to win citizenship and become fully Roman.

The conquest of Italy, begun with the birth of the Republic around 509 BC, and completed in 265 BC, comprises the first phase of Roman imperialism. At the end of it Rome controlled all of Italy south of the Po valley and had joined the Antigonid, Seleucid, Ptolemaic, and Carthaginian empires as a first class power in the Mediterranean.

The Second Phase: Carthage & the East

The second phase of Roman imperialism, which ran from 264 BC to the defeat of Antiochus III in 188 BC, involved the elimination of all serious rivals for domination of the Mediterranean littoral and marked the real establishment of the empire. During this period security concerns remained the prime motivation for the Senate to take Rome to war, but exactly how those security needs were defined changed, becoming ever more expansive as Roman power grew.

The conquest of southern Italy had brought the Romans eyeball to eyeball with the Carthaginians in Sicily, where those North Africans had been vying with the Greeks for several centuries. The Senate had no designs on Carthage's commercial/

naval empire, but the presence of a major and alien power (the Romans were outraged by the Carthaginians' practice of human sacrifice) in Sicily — so near as to be virtually a part of Italy — was a worry. Further, though Rome was not concerned about Carthage's economic domination of the island, her south Italian allies were, and inaction might have led to disaffection and eventual Carthaginian interference on the mainland.

Accordingly, in 264 BC, after much hesitation and lengthy debate, the Senate accepted a request for help from the key Sicilian city of Messina, just across the straits from the toe of Italy. The Carthag-

inians understandably were resentful and fearful of this interference in what they considered (and Rome had earlier agreed) was their sphere of influence. They reacted in force, initiating the First Punic War (264–241 BC).

That the issues for the Senate were security and Sicily was demonstrated at the end of the war: besides an indemnity, Carthage's only loss was that island. The Romans had no hard feelings, and when a year or so later rebelling Carthaginian mercenaries in North Africa appealed for help, the Senate not only refused, they offered aid to Carthage.

On the other hand, when shortly after that incident the mercenaries on Sardinia similarly sought support against Carthage, Rome responded by using the affair as a pretext to force surrender of both Sardinia and Corsica. This was not really a dramatic change in imperial policy, but rather is probably best viewed as what one historian has aptly labeled "the act of a nervous bully." It was a relatively painless way of obtaining two islands the Senate considered important for Italian security, and still flushed from their recent victory, the Romans couldn't resist the temptation to commit what was essentially an act of aggression. After that there were hard feelings on both sides.

Increasingly driven from the sea, the Carthaginians concentrated on Spain, developing its silver mines and building a fine army. Rome had absolutely no interest in the distant Iberian peninsula, but she did have friends, such as the city of Massilia, who did, and by playing on Roman fears, especially over the growing Carthaginian-Gallic connection, they convinced the Senate to interfere diplomatically. Seeing where all this was leading, Hannibal determined to gain the advantage by striking first, and in 218 BC he crossed the Pyrenees.

Roman fears and Carthaginian resentments were the proximate causes of the Second Punic War (218–201 BC), but something more fundamental ultimately lay behind this and the first war. In the third century BC both Rome and Carthage were vigorous and growing powers, and the western Mediterranean was only so big. That Carthage was primarily a commercial state and Rome was one seemingly disinterested in the offensive projection of power may have delayed the clash, but a showdown was inevitable. Hannibal's role was to accelerate the process — and to vividly demonstrate Rome's winning edge: the manpower of the Italian alliance system.

The defeat of Hannibal left Rome mistress of the western Mediterranean, and events conspired to draw her immediately to the east. In 201 BC an embassy representing the small Greek states of Pergamum and Rhodes arrived, seeking Roman aid against Philip V of Macedon. He had been an opportunistic ally of Carthage (the First Macedonian War, 214–205 BC), and the Romans had a

The Hellenistic Monarchies

The powerful Greek states Rome confronted in the eastern Mediterranean represented the major fragments of the empire of Alexander the Great (336–323 BC). That conqueror's death was followed by a generation of struggle among his generals, which culminated in the early third century BC in the establishment of the Antigonid, Seleucid, and Ptolemaic dynasties, each named after the officer who founded it.

The Antigonids controlled Macedon and its valuable supply of recruits, and struggled with the other monarchs for influence in the Balkan peninsula and Aegean basin. The Seleucids gained the Asian empire, which continually shrank westward, leaving them the economically vital regions of Asia Minor and Syria-Palestine. The Ptolemies held Egypt, from which they contended with the Seleucids for control of Syria-Palestine, and with the Antigonids for the Peloponnese. (Even more than Prussia, the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires were simply armies with a place to stand.)

Each state consisted of a Greco-Macedonian administration and army, and its territory was defined by however much that army controlled at any given time. With the exception of the propertied classes, which were receptive to hellenization and became "culture Greeks," the native populations had no role beyond producing the wealth that supported the army and administration. As kings of Macedon, the Antigonids had a real connection with the people they ruled, but even they tended to see their populace as little more than a resource upon which to draw.

Competing for strategic areas and for the Greek cities with their money and recruits, the three monarchies maintained a precarious balance of power through most of the third century BC, no one able to achieve dominance against the resistance of the other two. By the time Rome arrived on the scene around 200 BC, the balance was already breaking down. Ptolemaic Egypt was sliding into internal disarray and faced the growing prospect of Seleucid conquest.

The Antigonid monarchy came to an end in 167 BC, with Perseus' defeat by the Romans, and the Seleucid house, in more or less steady decline since its defeat in 188 BC, was finally extinguished by Cn. Pompeius in 64. Protected by the Romans, who turned back a victorious Antiochus IV in 167 BC, the Ptolemaic dynasty lasted the longest, ending in 30 BC with the suicide of Cleopatra VII.

long memory. But with his attention focused in the Aegean and his fleet checked by the Rhodian-Pergamene coalition, the Antigonid king was never an immediate danger. Thus the mere shadowy threat of some future stab in the back by Philip would not have been enough to move the Senate, especially with Italy exhausted from the Punic War, but the Rhodian-Pergamene appeal was opportunity come knocking again.

As invited allies, particularly of the Rhodians with their unimpeachable reputation, the Romans could credibly intervene under the convenient banner of Greek liberty. The allies already possessed a powerful fleet, which had Philip's blockaded, and though Rome was tired of war, she did have veteran legions ready at hand. Philip was both a powerful and troublesome neighbor who would have had to have been dealt with sooner or later, and the situation made it attractive to do it sooner. But certainly a desire for simple conquest had nothing to do with the decision to launch a new war: at the end of it the Romans evacuated Greece, astounding the cynical natives.

While Rome was busy winning the Second Macedonian War (200-196 BC), Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire took the opportunity to regain western Asia Minor, which had been lost earlier by his dynasty. This led to a "Cold War" with the Romans, who themselves had no real interest in Asian affairs, but who had friends who did. Prompted especially by Pergamum, whose ambitions Antiochus was thwarting, Rome began pestering the king over the issue of his Greek cities.

Matters were not helped by the appearance of Hannibal at the Seleucid court, and war was finally begun in 192 BC. The Aetolians, hoping to capitalize on the opportunities a new war would create, ambushed one of the last Roman detachments in Greece and invited Antiochus to pitch in and strike while he could.

Neither the Senate nor Antiochus wanted the war. Roman arrogance and suspicion, Antiochus' justifiable stubbornness, and the presence of Hannibal, all worked to create a charged atmosphere of misunderstanding and distrust, upon which the machinations of Pergamum and Aetolia played, driving the two great powers to open hostility. The result was the War with Antiochus (192-188 BC), which marked the beginning of the end of the Seleucid Dynasty.

Reluctant Imperialists

The defeat of Antiochus was the turning point. There was simply no one left to face Rome: Carthage had been reduced to city-state proportions; Philip was left with only his ancestral kingdom and little else; Ptolemaic Egypt was already impotent, and the Seleucids, stripped of Asia Minor, were beginning their long slide to oblivion. Even though Rome directly controlled little Mediterranean territory, the empire had been established.

Provincial Government & Taxation

The question of provincial administration first arose with the acquisition of Sicily in 241 BC. Having decided against extending the military alliance system beyond the Italian peninsula, the Senate first attempted to govern the island without creating any new administrative apparatus, by simply working through the existing local officials. That proved unworkable, and in 227 BC the magisterial structure was expanded by the addition of two new praetors, who were to act as governors of the provinces (from *provincia*, the administrative sphere of a magistrate) of Sicily and Sardinia-Corsica.

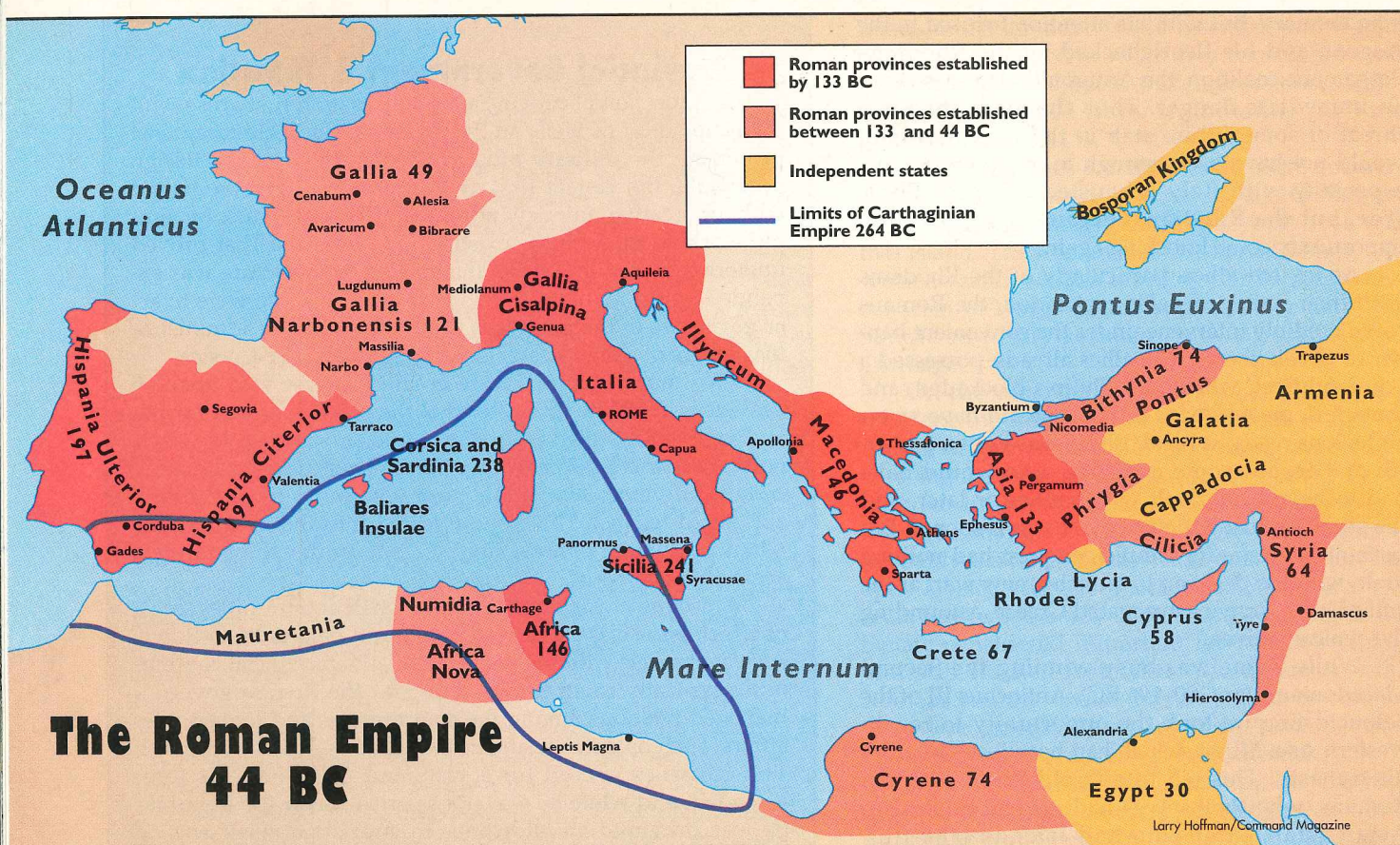
Two more praetors were created for the two Spanish provinces in 197 BC, but after that the practice arose of using ex-magistrates, called *propraetors* and *proconsuls*, as governors. Augustus again modified this approach by designating certain provinces "imperial," and governing them through appointed legates. This system lasted into the Late Empire, when provincial control finally came under the complete aegis of the emperor.

A province was a collection of small communities, most of which were classified as tributary and paid taxes to Rome. As was the case with the Italian allies, the provincial communities typically ruled themselves, and the Roman governor managed relations among the communities and looked after affairs, such as defense and taxation, at the provincial level. The governor served for a year, but often had his term extended, and while he was not salaried under the Republic, he was provided an allowance to support himself and an extensive staff.

The Romans normally adopted whatever tax system was already present, and new subjects usually paid no more, often even less, than they had to their previous rulers. Collection mechanisms varied: some direct taxes were raised by the communities themselves, while other direct and all the indirect revenues were contracted to "tax farmers." These were private corporations that bid for a tax collection contract and kept as profit whatever they took in beyond their bid. In the early Principate, tax farmers were limited to indirect taxes and then eliminated altogether, their place taken by imperial revenue officials.

Because of the virtually unlimited and unsupervised authority of a governor under the Republic, there was plenty of opportunity for abuse of power. The typically short term of office worked against any extensive familiarity with the province, and also prompted a corrupt governor to work more quickly to recover illegally the expenses of the political career that had brought him his governorship.

With the authorities biased in their favor, Roman moneylenders preyed on the provincials, and the corruption of the tax farmers became notorious. An extortion court to try provincial officials was established in 149 BC, but it was completely inadequate and in any case quickly became a domestic political football during the Revolution. The later years of the Revolution were (until the Anarchy, AD 235-285) the worst for the provincials, who were plundered to support the civil wars. But life improved immensely under the Principate, with the growing supervision and control of governors by the emperor.



The prime motivation of Rome during these wars was security, but how the Senate defined that security necessarily changed as the state became more powerful — just as happened with the United States after World War II. The fear of an immediately and directly threatening neighbor, a great power right on her doorstep, led to the First Punic War. The Second Punic War was essentially an extension of the First, but it was precipitated by the Senate's new perception of an indirect threat in the expansion of Carthaginian power in Spain. In the case of Philip, the Senate was concerned about a neighbor who might be a future threat. With Antiochus, they had reached the final stage: an intolerance of any strong power that didn't respond to their bidding.

The Romans may be seen to have become arrogant, impatient, and even outright paranoid, but that can't obscure the fact their elimination of Mediterranean rivals, like their earlier conquest of Italy, resulted essentially from short-term defensive concerns. Hunger for territory or economic advantage was not behind the developments. The Romans evacuated Greece twice, and Asia Minor once, and left Anatolian and North African territory to clients.

The Senate represented landed wealth; its members were barred by law from most business activities — this fostered in them a tendency to ignore foreign economic opportunities and leave

them to allies. Rome made plenty of money in the eastern wars, and Italian businessmen eagerly followed the legions, but there is no evidence the Senate voted a war in this period for economic reasons.

Rome's reluctance to create provinces certainly suggests a hesitant imperialist. Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica were made into provinces because they were vital to Italian security, and the Mediterranean coast of Spain was taken in because there was no one else to maintain order — but the Senate normally chose to avoid establishing direct Roman rule.

Such rule was expensive; the state had no real colonial apparatus (provincial governors were simply ex-magistrates) or long-service professional military, and the Senate did not want to create such commitments. Turning Macedonia into a province, for example, would require Rome to shoulder that people's traditional duty of shielding Greece from northern barbarians; better to let a weakened Philip do it. The Senate's preferred policy was to exercise power indirectly, through client states like Pergamum or Numidia (the latter was actually a Roman creation).

This policy didn't always work, and over the decades areas were turned into provinces because other arrangements could not ensure order. Macedonia is again a perfect example. In 196 BC, that Antigonid kingdom was left intact, but was

stripped of its foreign possessions. Philip's son Perseus rebuilt Macedonian strength and thereby aroused Roman suspicions, which were then played on by the king's Greek enemies, who managed to prod both parties into the Third Macedon-

ian War (171–167 BC). Having defeated Perseus, the Romans deposed him and turned Macedon into four autonomous republics, only to be faced by a pretender, Andriscus, who set off the Fourth Macedonian War (149–148 BC). Andriscus was eas-

A Faithful Client: Pergamum

Few allies of Rome were as dedicated (and at the same time as self-serving) as the Attalids of Pergamum. The dynasty began with Philetaerus (282–263 BC), an officer of Seleucus I, who ruled the city of Pergamum in northwestern Asia Minor and defended the area from the Galatians. Eumenes I (263–241 BC), his nephew and successor, took advantage of Seleucid problems to throw off their yoke in 262 and expand his kingdom. His successor, Attalus I (241–197 BC), crushed the Galatians and at the end of the century began a policy of aiding the enemies of Philip V of Macedon. Attalus' reaction to Philip's Aegean campaign in 202 was to send a joint embassy with the Rhodians to seek Roman aid, and this appeal resulted in the Second Macedonian War.

Pergamum's role in the war was necessarily limited, and Attalus' son Eumenes II (197–159 BC) not only received little reward from Rome, but also faced the threat of resurgent Seleucid power under Antiochus III (223–187 BC). Eumenes consequently did everything he could to stir up suspicion and hostility between Rome and Antiochus and played an instrumental role in bringing on the war that broke out in 192 BC. The Pergamene fleet helped the Romans once again, and this time the kingdom was amply rewarded with most of the Seleucid territory in Asia Minor.

Eumenes used his influence with the Senate to make political arrangements in Asia Minor favorable to himself, and in 183 BC he persuaded the Romans to stop a war neighboring Bithynia was waging against him. His control of cities in Thrace led to friction with the new Macedonian king, Perseus, and Eumenes once more did all he could to cause trouble between Rome and a Greek monarch, helping to cause the Third Macedonian War. During that war he personally lost favor with the Senate because of their suspicion he was negotiating with Perseus. But his successors, Attalus II (159–138 BC), and Attalus III (138–133 BC), regained Roman confidence and support.

Pergamum was the perfect model of a client state, consistently looking after Roman interests in the east in return for the rewards that Roman power could bring: protection and territorial gain. The Attalids always put their interests first, but with the exception of Eumenes' slip during the Third Macedonian War they were also always careful to keep the Senate happy. They served Rome one final time; when Attalus III died in 133 BC, he bequeathed the entire kingdom to the Romans, who in 129 turned it into the province of Asia.

A Less Than Faithful Client: Rhodes

Because of its economic power and fine navy, the island republic of Rhodes was the only Greek city state

to preserve its independence and play an important role in the Hellenistic system. Throughout the third century BC, Rhodian foreign policy aimed at suppressing piracy and maintaining a balance of power among the three great monarchies. The island even joined a coalition against its closest ally, Egypt, when Ptolemy II (283–246 BC) became too strong.

The Hellenistic power balance was in ruins by the end of the century, however, and when Philip V began his campaign in the Aegean and Asia Minor, Rhodes' options were limited. By 201 BC, the Rhodian–Pergamene fleet had trapped Philip's navy, and the island was thus safe from invasion, but without help from a great power it would be impossible to eject Antigonid forces from Rhodian and Pergamene territory on the Anatolian mainland. Ptolemaic Egypt was a weakling, and the Seleucid monarch Antiochus III had struck a deal with Philip, so with Pergamum's Attalus III Rhodes appealed to Rome, kindling the Second Macedonian War.

Inviting Rome into the east was dangerous, but Rhodes had little choice. In any case the policy proved correct, since the Romans did not occupy Greece in the wake of the war. Rhodian participation in the fighting was necessarily limited, but the republic emerged as official hegemon of the Aegean islands and with an enhanced reputation as a defender of Greek liberty.

The Rhodians certainly didn't want to see a war between Rome and Antiochus, but once it was on they determined to reap what benefits they could and joined the Romans, virtually winning the naval war for them single-handedly.

Rhodes was well rewarded for participating by being granted large tracts of Anatolian territory, but apprehension about growing Roman influence and involvement in Greek affairs was spreading among her policy makers. The island was consequently lukewarm in her support of Rome in the Third Macedonian War, and in 168 BC sent peace embassies to the Senate and to the Roman consul in Macedon. The timing was incredibly bad: the offer to mediate arrived hard on the heels of Perseus' defeat at Pydna, leaving the embarrassed islanders mumbling improvised congratulations.

But neutrality and congratulations were not acceptable to a Rome that no longer faced any serious threat in the Mediterranean, and Roman favor turned to hostility. A faction of Senators began urging a declaration of war against the island, and swallowing their immense pride, the Rhodians sought and finally obtained a permanent alliance with Rome in 164. That meant the end of Rhodian independence, but rational to the end, their leadership recognized alliance was the only way to save the prosperous republic from complete ruin.

Judea

Rome's direct involvement with Judea began in 63 BC, when Cn. Pompeius, who was in the east winding up the Third Mithridatic War and organizing the province of Syria, supported Hyrcanus against his brother as high priest and ethnarch of Judea and surrounding territories. Hyrcanus was captured by the Parthians in 40 BC, and three years later M. Antonius installed the pro-Roman Herod (the Great), who built a strong and expansive secular government. Political troubles at Herod's death in 4 BC required Roman intervention, and his kingdom was divided among his three sons, Archelaus becoming ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumaea.

Archelaus was so despised by his own people that at their request Augustus turned his kingdom into the province of Judea in AD 6. In AD 41, Claudius added this province to the northern kingdom of Herod's grandson Agrippa I, and upon the latter's death three years later the entire area was annexed as a procuratorial province. There followed years of increasing unrest, culminating in open rebellion against Rome in AD 66, and again in 132. Both insurrections were crushed.

Judea stands in direct contrast to the rest of the Empire, which generally accepted Roman rule. The Roman government, apart from a few lunatic or incompetent emperors like Caligula, recognized that the Jews were a special case and, at least until the revolt of 66, gave them considerably more leeway than other provincials. To a much greater degree than others in the

Empire, they were granted local autonomy and jurisdiction and were released from various military and imperial cult requirements that conflicted with their religion.

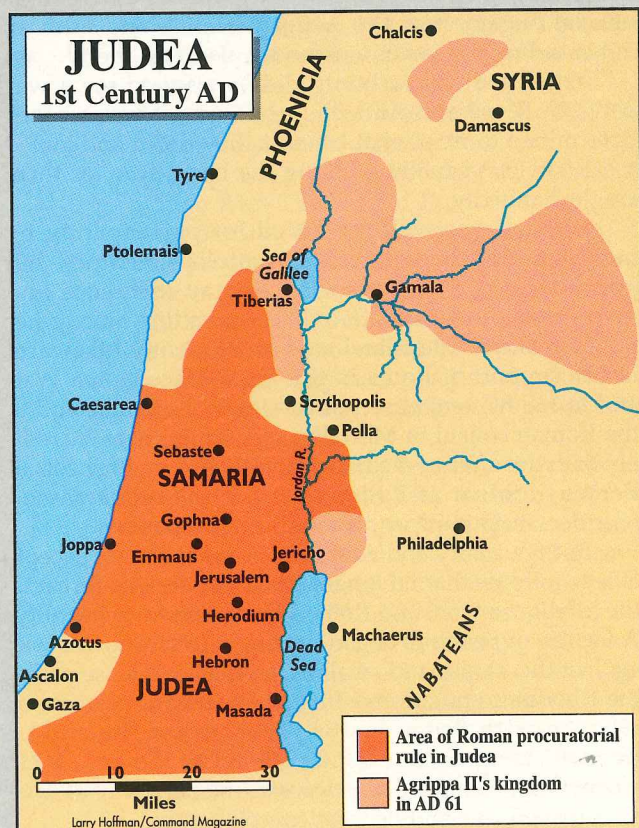
But trouble could not be avoided, because the Jews, unlike others, could not be assimilated into the Greco-Roman polytheist culture of the Empire. The same problem had confronted the previous rulers of Palestine, the Macedonian monarchs of the Seleucid dynasty, who had attempted to unite their realm through hellenization. Their efforts had also been fiercely resisted by the Jews.

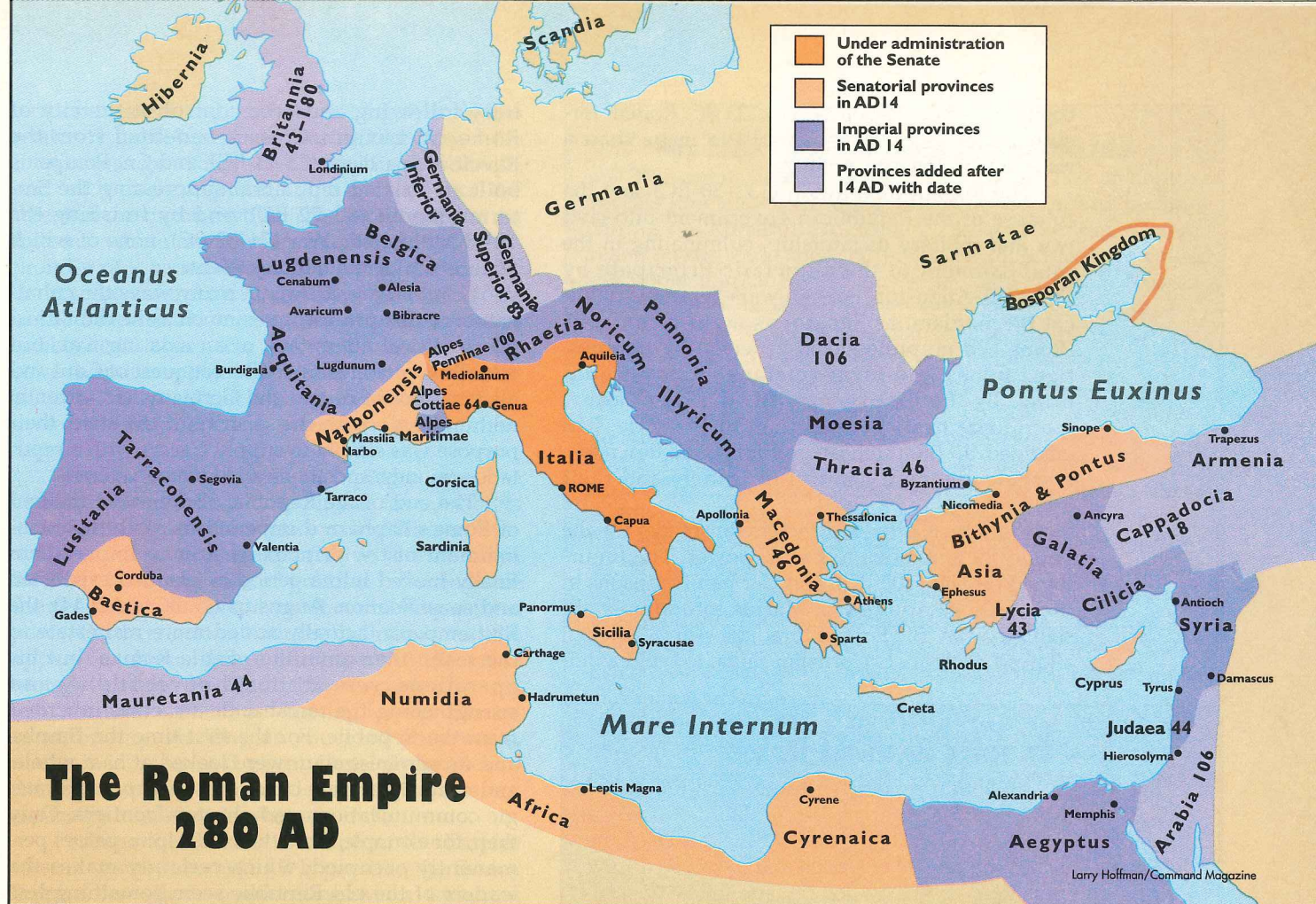
As the occupying power, Rome was naturally the focus of hostility, but in fact much of the friction was between Jews and Greeks, and between differing factions of Jews. The enmity between Jew and Greek went back to the days of Alexander, and under Rome the Greeks and other gentiles in the area quite naturally resented the special treatment given the Hebrews. Alexandria, a Greek city with the largest Jewish community outside Palestine, was the scene of frequent rioting, and the Romans (much like the British army in Palestine during the Mandate) were caught in the middle.

In Judea itself, the propertied classes that controlled the religious establishment generally supported Rome, knowing full well the alternative was disaster. But at the popular level, emotion and religious fervor triumphed over reason and reality and twice brought that feared disaster upon the Jews. This explains in part the desire of the upper-class Jews to have Jesus executed; not only was he a heretic, threatening their traditional religious authority, but hailed as "King of the Jews," he could also be seen by the Romans as a nationalist leader — something the Imperial government could not tolerate. Finally, because Judea was such a difficult place to govern, and thus an unpopular posting, the province tended to get poor administrators, which of course only exacerbated the situation.

There is no escaping the fact the Romans were occupying an area that had previous owners, and to that extent they may be considered culpable imperialists. But that, as they used to say even then, "is life in the big city," and the Jews themselves could hardly act holier-than-thou on this score, since during their two periods of political independence (the kingdoms established by David in the 11th century BC, and after the Maccabean revolt in the second century BC) they had not hesitated in crushing the freedom of their neighbors. The "bottom line" of *Realpolitik* in the eastern Mediterranean was that Syria-Palestine was strategically vital to whatever strong power emerged, and Rome can hardly be accused of doing anything unusual in the region.

The fact the Roman government tried so many different administrative arrangements for Judea in the period leading up to the first revolt demonstrates how difficult it was to maintain order there. After the policies of compromise failed with the explosion of the first Jewish revolt, Roman attitudes hardened, quite understandably. This led inevitably to the second revolt, in which the destruction and loss of life made the results of the first seem trivial.





ily crushed, but the Senate then had little alternative to forming the province of Macedon.

Empire

With the defeat of Antiochus, Roman imperialism entered its third phase, which lasted until 30 BC and the end of the civil wars. Though there were some problems with the Germans at the end of the second century BC, the security of Italy was clearly no longer at issue, and the Senate concerned itself more with the maintenance of order and local security around the Mediterranean. That concern contributed to the gradual expansion of direct administration.

A good example of this phase comes from Spain. There efforts to protect the coastal cities drew the Romans deeper and deeper into the interior, until by the end of the second century BC almost all of Iberia had been incorporated into the provincial system.

The final destruction of Carthage in the Third Punic War (149-146 BC), incidentally, was completely anomalous — the result of emotion rather than calculated policy. After the terrifying experience of Hannibal in Italy, the Romans could no longer think rationally when dealing with the African state.

During this period, Roman domestic politics also began to emerge as a prime determinant in

foreign policy decisions. The traditional goal of the Senatorial statesmen had been to gain and surpass each other in prestige — *dignitas* — which was acquired by serving the state. There was of course political jockeying among the wealthy families that made up the Senate, but it appears that before the second century BC the vast majority of Senators voted according to what they considered the best interests of Rome. By the second half of that century, however, personal political interests and ambitions were beginning to dominate, and with the

A Line in the Sand

Just how strong Rome had become by the end of the Third Macedonian War is illustrated by an incident that took place in 168 BC. In that year Antiochus IV stood with his army at the gates of Alexandria, about to achieve what his dynasty had been attempting for almost a century and a half — the capture of Egypt from the Ptolemies. At his moment of victory, however, a Roman embassy headed by C. Popillius Laenas showed up with a Senatorial order for Antiochus to evacuate Egypt and Cyprus (which he had recently taken).

When the Seleucid king requested time to consider, Popillius drew a line in the sand around him with his walking stick and demanded an answer before Antiochus left that circle. Antiochus took his army and returned to Syria.

beginning of the Revolution in 133 BC, Roman foreign policy quickly became little more than a reflection of domestic politics.

The Roman Revolution (133–30 BC) saw the collapse of the Republican government into civil war and military dictatorship, culminating in the establishment of the autocratic Principate by Octavian–Augustus. Foreign wars became a political mechanism, as Senators sought commands (Rome had no professional generals) for the prestige, money and loyal veterans victory would bring. By the first century BC the client army, more loyal to its general than to the state, had emerged, and Republican politics boiled down to a struggle among a handful of leaders and their armies.

Wars then provided the circumstances for the politically ambitious to rise to power. The Jugurthine War (111–105 BC), and German incursions in the north, catapulted C. Marius into almost absolute power. The First Mithradatic War (89–85 BC) allowed his rival, L. Cornelius Sulla, to build a mil-

itary following and take control of the city of Rome. M. Licinius Crassus benefited from the Revolt of Spartacus (73–71 BC), and Cn. Pompeius built an inflated reputation suppressing the Sertorian Revolt (80–72 BC), and by finishing the Third Mithradatic War (74–63 BC), none of which required any great military talent.

C. Julius Caesar was in many ways the culmination of this process, in as much as he didn't just take political advantage of an existing war, but actually created his own. The conquest of Gaul and his invasions of Britain and Germany had virtually nothing to do with the security of the state; their purpose was simply to supply Caesar with a reputation, money, and above all, devoted veterans.

The end of the Republic also marked the end of Rome's haphazard imperialism. With the establishment of the Principate, Roman imperialism finally moved into a period of planned expansion and consolidation. Augustus (27 BC – AD 14), the first emperor, actually added more real estate to the realm than any other single Roman, but his operations were all in aid of rebuilding and strengthening the ramshackle structure inherited from the Republic. For the first time the Empire and its administration were looked at as a whole, and campaigns were conducted to improve strategic communications and shorten frontiers. Only then, for example, were the vital Alpine passes permanently occupied, which certainly makes the leaders of the old Republic seem something less than deliberate imperialists.

To improve communications east from Italy, and to protect the Balkan peninsula, Augustus occupied all the territory north to the Danube River. He intended then to conquer western Germany to the Elbe River, and thus dramatically shorten the northern frontier, but the annihilation of three legions in the Teutoburg Forest ended that scheme. The frontier would be the Rhine–Danube line, and Augustus, deciding the empire had reached its natural limits, urged his successors to forgo further expansion.

Apex

With the exception of Claudius' invasion of Britain (AD 41–54), and the Flavian settlement of the triangle of land between the upper Rhine and Danube, Augustus' dictum was followed until the early second century AD, when Trajan (AD 98–117) occupied Dacia, Armenia and Mesopotamia. His successor, Hadrian (AD 117–138), abandoned the over-extended eastern conquests, but Dacia, protected by the Carpathian Mountains, was kept until the middle of the third century. By that time the empire was struggling to survive its own internal breakdown, and Roman imperialism was at an end.

The period from Augustus to the outbreak of the Anarchy in 235 was the heyday of the Roman Empire, when it reached its greatest prosperity and

Revolts Against Rome

In the half-millennium between the unification of the Italian peninsula and the Anarchy, Rome faced roughly a dozen serious revolts. This figure doesn't include wartime defections, such as the revolts of Capua and Syracuse during the Second Punic War, or Roman-led revolts against the central government.

Three of these revolts were slave uprisings: two in Sicily (135–132 BC; 103–99 BC) and one in Italy under Spartacus (73–71 BC). Five were native revolts in areas that had only recently been conquered: Vercingetorix and his Gauls (52–51 BC), the Pannonians (AD 6–9), Arminius and his Germans (AD 9), Boudicca and her Iceni and other British tribes (AD 60), and Mesopotamia (AD 116). Gaul, Pannonia, Germany east of the Rhine, and Mesopotamia had all been acquired after rapid campaigns, and the Iceni were clients rather than actual subjects. The two Jewish uprisings were undeniably nationalist revolts against Roman control, but the unassimilable monotheist Hebrews were a unique case.

Excepting those of the Jews, only two native revolts occurred in areas occupied by the Romans for a generation or more: C. Julius Vindex and his Gauls (AD 68), and C. Julius Civilis and his Batavians (AD 69–70). Both leaders were Romanized provincials, and both clearly received some support from the Gauls for a war of liberation, suggesting a measure of discontent with Roman rule. Discontent, particularly because of financial oppression, certainly played a role in the rapid spread of Boudicca's revolt, though it should be remembered the Roman presence in Britain was then only a decade-and-a-half old.

Roman rule was obviously not perceived as wonderful by all the provincials, but the scarcity of native revolts over such a long period suggests that while most subjects were perhaps less than enthusiastic about the Empire, they could live with it.

territorial extent and enjoyed its longest period of relatively unbroken peace. During that period the Empire was generally accepted by its inhabitants, and with one exception Rome did not face the threat of provincial revolts. That exception was the Judeans, whose monotheism and belief in a divine promise of a national state made it impossible for them to be assimilated into the polytheist culture of the Empire. Otherwise, once Roman rule was established it was accepted, which was fortunate, since the military manpower allowed by the imperial economy would not have been sufficient to both guard the frontiers and internally garrison the Empire.

The Empire was broadly accepted because for its first two centuries, at least, it was for most of its inhabitants a satisfactory place to live. The tax burden was not particularly oppressive, and in return for their taxes and loss of political independence the provincials received a most compelling return: peace. Further, lacking both the inclination and the apparatus, Rome didn't administer at the grass roots level, but ruled indirectly through alliances with the local elites, thus allowing for a great deal of autonomy. As long as you paid your taxes, maintained order and gave at least lip service to the imperial cult, the central government was not especially interested in what you did.

Perhaps the greatest triumph of the Empire was its cosmopolitanism. It began like the British Empire, one ethnic group ruling over a variety of subject peoples, but quickly evolved away from that model. Not only did the Greco-Roman culture of the imperial heartland flow outward, Rome increasingly took provincial talent into the central government. Trajan and Hadrian are good examples here — they were Roman in every sense except their blood lines, which were Iberian.

Italy gradually lost its special status, ultimately becoming just another set of provinces. The process of homogenization culminated, at least symbolically, in 212 AD, with the Edict of Caracalla (211-217), by which virtually every free male in the Empire acquired Roman citizenship. By then that citizenship was largely meaningless politically, but the point remains that a Gallic farmer or Syrian merchant had the same legal status as someone whose ancestry was Roman all the way back to the early Republic.

In the end, the Roman Empire collapsed because of structural weaknesses, but while it lasted it was something. There have been bigger empires, and a few longer-lived empires, but never has there been an empire so large and so stable over so long a time, with so small a military establishment and such a low level of technique. And never has there been an imperial structure so cosmopolitan. For all the negative reputation, the Roman Empire in its prime was easily one of the better political constructs in the often sorry history of our race. ★

An Enemy of Rome: Mithridates

The career of Mithridates VI (c. 120-63 BC) of Pontus reveals how entwined foreign and domestic affairs became during the Roman Revolution. As king of Pontus, a small realm on the south shore of the Black Sea, Mithridates could not under normal circumstances seriously challenge Roman authority in Asia Minor. But in 90 BC the Romans were distracted by the revolt of their Italian allies in the Social War (90-88 BC). Taking advantage of that, Mithridates seized Asia Minor and most of Greece.

The Roman response was delayed first by the Social War, and then by the growing political struggle between C. Marius and L. Cornelius Sulla, both of whom had risen to prominence during the wars against Jugurtha and the Italian allies. Sulla was first assigned command of the expeditionary force, but when he went off to join the army at Nola, Marius' friends in Rome had the mission switched to their man. Not wanting to lose the opportunities for wealth and political power offered by an eastern campaign, Sulla convinced his troops the legitimate Senatorial government was actually being held hostage by Marian revolutionaries. He led them on a march to Rome.

The Marians were chased out of Rome, and in the spring of 87 BC Sulla left for Greece. Mithridates was quickly driven out of the Balkan peninsula and western Anatolia, and in 85 accepted a treaty that left his kingdom intact.

Had it not been for domestic considerations, Sulla certainly would not have agreed to such a generous peace, which contrary to the usual Roman practice left the war unfinished. But Sulla was anxious to settle affairs in Asia to be able to return to his problems in Rome, where the Marians had again seized power in his absence. Having thus received a further lease on political life, Mithridates again began expanding his kingdom, which led to the Second (83-82 BC) and Third Mithridatic Wars (74-63 BC).

In the final struggle, Mithridates was defeated and fled to Armenia, but he was saved from capture when L. Licinius Lucullus' army mutinied in 68. Once more the Pontic ruler was able to regain his kingdom, only to be driven out in 66 by Cn. Pompeius, who chased him into the Crimea, where he committed suicide in 63.

Mithridates' importance stems solely from his impact on the Roman Revolution. Had it not been for Rome's increasing domestic strife, he would never have emerged from obscurity in the first place, and would certainly not have survived as long as he did. His first expansion provided Sulla with the chance to acquire the wealth and loyal veterans that ultimately allowed him to triumph over the Marians and become dictator of Rome. The third war, essentially won by Lucullus, provided Pompeius with an easy enhancement of his reputation and the opportunity to establish economically and politically useful clients all over the east, though in the end it didn't save him from Caesar.

Mithridates' son Pharnaces II (63-47 BC) was made king of a reduced Pontus, and he used the occasion of the civil war between Caesar and Pompeius to follow his father's footsteps and seize neighboring territory. His army was destroyed by Caesar in 47 BC, after a five day campaign that led to the famous pronouncement: "I came; I saw; I conquered."

The Strategy of Harold Godwinson, Last Saxon King of England

(or How to Win a Battle and Lose a Kingdom)

by G.K. Bishop

Harold Godwinson is a figure of high tragedy in the history of warfare. In the judgment of most historians, he was an intelligent, astute and experienced statesman, and a strong administrator who was nevertheless known for his tolerance and understanding. Those were rare characteristics among the rulers of Europe a thousand years ago. Energetic and brave, at age 44 he was a seasoned warrior with a track record of success in leading some of the fiercest fighters the world had yet seen on the battlefield: the *Huscarles*.

In a 10-month period, Harold forged a political union to support his claim to the throne (even though he had no such claim by blood), and devastated the invasion of one of the most savage Viking warrior kings in history, Harald Hardrada. But he then lost his kingdom and his life to one of history's most decisive invaders, William the Bastard, also called "the Conqueror," Duke of Normandy.

The telling of Harold's story provides both high drama and useful information for students of military history and strategy. The choices made by Harold Godwinson in dealing with the simultaneous threats to his kingdom were both unique to him and timeless to us. The manner in which he chose to use military force was conditioned by three factors: 1) his kingdom's physical situation; 2) its social makeup; and 3) the economic, political and military elements of its power. All of those factors interacted with each other, and only when they are understood together can we get a useful picture of why Harold chose the strategy he did, and how it led him to his final end.

The Stage is Set

When Edward the Confessor died without an indisputable heir, the crown of England lay open to a trio of claimants: William of Normandy; Tostig Godwinson, Harold's brother; and Harald Hardrada ("The Hard Ruler"), the Viking king of Norway.

In the Sogne Fjord, north of present day Bergen, Hardrada assembled no less than half the

entire national levy, some 7,000 men in 200 warships, plus supporting transports and smaller vessels. To this he added another 100 ships and 3,000 men drawn from the Viking realm stretched around the North Sea: the Shetlands, the Orkneys, northwest Scotland, Iceland, the Faroes, the Hebrides, the Isle of Man, and even Ireland.

The size of the threat posed by Duke William, mustering only a few short sea miles away to the south in Normandy, has been debated ever since the Anglo-Saxon and French chroniclers first wrote about the opposing sides in the invasion. A good estimate is probably 8,000 men in some 800 ships.

At any rate, both threats to Harold were formidable by the standards of those times and later.

The Anglo-Saxon army has at times been denigrated in popular literature, especially when compared to William's Norman knights (but remember, "history" is written by the winners). In actuality, Harold commanded a powerful and efficiently organized army and navy, including 3,000 well-equipped and professionally trained *Huscarles*, more than 20,000 part-timers in the Select Fyrd, and almost 200 ships. The *Huscarles* in particular carried the most up-to-date offensive and defensive weapons, including their fearsome long-hafted axes. They were experienced fighters, veterans of long border wars against the Welsh, and had also developed the mobility required to deal with persistent Viking coastal raids.

Strategic Factors & Choices

Harold's strategy, forced on him by the geography of his realm, was to defeat the two invasions sequentially. This was possible because the two invasion fleets had to sail from opposite directions, one from the north and the other from the south, so the same steady summer winds could not bring them both to England at the same moment.

Geography also limited the potential landing sites because there were relatively few places along the English coast where such huge fleets could put

in. Harold knew the two most likely areas — the Humber Estuary in the north, and the coast opposite Normandy, from Dover to the Seven Sisters — were widely separated, and therefore so must be the invading armies landing at them. That was the primary consideration suggesting his strategy of sequential battles.

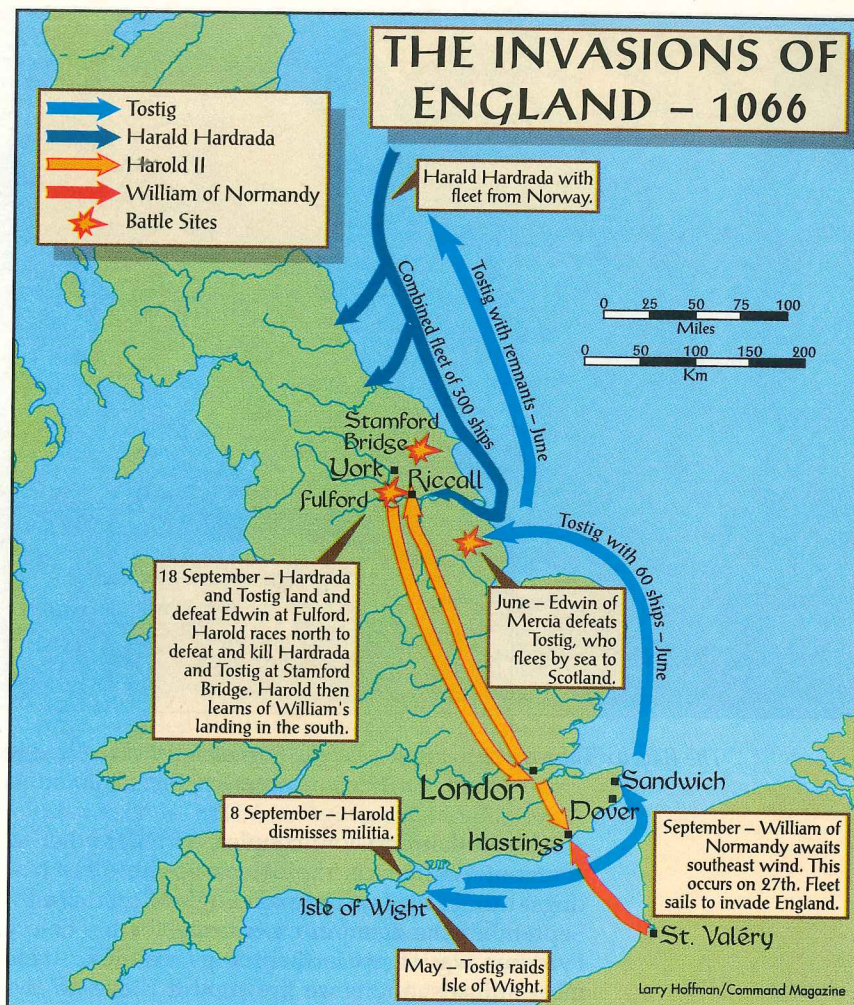
But if the two fleets were held back until the time of the more rapidly shifting winds of autumn, the timing of their arrivals might be much closer together. In that case, the wide separation of the two landing sites would pose a severe test for Harold. That is in fact what happened. He had to march north to defeat Hardrada, followed by a counter march begun less than four days later to meet William — a march of over 450 miles and two pitched battles in only 20 days.

Three social factors also shaped Harold's strategy. First, his "England" was really only just emerging as a nation, and its inhabitants were still far from constituting a single people. Unity was also uncertain within the ruling elite. Treachery was an accepted form of statecraft in Harold's culture, with tenuous "alliances" among noble families and factions being the rule.

Under Harold's predecessor, the English court had been divided into Anglo-Saxon, Norwegian, and other Scandinavian factions by a web of cultural ties, personal intrigues, family infighting, and threatened rebellions. Harold's father (Godwin) had exercised political influence based on the strength of his earldom, not on his blood relations to the king. Saxon society's choosing of its kings in assembly contrasted sharply with feudal Europe's general policy of succession-through-blood-ties. Only 13 years before, Godwin had been invited to a banquet and was there poisoned to death by Norman sympathizers of King Edward, whom Harold was eventually chosen to replace.

Another example of the extent to which treachery was carried on within English ruling circles, and the longevity of its effects, is provided by the St. Brice's Day Massacre, in which King Ethelred ordered the murder of all the Danes in England — men, women and children — in a single day only 64 years earlier. The results of that massacre for Harold helped determine the limited degree to which he could rely on the Danish leadership of the northern half of his kingdom to fulfill their part in his strategy. They also showed themselves in the morale of the Danes' Norman cousins, when they used the memory of Ethelred's blood crime to rouse their battle fury.

The final social factor that contributed to Harold's winning his greatest victory at Stamford Bridge, and also to his ultimate defeat at Hastings, was the Anglo-Saxon cultural preference for aggressiveness in both strategy and tactics. Harold's lightning strategic response to Hardrada's landing, even in the face of William's continuing threat, was founded on his faith in his warriors' speed and



combat prowess. That faith also prompted him to move to meet William too quickly with troops wearied by forced marches and a pitched battle, instead of waiting for the coming of winter for help in reducing the southern enemy by attrition.

The economics of the situation also had an effect on Harold's strategy. First, he alone among the three contestants possessed a formal system for financing the campaigns of the professional portion of his army. But the economy supporting that army was largely agrarian, and the vast majority of its members — the "Select Fyrd" of trained but non-professional men, and the "Great Fyrd" consisting of every free man in a threatened area — were therefore tied to the cycles of farming in their own lives. Consequently, periods of army service were usually less than 60 days.

Reasonably, then, Harold should not have counted on keeping a sustained force in the field throughout the summer and into the fall, but that's exactly what he attempted. He chose to call up the Select Fyrd in response to a probing attack by his brother Tostig on the Isle of Wight in May. From then on, he tried to maintain the Select Fyrd in the field until William's invasion arrived in October, rather than disband and later recall it.



The Bayeux Tapestry showing some of the English isolated and attacked on a hillock after having left the shield-wall to attack the retreating Bretons at the Battle of Hastings.

Upon that decision (coupled with the other to confront William as rapidly as possible at Hastings) turned the fate of Saxon England. Because by September the economic necessity for his Select Fyrdmen was to get in their crops, slaughter their meat animals, and store firewood to stave off the threat of winter starvation that would otherwise destroy their families. Thus, after keeping his forces ready for the normal two-month term of service, Harold then sustained them for another four, longer than any English king before him was able to do. It was due to both bad luck and bad timing, then, that Harold finally had to partially demobilize his army just when he needed its full numbers the most.

Sustaining supplies also ran out for Harold's fleet, which he had standing barrier patrol between the Isle of Wight and London since May. After being severely battered in some early season gales, it withdrew to its provisioning base in London for repairs. That same week, Hardrada landed in the north, and less than 20 days later William landed at Pevensey.

Stamford Bridge

Harold originally planned to fight William first, temporarily leaving the forces of Hardrada and Tostig to the two Earls of his northern provinces. But Hardrada, who had been expected to come second, came first instead, landing on 18 September 1066. The Vikings quickly and completely defeated the combined northern Saxon forces only two days later at the Battle of Fulford.

Harold unhesitatingly changed his plans and turned to meet the suddenly more immediate threat in the north. His army made the 185 mile-march north to meet the Norse invaders in only six days. He pushed through York without rest to take the Vikings by surprise, and the plan worked.

Hardrada and his army were encamped on the banks of the Derwent River, where it was crossed by a wooden bridge — Stamford Bridge — at the convergence of four ancient roads. The Saxon host was only a mile to the west by the time Hardrada and Tostig began to organize a hasty defense. That defense hinged on a group of warriors left on the west bank to delay the attackers and thus gain time for the rest of the Vikings to deploy properly on the far side.

Harold's fierce attack drove in the western Viking defense, and resistance crumbled except for one warrior who for a time withstood the Saxon attacks alone on the bridge. His death bought precious time for Hardrada. Only 300 yards beyond the bridge, on rising ground today known as "Battle Flats," the rest of the Viking army waited, but not for long. The next phase of the battle quickly devolved into a fiercely contested melee in which both Hardrada and Tostig were cut down.

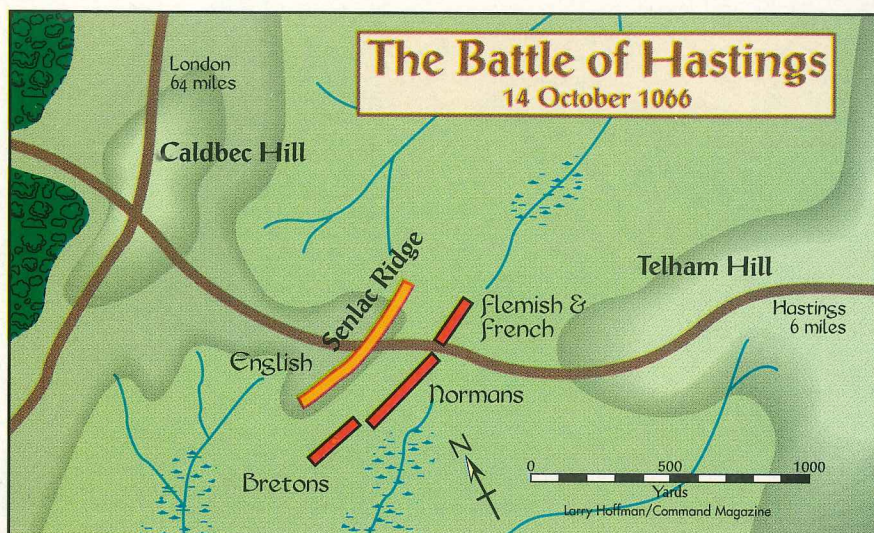
The Battle of Stamford Bridge lasted from dawn to sunset, and was one of the longest and bloodiest in all of English warfare. What Harold Godwinson's forces achieved there was also one of the most lopsided victories in English history. Of Hardrada's 10,000 men and 300 ships, some 7,000

are thought to have perished, leaving only 24 vessels to sail away. At the same time, however, Harold's victory was also brutally costly to his own forces; losses totalled as many as half the number of casualties suffered by the invaders, including many of the best Saxon officers and men. He had misjudged how costly the fighting would be to his own ranks, and had made no preparation for reserves of any kind to replenish the losses he should have expected from a battle with 10,000 Viking warriors. Two weeks later those men would be missed at Hastings.

Hastings

With a great victory behind him, Harold reversed course and rushed back south at a pace that still astounds, given the circumstances under which the move was carried out. Just 12 days from the time he received news of William's landing, Harold had gone 190 miles back to London, gathering scant reinforcements as he went, and then moved the final 60 miles to the coast. In his haste, though, he didn't wait for the many stragglers from his column to catch up, or for the casualties of Stamford to recover from their wounds, or for the Select Fyrd and the Great Fyrd of the south to fully mobilize. Harold may have wanted to catch William as unprepared as he had earlier caught Haradrada. He may also have underestimated Norman numbers, particularly in cavalry and archers.

That last was a particularly important miscalculation, since even though Harold had experienced the power of archery in his Welsh wars, and his own archers may have contributed to the victo-



ry over the Vikings, that weapon was not carried by significant numbers of his professional standing army. The Norman bowmen at Hastings may well have outnumbered their Saxon counterparts by as many as 30-to-1. Harold's deficit of archers at Hastings enabled William's cavalry to charge repeatedly without having to pay the terrible costs English bowmen would later extract from their mounted enemies at Crécy, Agincourt and Poitiers.

The cavalry was less of an unknown threat. Most scholars agree Harold knew of Norman mounted tactics from having fought along side them in one of their minor campaigns on the continent. At least some of the *Huscarles* fought mounted at Stamford Bridge, but usually they only used



The Norman cavalry presses on, while the archers (in the lower border) provide covering fire.

Fire vs. Shock

by R.L. Cody & Allyn R. Vannoy, with Chris Perello

The age of musket & cannon was one of the most colorful in the history of warfare. The battlefields of the 18th and 19th centuries came closest to capturing all that is considered glorious in war. Long lines of infantry, resplendent in bright uniforms punctuated by white crossed belts, gold buttons and buckles, their battle flags dancing in the breeze above gleaming bayonets, marched steadily forward in ranks to the sounds of fife and drum. On the flanks, bugles peeled and masses of brilliantly-dressed cavalry, sabers flashing and lance pennants waving, swirled forward. Above the crash of musketry and the thunder of charging hooves was the roar of the cannons. It was a thrilling — and bloody — spectacle.

From a military science standpoint, the era was dominated by a debate over the proper relationship between firepower and shock (the physical collision of formations).

The fundamental goal of combat was and is to win — to defeat the enemy. That is accomplished by physically destroying the enemy, psychologically overturning his will to fight, or a combination of both. Maneuver, the movement of units on the battlefield, enables forces to get into position to engage the enemy, but the enemy will be defeated only by the application (or threat of application) of physical damage by shock and/or fire.

The Background

Shock, delivered at close quarters by heavy infantry armed with sword and spear, was the decisive element in combat before the introduction of gunpowder. Fire combat, conducted by light troops armed with javelins, slings and arrows, played only a secondary role to harass and disorganize the enemy in preparation for the decisive attack.

Heavy infantry combat was conducted by masses of men in deep columns, to generate the

greatest possible physical mass at the point of contact. This type of fighting reached its zenith with the development of the Greek phalanx.

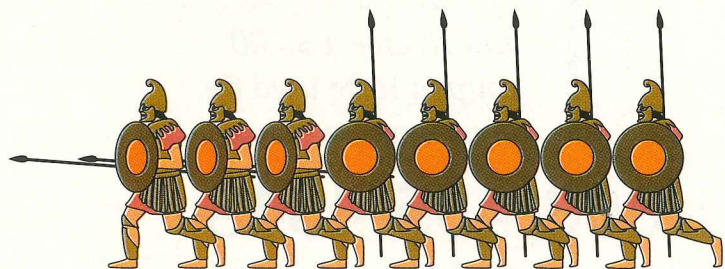
The basic Greek infantry formation, the phalanx, was designed around the 6-to-8 foot spear carried by the heavy infantry (Alexander the Great's Macedonians used a 13-to-16 foot *sarissa* and were arrayed 16 deep). The phalanx was made rigid by packing the individuals forming it as tightly as possible. In combat it would make a rush at the enemy phalanx, literally crashing into it with the intention of dispersing it. Once dispersed, the enemy troops could be killed more easily in individual combat.

If, as was likely, both phalanxes withstood the initial collision, the men in the first two or three ranks would start killing one another individually by stabbing with their spears or, since many spears would be broken by the impact, thrusting with swords. The men in the remaining rows would use their shields to push those in front of them, maintaining the pressure (literally and figuratively) on the enemy formation.

Men in a phalanx could hardly see, especially when wearing the heavy enclosed helmets of the time. The men deep in the middle of the formation had to take their cues from the bodies immediately around them. This made the formation susceptible to sudden and catastrophic breaking of morale. When massed formations break, they tend to break from the rear, not from the front. For this reason, the Greeks split their best men between the front (to lead the charge) and rear (to prevent those in the middle from running).

The phalanx had other weaknesses. Once in contact, it was almost impossible to maneuver, since few men could see what was going on around the formation and fewer still could have heard any orders to disengage. A phalanx was also weak on the flanks, since only a few men could fight there. For this reason, armies strove to match the enemy line in length, though this meant thinning the phalanx and thus reducing its physical impact.

Maneuvering thus had to be done before collision. At Leuctra, Epaminondas overcame the Spartan phalanx by massing a column almost 50 ranks deep; by the time the Spartans realized what was happening, they were crushed by the weight of the assault.



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Norman pressure ebbed, some of Harold's infantry "shield wall" held. Then, once again when the assault against the main Saxon line, but their atop the ridge. William then launched a cavalry — all in full view of their compatriots still those men and destroy them piecemeal with his sued into the valley. William was able to surround old's infantry broke ranks on the ridge and pursuing the Bretons retreat, a portion of Harold still lived and thus regain their confidence. helmetless into the fray so his troops could see he cries that the Duke had fallen. William had to ride there began to spread to the Norman center with William's left began to come apart, and the panic In the middle of the fight, the Bretons deployed on got going in earnest, and continued for eight hours. Within an hour of the first contact the battle prevented any flanking attacks. That ridge was a naturally strong position, with a gentle front slope, but steep sides that practically William's Normans arrived at Telham Hill, about a mile away from Harold's position on Senlac Ridge. It was mid-morning on 14 October when the Saxons fought entirely on foot. horses for mobility between battles. At Hastings

Lessons



There were alternative strategies available to Harold. To maintain his concentration against William, he might have tried to delay the northern invasion by buying off Hardrada and Tostig with gold and land, as had been done to counter Norse incursions in the past. Harold also possessed an excellent navy that might have thrown up a blockade around William's fleet in its anchorage, or interdicted it earlier on its passage across the channel, or landed troops behind the invaders' positions at Hastings. Even given the unopposed Norman crossing and landing, Harold might still have adopted a strategy of containing William on the Hastings peninsula (from which only one track

appear to have been killed to a man. and the *Huscarles* who had served it faithfully. The House of Godwin was exterminated, more decisive than those achieved against Harold and Gyrf. The final results at Hastings were even was slain along with his loyal brothers Leofwine attack finally broke through Harold's line, and he of archers, cavalry and infantry. The weight of that iam ordered a final, all-out, combined-arms assault As the autumn day drew toward dusk, William losing discipline in his own army. still capable enemy so soon after almost completely William would have risked such a ploy against a we know Norman armies had used deliberate feints elsewhere, it seems highly unlikely that extremely difficult to plan and carry out. Though conducted while in contact with the enemy, are tion. But such integrated deception maneuvers, ed to draw down the Saxons from their ridge position man retreats were deliberate tactical feints intended. Some commentators have claimed these Norm attempted pursuit down the slope — and again suffered the fate of those who had rushed out early.

Harold (on the left) is killed by a Norman knight, and the last stand of his army collapses.



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led inland) until the rain, snow and freezing winds of November had reduced his numbers.

However, since we lack the unique perspective Harold had as the man on the spot, we should perhaps not be too critical of him, and instead be content to draw what lessons we can from his last days.

The first lesson is that completely defeating an enemy who approximates your own strength can be extremely costly. Losses like those suffered at Stamford Bridge can fatally weaken even a victor whose "victory" was as complete as Harold's. Further, it seems that in an offensive victory one must anticipate losses will be disproportionately suffered by your best troops, as was the case with Harold's Huscarles.

The second lesson demonstrated is that speed and audacity in the execution of a strategy, even when done with the awe-inspiring flexibility and determination shown by the Saxons, can be nullified by poor provisioning of reserves and supplies.

The third lesson is not to neglect the technologies readily available for use in battle, neither your own or your enemy's, as Harold did when he neglected made provision for overturning or matching the Norman archers and horsemen.

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Fire vs. Shock

by R.L. Cody & Allyn R. Vannoy, with Chris Perello

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The phalanx had other weaknesses. Once in contact, it was almost impossible to maneuver, since few men could see what was going on around the formation and fewer still could have heard any orders to disengage. A phalanx was also weak on the flanks, since only a few men could fight there. For this reason, armies strove to match the enemy line in length, though this meant thinning the phalanx and thus reducing its physical impact.

Maneuvering thus had to be done before collision. At Leuctra, Epaminondas overcame the Spartan phalanx by massing a column almost 50 ranks deep; by the time the Spartans realized what was happening, they were crushed by the weight of the assault.

The age of musket & cannon was one of the most colorful in the history of warfare. The battlefields of the 18th and 19th centuries came closest to capturing all that is considered glorious in war. Long lines of infantry, resplendent in bright uniforms punctuated by white crossed belts, gold buttons and buckles, their battle flags dancing in the breeze above gleaming bayonets, marched steadily forward in ranks to the sounds of fife and drum. On the flanks, bugles peeled and masses of brilliantly-dressed cavalry, sabers flashing and lance pennants waving, swirled forward. Above the crash of musketry and the thunder of charging hooves was the roar of the cannons. It was a thrilling — and bloody — spectacle.

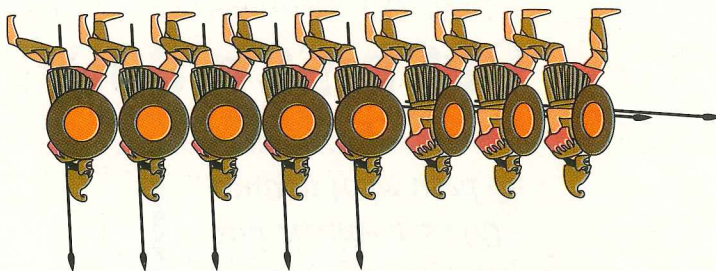
From a military science standpoint, the era was dominated by a debate over the proper relationship between firepower and shock (the physical collision of formations).

The fundamental goal of combat was and is to win — to defeat the enemy. That is accomplished by physically destroying the enemy, psychologically overturning his will to fight, or a combination of both. Maneuver, the movement of units on the battlefield, enables forces to get into position to engage the enemy, but the enemy will be defeated only by the application (or threat of application) of physical damage by shock and/or fire.

The Background

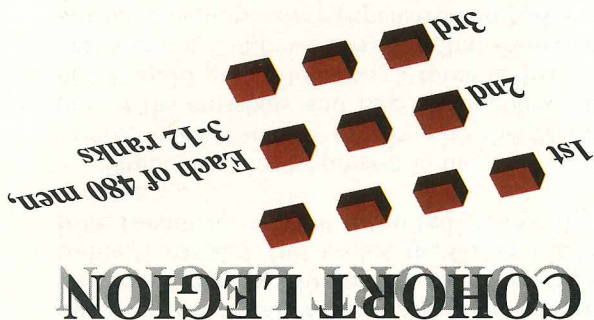
Shock, delivered at close quarters by heavy infantry armed with sword and spear, was the decisive element in combat before the introduction of gunpowder. Fire combat, conducted by light troops armed with javelins, slings and arrows, played only a secondary role to harass and disorganize the enemy in preparation for the decisive attack.

Heavy infantry combat was conducted by masses of men in deep columns, to generate the

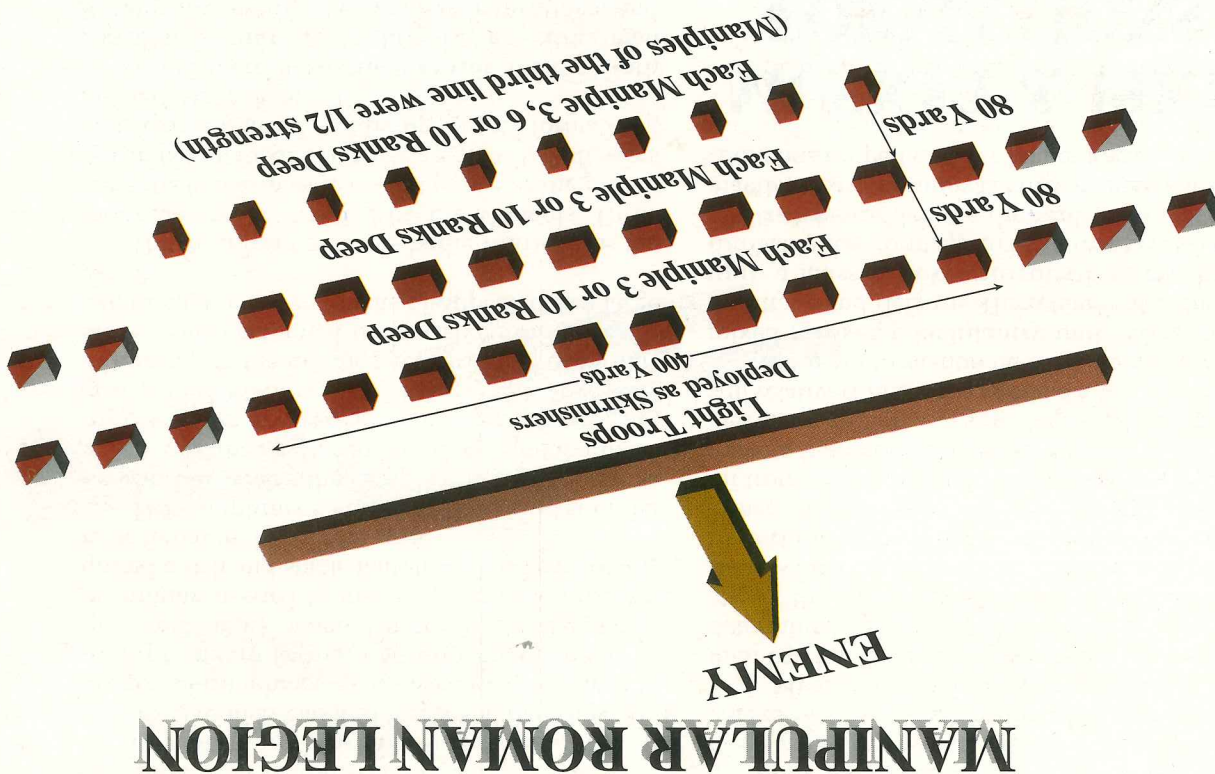


The Cavalry Era
The Middle Ages was a period of horse-dominated warfare, which came in three basic varieties. First were the Persian and Byzantine *cataphracts*; highly-trained, armored horsemen. Essentially

was a supplement to, not a replacement for, shock enemy formation. But, as with the Greeks, firepower spears, to be used just before impact to disrupt the itself. Each legionary carried one or two throwing armed with slings and arrows, and by the legion Roman firepower was provided by light troops



The maniples were replaced with 10 cohorts of 480 men. Each cohort was capable of forming a wide array of formations, depending on the needs of the situation. Though it appears the new legion was less flexible than the old because it had fewer subordinate units, this was not the case as each cohort was more self sufficient, and did not need a second line to cover any gaps.



legion gave way to the Marian or cohort legion. In the late Republic (c. 100 BC), the manipular impact (shock) against an entire formation.

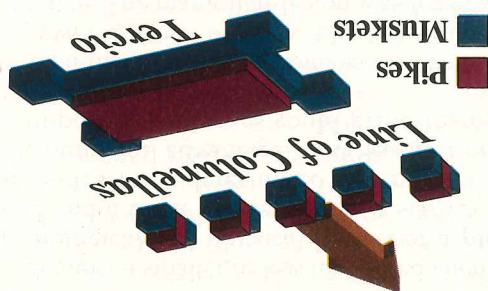
individuals within a formation rather than that of (gladius). In effect, they chose the tactic of killing carried them) in favor of the thrusting short sword (though the maniples of the third line may have Romans discarded the spear as a primary weapon physical impact of the phalanx. For this reason, the However, the maniples could not generate the

his own. reserves to exploit enemy weak spots or reinforce all his troops engaged, allowing him to direct importantly, the Roman commander did not have maneuver more quickly than a phalanx. More more flexibility. The individual maniples could This formation gave the Romans considerably line when needed.

of the next line, so the legion could form a solid maniples. The gaps were covered by the maniples of 10 maniples, with large gaps between each For combat, a legion would form three lines, each maniples of two centuries of about 80 men each. formation. The manipular legion was formed of 30 the power of mass, but they adopted a more open Like the Greeks, the Romans also believed in

into virtual annihilation. the opposing phalanxes could grind themselves large numerical advantage, as at Second Koroneia, both sides were determined and neither had a could end a battle almost before it started. But if psychological and physical impact of a phalanx Against a smaller or less motivated enemy, the

MUSKET & PIKE FORMATIONS



Combined arms operations became the order of the day. Cavalry was still a powerful shock arm, able to ride over small bodies of infantry almost at will. Musketeers did most of the killing by the infantry, but their firepower could not yet stop a determined cavalry or infantry charge. The mainstay of the infantry was still the dense pike formation, which could fend off cavalry and provide protection to the musketeers. Some cavalry units armed themselves with pistols so they could stand off from a pike unit and inflict casualties, hoping to make a big enough opening to allow a charge. A new arm, artillery, was making itself felt, but was still relatively immobile and had a low rate of fire. The main formation on the battlefield was the mixed musket-pike infantry unit, self-sufficient for attack and defence. The *columnella* was the basic unit, a mass of pikes surround by musketeers (probably less formally than shown here). The *columnella* (whence derives the rank "colonel," commander of a column) was fairly maneuverable and could be grouped to make longer lines.

A larger formation, almost a walking fort, was formed by the Spanish *tercios* and copied by others. The formation was denser than the *columnella* and therefore more powerful, but much less maneuverable.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, improvements in firearms gradually caused the balance to shift away from shock and toward fire. At the end of the 16th century, Maurice of Nassau became the first commander to reduce his pikemen to a numerical equality with his musketeers. His battalions formed into 10 ranks, with 250 pikemen in close order, and 250 musketeers kept at intervals varying from three to six paces between files. Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden (1611-32), ally decreased the ratio of musketeers to pikemen. However, he made both more effective by adopting a formation reminiscent of the Roman manipular legion.

His battalions deployed in blocks that were either pure pikemen or pure musketeer. The pikemen deployed in six ranks, while the musketeers

mounted heavy infantrymen, cataphracts were capable of using bow-and-arrow, spear, and sword. Like their classical forebears, the firepower portion of cataphract tactics was used primarily to disrupt enemy formations to prepare them for (mounted) shock action. Unfortunately, the degree of training needed to make a good cataphract required a rich and stable nation, and there were few to be found in the middle ages.

The cataphract's successor was the mounted knight, but where the cataphracts had fought in formations, the knights fought more as individuals, supported to varying degrees by spear, pike, and bow-armed infantrymen. The generally low level of learning in the middle ages carried over to warfare — shock remained the decisive form of combat, though orderly systems disappeared to a large extent.

The third form of horse-borne warrior was the mounted archer, typified by the Mongols. These were the first armies to use firepower as the primary combat method. The horse archers used showers of arrows not merely to disrupt enemy formations, but to destroy them.

There were limitations to this system, both actual and cultural. It could only be used in open terrain, was ineffective against fortifications, and could not deliver the *coup de grace* to an enemy — that could still be done only by shock action. About 40 per cent of the Mongol horsemen were armored and sword-armed for shock attacks. Further, the bows used for mounted action were necessarily lighter than infantry bows, and were therefore more easily defeated by armor.

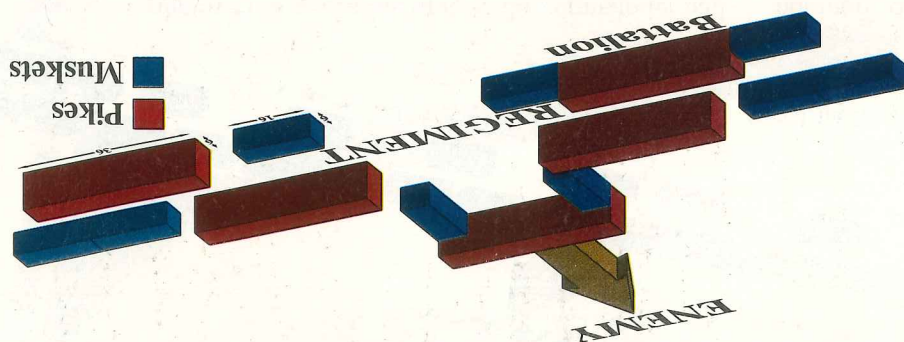
As the Middle Ages drew to a close, infantrymen and firepower began to whittle away the domination of cavalry. Infantry, armed with pikes (long, thick spears) and axes, resumed the dense phalanx formation. The wall of pikes was impenetrable to cavalry, but unlike the Greek phalanx, pike formations were intended primarily for defense.

Firepower, always present in the guise of light troops, made a serious impact with the introduction of the crossbow and English longbow. These bows could generate enough force to penetrate heavy armor. But bows were still limited in overall impact: crossbows were expensive and had a slow rate of fire; longbows required extensive training. Neither dominated the battlefield (with the exception of battles like Crécy and Agincourt), but they did bring firepower fully into the equation.

Musket & Pike

The introduction of gunpowder took years to affect combat, because the first guns were cumbersome and inaccurate. By the middle of the 16th century, though, the one-man firearm was firmly established. However, the musket could not yet dominate the battlefield. Its rate of fire was too slow, and range and accuracy were limited.

FORMATIONS OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS' ARMY



Battlefield "Etiquette"

There is a (probably apocryphal) story about a French battalion facing a British battalion during one of the wars of the 18th century. The battalions had come within firing range, but neither would shoot first; in fact, the opposing commanders each offered to let the other fire first.

This story illustrates one of the key problems with volley fire: once a volley was fired, no one in the firing unit would be able to fire again for at least 15 seconds, probably longer. In that time, the opposing force would be able to close the combat distance. If the attackers had held their fire, they would then be able to fire a devastating volley at close range. As a rule therefore, defenders would hold their fire until the attackers were close enough for the first volley to be decisive. If the attacker's morale survived the blow, they would be able to close with the defenders.

Marborough devised a method to overcome the problem: platoon fire. Instead of firing a single volley, a battalion would fire by platoon, which was usually some combination of one or two companies. In this way, some portion of the battalion would always be shooting, others would be loading, and still others would be ready to fire.

There were some problems with platooning. First, it required a great deal of training and discipline to keep it up — not surprisingly, few armies could use it effectively. The British were good at it; the Prussians excelled.

Second, the clouds of smoke associated with musket fire meant each partial volley helped obscure the front for the platoons who had not yet fired. This made subsequent volleys less effective. The Prussians solved the problem by having each platoon advance — the “rolling fire” not only became more effective, but appeared all the more irresistible. Finally, one of the keys to a successful volley was the volume of fire achieved. By breaking the battalion volley into several parts, each part had less of a psychological impact. The problem wasn’t fully resolved until breechloaders were introduced in the last half of the 19th century.

Musket & Bayonet

enemy formations and fire pistols (one or two per man) one rank at a time. As each rank fired, it would wheel about and pass back through the files to the rear of the formation to reload, while the next rank took its turn to fire. This *cannole* tactic in effect made cavalry into mounted infantry, and would survive in places to the middle of the 18th century.

Cavalry also began to adopt firepower-oriented tactics, an outgrowth of their earlier pistol attacks. Formed six ranks deep like the infantry, a cavalry unit would walk, not gallop, up to

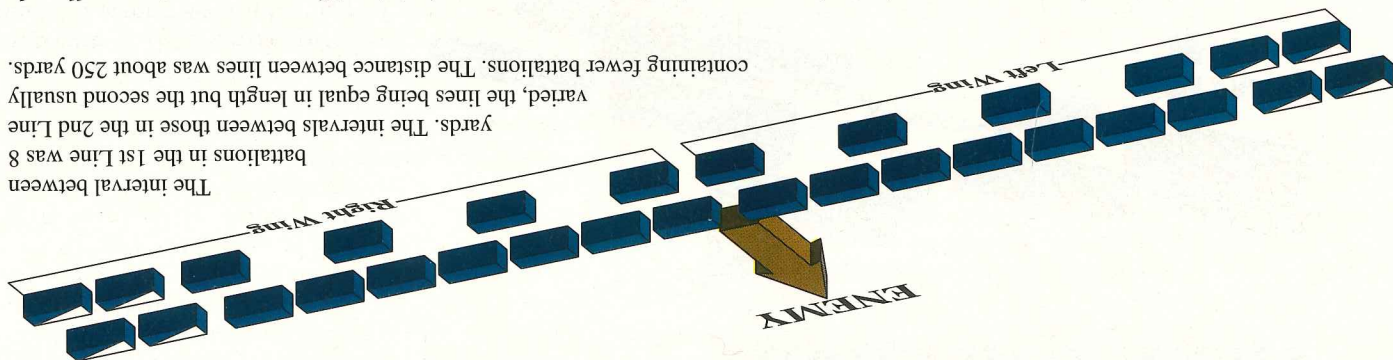
deployed in six or, for maximum firepower, three ranks. The blocks of musket and pike no longer maneuvered as a whole, but as independent units in mutually supporting distance. The smaller units were much faster than mixed formations used by nearly everyone else. The six-rank formations were also less susceptible to artillery fire, which was becoming a greater threat on the battlefield.

There were several disadvantages to column in line. Appears French units continued to fight primarily Folard school was by no means dominant, and it attack order for French infantry. However, the cepts and decreed the column to be the primary issued a tactical ordinance reflecting Folard's con- *ordre profond* in 1724. In 1754, the French army writers, published his doctrine championing the Folard, one of the first great modern military was primarily a shock weapon or a fire weapon. joined to the musket formed a combination that down to a debate about whether the bayonet ed whenever possible. The argument finally boiled reached by an enemy column — were to be avoid- and one easy to pierce by shock action if it could be a formation difficult to maneuver on the battlefield He felt the disadvantages of the line — which was defending obstacles, fortified places and outposts. ondary element on the battlefield, to be used in *ordre mince* (line). To Folard, fire action was a sec- championing the *ordre profond* (column) over the to Marshal Folard (1669-1752), a new school arose to the lessons of the ancients. Under the leadership military theoreticians, especially in France, turned To break the impasse of the battlefield, some

French Theories

not more, decisive. There were routs, usually when one general was badly outmaneuvered by his opponent, as at Blenheim and Leuthen, or an army persevered too long after the enemy had gained the upper hand, as at Poltava and Kunersdorf.

The interval between battalions in the 1st Line was 8 yards. The intervals between those in the 2nd Line varied, the lines being equal in length but the second usually containing fewer battalions. The distance between lines was about 250 yards.



THE PRUSSIAN (OR LINEAL) SYSTEM Frederick the Great's Army in Order of Battle or Encampment

Thus the battles of the early- and mid-18th century became massive firefights, unsullied by rapid maneuvers or huge assaults. Once one army gained the upper hand through superior fire, maneuver and/or luck, the other would conduct a controlled retreat before the advantage could be exploited. For all their blood, battles became less,

perfect alignment was relaxed. advent of the "square," the necessity of keeping individual battalions to maneuver. Later, with the This reduced the willingness, if not the ability, of the battalions on line and with no gaps between, straight lines within the battalion, but to keep all For this reason infantry strove not only to keep the horses would not charge the wall of bayonets, an unbroken line. As long as a line was unbroken, the infantry simply had to turn around to present ing it from the rear was not usually successful, as to hit the line from the narrow flank — even strik- Cavalry could still ride down infantry, but had already been hurt by fire.

and usually unsuccessful unless the enemy had spoke of bayonet attacks, it was rarely attempted enemy's advance. Though many commanders demoralized because of the inability to stop the broke under the fire of the attacker, or became er's fire, or the defender became demoralized and from the physical and moral effect of the defend- cal instead of physical. An attacker either retreated Shock action increasingly became psychological before.

were capable of more battlefield maneuver than days of cold steel. Though far from nimble, armies longer locked into combat as they had been in the combat that was not going well — they were no lines of infantry were now able to retreat from ry, close combat nearly did the same. Opposing battlefield. Except for those armies using shock caval- infantry columns almost disappeared from the bat- With the emphasis on fire combat, massive occurred by mutual consent.

could not generally be forced to fight — battles deployed as a separate unit, so the commander had many individual units to attend. As a result, armies

saw the column as "not suitable for either attack or retreat, since it was a mass incapable of any movement or execution which required promptitude or rapidity."

Prussian Practice

Another solution to the

staid battlefield was provided by the Prussian army of Frederick the Great. The Prussians made no theoretical changes to standard linear warfare, but carried it to its logical conclusion through intense training and severe discipline.

Prussian infantry deployed in the usual three-rank line, but was trained to fire once every 15 seconds. Combined with the advancing platoon fire (see sidebar), this made the Prussian infantry almost unbeatable. The rapid fire and continuous advance became a form shock in itself.

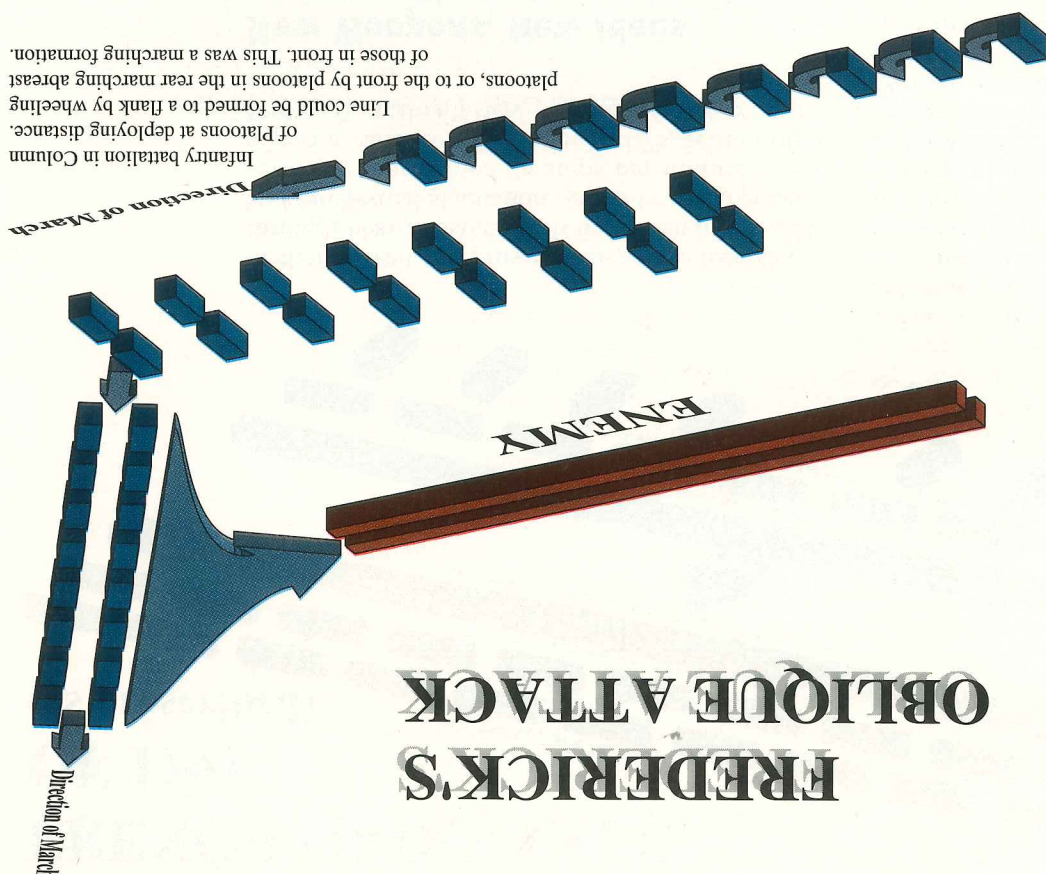
The of shock power in Frederick's army was provided primarily by his cavalry, which after the War of Austrian

Succession was retrained to conduct charges in mass. Not only did they sweep enemy cavalry from the field, they were now capable of rapidly maneuvering against enemy infantry. At Hohenfriedburg, a single Prussian cavalry regiment rode down 20 battalions of Austrian infantry (not all were killed or captured, but the units were put out of action). At Rossbach, the cavalry caught the French on the march, and nearly won the battle without the help of the infantry.

Frederick, like most generals of the time, had a fondness for the bayonet. On several occasions he insisted his infantry attack without firing, using only the bayonet and closing rapidly. After a particularly disastrous assault at Prague in 1757, he returned to the fire tactics that served him so well. Artillery was still subordinate to infantry, but Frederick did increase the number of pieces in his army throughout his reign in an effort to bolster firepower still further.

The greatest contribution of the Prussians was to bring maneuver back to the battlefield. Using the Prussian infantry's ability to march and change formation quickly (based in part on universal employment of cadenced drill), Frederick developed the oblique attack. The Prussians would first deploy opposite the enemy line, then rapidly march across their front to a flank. The enemy army could not redeploy in time, and the Prussians could concentrate against a single flank with their

FREDERICK'S OBLIQUE ATTACK



whole force. Rapid marching also gave the Prussians the option of forcing an enemy to fight. The Prussian system was soon embraced by most European armies. However, the level of discipline required was beyond the capabilities of most

Assault Without Fire

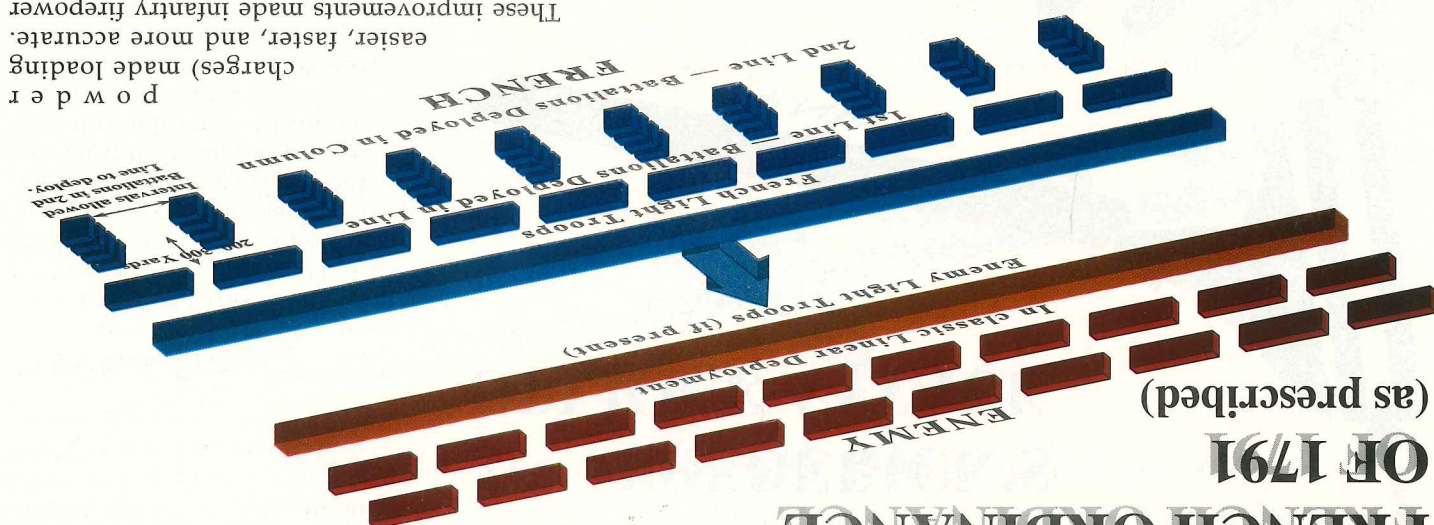
Frederick was not the only general to order an assault by troops forbidden to fire, nor is it a tactic without merit.

If an assault with fire does succeed, the attackers' empty muskets will afford them no defense against a sudden counterattack. Holding fire can also be useful when an assault depends on stealth, or when assaulting entrenched or fortified troops as they are all but invulnerable to musket fire.

Perhaps the best justification for not firing is that stopping to fire means *stopping*. Regardless of the situation, the attacking troops will no doubt feel safer shooting while hidden in a cloud of their own musket smoke than charging into a hail of defending fire.

The tactic was used frequently in the American Civil War, where firepower was relatively stronger than in Frederick's day. At Second Fredericksburg, three Union assaults with fire failed; a fourth without fire succeeded. At Spotsylvania, Upton's assault column broke into the Confederate lines without firing — by the time the Confederates realized an attack was underway, the Union troops were too close to be stopped by musketry.

FRENCH ORDINANCE OF 1791 (as prescribed)



These improvements made infantry firepower still more potent.

The other new ideas which came forward in this period were not really new, but were applied for the first time on a large scale.

Light infantry had been known from the time of the Greeks, but around the middle of the 18th century their use on the battlefield was increased. Musketeers were now detached from the formed bodies of infantry to provide harassing fire to disrupt the cohesion of enemy formations, fight in broken terrain unsuitable for formed bodies, and provide a security screen for battalions in line. Skirmishers could not provide the massed firepower of battalion volleys, but the cumulative effect of their fire was significant. Some of them were armed with rifled muskets, which gave greater range, hitting power and accuracy, but at the cost of rate of fire.

To overcome the slow deployment of linear armies, the French Duc de Broglie had begun dividing his army into permanent divisions of infantry and artillery. This practice soon became universal, greatly speeding deployment, easing the problems of maneuver on the battlefield, and allowing armies to march in independent columns, which speeded movement to and from the battlefield. Napoleon would develop the idea one step further when he introduced the corps.

Guibert

In 1772, when he was only 29, the Comte de Guibert published his *Essai général de Tactique*, one of the seminal works of the century. It was an amalgam of much that had gone before. Guibert advocated the raising of national conscript armies, though he later retracted that in his *Défense de Système de Guerre Moderne* — he was after all a product of the nobility. He strongly supported the adoption of Broglie's divisional system, and in particular the idea of marching separately and gathering only to fight.

of them. Even the Prussians began to lose steam through heavy casualties in the Seven Years' War and intellectual stagnation — one Prussian general seriously maintained 76 steps per minute was a superior cadence to the standard 75, setting off a series of mathematical "proofs" for one or the other.

New Weapons, New Ideas

The years following the Seven Years' War saw great advances in military science. The most important change was the vast increase in artillery firepower. The Frenchmen Gibréauval and du Teil developed a new series of standardized gun barrels and carriages, making artillery more powerful, lighter and faster, and new tactics emphasizing massed batteries and longer-ranged firing. In the next war, artillery firepower would become at least equal to the battlefield power of cavalry and infantry.

Two artillery developments in particular heralded the new age. First was horse artillery. The guns were generally light or medium weight, but had light caissons and mounted crewmen, allowing them to not only keep up with infantry but with cavalry as well.

The second was the concept of using artillery offensively — in the past, artillery had been most effective on defense owing to its limited mobility. The famous charge of Senarumont at Friedland, where several batteries were moved up to point blank range, was unusual, but most Napoleonic battles featured extensive use of grand batteries. These guns, pushed out in front of the main infantry line, provided a firepower base around which the army could maneuver.

The final technical improvement was not revolutionary, but was the continued evolution of the musket itself. The use of iron ramrods (started by the Prussians) and cartridges (with pre-measured

the infantry was simply not capable of the intricate maneuvers required. As a result, the tactical combinations used skirmishers and columns alone, as the line was the most difficult drill to learn.

The standard first line was replaced with a larger band of skirmishers, while maintaining the second line in battalion columns. The skirmishers, when thrown out in sufficient numbers, did the job required of engaging the enemy with fire. At the proper moment, the columns of the second line charged forward. Fortunately for the French, they almost always had superiority of numbers in the early years of the war, so these simplified fire and shock tactics were enough.

That was doubly fortunate because the other arms of the army were unready for war. Artillery-men take a long time to train, and guns were in short supply to start. The cavalry, long a bastion of the upper classes, was hurt much more by the social upheavals of the Revolution. So the infantry carried the load in the early years.

At the height of the Empire, 1805-7, Napoleon's army was a balanced force of heavy and light cavalry, powerful artillery, and well-trained

Two-Rank and Three-Rank Lines

Every country (including England) prescribed a three-rank line for its infantry. Most British commanders in the field ended up using the two-rank line simply because they had so few troops and needed to stretch their lines as far as possible. At one point Napoleon also prescribed a two-rank line, though it is clear most of his subordinates ignored the order.

The two-rank formation does have a slight advantage in generating firepower, though not the 50% advantage generally credited to it. It is possible for men in the third rank to fire if the first rank kneels, but their more common contribution to firepower was to load muskets for those in front — fewer bullets would be fired in a given volley, but over the course of several minutes fighting there would be little if any difference. This was a tactic used throughout the musket era — for example, by Longstreet's troops in the Sunken Road at Fredericksburg, who were massed six-deep and kept up a nearly continuous fire.

The three-rank formation had a few advantages of its own. In an extended fight, the third rank provided a built-in reserve, moving up to replace casualties in the first two ranks. This gave a battalion the capacity to maintain its fire longer, and made it less susceptible to gaps opening in its line. The Austrians used their third rank as a source of skirmishers. When faced with cavalry, the third rank added that much more mass to resist the shock of the charge.

In the final analysis, the differences between the two formations were probably minimal. Two-rank lines gave a longer front and higher initial firepower, while a three-rank line had greater staying power. The formation used would depend more on the situation on the ground at a given place and time than on any intrinsic superiority.

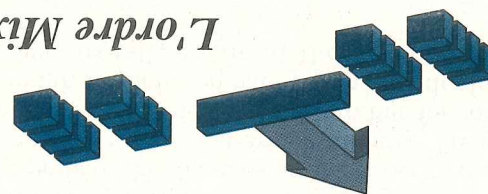
For the battlefield, Guibert emphasized the necessity of gaining fire superiority before attempting to close with an enemy — for the first time, firepower formally was seen as a prerequisite to shock rather than a supplement or completely separate from it. To that end, he advocated widespread use of skirmishers and infantry deployed in line.

However, he also thought columns should be used for movement and for the final assault. He therefore proposed forming an army in two lines; the first line would be battalions in line, the second battalions in column, able to maneuver, reinforce the firing line, or charge.

As a logical development of this he proposed *l'ordre mixte*, in which one battalion in line would be flanked by two in column. The infantry in line would prepare the way for an assault by the columns, while the columns would maneuver as needed to protect the line's flank. This formation was vastly more flexible than forming the entire army in a single formation, and became the basis for almost all French combat formations through the Napoleonic era.

There were those who still saw the column as the principal infantry formation, but their was a losing battle: Guibert's ideas were officially adopted by the French army in 1791 and remained in force long after Napoleon's fall.

L'ordre Mixte



The French Revolution and Napoleon

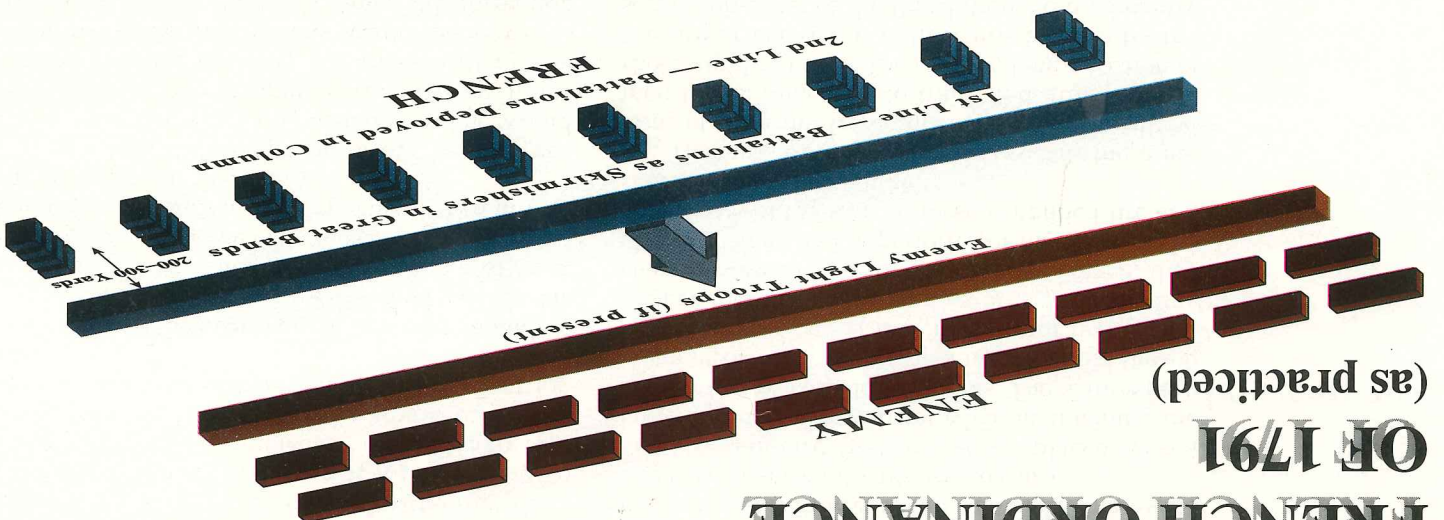
Guibert's theories were almost exclusively concerned with infantry formations (it was part of the on-going line-column debate), so they neglected the role of artillery, cavalry and skirmishers. But these points were filled in by others and were included in the 1791 regulations.

During the epic struggles between France and the Allies from 1793 to 1815, the art and science of warfare in the age of the musket reached its crowning glory. In sheer scope and energy, the warfare of that time towered above all that had gone before it. That era also heralded a new philosophy of war — the French armies that went to war in 1792 officially did so using the new, Guibert-inspired regulations. However, the huge and rapid increase in the size of the army made it impossible to teach the new recruits more than the rudiments of drill. As practiced during the first few years of the wars,

FRENCH ORDINANCE

OF 1791

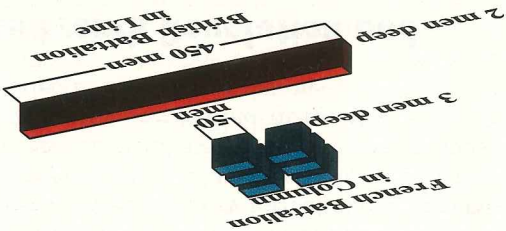
(as practiced)



won battles. By 1815, shock action could only provide punctuation to battles won by firepower.

Column and Line

The fire vs. shock discussion has an unfortunate tendency to degenerate into a "debate" over the relative value of infantry in line vs. infantry in column, ignoring or minimizing the importance of artillery and cavalry. But there was no debate; the line was recognized by every European army (except perhaps the Russians) as the superior combat formation for musket-armed infantry. French regulations stressed deployment into line for combat, though in their combat system that deployment was usually made at the last possible moment.



The column/line discussion invariably starts out with a generic comparison of a single French battalion in column and a single British battalion in line. The French battalion had six companies, each deployed in a three-rank line. The companies were formed into a column with a two-company front. A 600-man battalion would thus have a frontage of about 66 men and a depth of 9. Only the front two ranks could fire. A British battalion of 600 men would have a frontage of 300 men, with all 600 able to fire. The British unit thus had more than four times the front and five times the firepower.

and flexible infantry. His subordinates were experienced and innovative, using a broad array of tactics in different situations. At Austerlitz, Napoleon prescribed his favored *ordre mixte* for the decisive attack on the Pratzen Heights. At Jena, Marshal Lanne's corps maneuvered both in line and column, though the line predominated, while Marshal Soult maneuvered only in column. Davout's corps, on its own at Auerstadt against almost twice as many Prussians, used a variety of column, line and square. As the wars continued, the use of field fortifications — redoubts, redans, and villages — increased, leading to greater use of columns.

Throughout his wars, Napoleon never lost sight of the dominance of fire on the battlefield. When his troops deteriorated in quality and therefore could not be maneuvered or fought in line, he compensated by increasing the number of skirmishers and artillery, including the addition of guns to each infantry battalion. This was supplemented with grand batteries, of as many as 80 guns, to provide the firepower needed to win large battles.

Shock action was seen less, but when used it was large-scale. Cavalry, especially heavy cavalry and lancers, would charge in bodies of as many as 10,000 troopers. However, such action was reserved for places and times where the enemy had already been beaten by fire, and the cavalry action could be decisive. In most of the attacks, the cavalry was accompanied by horse artillery for last-minute fire support. However, shock action, even by massed horsemen, could not overcome formed, fresh infantry. At Waterloo, the French cavalry wasted its strength in charge after charge to almost no effect.

In the course of 2,000 years, the relative importance of fire and shock had been reversed. For the Greeks, firepower could ease the way, but shock

The problem with this comparison is it's a bit like the old joke about the Sultan's harem, "...twenty-four women, each more beautiful than the last...well, if you line them up that way." Individual battalions didn't line up for one-on-one duels. Each was part of a complex and well-developed combat system, and the virtues of each must be examined in that context.

The infantry column had a number of advantages over the line. Being more compact, it was more maneuverable. Specifically, it was less troubled by linear obstacles (hedges, creeks) and could wheel more quickly — in the example above, the outside man of the British battalion had to walk five times as far as the outside man in the French battalion to make a 90° turn. This made the column much better at reacting to sudden threats defensively, picking the weak point while attacking, and forming square quickly. In broken terrain (woods, villages), the column was no worse for combat because such fighting inevitably turned into multiple individual and squad-sized firefights. A column could also react more quickly to shouted orders because the commander's voice did not have to carry as far.

The French combat system was built around a combined-arms approach. Artillery would establish a base of fire, prevent massed enemy attacks, and punch holes in an enemy line. Skirmishers would precede the main infantry attack, using firepower to disrupt enemy formations and inflict casualties. The main attack would be delivered by infantry battalions that approached the enemy line in column for faster movement and to allow last-minute selection of the point of attack. At the critical distance (just outside musket range), the columns would deploy into line to deliver the assault based on volley fire. Meanwhile, heavy cavalry and horse artillery would accompany the infantry, prepared to apply the shock *coup de grace* to formations already beaten by firepower. Light cavalry would follow the main assault and pursue the beaten foe.

British armies of the period simply could not match the French combat system. Much of the infantry was provided by allies and was of indifferent quality, and the artillery and cavalry was not nearly so numerous. The British therefore relied heavily on their infantry.

What the British could do was beat the French system in detail. To minimize the value of the French artillery, the British battalions would deploy behind slopes or would lie down in formation. French cavalry was already limited in its effectiveness because of the generally rough terrain in which most of Wellington's battles were fought. Most importantly, the British beat the French in skirmishing. The British deployed large numbers of light infantry, who were specially trained for the task (unlike their French counterparts, the *légère* title was mainly an honorific), reinforced with

The most famous incident from the battle was an attack by the 1,600-man French 1st *Légère* (1st *Light Infantry Regiment*) against a single British battalion (of about 700). This contest comes very close to the "theoretical" comparison mentioned above, except the French attacked with *two* battalions in column side by side. After being riddled with bullets, the French columns broke before a British bay-

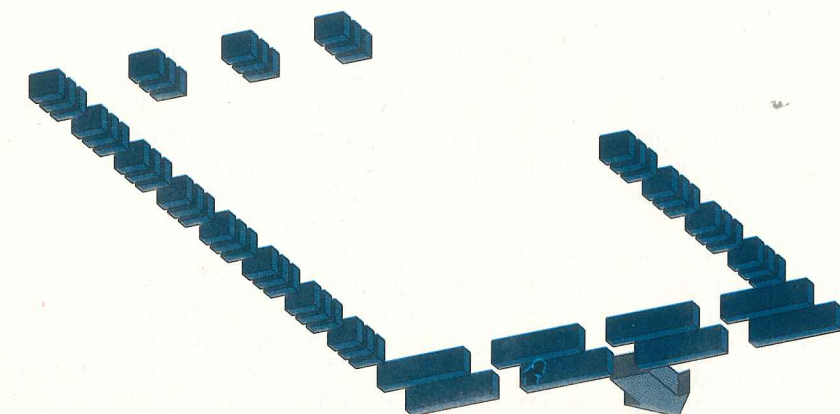
Maida

This battle, fought in Calabria (the heel of Italy) in 1806, is invariably used to illustrate the superiority of column over line. The antagonists were a British force of about 5,000 men (many of them light infantry) and a French division of just over 4,000. Neither side had much cavalry or artillery, so it was largely a contest of infantry.

The French commander decided not to "waste" time deploying skirmishers (which is surprising as the commander, Keynier, had run into the British infantry in Egypt in 1801). The British, not worried about hiding from artillery, formed their lines and moved forward to meet the French — if the French intended to deploy into line, they never made it. The resultant contest between infantry in column and infantry in line was as one-sided as would be expected in the circumstances.

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strength.



On each flank of the column were a number of battalions marching behind one another. These firepower.

On the second day of the battle, the French force and were deployed in line to maximize their in line. These battalions were the actual attack head of the column, eight battalions were deployed formation formed for a specific purpose. At the lanx, the giant column was in fact a very flexible Far from being an attempt to recreate a phalanx, without support.

mission of attacking into the Austrian lines virtually a gap in the French lines, the force was given the French on the second day of the battle. Inserted into together during one of several crises faced by the corps and several individual battalions scraped corps, but consisted of two divisions from one MacDonald's command was not actually a less than half normal strength).

Probably the most common example given of a massed column is MacDonald's "Corps" at Waterloo in 1809. The diagram below illustrates the approximate shape of the column, which totaled only 8,000-9,000 men (about 350-375 per battalion, less than half normal strength).

D'Erlon's formation is only one of several used to indicate a French "predilection" for massed columns in Napoleon's later years. Once again, it is a question of context: the last half of the Napoleonic era was characterized by ever-larger armies, increased artillery, and increased use of field fortifications.

Massed Columns

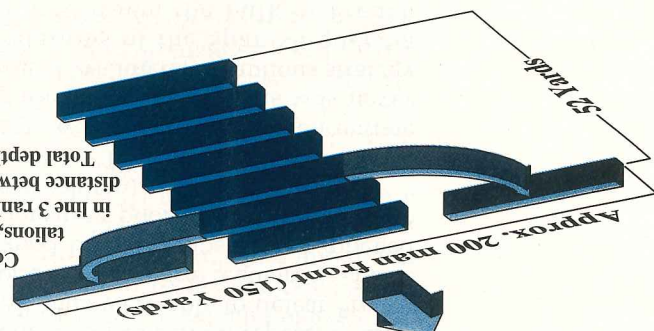
The formation chosen was probably clumser than necessary — a reversion to *l'ordre mixte* would have been simpler — but it was far from being a simple-minded use of sheer mass.

A full quarter of Napoleon's infantry was put out of action. The result was a rout, with hundreds cut down and thousands captured. new French formation was the individual battalions could not form square. The one drawback of the Two full brigades of British cavalry charged from simply not have expected such a counterattack. ally had been relatively ineffective — D'Erlon may

But this setback would only have slowed the attack; the French infantry was in the process of deploying extended lines when it was hit by a surprising new foe — British cavalry. It was surprising because in the Spanish campaign the British cavalry

Unfortunately for the French, two things went wrong. First, too little cavalry accompanied the attack. When the British infantry rose up to fire on the columns, they should have been crushed by cavalry but none was available.

It is uncertain exactly why this formation was chosen, but it probably had to do with D'Erlon's experience with the British in Spain. There, columns had been caught by British infantry before they could deploy into line. With this formation, the battalions were already in line. All the trailing battalions had to do was conduct a left- or right-face and march out to extend the lead battalions line. Meanwhile, the lead battalion would be able to keep up a steady fire. It was an attempt by the French to adjust their tactics to their enemy.



MARCOGNET'S DIVISION at the Battle of Waterloo, 1815

Another famous example used to illustrate the superiority of line was the attack of D'Erlon's 1st Corps at Waterloo. Three of the four assault divisions were formed into massed columns of battalions in line. Two divisions (one of eight and one of seven battalions) deployed all battalions in line, while the third deployed two columns, one for each brigade.

D'Erlon's Attack

an example of superior tactics than of appalling leadership. armies understood and accepted. Maida was less of the example given above, but it was a point all the British just 51. This one action proves the point onet assault. French losses totaled more than 800.

Future Shock

nerves are much more affected (in the short run) by intense noise and concussion than by steady drumfire. Both the French and the Germans used this technique, the best practitioner being Georg Bruchmüller, whose artillery paved the way for all the major German offensives of 1918. The techniques were further refined in WWI by the Americans using Time-on-Target (in which the firing of a number of batteries was timed so all the shells landed at the same time) and the British "Pepperpot" (in which as many guns as possible of as many calibres as possible were trained on a single target). The second kind of shock was the use of infiltration tactics on a major scale. Both sides on the Western Front had used these tactics to conduct trench raids, but the Germans were more systematic about it and were the first to lift the concept beyond raiding. The new tactics emphasized infiltrating many small groups through weak points in the enemy line. These groups would attack *through* the enemy positions, aiming for headquarters, communications and artillery (the core of a unit's firepower). The enemy organization, developed to fight a linear battle, was unable to analyze and cope with the new form of attack. Its infantry, largely unhurt by the initial attack, could not conduct a coherent and supported defence — the unit was "shocked" into incapacity. The 1940 Battle of France was the apogee of this form of battle: the entire Allied command was paralyzed and unable to respond in a timely manner. The third method of bringing shock to the battlefield was to speed the movement of firepower. The internal combustion engine enabled an army to move its weapons to a given point with great rapidity, thus establishing overwhelming fire superiority at that point. The tank, a combination of firepower, mobility and armor protection from most weapons, became the instrument of shock, increasingly supported by the air-planes. When these three methods were combined, the world was introduced to the "Blitzkrieg," the synchronization of firepower and mobility to induce shock.

To end this stalemate — different in quality but similar in effect to the stalemate of 18th century linear war — there arose three modern kinds of shock action. First was the use of the tools at hand — meaning artillery — in a different way. The old method required huge numbers of guns shelling slowly for days on end, systematically destroying known targets. The new method used fewer guns firing much more quickly for a much shorter period, sometimes as little as two or three hours. The intense bombardment was aimed not at physical but at psychological destruction — a man's

machines and artillery made attacking bloody and reality of World War I trench fighting. The firepower of This basic philosophy was heavily reinforced by the based its attacks on overwhelming fire).

accepted firepower as the basic form of combat for both attack and defence (even the French "offensive" school bared defenders. For the most part, though, armies against tired, poorly motivated and/or badly outmaneuvered every case, such attacks were made. But in almost every case, were made and did succeed.

actual shock attacks — by bayonet-armed infantry or saboteur-made cavalry — were made and did succeed. During this period, there were occasions when French army, which argued for bayonet assault).

school of thought, especially in the late-19th century close-up, decisive fire combat (though there was a small forward to close range where they could deploy for point the remaining reserve companies would charge formation) until fire superiority was gained. At that would be fed by reserve companies (in an open column up version of the Napoleonic skirmish line. This line combat practices on the firing line, essentially a befeet 1914, all European and American armies based their

From about the middle of the 19th century until lyze or disperse formations. Though firepower was clearly the dominant force on the battlefield during and after the musket era, the debate over "shock" action continued. In this sense, though, shock no longer meant the actual collision of formations, but the psychological shock that could para-

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The Last Word

Some commanders during the period ended up using columns because their inexperienced soldiers could not handle the more complicated drill, and there were some, French, Russian and others, who truly believed in the bayonet charge. But most accepted the primacy of the line. As Napoleon himself stated, "The ancient arms require the *ordre profond*, the modern the *ordre mince*." There was nothing more to be said.

circumstances at Wagram it was a good example of a flexible, field-expedient formation.

French troops would be advancing on MacDonald's flanks. The right flank was stronger because the center of the Austrian army lay in that direction. The three battalions at the rear of the column were deployed in column because it allowed more rapid maneuver and redeployment — in fact, the column was hit with a large Austrian cavalry attack that prompted the battalions to form square.

MacDonald's column achieved its objective, pinning the Austrians and plugging a gap simultaneously, though at a cost of more than 60% losses — high, but not excessive under the circumstances: nearly 1,000 cannon were deployed on the

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	The Perf. Gen.	\$38

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Unit Scale: Division/
Brigade
Time Scale: 1 Week
per Turn
Map Scale: 24 km
per Hex
Players: 1-2

88
Warszawa
8-3-6

1
8
5/II/Sturm
2-2-5

3
11
22NZ
4-5-5

1
8
2-2-5

1
8
2-2-5

Unit Scale: Company/
Battalion
Time Scale: 8 hours
per Turn
Map Scale: 1.5 km
per Hex
Players: 1-4

Counters	200	400
Maps (22x34 inch)	One	Two
Playing Time	2-5 hrs.	2-6 hrs.
Solitaire Playability	Yes	Yes
Scenarios	Multiple	Multiple
Special Rules	Yes	Yes
Unit Scale	Division	Battalion

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	Thunderbolt+Apache Leader	\$32.00	
	1863: Four Civil War Battles	\$37.00	
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	* 7.25% sales tax for CA residents		
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