

Biennial Report of
THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF
THE UNITED STATES ARMY

July 1, 1943, to June 30, 1945

TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Price of Victory

Even with our overwhelming concentration of airpower and firepower, this war has been the most costly in which the Nation has been engaged. The victory in Europe alone cost us 772,626 battle casualties of which 160,045 are dead. The price of victory in the Pacific was 170,596, including 41,322 dead. Army battle deaths since 7 December 1941 were greater than the combined losses, Union and Confederate, of the Civil War.

Army casualties in all theaters from 7 December 1941 until the end of the period of this report total 943,222, including 201,367 killed, 570,783 wounded, 114,205 prisoners, 56,867 missing; of the total wounded, prisoners, or missing more than 633,200 have returned to duty, or been evacuated to the United States.

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Despite the fact that United States troops lived and fought in some of the most disease-infested areas of the world, the death rate from nonbattle causes in the Army in the last two years was approximately that of the corresponding age group in civil life—about 3 per 1,000 per year. The greater exposure of troops was counterbalanced by the general immunization from such diseases as typhoid, typhus, cholera, tetanus, smallpox, and yellow fever, and, obviously, by the fact that men in the Army were selected for their physical fitness.

The comparison of the nonbattle death rate in this and other wars is impressive. During the Mexican War 10 percent of officers and enlisted men died each year of disease; the rate was reduced to 7.2 percent of Union troops in the Civil War; to 1.6 percent in the Spanish War and the Philippine Insurrection; to 1.3 percent in World War I; and to 0.6 percent of the troops in this war.