

FARAGO, Ladislav, writes

1964

### Patton

TO THE EDITOR:

**H**AD I known that S. L. A. Marshall was so hard put to find "mistakes" for his review of my book, "Patton: Ordeal and Triumph" (Nov. 8), I would have supplied a few, for what book of this complexity and length is without some? The ones he has singled out to discredit my book by casting a shadow of doubt on its over-all accuracy just won't stand up. The facts are all on my side. . . .

To demonstrate the quality of his specific objections, I will mention a few of his fancies as contrasted to the facts. He objects to my writing on Page

719 that Colonel Abrams's breakthrough to Bastogne had lifted the siege and says, "But it lasted almost another month, and the pressure and artillery pounding got steadily worse."

Had he read on, Mr. Marshall would have found that this was exactly what I wrote, on Page 724. "Bastogne was still the fulcrum of the Third Army's efforts," was the way I put it, describing how hard III Corps had to work to enlarge and protect the precarious corridor. Moreover, I quoted Patton himself as exclaiming during a visit to the town on Jan. 3, "We can still lose this war."

Mr. Marshall corrects me for crediting the 41st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron with "closing the ring to end the Ardennes battle," claiming that "it was Task Force Stubbs, mainly out of the 17th Air-

borne Division." Nowhere did I say that the 41st Cavalry Squadron had "closed the ring." I gave credit for establishing "contact in the town" where credit was actually due. It was indeed a gallant unit of the Squadron that was the first to make it into Houffalize.

According to Mr. Marshall, I was wrong in saying that General Bayerlein had made the surrender demand of General McAuliffe. I happen to have a copy of the written ultimatum, signed by Bayerlein, and not by von Luettwitz, as Mr. Marshall claims.

Dredging up the minor tactical role of Marvais as another point against me is far too petty to deserve an argument. In actual fact, the town had been cleared on Dec. 20, and had little if any of the significance Mr. Marshall gratuitously attributes to it. . . .

I was deeply hurt when Mr. Marshall charged me with a derogatory attitude to the official histories of World War II published by the Department of the Army. I feel very strongly about this charge, for I have nothing but the highest admiration for the Army's Office of the Chief of Military History and the incomparable monographs produced by them. I spoke of "doctored histories" only in connection with the Ardennes battle whose official American history has not even been published as yet.

As for the rest of Mr. Marshall's objections, it is a matter of interpretations rather than facts. . . .

LADISLAV FARAGO.

New York City. Dec. 13, 1964