

**Dr. Roger Ray from page 6**

precisely, Nazi memorabilia. How could such a shop exist in Israel? The heated conversation which followed might have been the end of my education about Middle East politics had a group of Israeli soldiers not come along and rescued me.

Some Christians still quote the covenant between God and Abraham reported in the book of Genesis as the absolute authority for the land grab which displaced Palestinians to create the state of Israel. Muslims quote the Quran to support their unwavering belief that once any land is under Muslim rule it must remain under Muslim rule forever. When I first visited the Middle East, 30 years after the creation of Israel, Palestinians were still mad about the theft of their land by the United States and Great Britain to create Israel. Now, 60 years later, they are still unwilling to accept that the forcible taking of their land to heal a great European sin is acceptable. Which leaves the United States in the terribly awkward position of continuing to support Israel's disproportionate and lethal military response to the Hamas-led attacks on Israel this past week.

I love Israel and yet I accept that taking Palestinian land to resolve the Jewish homeland issue at the end of WWII was a bad idea... romantic, sure, religiously nostalgic, you betya, but politically unworkable. And yet, here we are, irrevocably stuck with an ally we cannot abandon because their precarious situation is largely our fault but an ally we can hardly defend either for their actions nor for their location.

The solution to this crisis is nowhere on the horizon. At least we can take a foreign policy lesson from this situation which demonstrates how a war isn't over when it is over. Sixty years after the creation of Israel it is no more secure than it was a half a century ago and there is little reason to believe that it will be much different a century from now. So, invading foreign nations, changing their governments and moving their boundaries in order to create stable states at the end of the barrel of a gun may not be a good policy for us to pursue in the future.

*Dr. Ray is a local pastor contributing his personal opinion, not that of his church. "From the Left" appears every Wednesday. Coming Tuesday: "From the Right." □*

## Pope John Paul II Polish Center

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9:00 AM ENG 10:30 AM PL  
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**Polish Comrades from 5**

minutes. The Germans, firing from the small woods that dotted the landscape, caught the Poles in a deadly crossfire. This bottled up elements of the division that were supposed to maintain the momentum of the attack. The Polish Armd. Div. was also hampered by the disastrous "short bombing" of the United States 8th Air Force that caused scores of casualties and the loss of ammunition and equipment.

By nightfall, the Polish had made little progress and orders to continue could not be carried out. The next morning the division launched an attack on a broader front and experienced its first real success.

However, 12th SS battle groups quickly counterattacked and destroyed scores of the flimsy Sherman tanks. Elements of the Polish Armd. Div. were less than a mile from Point 140 where the British Columbia and Algonquin regiments were being systematically destroyed. However, the Poles could not advance further.

It is impossible to exaggerate the inadequacy of Allied armour in such situations. The great strengths of the Sherman tank were its mechanical reliability and speed, the great weaknesses were a high profile, armour plate so thin it could easily be penetrated by any German anti-tank gun and a 75-mm main gun that was ineffective at ranges beyond 500 yards.

After Operation Totalize, the Poles, who had lost 66 tanks, hastened to copy the experiments of the more experienced regiments that had begun to wire and weld additional tank tracks to their hulls in the hope of deflecting hits and avoiding destruction.

Simonds was either unaware of the depth of this problem or determined to ignore it. As a corps commander he could not allow his men to focus on reasons for failure. He had to plan for success and employ the resources available to him. At a commanders conference held just before launching his second armoured Blitzkrieg-Operation Tractable-Simonds was highly critical of the performance of both armoured divisions. He accused them of every known sin under the sun, including lack of drive. He was especially disappointed in the Poles and for Tractable, the massive daylight attack of Aug. 14, he paired the veteran 2nd Canadian Armed Bde. with 4th Div. This left the Polish Armd. Div. to form "a firm base."

The decision gave the Poles time to recover from their first battle and from the ordeal of a second short bombing-this time by the Royal Canadian Air Force-that inflicted more than 200 casualties.

When the order to cross the River Dives and advance toward Trun was received on Aug. 15, the Polish Armd. Div. was ideally situated to launch an end run around the main enemy resistance.

Maczek embraced the new orders that were well suited to his ideas about employing an armoured division. The Polish Armd. Div. was organized into battle groups and quickly formed a bridgehead across the Dives.

The Polish and Canadian advance to Trun was slowed by battle groups of the 85th, 21st and 12th SS divisions, which were busy holding the northern edge of the Falaise Pocket. Simonds decided to leave Trun to the 4th Armored and ordered Maczek to take Chambois and link up with the Americans in closing the gap.

The Poles, after two days of continuous combat, were to work their way across the grain of some of the most rugged terrain in Normandy. The hills in this beautiful part of France rise steeply from the river valleys and the only good roads run north-south.

Maczek decided to send one battle group to Chambois and then block the exits by seizing the high ground at Mount Ormel-Coudehard, a hill the Poles would

come to call the Maczuga or mace after its appearance on the contour maps.

Unfortunately the commander of the regiment who was to lead the advance to Chambois did not communicate his intentions clearly to the guide supplied by the French resistance. The Koszutski battle group moved due east to a village called Les Champeaux astride the main Trun-Vimoutiers highway, the German escape route to the River Seine. This small force, one armoured regiment and an infantry battalion, had penetrated deep into the German rear areas where it was repeatedly attacked by Royal Air Force Spitfires and Typhoons whose pilots had been briefed to bomb and strafe all movement in an area known to be occupied by the enemy. Despite casualties from friendly fire, the battle group disrupted the German retreat and helped to stem the counterattack by 9th SS Panzer Div. while Koszutski's men fought their isolated battle, the rest of the division worked its way to Chambois and the Maczuga.

On the afternoon of Aug. 19, while Canadians were fighting for control of St-Lambert-sur-Dives, the Polish 10th Dragoons in "heavy hand-to-hand battles" fought its way into Chambois and linked up with American infantry from 90th Div. On the maps at corps and army headquarters the gap could now be marked closed, but on the ground exhausted Polish, Canadian and American soldiers had to cope with an enemy that still included thousands of men determined to break the ring and fight their way north.

During the early hours of Aug. 20, senior German officers inside the pocket set about organizing groups of men for one last attempt at a breakout to coincide with a two-pronged attack by II SS Panzer Corps from the north. The Luftwaffe made a major effort to drop supplies and ammunition and while little of it landed within German lines the operation helped morale. Lead rousps crossed the Dives during the night, but the main breakout occurred shortly after dawn when thousands of shouting desperate men surged forward.

Once across the river and the Trun-Chambois highway, the Germans were faced with the Polish positions on the Maczuga.

The main road ran over the saddle of the ridge between the two Point 262s held by the Poles. Isolated bands of German soldiers moved forward under constant artillery and machine-gun fire.

On the crest of Mount Ormel, Captain Pierre Seveigny, the forward observation officer for 4th Medium Regt., directed the fire of the 4.5-inch guns that sent 100-pound shells crashing down on the enemy. The battle that raged around Mount Ormel reminded one Pole of "medieval days, when the defence of the battlefield was organized by placing camps in a tight observation. As a result German tanks could approach unnoticed, almost up to our positions. This was demonstrated by a Panther and a Sherman facing one another barrel to barrel at a distance of a few metres, both burned.. The Maczuga and Chambois were practically cut off.. All attempts to evacuate our wounded failed."

There were German prisoners everywhere. Some could be handed over to the Americans, but they, too, were cut off when the enemy recaptured the road into Chambois. Simonds ordered the Canadians to break through to the Poles and the Grenadier Guards. With their machine-guns firing almost continuously, they opened up a line of communication allowing ammunition, food and medical supplies to reach the Maczuga. The British Columbia Regiment broke through to the southern spur of Mount Ormel on the evening of Aug. 21, while a battle group of 1st Hussars tanks and Highland Light Infantry used a rtilery barrage to help them advance toward Chambois."Hours of bloody fighting" were required to reach the village, but by nightfall the ap was finally closed.

The Poles alone captured 6,000 prisoners and destroyed 70 tanks, 500 vehicles and more than 100 artillery pieces. Their own losses in the four days were 1,400 killed and wounded. The roads through Trun, Chambois and St. Lambert were lined with the wreckage of two German armies. Operational research teams counted 3,043

**Polish Profiles from 2**

stronger, and ready to face every obstacle in my life. This mosaic of Christ is the largest in the world of a single seated Christ, and contains 4,000 shades of color. Then there is the altar-mural at the St. Joseph chapel in the National Cathedral called "The Entombment of Christ", also a mural at St. Agnes Episcopal Church, and a beautiful mosaic at the Catholic St. Matthew Cathedral.

Throughout the United States, De Rosen's works adorn Cathedrals and churches. In Prescott, Arizona, in Pittsburg, Memphis, Buffalo, Pasadena, San Marino, Sacramento, San Francisco, and La Jolla. However, the largest mosaic in the world is in the dome of the St. Louis Cathedral. It is Rosen's greatest piece of art, and the largest mosaic in the world.

At the age of 84 De Rosen was still painting. He painted a triptych of St. Genevieve for a church in Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania. It was his last work.

I sometimes visited De Rosen in his modest home where he lived with his two younger sisters. It was a very modest place in the suburbs of Washington. As such a great artist, he should have lived financially comfortable, but he did not. He lived very modestly. There was no money left over for emergencies.

Jan De Rosen was not only a great artist, he was also a great gentleman, and unfortunately very nad'Ve. He was taken advantage of by some galleries and art dealers.

He appreciated my visits to his place. A cup of tea was always ready for me. That and a smile. His deeply blue eyes twinkled merrily as we said goodbye. Soon after, Jan De Rosen died. He was 91 years old, and the year was 1982. □

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vehicles, including 187 tanks and self-propelled guns in the area they called the Shambles. Most had been destroyed by artillery and anti-tank guns or had been abandoned by their crews when forward movement became impossible.

The Allies had won a very great victory and could now pursue the broken remnants of the Wehrmacht and SS back to Germany.

If anyone had prophesied that the German army in the west would be destroyed less than three months after the Normandy invasion began on June 6, 1944, they would have been dismissed as a dreamer. With the dream fulfilled, generals, journalists and historians began to argue that the victory was incomplete. They sought to second-guess the decisions that delayed the closing of the gap, but let us leave such speculation to the armchair xperts. We should, instead, celebrate the heroism, the endurance and the achievement of the Allied soldiers who won the battle.

And let us be sure and remember the Polish soldiers who fought with such courage while their countrymen and capital city were systematically destroyed. They are not forgotten in Normandy where the Polish War Cemetery is maintained by the French government and the memorial museum on the crest of the Maczuga is maintained and staffed by the citizens of nearby villages. □