



Soldiers of the Corps Expéditionnaire Français with their ammunition-bearing mules—here passing wrecked German armor—after breaking through the heavily defended Gustav Line, quickly pursued the retreating Germans to their backup Hitler line.



BREAKING THE GUSTAV LINE

In 1943 General Alphonse Juin and his Corps Expéditionnaire Français showed the Allies how to win a fight in the mountains By Douglas Porch

General Dwight D. Eisenhower's decision to invade the Italian peninsula, based on wishful thinking and best-case scenarios, had drawn the Allies into a campaign without clear strategic objectives beyond a vague desire to capture Rome and tie down German divisions. But pinning down those divisions obliged the Allies to execute offensive operations across a tormented landscape that goats would find challenging. The difficulty spiked considerably once German commander Albert Kesselring completed a series of defense-in-depth barriers across central Italy. The most formidable, the Gustav Line, ran from the Adriatic to the Tyrrhenian Sea, with the medieval Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino as its anchor point.

Perched atop 1,706-foot Monastery Hill at the confluence of the Rapido, Garigliano, and Liri River Valleys, Cassino dominated Route 6, the critical axis that followed the Liri Valley north to Rome. Cassino came to epitomize the slow, blood-spattered slogging march up the spiny peninsula, which replicated in its strategic futility and tactical frustrations the mud-soaked misery of the trench warfare of 1914–1918.

The long struggle in Italy might have proved even more humiliating for the Allies had it not been for the vital contribution of the Corps Expéditionnaire Français—a force that by May 1944 counted four divisions of French-led, largely North African troops supplemented by irregular Moroccan levies called *goums*. In the winter of 1943–1944 the CEF intervened in the conflict to break the stalemate at Monte Cassino.

The force was led by the wily, brilliant, and innovative General Alphonse Juin, whose hard-hitting fighters supplied the critical margin between victory and defeat at Monte Cassino in May 1944. U.S. general and Fifth Army commander Mark Clark conceded: “General Juin’s entire force showed an aggressiveness hour after hour that the Germans could not withstand.” He called it “one of the most brilliant and daring advances of the war in Italy.” Juin broke the Gustav Line after convincing Clark to

switch from his futile and bloody frontal assaults on Monte Cassino to a campaign of surprise, maneuver, and infiltration. Juin’s French-led Muslim troops, especially the *goums*, proved particularly adept at mountain warfare. They almost single-handedly cracked the German front on the second day of the battle. Then, exploiting the breakthrough, they thwarted Kesselring’s attempt to reestablish his front on the reserve Hitler Line, branching west of the Aurunci Mountains at Cassino.

Juin’s French-led Muslim troops proved particularly adept at mountain warfare

Remarkably, the CEF and its commander almost didn’t make it to Italy at all: The French had had to reconstruct an army virtually from scratch and largely from limited manpower resources in North Africa. Under the terms of the 1940 armistice, the French counted barely 60,000 poorly armed soldiers in North Africa when the Allies invaded in November 1942. Algeria and Tunisia relied on conscription, while Morocco called for “volunteers,” which produced a disproportionate number of Berbers. Most were young and illiterate, although tough and whipped into shape by native corporals who did not hesitate to employ brutality. The revival of conscription and the recall of reservists in Algeria reeled in 175,000 *pieds noirs*—Algerians of European descent.

Allied generals at that time held the French in contempt. Both Eisenhower and British chief of staff Alan Brooke viewed the French as worthy garrison troops at best. While Clark to his credit was more open-minded (or more desperate), his subordinate commanders remained skeptical. And well they might: The CEF appeared to be an unpromising motley force, 54 percent were largely illiterate North African Muslims, 40 percent French, and 6 percent odds and ends of overseas subjects. Clark’s original idea was to divvy up the French troops among U.S. corps commanders, but Juin remained determined that France claim its own sector of the front.

Delays in reequipment meant that initially only two French divisions were available for operations, the 2nd Moroccan Infantry and the 3rd Algerian Infantry, which disembarked at Naples in November 1943. Each division had been assigned a battalion composed of four *goums* or companies of 175 officers and men divided into three platoons. “*Goums* are companies of irregular light mountain infantry which are recruited almost exclusively from the Berber tribes,” read an undated Seventh Army report. Lean, bronzed recruits from the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, they wore their American-supplied uniforms camouflaged under striped woolen North African *djellabas*. Armed with World War I vintage Springfield and Enfield rifles and wearing Great War-style French helmets, they appeared a study in anachronism. Their reputation, earned in Tunisia and Sicily, for rusticity, adaptability, raiding, and night operations led Clark to ask Juin in October 1943 to include *goums* in the CEF.

If the Italian campaign would prove the redemption of the French army, so too would it rescue the reputation of Alphonse Juin. He was a *pied noir* officer and native of Constantine, in eastern Algeria. Juin had elected to join the Algerian *tirailleurs* after graduating first in his 1911 Saint Cyr class, and throughout his illustrious career remained fervently attached to L’Armée d’Afrique. A soldier’s soldier who enjoyed the rough humor of the barracks, Juin was reserved and understated. His authority sprang from his competence rather than any obvious

General Alphonse Juin's experience in mountain combat, plus the toughness of his 2nd Moroccan Infantry's goums (below), enabled an unconventional lightning campaign that overwhelmed German defenders.

charm or martial bearing. His signature was his left-handed salute, permitted after his right arm was badly wounded in the Champagne offensive of 1915. With his beret pulled down to his ears, the inevitable cigarette dangling beneath a full mustache, and a thick pied noir accent, Juin might easily have been mistaken for a Mediterranean peasant who had wandered onto the battlefield, had it not been for his insignia of rank. Anyone who underestimated him soon discovered a man who succeeded through personal bravery, an intuition for the right answer, and more than a touch of cunning.

Allied commanders in Italy quickly came to see Juin's operational brilliance. His strengths resided in his understanding of the capacities and limitations of the North African troops in his command and in his straightforward, robust battle planning. He also had experience in mountain combat, gained in Morocco during the Rif War between Spanish colonial forces and Berber tribesmen in the 1920s. Despite Juin's protestations that "politics isn't my thing," he proved remarkably diplomatic, using his humility, charm, and tactical sagacity to win over Clark, seven years his junior, and the Americans who, in Juin's view, were simultaneously powerful and desperately insecure.

On November 25, 1943, Juin flew into Naples in a rainstorm. The Anglo-American advance had stalled before a near-impregnable string of fortifications that ran from the mouth of the Garigliano River on the Tyrrhenian Sea, along the jagged ridges and peaks of the Aurunci Mountains, to the confluence of the Gari and Liri Rivers about a mile and a half south of the town of Cassino. Route 6 wound southwest through the town and around the foot of Monte Cassino, crowned by the majestic medieval mother abbey of the Benedictine order, before it turned northwest toward Rome. Unfortunately, to exploit this most practical route toward the Italian capital, the Allies would have to cross the Rapido and charge up the funnel of the Liri Valley. Doing so would expose their flanks to the Aurunci Mountains to the south and to the north, to Monte Cassino, a shoulder of rock that stretched southeast from its 5,000-foot pinnacle of Monte Cairo. Kesselring, recognizing that Monte Cassino and the Liri Valley was the most obvious passage to Rome, concentrated his strongest defenses there. To the northeast, the Gustav Line curved through a series of spurs and ridges dominated by Monte San Croce and Monte Belvedere before it joined the Sangro River as it dropped out of the mountains to the Adriatic.

This tormented landscape became home to 60,000 German defenders deeply ensconced behind ridges and on reverse slopes that made the men difficult to spot, much less to blast with artillery or bombs. Ridgelines that appeared from a distance to offer smooth routes of advance were, in fact, shattered into irregular knolls and outcroppings transformed by the defenders into bunkers reinforced with concrete and railway tracks and ties, protected by kilometers of barbed wire and





Hard Slog in Italy

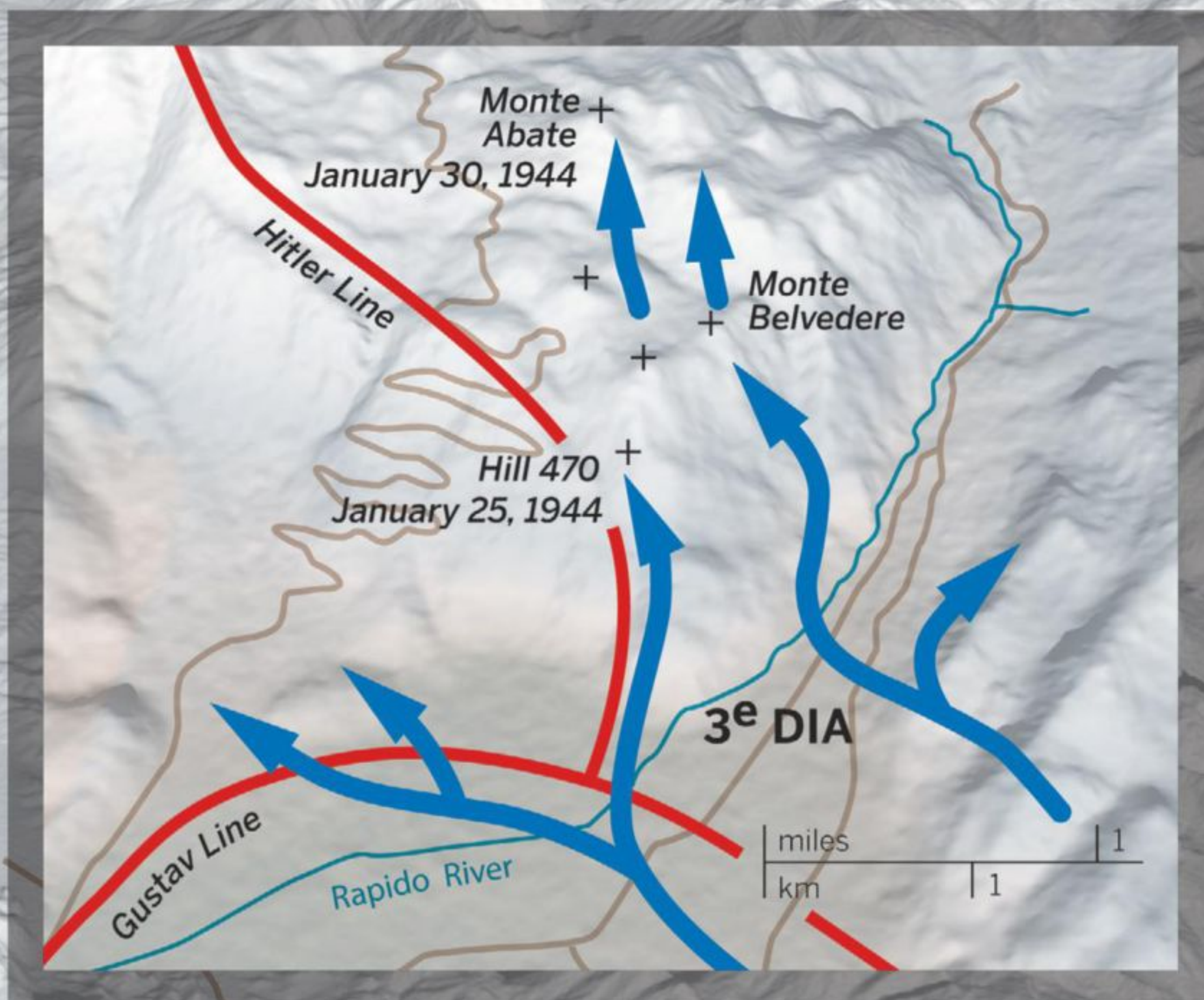
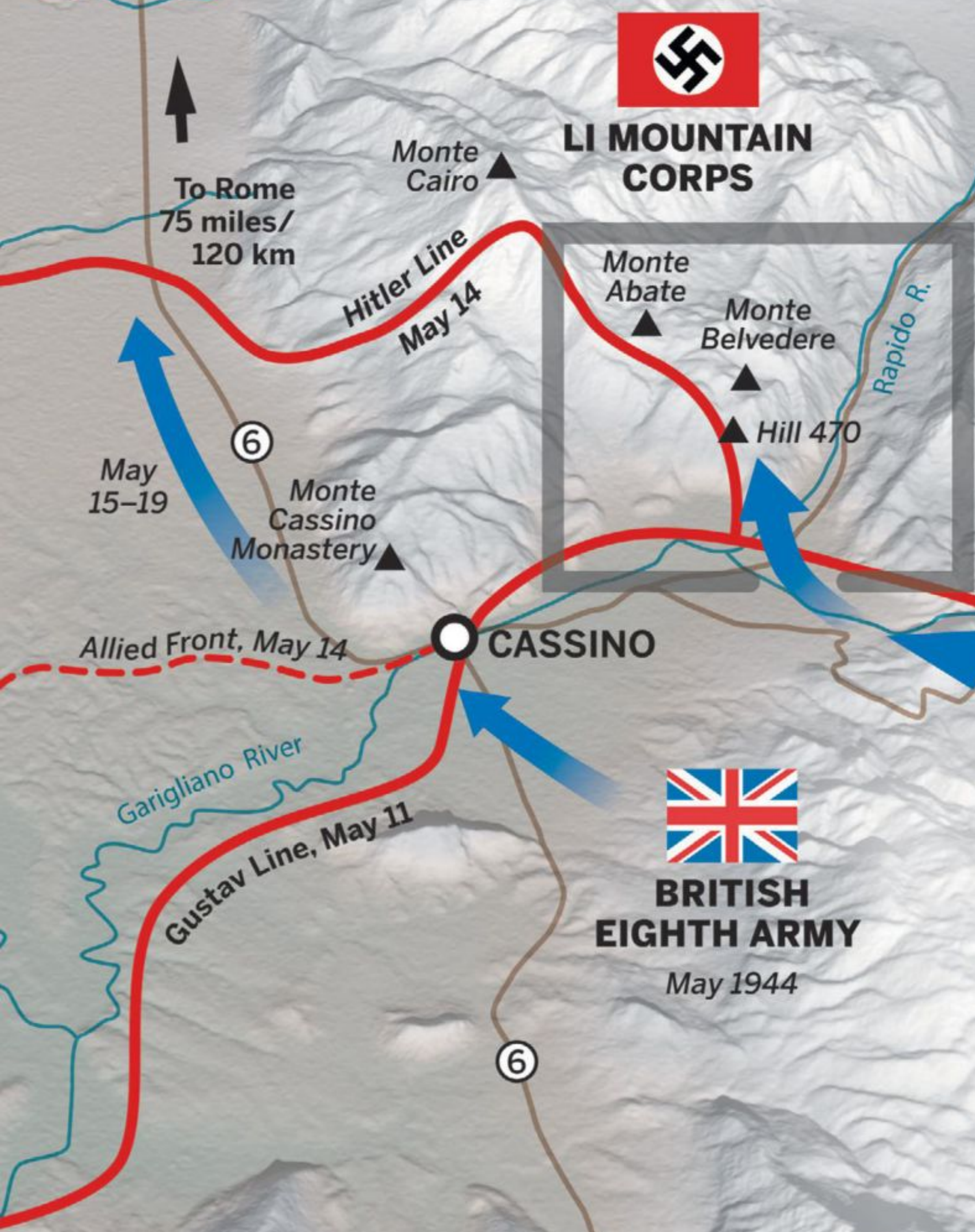
Once the Allies invaded the Italian mainland in September 1943 at Calabria and at Salerno, south of Naples, they confronted the prospect of a long, hard northward advance, in which their strategic goals remained murky. German resistance coalesced, then nearly prevailed in a 10-day close-range fight at the Salerno beachhead, the first of many bloody battles for the peninsula. In early winter the German commander in Italy, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, established three lines of defense across the waist of Italy, south of Rome. The southernmost and strongest was the Gustav Line, anchored to 1,706-foot Monastery Hill, with its ancient monastery, Monte Cassino. At that line, manned by the German Tenth Army, the advance by the American Fifth Army and the British X Corps slowed nearly to a standstill. Then the weather turned ugly. **NOTE:** Map depicts repeated Allied assaults on the Gustav Line over a six-month period, the earliest on the righthand page and the final, successful battle on the left.

Operation Diadem

Mid-May 1944: The Allies' strongest assault finally broke the Gustav Line. The power of the British Eighth Army, U.S. II Corps and Fifth Army, plus Polish and Canadian corps and Juin's CEF attacked on May 11. They were first stalled, but then the CEF cracked the line on May 13. In a week of hard fighting, the Allies forced a German retreat, then reached Monte Cassino and the Hitler Line.

Battles for Cassino

Monte Cassino commanded the Liri Valley and Route 6, the most direct path to Rome. But the difficult terrain was held by 60,000 dug-in German defenders. U.S. general Mark Clark's Fifth Army's frontal attack in mid-January 1944 failed, as did subsequent high-casualty midwinter assaults by British, New Zealand, Indian, and Canadian forces. A February Allied bombing raid destroyed the ancient monastery—but their follow-up assault also failed.



The CEF's Mountain Prowess

The CEF entered the campaign in early December. In a dawn attack on December 16, General Alphonse Juin's Moroccan infantrymen gave proof to their commander's mountain-warfare ideas in taking Monte Pantano, then battling their way to Monte Monna Casale and the Mainarde Ridge. Renewing their attack in late January, Juin's North Africans pierced the Gustav Line and seized Monte Belvedere and Monte Abate, flanking Cassino—though at high cost.

DISTANCES:
 Gaeta to Cassino, 24 miles/38 km
 Castleforte to Pico, 18 miles/29 km

MAPS BY STEVE WALKOWIAK/SWMAPS.COM



BREAKING THE GUSTAV LINE



In their striped woolen djellabas over GI uniforms with French and British helmets, the knife-wielding, night-fighting goums often spooked German forces with their guerrilla tactics—while relishing the firepower of U.S.-supplied machine guns.

mines. The weaknesses of the German position in Italy were two: They could be outflanked by sea, and the massive extension of their front, caused by the sheer size of the mountains, meant they could not be strong everywhere. It was this latter deficiency that Juin and the CEF would exploit.

The 2nd Moroccan Infantry Division officially entered the line on December 11 to relieve the U.S. 34th Division, the link between the U.S. Fifth Army and the British Eighth Army in a rock-strewn, mine-infested, snow-whipped confusion of stark 6,000-foot peaks and ridges. The CEF rapidly realized that it would have to leave most of its American equipment at the foot of the mountains—that the mule, not the jeep, reigned in Italy. The enemy knew the sector and its chaotic terrain well and was always shifting position out of view. Officers had to prevent tirailleurs from lighting fires against a cold so bitter that the mechanisms of rifles froze. Because of imposed radio silence, messages had to be passed by runners, who frequently got lost. Boots slipped treacherously in the ubiquitous mud. Allied attacks, even when successful, could not be sustained because they could not be reliably supplied.

On December 1 the U.S. 34th Division's attack to take the heights east of Cassino had come to a halt at the foot of the Pantano mountain. Juin knew he was taking a risk in throwing the untested 2nd Moroccan into the attack, but at 6:30 a.m. on December 16 he launched them up a mountainside still littered with GI corpses. In two days of fierce hand-to-hand fighting among a line of blockhouses sited on narrow ridges covered by German artillery, the 2nd Moroccan became the master of the Pantano. French troops pushed forward to occupy Mount Cerasuolo and pressed toward Mount Monna Casale and Mainarde Ridge, where German resistance firmed up. "Our allies saw us as the defeated of '40," remarked André Lanquetot, who served with the 8th Regiment of Moroccan Tirailleurs in Italy, "After these initial engagements [on the Pantano], we were accepted as companions in arms."

During a glacial and joyless Christmas, the French attempted to assimilate the lessons of the Pantano engagement: the difficulties of night operations; the need to do their own reconnaissance rather than rely on U.S. reports, which they found to be fragmentary and imprecise; the requirement to lighten the load carried by the soldiers; better coordination among battalions; and better infantry-artillery liaison.

The commander of IV Corps, John P. Lucas, was eager to seize a troika of peaks called the Catenella delle Mainarde before the Germans could reinforce them. The first attack launched on December 26 failed when low visibility precluded close-air and artillery support, and U.S. engineers working on the road cut the telephone wires, which prevented coordination. The only success was that the goums had gained a foothold on the Mainarde Ridge.

A renewed attack the next day was announced by a short but furious artillery barrage on the 800-meter-long Mainarde Ridge and at pillboxes on adjoining heights. Three battalions

of the 8th Regiment, each man's pack reduced to a blanket, a shovel, a tin of rations, and as much ammunition as he could carry, surged forward at 8:45 a.m. The 5th Regiment of Moroccan Tirailleurs followed at 10:30. The fractured nature of the terrain broke the attack into a constellation of individual duels, with grenades and bursts by Thompson submachine guns against pockets of German resistance. Because German defenses were sited on the reverse slope, tirailleurs on neighboring heights often had a better view of the defenses than did those directly engaged, so the tirailleurs hit the enemy from the flanks with mortars and machine guns. The fog allowed some sections to take the defenses from the rear, where they hurriedly collected the valued German stick grenades.

As night fell, a violent snowstorm swept the battlefield, shrouding corpses and freezing the feet and rifles of the living. Tirailleurs sucked on snow for moisture, stripped the German dead of their clothing, and struggled to scrape a hole for the night, over which they rolled their tent half. Through the darkness mule convoys loaded with munitions toiled up the hill, while men hauled 50-caliber machine guns on their backs. On the return trips badly wounded men and corpses were wrapped in tent halves and lashed onto mule back.

"The Americans were stunned," Juin remembered, because they had been unable to make any progress for two weeks. On December 27 the 3rd Algerian Infantry Division was also successful—against hardened Wehrmacht veterans dug in on the heights of Catenella delle Mainarde, a remarkable feat, made even more so given that it was the division's first combat. The cost had been significant: 16 officers, 46 NCOs, and 235 tirailleurs had fallen. However, the French were mastering the art of mountain warfare with better artillery preparation; more mules to convey ammunition to the front and casualties to the rear; and more radios to coordinate attacks. They had also learned to take advantage of fog, rain, and snowstorms to attack from the rear. Four-man "stiff patrols" were dispatched to collect the dead and strip German corpses of their warmer boots and jackets. Soon the two armies were indistinguishable at a distance.

The Pantano was merely a warm-up for Clark's mid-January assault, sometimes called the First Battle of Cassino. And while that frontal blitz failed amid great carnage for the U.S. 36th Division, a breath of promise and suggestion for a way forward emerged on Clark's right flank. In two days Juin had so decimated the German 5th Mountain Division that Kesselring was forced to replace it with the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division. Hoping to turn the Cassino position from the northeast, Juin renewed his offensive on January 21, his agile Moors scaling the most difficult routes in the hope that these would be the least well defended. On the 23rd, Clark asked Juin to shift his attack to German lines just north of Cassino (that is, on the left side of the French line), which required moving all the artillery over mountain roads under German harassing fire. On the night of the 25th, the 3rd Algerian

Infantry took Hill 470 by surprise, then seized the three peaks that constituted the mist-shrouded Belvedere. They changed hands several times before the 3rd Algerian finally secured them against 36 hours of repeated German counterattacks. Only two of the 80 mules sent to resupply the French defenders reached the summit, but the French advance placed the defenders in crisis mode and Kesselring had to milk his divisions for reserves.

On January 29 the U.S. 142nd Infantry Regiment was thrown into the fight for Monte Abate to bolster the French.

A snowstorm swept the battlefield, shrouding corpses and freezing feet and rifles

On January 30 the French seized Monte Abate in bitter fighting—squad of French-led troops infiltrating over treacherous terrain approached German bunkers from the flanks, to push grenades through the embrasures and machine gun anyone who tried to flee out the back door. Peaks and ridges were taken, surrendered, and retaken as men fought for days without food, their weapons often frozen.

By the first week in February, however, the German defenses had hardened, while lashing rain, logistical problems, and sheer exhaustion had halted the Allied advance. The costs for the 3rd Algerian had been high: 2,091 were hors de combat, including 64 officers. Loss rates for the Germans were unclear but included 450 POWs. Colonel Goislard de Monsambert of the 3rd Algerian proudly quoted a German POW: "I have just found out that the French army is not dead yet."

The U.S. 34th Division and the CEF had snatched the honors of this first attempt to crack Monte Cassino. Juin reported that the Germans had required 17 battalions, or 44 percent of their forces, to halt the CEF. The British were especially impressed by the ferocity of the Moroccans; the official British history reported that they "regarded the killing of enemies as an honourable and agreeable duty to be undertaken with zest." German General Ringel reported that the Moroccans had inflicted 80 percent casualties on his troops who had opposed them. However, a setback was a setback: Juin's desire to restore France's martial reputation did not blind him to the serious problems the Allies still faced in Italy.

Tactically, Juin had been unhappy with the role Clark had allotted him. He felt that the strengths of his troops—mobility, fluidity, the ability to maneuver and infiltrate—were mismatched against Kesselring's tightly constructed German defensive system. Juin also feared that the morale of his North Africans might crack as their casualty rates skyrocketed. While Kesselring praised the "excellent troops of the French Expeditionary Corps," he concluded that the Allies could not continue such a "reckless" expenditure of men.

For the May 1944 offensive against Cassino—Operation Diadem—the British XIII Corps was returned to the Eighth Army, which would bear the responsibility for the main effort against the monastery. The CEF would replace the XIII Corps at a portion of the line that paralleled the Garigliano River between Cassino and Gaeta on the Tyrrhenian coast. At first glance this sector, dominated by Mount Majo, appeared too formidable even for Juin's North Africans: a bewildering maze of cliffs, crags, and stark hillsides studded with primeval boulders and dwarf oaks. But intelligence reports told Juin that the Germans were not occupying the mountain summits, because they believed the British XIII Corps lacked the capacity to attack them.

On March 22 Juin sought to convince Clark that the key to successful warfare in the mountains was surprise and a steady, seamless advance that denied the enemy the time to react. But Juin's observations appeared to have fallen on deaf ears when on April 1 Clark's operations officer announced a reprise of the frontal assault on Cassino, this time on a superior scale. The role of the CEF would be to open a small road to Castelforte, Ausonia, and Esperia for Clark's Fifth Army. In other words, Juin's corps was to be sacrificed so Clark could seize Rome and salvage his tottering reputation. Juin uncharacteristically protested by pounding his usable left arm on the map on the table.

Juin's staff nevertheless worked up a plan to scramble over the lightly held mountain peaks to maneuver against the rear of the German Tenth Army, with the goal of blocking the roads against reinforcements. Although their plan to launch two divisions—a total of 35,000 men, supported by 7,000 mules—along a goat trail that ran for 45 miles into the German rear appeared fantastical, Juin got the backing of both French president Charles de Gaulle and U.S. 36th Division commander Fred L. Walker.

Juin's corps was to be sacrificed so Clark could seize Rome and salvage his reputation

Together, they convinced Clark to adopt Juin's plan. On April 17 Juin visited General Harold Alexander, Fifteenth Army commander, to sell him on the idea. While Clark, Alexander, and Eighth Army commander Oliver Leese did not seem convinced by Juin's scheme, they were bereft of better ideas and concluded that they had nothing to lose.

Juin's idea proved to be based on a sound operational construct; it wasn't merely a shot in the dark. In a remarkable April 15, 1944, memo issued by the CEF operations bureau, Juin laid out his concept of mountain warfare, opening with the observation that success begins with capturing the mountain peaks that give "the best observation and fields of fire," as well as the possibility for flanking movements. Commanders must begin with a thorough reconnaissance to understand which terrain features are

most important to seize. Overwhelming force is a liability in mountain warfare; large numbers of infantry are often superfluous in a constricted battle space. Small groups of men acting against "islands of enemy defense" can produce "great results" in breakthrough operations. The infantry must be organized in what Juin called "torrents," so that fresh elements are always available to seize a ridge or execute a flanking movement and maintain unrelenting momentum. Surprise and speed are vital.

Juin's memo stressed the importance of infiltration, decentralization of command, flexibility to adjust to rapidly evolving circumstances, and the need for mutually supporting advances. Seizing choke points—passes, valleys, road junctions—would keep the enemy from reinforcing them. Corps-level concentrations of artillery and mortars must suppress enemy defensive fire so the infantry could close on fortifications before revealing themselves. The artillery must also organize mobile elements to follow the advances. Engineers must advance with the infantry to demine and rapidly open roads and trails so the mules could supply the advance. Finally, Italy was to be scoured for mules, without which no breakthrough could be sustained: "No mules, no maneuver," Juin declared.

The Battle of the Garigliano, part of Operation Diadem, launched at 11 p.m. on the night of May 11 behind a barrage of 2,000 guns firing 284,000 shells in four hours. Flanked by the 1st Free French Division and the 4th Moroccan Mountain Division, the 2nd Moroccan led and rushed the German defenses. But the attack had barely begun when radios crackled with calls for ambulances. Prearranged artillery targeting had failed to silence German batteries. The three attacking French divisions became entangled in mine fields and were subjected to heavy bombardment and counterattacks. They were driven back to their start line, suffering horrible casualties.

The next morning, May 12, Juin jumped in his jeep, crossed the Garigliano, and picked his way forward through a carnage of dead mules and mutilated men to assess the situation. Calculating that German defenses must be stretched to the limit, Juin quickly decided to risk renewing the attack with his single remaining reserve division on May 13. This time a strong preparatory bombardment disoriented the defenders, who began to surrender in large numbers. Clark shifted his artillery to support a promising French initiative, just in time to catch two German counterattacks in the open and stop them cold. By the afternoon of May 13, the 2,000-foot Mount Majo had been taken by the French, completing a rupture in the Gustav Line through which the entire CEF surged. For once Kesselring failed to react. His attention was riveted on the British Eighth Army's thrust at Cassino, and he was also reluctant to commit his reserves against the advancing French just as the Anzio bridgehead sprang to life. Juin pushed his troops mercilessly forward to overrun the reserve defensive lines behind Cassino before Kesselring could regroup to defend them.

"Ability to cross country is especially notable among French and Moroccan troops," Kesselring later reported. "They have quickly surmounted terrain considered impassable, using pack-



By late May 1944 the Allied breakthroughs at Monte Cassino and elsewhere in the rugged Italian mountains had the Germans retreating north toward Rome and, along a devastated Route 6, surrendering.

animals to transport their heavy weapons, and have on many occasions tried to turn our own positions (sometimes in wide encircling movements) in order to break them open from the rear.” By May 17 the CEF had outdistanced its mules and hence its ammunition. Medium bombers of the Twelfth Air Force’s Tactical Air Command dropped water, ammunition, and food to the lead French units. Though his men were exhausted, Juin realized that they had to pursue the remnants of the retreating German forces, infiltrating their positions, turning their flanks, and ambushing unsuspecting units—*giving them no time to recover*. On May 18 the French swamped the seasoned 9th Panzer Grenadiers, capturing 40 guns in the process. This feat of arms shook the confidence of a German command disorganized by Allied air strikes and demoralized by the shredding of the XIV Panzer Corps. By May 22 the CEF and II Corps had pierced the Hitler Line and closed in on the Liri Valley from the south. His line breached, Kesselring had no choice but to scamper north with whatever troops he could salvage.

In the aftermath of the attack, the goums came in for both high praise and condemnation. A Fifth Army after-action report stated:

It was the Goums who caused real havoc behind the German positions. By infiltrating through the enemy lines at night in groups of two or four these troops attacked sentry posts, isolated rest bunkers, and in general succeeded in keeping the rearmost Germans on the line in constant fear of being isolated. By these means the enemy was given many false indications of attack. The result was that the German was under a constant nerve strain which contributed to tiring out the enemy forces.

But at this point, reports from both British and American soldiers began to arrive that the Moroccans, especially the goums, were raping women, abusing POWs or even selling them to the Americans, ransacking the homes of locals, stealing livestock, and committing armed holdups of Italians. Juin denounced these claims as “exaggerated” charges leveled to discredit the French. Nevertheless, on June 20 he ordered his commanders to impose severe discipline, which produced a spate of courts-martial as well as summary executions.

On June 30, when Pope Pius XII met with de Gaulle in Rome, the pontiff too complained about the depredations of the Moroccans. French authors insisted that charges against the goums were exaggerated, and the accusations, they believed, spoke to the humiliation of the Italians in the war or to papal discontent with the French for importing Muslim troops into Italy. Whatever the case, the CEF was directed well to the east of Rome, as they continued to pursue Kesselring north to Siena.

“Juin’s operation was one of the most remarkable feats of a war more remarkable for bloody attrition than skill, and deserves to be better known instead of being a briefly noted incident of the secondary Italian campaign, or ignored altogether,” wrote Shelford Bidwell and Dominick Graham, historians of the Italian campaign. Under Juin, the CEF reached the apogee of French performance in World War II. **MHQ**

DOUGLAS PORCH, professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, has written extensively on French military history and World War II. His most recent book is *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War*.