



**ALL FOR
VICTORY!**

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PANZERS WITHOUT OIL

Colonel T. draws attention to Hitler's desperate need for oil. The meaning of the Rostov campaign. Why Japan drives toward the Dutch East Indies.

WITH the fateful "7-11" throw of the Axis dice (Japan declared war on the U. S. on December 7 and Germany on December 11), the second world war has thrown a girdle of fire around the entire world. And out of the welter of fronts, sectors, operative lines, communications, sea lanes, threats, and potentialities, there emerges one simple fundamental pattern: the actual fighting on large scales centers in two zones. These zones are limited by the meridians 20 and 40 longitude east and 100 and 120 longitude east. The great bulk of the Axis fights in the first zone, its Japanese appendix in the second. In this article I want to discuss one phase—to me an important one—of the present fighting.

What is the invisible magnet which attracts the fighting forces of the contending sides to these particular zones? Without discussing the whole complex of factors involved, the question of oil, it seems to me, is a fundamental one, militarily.

The fundamental elements of warfare are *movement* (maneuver), *fire*, and *shock*. Modern war combines the three with a preponderance of the first. While maneuver retains its fundamental purpose, which is to get into the most advantageous position for striking, an army also fires as it moves (tanks and planes); the concept of shock, of course, is indivisible from the concept of movement.

The movement of modern armies is created by the internal combustion motor. This means that all three elements of warfare are dependent on oil. Now oil is not found everywhere. There are two great oil centers (so far discovered) on this earth. One is in the Western Hemisphere (North, Central, and South America). This center yields probably some 100,000,000 tons a year, the major part of which is produced by the United States. The other great center is located between the Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Persian Gulf. We might call it the Caucasian-Iranian center. This center can produce about 50,000,000 tons per year with more than one-half belonging to the USSR, and the rest to countries cooperating with the anti-Axis powers. A third center is in the Dutch East Indies.

These are the principal centers. The first (American) is not within Axis reach. The second (Baku-Mosul) is the object of Ger-

many's attack. The third (East Indian) is the object of Japanese attack. However, the above three centers are not the only ones in the world. Germany and its immediate satellites have some oil at their disposal. In order to get an idea of things to come, it is interesting to analyze these reserves.

IT IS KNOWN that the combined output of Germany, Poland, Rumania, Albania, and other occupied countries is about 7,000,000 tons yearly. Germany can produce a maximum of 3,500,000 tons of synthetic oil. Another 1,600,000 tons of substitute (alcohol and benzol) can be produced. It is now known that Germany had a reserve of some 7,000,000 tons of oil, accumulated for this war. In other words, the western part of the Axis has, for one year of war on the present scale, some 19,000,000 tons of fuel of various types.

But what is the scale of this war? Here are a few calculations. In the forty-five days of the German campaign in the West in 1940, the *Wehrmacht* used up 1,500,000 tons of petroleum products in military operations alone. This took care of 135 infantry divisions, about twelve armored divisions, and about 10,000 planes on active duty. Considering the gigantic scope of operations on the Soviet Front, it is quite on the safe side to say that the Axis forces in the East need at least 2,000,000 tons of fuel per month. Add another 500,000 for the communications in areas behind the lines (Italy, etc). In other words, during one year of war on the present scale, the Axis will need 30,000,000 tons of fuel in all forms. (Pre-war General Staff calculations were about 20,000,000 tons per year.)

On the other hand, we saw above that the Axis had only 19,000,000 tons for a year of war. This means that Hitler's quartermaster-general is faced with a yearly deficit of 11,000,000 tons. It must also be pointed out that all these calculations do not even take into consideration the possible, and probable, damage caused to German oil production by both British and Soviet air action.

Thus a monthly drain of 900,000 tons per month is placed on the German oil resources, and this means that less than eight months after the invasion of the Soviet Union began, the German reserves will have been depleted and a certain number of tanks, trucks, and planes will have to be immobilized. This

approximate date can be set at March 1, 1942.

The Germans figured that they would have the Caucasus by spring. Baku alone could have kept their war machine rolling. Their offensive against Rostov was a direct bid for oil. The stab at Leningrad and Moscow and Vologda was a bid to cut the communications of the Soviet Union with its Allies and thus to weaken the Soviet defense, protecting, among other things, the oil of Baku.

This combined offensive has proved a fiasco. Toward the end of the sixth month of the war the German armies are reeling back on the entire front. Not one of the three objectives has been achieved. There will be no Baku oil for Hitler this year. Two "locks" are hanging on the "door" to Baku—Rostov and Sebastopol, the door itself being formed by the huge Red Army front—Murmansk-Leningrad-Moscow-Rostov.

What is Germany to do? It must again turn its attention to the Iraq-Iranian oilfields. Two avenues of approach are possible here; a march through Turkey and another through Egypt. The Egyptian plan appears to be washed up. So the Turkish route seems to loom menacingly.

Meanwhile the Japanese are stabbing toward the East Indian oilfields. The way is barred here by the quadrangle of powerful fortresses and bases — Manila-Hongkong-Singapore-Surabaya. The Japanese are now attacking the first three, of which Manila and Singapore are the most important. We do not know, of course, what the Japanese oil reserves are. The export divisions of Standard Oil can perhaps supply Washington with the figures. In any case it is probable that the Japanese can endure a war on the present scale in the Pacific longer than the Germans can on the Eastern Front. But the capture of the East Indian oil by the Japanese would not help Germany, as far as oil is concerned.

THE GENERAL PICTURE, as the war approaches the end of the sixth month of its most active and decisive phase, is this. The Soviet Union, while guarding the approaches to the oil of Baku and thus parching the Axis to death, is holding in its grip some 300 German divisions; at the same time it immobilizes no less than one-third of the Japanese land forces and probably half of their air force through the mere presence of the great crescent of its Far Eastern armies.

The British are holding off some ten Axis divisions in Libya and guarding the approaches to the oil of Iraq and Iran. In the Far East the ABCD powers are striving to keep Japan from the oil of the East Indies. The United States is guarding the entire oil supply of the Western Hemisphere, against which passes have been made repeatedly by the Axis. The United States is getting into its stride.

The Red Army has seized the initiative along the entire 1,800-mile front after shattering about half of the Axis military strength during twenty-five weeks of incessant fighting. It seems that the Axis "7-11" throw was an unhappy one, for once. COLONEL T.