
U.S. AT WAR

17-2



Mobilizing at Home

- * The “date which will live in infamy.” Franklin D. Roosevelt in response to the attack on Pearl Harbor
- * Germany and Italy declare war on the U.S. a few days later
- * U.S. had to prepare for a global war on two fronts
- * Selective Service already had nearly 2 million soldiers prepared
- * numbers increase drastically in next few years

Minorities in Uniform

- * Over 1 million African Americans fought for U.S. in WWII
- * still segregated and led by white officers
- * many were not allowed to fight - those that did were excellent
- * Late 1944: General Eisenhower called for African Americans to enlist and fight in integrated units
- * Nearly 350,000 Latin Americans fought in WWII for U.S.
- * most decorated American ethnic group

Tuskegee Airmen

- * First black military airmen at a time when many thought they lacked intelligence, skill, and courage
- * Trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama
- * First class started July, 1941 and graduated March, 1942
- * Scored exceptionally high on aptitude test



Tuskegee Cont...

- * Formed the 332nd fighter group
- * 1940-1946: trained over 1,000 pilots
- * In over 200 missions the fighter squad never lost a single bomber to enemy fire - a record that is still unmatched
- * Regardless of qualifications and success overseas it was nearly impossible for pilots to get a job when returning home after WWII



Minorities in Uniform cont...

- * Japanese Americans: fought loyally even though they and their families faced severe discrimination
- * Native Americans: Marine Signal Callers - used Navajo language to form a signal code never broken by the Japanese



European Front

- * June 22, 1941: Germany attacks Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa)
- * Battle of Leningrad: surrounded for nearly 900 days - starving nearly half a million residents
- * Long winter saves a surrounded Moscow
- * Battle of Stalingrad: July 1942-Feb. 1943 - maybe greatest victory of WWII - left about 2 million dead
- * Stalin was upset Allies offered no assistance

courtesy of C. Jinghamre



North African Campaign

- * General Erwin Rommel: “The Desert Fox”
- * Battle of El Alamein - Oct.-Nov. 1942 - British victory - Allies maintain Suez Canal
- * Operation Torch: Nov. 1942 - Allied invasion to push Axis out of Africa
- * Jan. 1943: Casablanca Conference: Allied leaders agree to wage war against Axis Powers until they received an unconditional surrender
- * May 1943: German soldiers surrender Africa to Allies

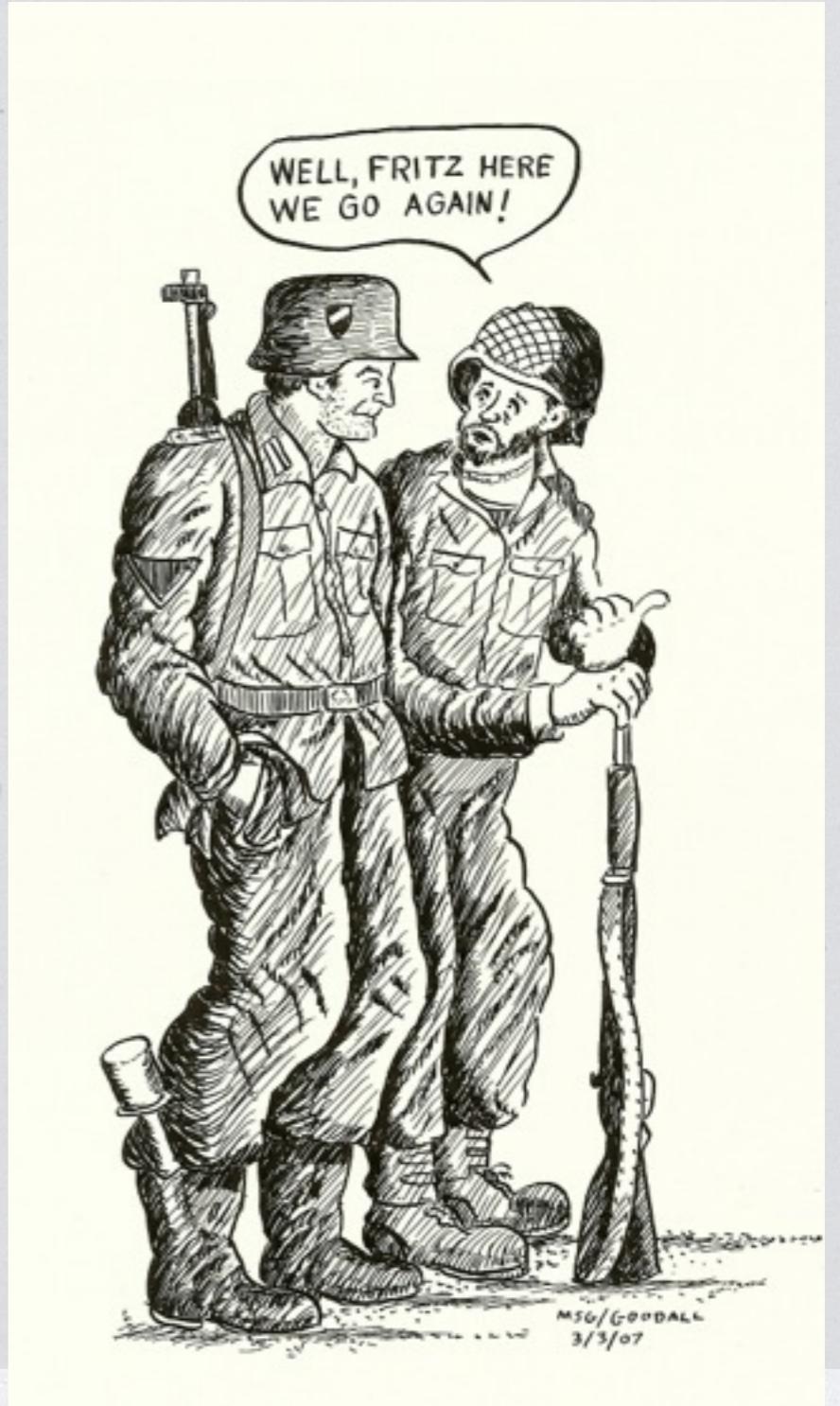
Italian Campaign

- ❖ * July 10, 1943: begin invasion of Italy
- * “soft underbelly of Europe”
- * Stalin continued to push for western invasion
- * Air and amphibious assaults
- * July 25, 1943: Mussolini is removed from power
- * Hitler sends reinforcements



Operation Overlord (D-Day)

- * Planning began August, 1943
- * June 6, 1944: largest land-sea-air assault in history
 - * originally planned for June 5 - was delayed due to bad weather
- * Late June 5th: Paratroopers are dropped behind enemy lines in France



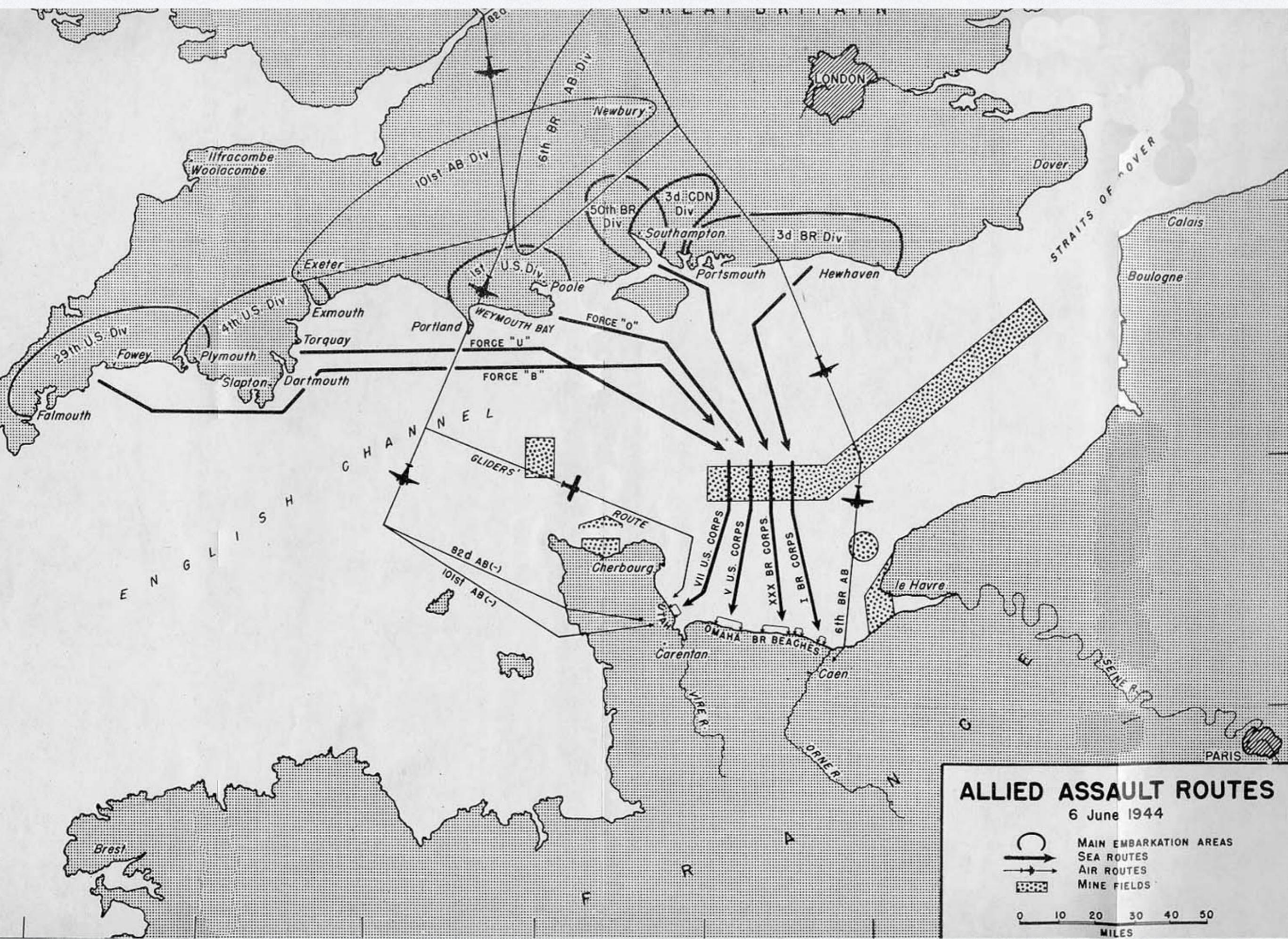
D-Day Plan

- * D-Day minus two: begin bombing of France
- * D-Day minus one: Troops went through a practice run and rested
- * at dusk and early night Paratroopers were to be dropped behind enemy lines
- * D-Day: at first light bombing would begin for a half hour and would cease 5 minutes before troops land ashore - 10 minutes if cloudy

D-Day Cont.

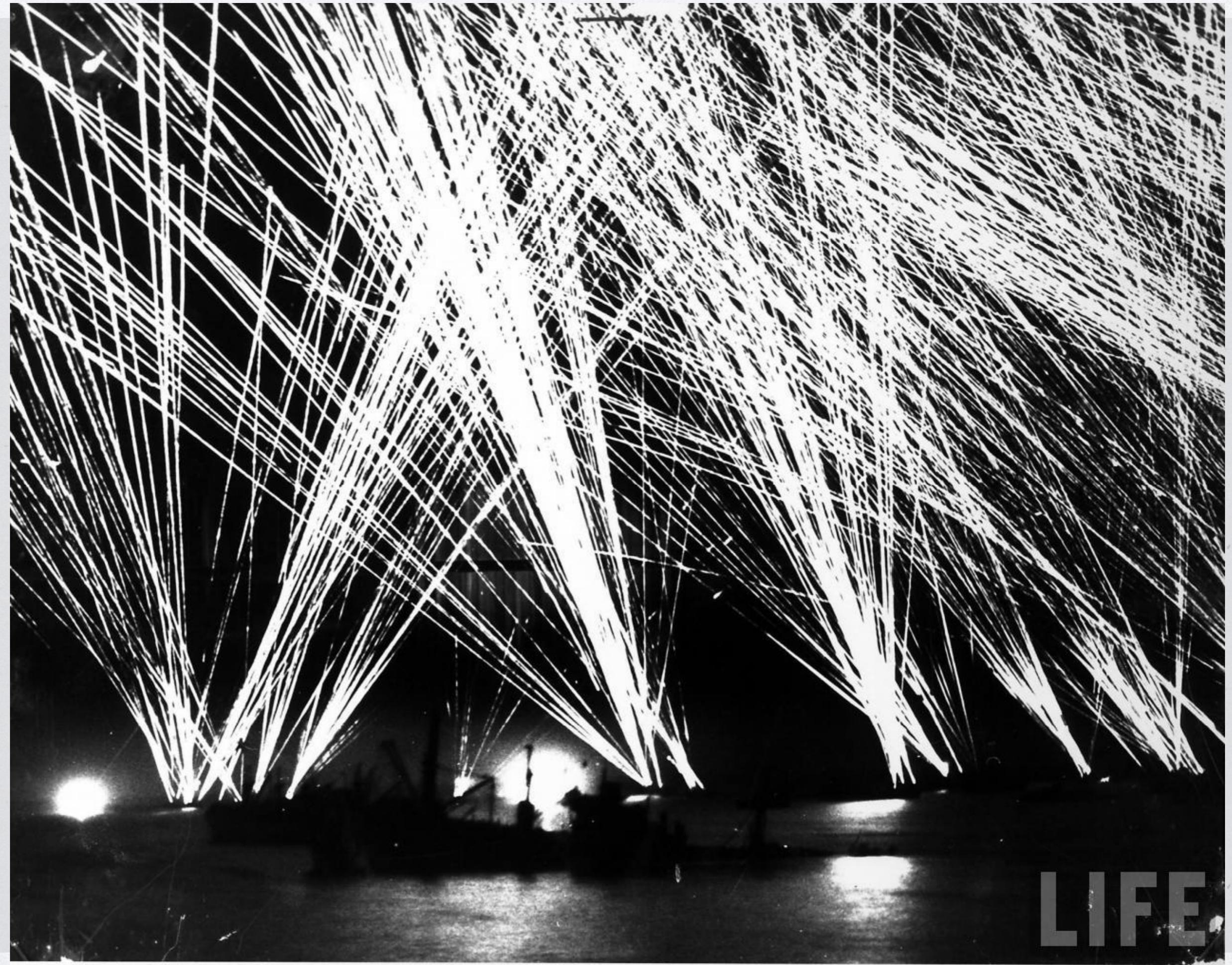
* “Dutch” Schultz remembered a paratrooper who “accidentally” shot himself in the foot. A 1st Division sergeant, Joseph Dragotto, watched with astonishment as a man from another company calmly put a generous portion of pipe tobacco between two pieces of bread and ate the “sandwich.” That got him into the hospital - and out of the invasion. Dragotto also saw a man lift his rifle and start firing it into the pup tents. As the MPs descended on him, Dragotto wondered why he was doing such a crazy thing, “and then I realized he didn’t want to go to war.”

* excerpt from *D-Day* by Stephen Ambrose









LIFE











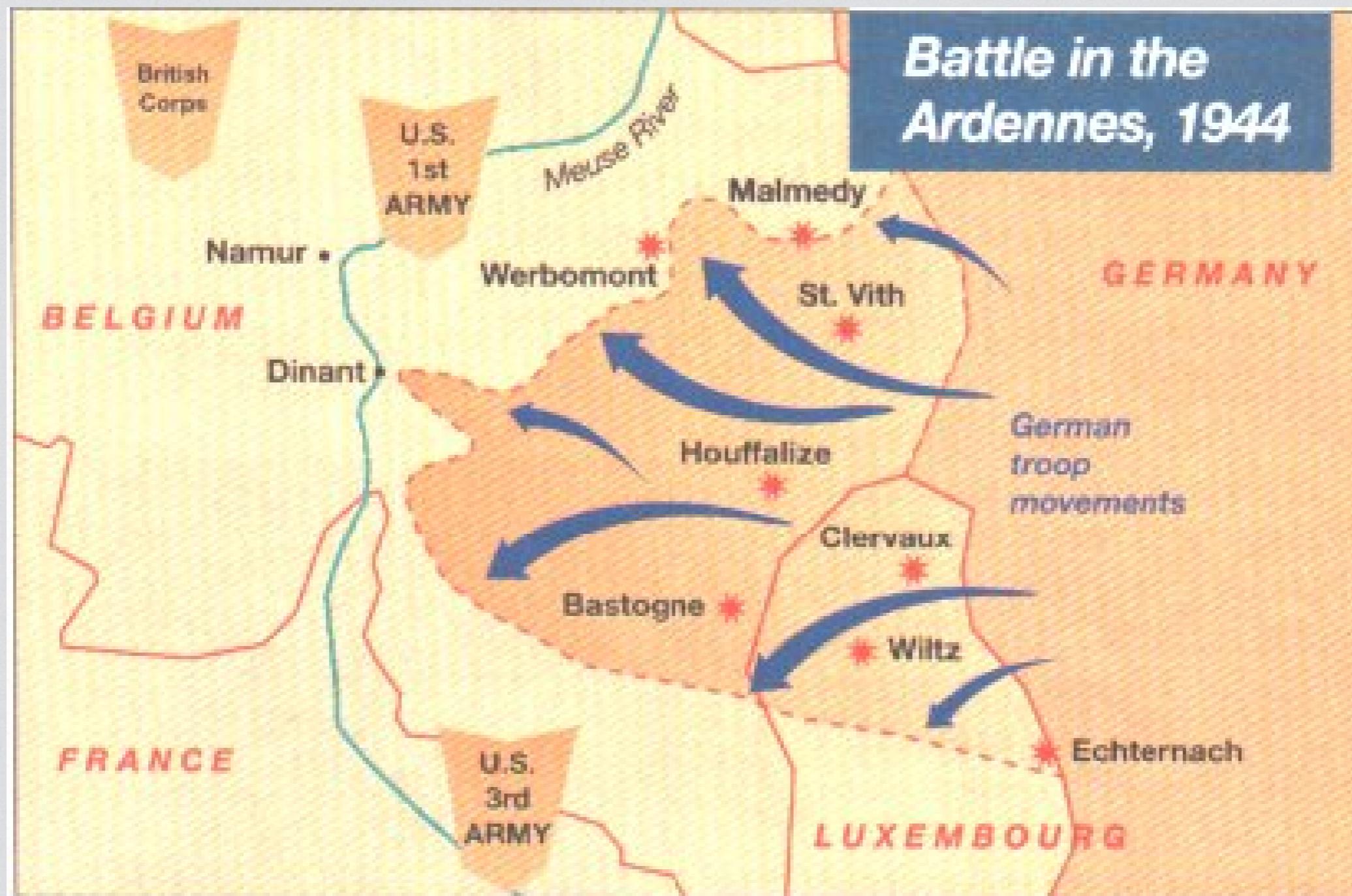




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Battle of the Bulge

- * Started December 16, 1944 - Germany thought a huge assault could break up the Allies
- * In the Ardennes Forest of Belgium Hitler staged his final assault
- * Drove a bulge of troops and artillery 80 mi long and 50 mi deep into the Allied lines - aided by bad weather
- * Allies lost 76,000 soldiers before they were able to push the Germans back
- * opened up the roads to Germany



The massive German offensive in the Ardennes Forest of Luxembourg and Belgium lasted from Dec. 16, 1944, until Jan. 28, 1945. Its target was Antwerp, Belgium.

Finishing Off Europe

- * After fending off Germany - Soviets continue to push westward
- * Allies continue to head into Germany from west
 - * biggest problem is finding safe bridges to cross
- * Roosevelt dies April 12, 1945
- * Hitler commits suicide April 30, 1945
- * Berlin fell May 2 and Germany unconditionally surrenders May 7
- * May 8, 1945: Allies declare Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day)