

announced that the Allied War Council had entrusted the supreme command to Marshal Ferdinand Foch, and that the entire American force had been placed at his disposal.

The Germans had solved the problem of breaking through a strongly intrenched front, but they had accomplished it at an enormous cost and the force of the blow was exhausted until they could reorganize their forces and prepare for the delivery of another. A pause of a week then ensued. On March 23 Paris had been bombarded at intervals by a high velocity gun which opened fire at a range of more than seventy miles. The material damage occasioned was not great, until Good Friday, March 29, when a church was wrecked by a shell and many of the congregation killed or injured.

The Germans crossed the Oise on April 5, and gained considerable ground at the expense of heavy losses. The French retired behind the river Ailette. The Germans forced the passage of this river on April 8, and made some further progress. Their main attack was then suddenly shifted to Flanders, where the first British army occupied the sector of the line between Arras and Ypres. After another short, but destructive artillery bombardment, an assault was made on a front of twenty miles between Givenchy and Ypres, having Hazebrouck as its chief objective. A Portuguese division in the front line was driven out with heavy loss, and a breach made on a front of nearly ten miles. The British position at Armentières was turned on both flanks and abandoned during the night of April 10-11. Neighbouring intrenchments were lost and retaken several times, but the British line from Bethune to Arras was eventually maintained. The German advance along the Lys continued; they reached the railway and approached within five miles of Hazebrouck. The situation had become so extremely critical that on April 12 Marshal Haig published a general order calling upon his troops to "die where they stood, fighting with their backs to the wall." The German assaults were renewed with unremitting fury. Bailleul and Wytschaete were both taken on April 16, with the entire adjacent line of heights captured by the British the year before. Fierce fighting with varying success, in which these positions twice changed hands, continued for two days. Reinforcements of British and French troops had then come up and some American battalions were brigaded with the British. A violent attack was repulsed that day, and a pause followed which lasted for a week. The Germans were reinforced by specially trained "shock" and Alpine troops, and began another attack on April 25, after a very severe bombardment on a front of seven miles in the vicinity of Mount Kemmel. Here a section of five miles of the front line had been taken over from another area by veteran French troops, against whom the whole force of the onset was directed. Mount Kemmel and the adjacent villages were eventually taken after a stubborn defence and this compelled a considerable withdrawal from the line south of Ypres. All attempts to pursue, however, were checked with great loss. Subsequent attacks on the new British position were repelled and the German troops occupying Mount Kemmel were subjected to a destructive and continuous artillery fire. The German advance in Flanders had then been