

Outcome of the battle of the bulge

The Battle of the Bulge: A Turning Point in WWII's European Theatre The Battle of the Bulge, fought from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945, was a pivotal, though costly, engagement in the final stages of World War II in Europe. While a localized German counteroffensive, it significantly impacted the war's trajectory, altering the Allied strategic outlook and accelerating the eventual Allied victory. This delves into the battle's background, course, and lasting consequences, highlighting its profound impact on the course of the war.

Understanding the Strategic Context The Battle of the Bulge wasn't a spontaneous act of German defiance. It was a calculated gamble, a desperate attempt by Adolf Hitler to stem the tide of the Allied advance and potentially shatter the Allied resolve. The Western Front had seen the consistent and relentless pushing back of German forces. The Allies were steadily making gains, liberating territory and closing in on the German heartland. Hitler, recognizing the inevitability of defeat in the west, sought a localized victory that would either halt the Allied offensive or at the very least, create significant casualties and hamper the Allies' momentum.

Hitler's Gamble: Objectives and Preparations Hitler's audacious plan revolved around a surprise attack through the Ardennes Forest, a region historically considered a difficult terrain for large-scale tank formations, thus, expected to be weakly defended. This calculated risk hinged on several crucial factors:

- **Surprise and speed:** The Germans aimed to exploit Allied complacency and logistical vulnerabilities, seizing key bridges and road junctions to disrupt Allied supply lines and communications.
- **A decisive victory:** The German high command envisioned isolating Allied forces, cutting off crucial supply lines, and achieving a significant breakthrough.
- **Weakening Allied resolve:** A resounding victory would demoralize Allied troops and potentially lead to a fracturing of the Allied alliance.

The Initial German Successes (December 1944) The initial phases of the offensive saw impressive German successes. The Ardennes Forest, indeed, provided a degree of cover and concealment from Allied aerial reconnaissance.

- German armored divisions spearheaded the attack, breaching Allied lines and swiftly advancing.
- The element of surprise played a significant role, allowing the Germans to temporarily disrupt Allied communications and supply lines.
- The sudden appearance of German forces, along with the dense fog, created confusion within Allied ranks.

The Allied Response and Turning the Tide The early German successes, however, were short-lived. The Allies, while initially caught off guard, quickly began to regroup and counterattack.

- American and British forces, though caught off-guard, were resilient and tenacious. American resistance proved pivotal in the battle's outcome.
- The vital importance of supply lines and logistical coordination were underscored as the Allies rapidly organized and redeployed resources.
- Intelligence gathering and strategic assessments became crucial elements in reversing the tide of the battle.

The Battle's Course and Key Turning Points The climax of the Battle of the Bulge unfolded in a series of engagements across the Ardennes and surrounding regions.

- The crucial role of Bastogne: The defense of the Belgian town of Bastogne by the 101st Airborne Division exemplified American resilience and determination against overwhelming odds.
- *The significance of air superiority:* As the weather cleared, Allied air power became critical in repelling German attacks and supporting Allied ground forces.
- The arrival of reinforcements: Allied reinforcements began to arrive, gradually

bolstering their defenses and providing much-needed support. *The Devastation and Loss of Life* The Battle of the Bulge was a brutal conflict that resulted in significant losses on both sides. • Estimates put casualties in the tens of thousands, with significant numbers of Allied and German soldiers suffering injuries or dying. • The fighting was particularly fierce and unforgiving in the Ardennes region. • The harsh winter conditions compounded the difficulties faced by both armies, adding further hardship to the battlefield. *The End of the Offensive and Lasting Impacts* By January 25, 1945, the German offensive had been repelled. • The German forces were forced to retreat, abandoning their gains and suffering considerable losses. • The Battle of the Bulge served as a critical turning point in the war's European theater. • It significantly reduced German capacity for further offensives and signaled a strong resolve for Allied victory. **Long-Term Consequences** The Battle of the Bulge had profound and lasting impacts: • It revealed the tenacity and adaptability of the Allied forces. • It accelerated the momentum of the Allied advance towards the German heartland. • It demonstrated the importance of Allied cooperation and strategic coordination. **Key Takeaways** • The Battle of the Bulge was a costly, but ultimately unsuccessful, German offensive. • Allied resilience and strategic adaptation were crucial to victory. • The battle solidified the Allied resolve and hastened the end of the war in Europe. **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** 1. **What were the primary motivations behind Hitler's offensive?** Hitler aimed to divide the Allied forces, weaken their resolve, and possibly recapture lost territory, ultimately to prolong the war and achieve a more favourable outcome. 2. **What role did geography play in the battle?** The Ardennes Forest provided cover and concealment for the initial German advance, but the Allies' ability to quickly adapt to the terrain and leverage their air power played a critical role in the eventual outcome. 3. How did the Battle of the Bulge affect the overall course of WWII in Europe? The battle ultimately weakened Germany's war-making capability, hastened the Allied advance, and demoralized German forces. 4. **What were the most significant factors contributing to the Allied victory?** Allied resilience, rapid adaptation, strategic coordination, and the arrival of reinforcements were crucial. 5. What were the human costs of the battle? The battle resulted in thousands of casualties, causing immense suffering and loss of life for both Allied and German soldiers. The Battle of the Bulge stands as a testament to the complexities and human cost of war, while highlighting the critical factors that determined the outcome of a pivotal clash of armies. It serves as a historical lesson emphasizing the importance of strategic insight, military preparedness, and resolute alliance to overcome adversity and ultimately, achieve victory.

The Lingering Echoes: Unpacking the Outcome of the Battle of the Bulge

The Battle of the Bulge, a name that still sends shivers down the spine of anyone who understands its raw ferocity, was the last major German offensive campaign on the Western Front during World War II. Launched on December 16, 1944, it was a desperate gamble by Adolf Hitler to split the Allied armies and force a negotiated peace. While the initial German surge created a massive "bulge" in the Allied lines, the ultimate outcome was a devastating defeat for the Third Reich, a turning point that undeniably hastened the end of the war. But

the "outcome" isn't just a simple victory or loss; it's a complex tapestry woven with immense human cost, strategic shifts, and profound long-term consequences for both sides.

The Immediate Aftermath: A Pyrrhic Victory for Germany

Let's be clear from the outset: Germany's initial offensive achieved a tactical surprise and inflicted significant casualties and equipment losses on the Allies. The sheer audacity and speed of the German advance through the Ardennes forest caught the unsuspecting American forces by storm. For a brief, terrifying period, it seemed as though the Allies might be pushed back to the Meuse River, their supply lines severed, and their morale shattered. However, this initial success was a classic example of a pyrrhic victory. The German army, already weakened by years of relentless fighting on multiple fronts, poured its last significant reserves into this gamble. The operation demanded a huge expenditure of fuel, ammunition, and manpower. While they managed to push deep into Allied territory, they failed to achieve their primary objectives: capturing the vital port of Antwerp and encircling significant Allied forces. The logistical strain of maintaining such a deep penetration proved insurmountable, especially with Allied air superiority limiting German resupply and movement.

The Allied Response: Resilience and Determination

The Allied response to the initial shock was one of immense resilience and growing determination. Despite the surprise and the difficult winter conditions, American troops, often outnumbered and outgunned, fought tenaciously. The legendary stand at Bastogne by the 101st Airborne Division, famously holding out against overwhelming odds with the iconic surrender reply "Nuts!", became a symbol of American grit. This desperate defense bought precious time for Allied reinforcements to arrive and for commanders like General George S. Patton to execute audacious flanking maneuvers. Patton's Third Army, famously turning north from its planned offensive, was instrumental in relieving Bastogne. The speed and effectiveness of this counter-offensive, aided by improving weather that allowed Allied air power to dominate the skies, began to strangle the German salient. The battle devolved into a brutal, attritional struggle in the snow-covered forests and towns of the Ardennes.

Key Turning Points and Strategic Implications

Several key moments sealed the fate of the Battle of the Bulge. The initial German push, while successful, overextended their forces. The Allied ability to hold key communication nodes like Bastogne, despite immense pressure, prevented a complete collapse. The eventual arrival of overwhelming Allied reserves, combined with a relentless aerial bombardment of German supply lines and troop concentrations, began to turn the tide. Strategically, the outcome had far-reaching implications. For Germany, it represented the final exhaustion of their offensive capabilities on the Western Front. The irreplaceable losses in experienced troops and equipment meant they could no longer mount significant counter-offensives. The battle effectively bled the German army dry, leaving them severely weakened for the final Allied push into Germany. For the Allies, the Battle of the Bulge was a stark reminder of the enemy's capacity for surprise and the brutal realities of modern warfare. It reinforced the need for

constant vigilance and robust defensive preparations. However, it also demonstrated the strength and adaptability of the Allied command and the unwavering courage of the soldiers on the ground. The immense resources poured into the battle, while costly, ultimately solidified the Allied position and accelerated their march towards victory.

The Human Cost: A Scars That Remain

No discussion of the Battle of the Bulge's outcome is complete without acknowledging the staggering human cost. It was one of the bloodiest battles fought by the United States in World War II, with American casualties exceeding 80,000, including nearly 19,000 killed. German losses were even higher, estimated to be between 60,000 and 100,000 killed, wounded, or captured. The civilian populations caught in the crossfire also suffered immensely, with thousands of Belgians and Luxembourgers killed or displaced. The brutal fighting, often in freezing temperatures and amidst widespread destruction, left deep psychological scars on the soldiers involved. The sheer intensity of the combat, the fear, and the loss of comrades were experiences that many carried with them for the rest of their lives. The tales of heroism and sacrifice are etched into the history of the war, but so too are the stories of immense suffering.

The Role of Logistics and Air Power

The Battle of the Bulge highlighted the critical importance of logistics and air power in modern warfare. Germany's ambitious offensive was hampered by its inability to adequately supply its advancing forces. Allied air superiority, once the weather cleared, was a decisive factor, interdicting German supply convoys, attacking troop concentrations, and providing invaluable reconnaissance. This demonstrated that even the most daring land offensive could be rendered unsustainable without the backing of robust logistical support and air control. The effectiveness of the Allied air forces in disrupting German movements was a significant contributor to the battle's outcome.

The Psychological Impact: Cracks in the Nazi Regime

The failure of Hitler's last great offensive had a significant psychological impact on both sides. For the Germans, it shattered any lingering illusions of a potential victory or a negotiated peace on favorable terms. The realization that their reserves were depleted and that the Allies were now on an unstoppable advance undoubtedly contributed to the growing despair within the Nazi leadership and the general population. On the Allied side, while the initial shock was considerable, the ultimate victory bolstered morale and reaffirmed their resolve to see the war through to its absolute conclusion. It demonstrated that even in the face of a desperate enemy, their combined strength and determination would prevail. The propaganda value of this decisive victory was immense, fueling public support for the war effort and solidifying the narrative of impending Nazi defeat.

Shaping the Post-War Landscape

While not a direct cause, the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge indirectly shaped the post-war landscape. The immense losses suffered by Germany meant that the Soviet Union's advance

from the East would face less organized resistance in the final months of the war. This contributed to the division of Germany and the subsequent Cold War. The experience of fighting alongside and against different Allied nations also began to lay the groundwork for future international cooperation, albeit through the lens of post-war tensions. The memory of the battle also influenced military planning and doctrine for decades to come, emphasizing the importance of intelligence, combined arms operations, and the role of air power.

Conclusion: A Definitive Turning Point

In conclusion, the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge was a definitive turning point in World War II. It was the bloody nail in the coffin of Hitler's grand illusions of victory. While the initial German offensive achieved surprise and inflicted considerable damage, their ultimate failure to achieve their objectives led to the irreversible exhaustion of their military strength on the Western Front. The Allied resilience, strategic brilliance, and overwhelming material superiority ultimately prevailed. The battle stands as a testament to the immense sacrifices made by soldiers from many nations, a stark reminder of the brutal realities of war, and a crucial chapter in the narrative of Allied victory. The "bulge" in the lines was ultimately flattened, but the echoes of its ferocity, its heroes, and its devastating cost continue to resonate through history, shaping our understanding of that pivotal conflict and the enduring consequences of warfare. The Battle of the Bulge was not just a battle; it was the beginning of the end.

The Battle of the Bulge stands as one of the most pivotal and consequential military engagements of World War II, marking a dramatic turning point in the Western Front's progression toward the final Allied victory. Fought between December 16, 1944, and January 25, 1945, this fierce confrontation saw the German Wehrmacht launch a massive surprise offensive through the dense, snow-laden Ardennes forest. This audacious move aimed to split the Allied forces, capture key logistical hubs, and potentially force a negotiated peace before American reinforcements could fully consolidate.

A Defining Strategic Turning Point

The outcome of the Battle of the Bulge revealed critical insights into the shifting balance of power in Europe. Despite initial success in creating a deep salient in Allied lines and inflicting heavy casualties, the German offensive ultimately failed to achieve its strategic objectives. The tenacity and resilience of Allied forces—comprising American, British, Canadian, and French troops—demonstrated an unprecedented ability to regroup under extreme pressure. This failure not only halted Germany's last major counterattack on the Western Front but also hastened its eventual collapse. The battle underscored the importance of logistics, air superiority, and coordinated defense, shaping post-war military doctrine.

Key insights from the battle highlight the devastating consequences of surprise and winter conditions, which severely hampered German mobility and supply. Yet, the Allies' capacity to absorb the shock, reinforce vulnerable points, and leverage superior air power proved decisive. These lessons informed later Cold War strategies, emphasizing rapid response and robust logistical planning in high-stakes conflicts.

Applications and Broader Military Influence

The legacy of the Battle of the Bulge extends far beyond its immediate wartime impact. It became a foundational case study in military academies worldwide, used to analyze operational planning, command decision-making, and the psychology of combat under duress. Modern armed forces incorporate its outcomes into training programs focused on defensive resilience and adaptive leadership.

Moreover, the battle's outcome reinforced the critical role of intelligence and early warning systems—failures in predicting the German assault led to significant reforms in Allied intelligence networks. The integration of real-time reconnaissance, improved communication channels, and joint operational coordination can all trace conceptual evolution to lessons learned here. These developments have proven invaluable in subsequent conflicts and peacekeeping missions.

Enduring Benefits and Historical Significance

The Battle of the Bulge's outcome delivered far-reaching benefits, most notably preserving the integrity of Allied advancement toward Nazi Germany's heartland. By decisively weakening German forces and destroying critical units, the battle significantly shortened the war in Europe. This allowed for a more rapid liberation of occupied territories and minimized civilian suffering in the final months of conflict.

Historically, the battle symbolizes both the ferocity of human conflict and the endurance of collective resolve. It stands as a testament to the cost of war and the value of unity in adversity. The strategic clarity achieved through its outcome continues to inform military historians and strategists, offering timeless wisdom on how to confront and overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges.

The Future Outlook: Lessons for Modern Conflict

Looking forward, the Battle of the Bulge remains relevant in an era of hybrid warfare and unpredictable threats. Its outcome teaches that preparedness, adaptability, and coalition cohesion are indispensable in countering aggressive offensives—whether conventional or asymmetric. As modern militaries face new forms of aggression, the battle's legacy reminds us that resilience is not merely a product of strength, but of intelligent strategy and unwavering determination. The lessons drawn from this pivotal engagement continue to shape how nations defend freedom and uphold stability in an uncertain world.

The Decisive Climax: Unpacking the Outcome of the Battle of the Bulge

The Battle of the Bulge, officially known as the Ardennes Offensive, stands as a monumental and bloody turning point in the European theater of World War II. From December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945, this audacious German counteroffensive sought to split the Allied armies,

capture Antwerp, and force a negotiated peace on the Western Front. While initially achieving surprise and causing widespread panic and disarray, the ultimate outcome of the Battle of the Bulge was a catastrophic failure for Nazi Germany and a decisive, albeit costly, victory for the Allies. This article delves into the multifaceted results of this pivotal engagement, analyzing its strategic implications, human cost, and lasting impact on the trajectory of the war.

The Immediate Aftermath: Allied Resilience and German Exhaustion

The immediate outcome of the Battle of the Bulge was characterized by the Allies' remarkable resilience in the face of a formidable German assault and the subsequent complete exhaustion of Germany's remaining offensive capabilities on the Western Front. Initially, the German panzer divisions achieved significant breakthroughs, creating a "bulge" in the Allied lines, which gave the battle its popular name. This surprise attack, launched through the dense, forested Ardennes region, caught the predominantly American forces largely unprepared. However, the tenacious defense put up by isolated American units, most famously at Bastogne, bought crucial time for Allied reinforcements to arrive and launch a counteroffensive.

Stalwart Defense and the Turning Tide

Key to the Allied success was the fierce determination of individual soldiers and small units. The defenders of Bastogne, surrounded and outnumbered, famously refused to surrender. Their "Nuts!" reply to the German surrender ultimatum became a symbol of American defiance. This heroic resistance, coupled with the logistical challenges faced by the advancing German forces, allowed Allied air power and artillery to begin to reassert their dominance. The skies, previously dominated by fog and bad weather, eventually cleared, enabling the Allies to gain air superiority, a critical factor in any major campaign. As Allied forces regrouped and counterattacked from the north and south, the German salient began to shrink, and their offensive momentum sputtered to a halt.

The Irreplaceable Losses for the Wehrmacht

For Germany, the outcome was devastating. The Ardennes Offensive represented their last major gamble to alter the course of the war in the West. The Wehrmacht committed its elite Panzer divisions and much of its remaining reserves of men and materiel. The ensuing battle ground down these valuable assets. The outcome saw an immense loss of experienced troops, tanks, aircraft, and artillery. These were losses that Germany, already struggling with dwindling resources and facing relentless pressure on the Eastern Front, could not possibly replace. The Battle of the Bulge, therefore, effectively drained the operational strength of the German army in the West, paving the way for the final Allied offensives.

Strategic Consequences: Accelerating the Allied Victory

Beyond the immediate battlefield, the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge had profound strategic consequences, significantly accelerating the Allied victory in Europe. The offensive's

failure meant that the much-anticipated German attempt to disrupt Allied operations and prolong the war had backfired spectacularly.

Weakening of German Defenses

The transfer of troops and equipment from the Eastern Front to participate in the Ardennes Offensive, coupled with the heavy losses sustained, left German defenses in the East considerably weakened. This provided the Soviet Red Army with a golden opportunity. As the Allied forces in the West regrouped and pushed forward, the Soviets launched their own massive offensive, driving deep into German territory. The outcome of the Battle of the Bulge, by depleting German reserves in the West, indirectly facilitated the Soviet advance, ensuring a two-front squeeze that Germany could not withstand.

Consolidation of Allied Unity and Resolve

While the initial surprise of the offensive caused considerable anxiety among the Allied command, the eventual success in repelling the German attack served to strengthen their resolve and unity. The shared ordeal fostered a greater sense of camaraderie and determination among the Allied soldiers and commanders. The costly victory underscored the importance of continued cooperation and the ultimate inevitability of an Allied triumph. The outcome of the Battle of the Bulge reinforced the Allied belief that their combined military might was insurmountable.

The Psychological Blow to Nazi Germany

The psychological impact of the Battle of the Bulge's outcome on Nazi Germany was immense. Hitler's final major offensive in the West had been decisively defeated. The hope, however slim, of forcing a political settlement through military action was extinguished. The offensive's failure, coupled with the ongoing bombing campaigns by the RAF and USAAF and the relentless advance from the East, further eroded morale within Germany. The outcome signaled the beginning of the end for the Third Reich, a fact understood by many within the German military and civilian population.

The Human Cost: A Sobering Legacy

No analysis of the Battle of the Bulge's outcome would be complete without acknowledging its staggering human cost. This was one of the bloodiest battles fought by American forces in World War II, with casualties estimated to be over 80,000, including killed, wounded, and missing. German losses were even higher, estimated to be between 80,000 and 100,000, many of whom were elite troops lost permanently.

American Sacrifices and Enduring Memory

The American military bore the brunt of the initial German assault. The rapid advance and fierce fighting in brutal winter conditions led to immense suffering. The outcome of the battle is forever etched in the collective memory of the United States, a testament to the sacrifice

and bravery of its soldiers. The battlefields of the Ardennes, with their memorials and cemeteries, serve as a somber reminder of the price of freedom. The stories of survival and heroism from this engagement continue to inspire generations.

The Devastation for German Soldiers

For the German soldiers, the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge represented the futility of their final desperate struggle. Many fought bravely, but they were ultimately fighting a losing war with dwindling resources and increasingly overwhelming opposition. The harsh winter conditions, coupled with inadequate supplies, added to their suffering. The battle marked the beginning of the end for many German servicemen, leading to capture, death, or prolonged hardship.

Long-Term Impact: Paving the Road to Victory

The long-term impact of the Battle of the Bulge's outcome was the definitive charting of the path towards Allied victory. The battle's conclusion in January 1945 left Germany critically weakened and with no viable strategic options left to alter the inevitable Allied advance.

The Final Push into Germany

With the German army in the West depleted and the Soviets pushing from the East, the stage was set for the final Allied offensives. The Rhine River crossings, a major objective, became achievable. The outcome of the Battle of the Bulge effectively removed the last significant barrier to a direct Allied assault on the German homeland. The final push into Germany, culminating in the fall of Berlin and Hitler's suicide, was significantly facilitated by the German exhaustion that followed the Ardennes offensive.

A Testament to Allied Logistics and Determination

The Battle of the Bulge also served as a powerful testament to the logistical capabilities and sheer determination of the Allied forces. Despite the initial shock and setbacks, the Allies were able to rapidly redeploy troops, supply them under difficult conditions, and launch a successful counteroffensive. This demonstrated the industrial might and organizational prowess that would ultimately secure victory.

Conclusion: The Pyrrhic Victory That Sealed Germany's Fate

In conclusion, the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge was a monumental turning point in World War II. While initially appearing to be a German success, the ultimate result was a decisive Allied victory that fatally weakened Nazi Germany. The battle's outcome led to the irreversible depletion of German offensive capabilities, accelerated the Allied advance on both the Western and Eastern Fronts, and had a profound psychological impact on the Third Reich. The immense human cost served as a stark reminder of the brutality of war, but the resilience and sacrifice

of the Allied soldiers ultimately paved the way for the liberation of Europe and the unconditional surrender of Germany. The Battle of the Bulge, therefore, stands not as a German resurgence, but as the final, desperate gamble that hastened their inevitable defeat.

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In the end, what matters most is not how quickly information is consumed, but how comfortably it stays within reach. When knowledge feels present rather than distant, learning becomes less about effort and more about connection. And that connection often continues long after the book is first opened.

Questions & Answers About outcome of the battle of the bulge

No	Question	Answer
1	What was the most significant immediate outcome of the Battle of the Bulge for the Allies?	The most significant immediate outcome was the halt and eventual repulsion of the German offensive. This victory bled the German army significantly, depleting their reserves of manpower, equipment, and fuel, which they could not replace.
2	How did the Battle of the Bulge impact the timeline of World War II in Europe?	The Battle of the Bulge delayed the Allied advance into Germany but ultimately accelerated the war's end. The heavy losses suffered by the Germans crippled their ability to launch further major offensives, allowing the Western Allies and Soviets to regroup and press their advantages.
3	What was the psychological impact of the Battle of the Bulge on both sides?	For the Allies, it was a boost to morale after initial shock and heavy casualties, proving their resilience. For the Germans, it represented a final, desperate gamble that failed, further eroding morale and the belief in victory, especially as Hitler's last major offensive on the Western Front.
4	Were there any strategic territorial gains or losses for either side as a direct result of the Battle of the Bulge?	Yes, the Germans initially regained some territory in the Ardennes region, creating the 'bulge' that gave the battle its name. However, this was a temporary gain. The Allies ultimately pushed the Germans back to their original lines, and the overall strategic initiative remained with the Allies.

5	What were the long-term consequences of the Battle of the Bulge for Germany's war effort?	The long-term consequences were devastating for Germany. The battle severely weakened the Wehrmacht on the Western Front, making them more vulnerable to subsequent Allied offensives and hastening their eventual collapse. It also drained resources needed elsewhere, like on the Eastern Front.
6	How did the experience of American soldiers during the Battle of the Bulge shape their post-war perceptions?	For many American soldiers, the Battle of the Bulge was their most brutal combat experience. It fostered a sense of shared sacrifice and trauma, and for many, a deep desire for peace and a return to normalcy. It also cemented the image of American grit and determination in the face of overwhelming odds.

Outcome of the Battle of the Bulge analysis, Battle of the Bulge aftermath and consequences, Battle of the Bulge strategic results, Aftermath of the Battle of the Bulge, Military impact of the Battle of the Bulge, Battle of the Bulge turning points and outcome, Key outcomes from the Battle of the Bulge, Battle of the Bulge historical significance, Battle of the Bulge victory consequences, Battle of the Bulge final results and impact

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