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INT/104 15th Army Group. Intelligence Notes
Opened Oct 13, 1944. Closed Dec 31, 1945
Oct 1944 - Dec 1945

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EXCERPT

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 92

OF 1 MAY, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

Army Group 'C' is smashed, and only battered remnants of VIETINGHOFF's well equipped and experienced divisions have escaped back into the foothills of the Alps. The defeat inflicted on 10 and 11 Armies South of the PO is greater than we had at first imagined, not so much in the numbers of prisoners taken as in the crippling losses suffered in armour and equipment South of the river. In the stretch between PONTELAGOSCURO and POLESELLA alone, where 76 Pz Corps crossed, 90 vehicles, 100 guns of all calibres and 59 Mk IV tanks were counted on the Southern bank of the PO; and this Corps probably escaped in better shape than either 1 Para or 14 Pz Corps. With no reserves, very short of infantry replacements and having lost over 500 guns and the major part of his armoured force (some 200 tanks and assault guns), VIETINGHOFF was powerless to prevent an exploiting across the PO, and knew we were across in strength. He was totally unable to hold any coordinated line of defence.

The course of the battle in the last week can be told quite briefly. VIETINGHOFF must have realised only too well how great was the danger presented by 5 Army's rapid seizing of bridgeheads S.E. of MANTUA, for unless he could cast our advance here he was faced with an Allied thrust to Lake GARDA which would split his armies in two. But he was completely unable to scrape together a force sufficient to meet this threat; 1 Para Corps and 76 Pz Corps were too busy desperately trying to save their own skins to spare troops for the MANTUA area and 51 Mountain Corps was being pushed further and further East in its vain attempts to find crossings over the PO. All that could be brought up to the MANTUA area were miscellaneous battlegroups composed of rear area and training units. 5 Army, quick to seize its opportunity, crushed the enemy opposition and swept North to reach VERONA on the 25th. By the following day all internal communication between the German forces in the plain was cut and the only route of escape left open to 51 Mountain Corps and Army LIGURIA was by way of MILAN and BRESCIA into the ALPS. But even this corridor was short-lived. The enemy tried to drive 51 Mountain Corps across the PO between PIACENZA and PARMA to cover the flank of Army LIGURIA but only a battlegroup of 90 Pz D. (by rumour the MANTUA area and the other formations of the Corps (334, 114, 232 and 5th Jager Divisions) were across the river

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[illegible] the numbers of prisoners taken as in the crippling losses suffered in armour and equipment South of the river. In the stretch between PONTELAGOSCURO and POLESELLA alone, where 76 Pz Corps crossed, 300 vehicles, 100 guns of all calibres and 99 Mk IV tanks were counted on the Southern bank of the PO; and this Corps probably escaped in better shape than either 1 Para or 14 Pz Corps. With no reserves, very short of infantry replacements and having lost over 500 guns and the major part of his armoured force (some 280 tanks and assault guns), VIETINGHOFF was powerless to prevent us exploiting across the PO, and once we were across in strength he was totally unable to hold any coordinated line of defence.

The course of the battle in the last week can be told quite briefly. VIETINGHOFF must have realised only too well how great was the danger precipitated by 5 Army's rapid seizing of bridgeheads S.E. of MANTUA, for unless he could seal off our advance here he was faced with an Allied thrust to Lake GARDA which would split his armies in two. But he was completely unable to scrape together a force sufficient to meet this threat; 1 Para Corps and 76 Pz Corps were too busy desperately trying to save their own skins to spare troops for the MANTUA area and 51 Mountain Corps was being pushed further and further East in its vain attempts to find crossings over the PO. All that could be brought up to the MANTUA area were miscellaneous battlegroups composed of near area and training units. 5 Army, quick to seize its opportunity, crushed the puny opposition and swept North to reach VERONA on the 25th. By the following day all Internal communication between the German forces in the plain was cut and the only route of escape left open to 51 Mountain Corps and Army LIGURIA was by way of MILAN and BRESCIA into the Alps. But when this corridor was shortlived. The enemy tried to bring 51 Mountain Corps across the PO between PIACENZA and PARMA to cover the flank of Army LIGURIA but only a battlegroup of 90 Pz G. Div reached the MILAN area and the other formations of the Corps (334, 114, 232 and 2[illegible] Divs) were still struggling across the plain, or else on the axis of route 9 South of the river or, in the case of 148 Div, still in the mountains S.W. of PARMA. The enemy was completely unable to offer any real resistance to our armoured columns which poured through BRESCIA and VERONA to reach ODED on the 28th. Meantime, CRUSADER had attacked the withdrawal of Army LIGURIA on the 23rd with orders that all his forces were to be behind the TICINO-PO line by 6 May. That the German Command should have left the withdrawal in the east so late, shows how completely by surprise the enemy was taken by the rapidity of our drive across the PO and the ensuing exploitation Northwards. By the 28th, when all escape from Western Italy Northwards into the Alps was cut, 5 Mountain Div had not started its move from west of TURIN where it had been waiting for 14 Div to evacuate S.W. PIEDMONT.

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It was by then apparent that the enemy had not the strength to attempt a coordinated attack Northwards to force a passage into the Alps or to secure the long open flank of 5 Army. The formations of 51 Mountain Corps were strewn on both sides of the PO and were being mopped up in thousands each day. There was complete disorganisation which culminated in the surrender of almost the whole of 114 Div S.E. of PADUA on the 29th with 1,000 MT and 6,000 troops led by its Commanding General. The garrison of MONZ was hemmed in on all sides by partisans and after a couple of days of negotiations, Major-General MENGOLD finally surrendered all his troops on the 27th. At the moment of writing all effective resistance in Western PIEDMONT has ceased: 5 Mtn Div is mainly West of TURIN and 34 Div is by now South of the city and spreads Eastwards to ALESSANDRIA, and both divisions are adopting an attitude of passive resistance until Allied forces arrive to whom they can formally surrender. Any account of the battle in Western PIEDMONT would be incomplete without a reference to the magnificent cooperation of the partisans who seized many key points in advance of the Allied troops and effectively helped to harrass and block the enemy escape routes.

East of VERONA progress was initially slower. Here we were faced with the possibility that the Germans would try to delay us on the Venetian line running behind the ADIGE river. Though his forces were totally inadequate for a determined stand on this line - the effective strength of 1 Para, 14 Pz and 76 Pz Corps at this stage probably did not exceed that of seven full strength divisions, whereas it had been estimated that at least eleven would be required to man the positions - it did seem the enemy's last chance of holding any sort of line forward of the Alps. 1 Para Corps had however, suffered such heavy losses that it could not take up its positions astride the VERONA-VICENZA road in time and 76 Pz Corps, with its two mobile divisions, was still struggling to cross the ADIGE and so could not spare any reinforcement for the Northern part of the line. By the 27th we had bridgeheads across the ADIGE, not only East of VERONA but also opposite LEGNAGO, where stiff resistance was encountered from the Parachutists, and also North of PADUA and ROVIGO. By the next morning, when we attacked towards VICENZA, negligible resistance was encountered until we reached the city and it was apparent that the enemy had abandoned the ADIGE line and was withdrawing his forces in haste to the North. That same day PADUA was entered and the next morning we were across the BRENTA, advancing towards VENICE which was by this time mainly in Partisan hands. Confused identifications were it was clear that the bulk of 76 Pz Corps was withdrawing directly Northwards towards the foothills of the Alps leaving 362 and 162 and elements of 155 Divs to offer ineffective opposition to our push along the Adriatic shore. By the 30th we had crossed the PIAVE and reached PORTO GRUARO meeting scattered resistance from coastal units trying to cut across the line of our advance and reach the Alps; further inland our troops were probing into the foothills of the Alps and captured BELLUNO on the 1st May.

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resistance until Allied forces arrive to whom they can formally surrender. Any account of the battle in Western ITALY would be incomplete without a reference to the magnificent cooperation of the Partisans who seized many key points in advance of the Allied troops and effectively helped to harrass and block the enemy escape routes.

East of VERONA progress was initially slower. Here we were faced with the possibility that the Germans would try to delay us on the Venetian Line running behind the ADIGE river. Though his forces were totally inadequate for a determined stand on this line - the effective strength of 1 Para, 11 Pz and 76 Pz Corps at this stage probably did not exceed that of seven full strength divisions, whereas it had been estimated that at least eleven would be required to man the positions - it did seem the enemy's last chance of holding any sort of line forward of the Alps. 1 Para Corps had however, suffered such heavy losses that it could not take up its positions astride the VERONA-VICENZA road in time and 76 Pz Corps, with its two mobile divisions, was still struggling to cross the ADIGE and so could not spare any reinforcement for the Northern part of the line. By the 27th we had bridgeheads across the ADIGE, not only East of VERONA but also opposite LEGNAGO, where stiff resistance was encountered from the Parachutists, and also North of PADUA and ROVIGO. By the next morning, when we attacked towards VICENZA, negligible resistance was encountered until we reached the city and it was apparent that the enemy had abandoned the ADIGE line and was withdrawing his forces in haste to the North. That same day PADUA was entered and the next morning we were across the BRENTA, advancing towards TREVISO which was by this time mainly in Partisan hands. Confused as identifications were it was clear that the bulk of 76 Pz Corps was withdrawing directly Northwards towards the foothills of the Alps leaving 362 and 162 and elements of 356 Divs to offer ineffective opposition to our push along the Adriatic shore. By the 30th we had crossed the PIAVE and reached PORTO GRUARO meeting scattered resistance from coastal units trying to cut across the line of our advance and reach the Alps; further inland our troops were probing into the foothills of the Alps and captured BELLUNO on the 1st May.

The battle of ITALY is over, and the remnants of VIETINGHOFF's once proud divisions have taken to the Alps. Of the divisions which have defied us so long in ITALY probably only four have reached the Alps as fighting formations fit to give battle; these are the two Para Divs, (though 4 Para Div has suffered very heavy casualties) and 26 Pz and 29 P.G. Divs. The two mobile divisions, in particular 26 Pz, have fought magnificently but by now probably have not to no tanks left. The other mobile division, 90 P.G., has been destroyed for the second time in the Mediterranean Theatre and Von MACK the

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divisional commander is a prisoner in our hands. Of the remaining divisions 8 Mtn, 42 Jaeger, 162 Turkoman, 1L6 Inf, 232 and 305 Inf Divs can now be considered destroyed though some elements may have escaped to the North. In addition, 65, 94, 98, 2L4, 1[illegible], 276, 334 and 362 Inf Divs have either been completely destroyed or else are so battered that they are unable to fight as formations. 5 Mtn and 1L Div unit to surrender in toto. In the N.W. what is in effect probably merely a low category brigade (24 S.S. KARST Division) has not yet been contacted but is now probably in full retreat towards the [illegible] Zone. Of the two Divisions in ISTRIA 188 and 237 Divs are now known to have passed with 97 Corps to command of C in C S.E. about the middle of April. In any case they are being cut up by the Yugoslav Army which has cut off FIUME and has reached the outskirts of [illegible].

The total count of prisoners and captured equipment is not yet complete but we know that over 150,000 enemy are already in our hands and there are many more to be rounded up in Western [illegible]. Some 13 Generals have fallen into our hands in the last ten days including the Commander of Army LIGURIA ([illegible]) and his Chief of Staff (Lt.Gen [illegible]), the Commander of 76 Pz Corps, Gen von SCHLIEBEN, who decided on the 29th that the German Armies in Italy were broken and so surrendered to our troops South of the PO, Lt.Gen SCHULZ Commander 334 Div, Lt.Gen FRAITER PICO, L48 Div, and several generals holding administrative and L of C appointments. All testified to the helplessness of the situation and to the utter confusion which existed in the latter stages of the battle. We now look to see whether VIETINGHOFF will try to collect his remaining forces for the defence of the Southern Alps, on what is virtually the perimeter of the Redoubt; Von SCHLEBEN said that as long as telephonic communication existed with HITLER's Headquarters VIETINGHOFF would continue to resist, but since HITLER has decided to stay in BERLIN and HIMMLER has been associated with proposals for surrender to the Western Allies, it looks as if the German High Command has abandoned any intention it may have had of holding the Southern Redoubt. Further, it is to say for the moment that our troops who have advanced up both sides of Lake GARDA are now encountering stubborn resistance from the Northern end of the Lake, but that on the far side of the Alps American forces have broken into the perimeter of the Redoubt and are now within 13 miles of INNSBRUCK. From a purely military point of view the enemy's chances of holding the Southern Redoubt begin to look a bit thin. Troops which should have provided the core stalwart garrison for it - those of Army Group 'C' - have been decisively smashed and with them has probably been smashed also such dreadful ideas as may ever have existed of holding the Southern fortress.

2. NORTH GERMANY ZONE

The great enemy pocket created in North GERMANY and HOLLAND as a result of the Allied link-up at [illegible], is shrinking steadily. To the East, Marshal [illegible] is [illegible]

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there are many more to be rounded up in Western [illegible]. Some 15 Generals have fallen into our hands in the last two days including the Commander of Army Group [illegible] (VIETINGHOFF) and his Chief of Staff (Lt. Gen FRIESSNER), the Commander of 76 Pz Corps, Gen von SCHLEBEN, who decided on the 29th that the German Armies in ITALY were broken and so surrendered to our troops South of the PO, Lt. Gen BOELSEN Commander 334 Div, Lt. Gen FRETTER PICOT, 14th Div, and several generals holding administrative and L of C appointments. All testified to the helplessness of the situation and to the utter confusion which existed in the latter stages of the battle. We now look to see whether VIETINGHOFF will try to collect his remaining forces for the defence of the Southern Alps, on what is virtually the perimeter of the Redoubt; Von SCHLEBEN said that as long as telephonic communication existed with HITLER's Headquarters VIETINGHOFF would continue to resist, but since HITLER has decided to stay in BERLIN and HIMMLER has been associated with proposals for surrender to the Western Allies, it looks as if the German High Command has abandoned any intention it may have had of holding the Southern Redoubt. Suffice it is to say for the moment that our troops who have advanced up both sides of Lake GARDA are now encountering stubborn resistance from the Northern end of the Lake, but that on the far side of the Alps American forces have broken into the perimeter of the Redoubt and are now within 15 miles of INNSBRUCK. From a purely military point of view the enemy's chances of holding the Southern Redoubt begin to look a bit thin. Troops which should have provided the most stalwart garrison for it - those of Army Group 'C' - have been decisively smashed and with them has probably been smashed also such dreadful ideas as may ever have existed of holding the Southern Fortress.

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C. NORTH GERMAN ZONE

The great enemy pocket created in North GERMANY and DENMARK as a result of the Allied link-up at [illegible], is shrinking steadily. To the East, Marshal ROKOSSOVSKY is advancing on a broad front running Southwards from the Baltic coast to West of BERLIN against decreasing resistance, while ZHUKOV's Third White Russian Army Group completes the reduction of the German capital. Meanwhile S.W. of BERLIN the long German salient which protruded as far South as LEIPZIG is being progressively worn down by successive links-up between American and Soviet forces. The exact number of German divisions in the Northern pocket is not known. Excluding NORWAY and the Dutch pocket there are unlikely to be more than 40 nominal divisions. These probably include some fourteen sub to div, three from the east and eleven from the West, and at least four parachute divisions of reasonably good quality; in addition a number of embryo divisions may now be setting up

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in DENMARK. From the information available on allocation of drafts and recruits, it seems likely that up to six new divisions are now being set up in DENMARK. The enemy's present attitude is consistent with a determination to fight for the North German ports as long as possible and as far South as possible. His resistance is at its weakest against the Russians who are further from the major ports of GERMANY than the other Allies. It is at its stiffest around HAMBURG and at the approaches to WILHELMSHAVEN where 1 Para Army, making the most of difficult marshy country and extensive airfields, is causing our progress to be slow. There has been a certain amount of rail movement from DENMARK Southwards towards HAMBURG during the week, an indication that the enemy is determined to make an even stiffer fight there than he did at HAMBURG. New identifications during the past week have largely reflected the results of the fusion of the two fronts. North of the Line-up, apart from a number of miscellaneous battle-groups, three divisions which had formerly been fighting the Russians now appeared on the Anglo-American front. The reshuffle of enemy divisions appears so far to be chiefly Westwards and we have no evidence that enemy divisions have moved to the Russian sector which had previously been on the Anglo-American front.

Meanwhile further North the move of 199 Inf Div from NORWAY to DENMARK should now be nearly complete, and the next formation due to come over, reported to be 7 Mtn Div, may be further up. The difficulties of transfer across the SKAGERRAK are likely to increase sharply from now on as the number of targets available to the Allied Air Forces decreases. The morale of the garrisons in NORWAY is reported to be low in the extreme. Many of them Quislings, looking both the stiffening presence of S.S. formations, and the stimulus of battle conditions, they are likely to be of limited value when organised German resistance in Central EUROPE has ended.

5. SOUTH GERMAN ZONE.

CENTRAL GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

The enemy is still showing considerable determination to prevent Allied incursions into SAXONY and BOHEMIA although for new factors have emerged in the Czechoslovak situation during the week. Army Group Centre is conducting a skilful withdrawal from SAXONY, suffering relatively few casualties as it pulls back. The main enemy weakness has been over the boundary between Army Groups Centre and South at PRAG. This is a fairly recent alteration in boundary, and 29 Corps which as a result passed from Army Group South to Centre seems to have been a little unsettled by the change, for it gave up PRAG rather readily. Army Group South now under the command of Colonel General HEINRICI, one time commander of 20 Mtn in FINLAND, continues to offer stubborn resistance along the whole front from PRAG to the DANUBE. In the DANUBE Valley the front has remained quiet and the main development has been the transfer of 2 S.S. Pz Div from East to West. It has arrived from the SOVIET front

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the fusion of the two fronts. [illegible] number of miscellaneous battle-groups, these divisions which had formerly been fighting the Russians have appeared on the Anglo-American front. The reshuffle of enemy divisions appears so far to be wholly Westwards and we have no evidence that enemy divisions have moved to the Russian sector which had previously been on the Anglo-American front.

Meanwhile further North the move of 169 Inf Div from NORWAY to HOLLAND should now be nearly complete, and the next formation due to come over, reported to be 7 Mtn Div, may be trading up. The difficulties of transfer across the SKAGERRAK are likely to increase sharply from now on as the number of targets available to the Allied Air Forces decreases. The morale of the garrisons in NORWAY is reported to be low in the extreme. Many of them Austrians, lacking both the stiffening presence of S.S. formations, and the stimulus of battle conditions, they are likely to be of limited value when organised German resistance in Central EUROPE has ended.

3. SOUTH EASTERN ZONE:

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA.

The enemy is still showing considerable determination to prevent Allied incursions into BOHEMIA and MORAVIA although few new factors have emerged in the Czechoslovak situation during the week. Army Group Centre is conducting a skilful withdrawal from SLOVAKIA, suffering relatively few casualties as it pulls back. The main enemy weakness has been over the boundary between Army Groups Centre and South at BRNO. This is a fairly recent alteration in boundary, and 29 Corps which as a result passed from Army Group South to Centre seems to have been a little unsettled by the change, for it gave up BRNO rather readily. Army Group South now under the command of Col-Gen RENDULIC, one time commander of 20 Mtn in FINLAND, continues to offer stubborn resistance along the whole front from BRNO to the DANUBE. In the MARCH Valley the front has remained quiet and the main development has been the transfer of 2 S.S. Pz Div from East to West. It has moved from the ST. POLTEN sector to PASSAU where it has been in contact with the Seventh U.S. Army. In the ST. POLTEN area the Soviets have now identified all three regiments of 10 Parachute Div. What appears to be its sister formation, 11 Parachute Division, is reported to be in the VIENNA area. Between the DANUBE and the DRAVA a certain amount of reshuffling is taking place on 6 Army and 2 Pz Army front, the effect of which has been to strengthen the approaches to GRAZ along the RAAB Valley at the expense of the MARIBOR sector. 2 Pz Army whose sector lies between the RAAB and DRAVA rivers is believed to have passed back to control of Army Group E from Army Group South.

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At the Southern approaches to AUGSB, the 19 Army in the Black Forest has completely collapsed. The small pocket believed to contain miscellaneous elements of OKH Administrative Staff was overrun and speedily eliminated and the enemy is no longer offering any effective resistance along the Swiss frontier. Nor is the situation on the remainder of Army Group G's front much healthier. The temporary show of coherence which has been achieved as a result of the switch over of forces from the Upper RHINE to the MUNICH area was short lived. New divisions such as 20 S.S. MUNICHBERG composed largely of 17 year olds with two weeks training have appeared; so too have a few ad hoc mobilisation divisions; but they have been of little avail in stemming the Allied advance. For the first time there have been indications of serious internal unrest amongst the Germans and about 20 April an attempt at seizing control of the MUNICH Radio Station seems to have been made by the representatives of the so-called Bavarian Freedom Party. No reliable details of this are available; in any case the city was in Allied hands two days later.

The enemy situation on Army Group G's front has deteriorated most rapidly in the region East and N.E. of Lake CONSTANCE. Here our forces advancing into Alpine terrain North of INNSBRUCK have so far met only scattered opposition, and demolitions or terrain have imposed more serious delays than any resistance. Latest reports put them some 10 miles North of INNSBRUCK which is well into the area reported to constitute the National Redoubt. There are however reports that the enemy opposition is stiffening in the area of IMST (D 67), although no reliable identification of the enemy forces offering the resistance has been reported. North of MUNICH opposition is at its strongest along the ISAR river, but in general there is no coherence about the enemy's resistance and isolated units are left to fight on long after the others have withdrawn. There is still the framework of at least 25 divisions within Army Group G and this includes four ad hoc divisions which have appeared within the past few days. The enemy's skill at pulling new divisions out of the bag is shown by the appearance on the Anglo-American fronts (including the fortress of Ruhr (ROLAND) of fifteen new divisions in the past three weeks. This compares with the appearance of only seven divisions formerly opposite the Russians.

YUGOSLAVIA

In SLOVENIA, the story is of a rapid and successful enemy withdrawal not seriously hampered by Yugoslav action. The enemy line between the DRAVA and MT. river is held by 15 Gebirgs Corps to the North and 21 Mtn Corps to the South with 1 Cossack Corps to the 7 S.S. Mtn and 22 Inf Divs still in contact with the Yugoslavs. It now seems improbable that the enemy will hold until he is back in the KARNIA area and the whole of the Balkan salient has been finally eliminated.

Meanwhile on the 4th Yugoslav Army front spectacular headway has been made. A bridge was effected at PIVKA (J 11) on the East coast of ISTRIA on 25 April and drove Eastwards as far as SESANA (H 92) and Northwards to ADELSBERG (H 24) against light resistance.

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most rapidly in the region East and N. of Lake OHRID. Here our forces advancing into Alpine terrain North of DEBRUCK have so far met only scattered opposition, and demolitions or terrain have imposed more serious delays than any resistance. Latest reports put them some 10 miles North of DEBRUCK which is well into the area reported to constitute the National Socialist Redoubt. There are however no acts that the enemy opposition is stiffening in the area of TITOVO (J 67), although no reliable identification of the enemy forces offering the resistance has been reported. North of KNIN the situation is at its strongest along the IKVA river, but in general there is no coherence about the enemy's resistance and isolated units are left to fight on long after the others have withdrawn. There is still the framework of at least 26 divisions within Army Group E and this includes four ad hoc divisions which have appeared within the past few days. The enemy's skill at pulling new divisions out of the bag is shown by the appearance on the Anglo-American fronts (including the fortress of West HOLLAND) of fifteen new divisions in the past three weeks. This compares with the appearance of only seven divisions formerly opposite the Russians.

YUGOSLAVIA

In SLAVONIA, the story is of a rapid and successful enemy withdrawal not seriously hampered by Yugoslav action. The enemy line between the DRAVA and SAVA rivers is held by 15 Cossack Corps to the North and 21 Mtn Corps to the South with 1 Cossack, 11 G.A.F., 41 Inf, 7 S.S. Mtn and 22 Inf Divs all in contact with the Yugoslavs. It now seems improbable that the enemy will halt until he is back in the KARLOVAC area and the whole of the Balkan salient has been finally eliminated.

Meanwhile on the 4th Yugoslav Army front spectacular headway has been made. A landing was effected at PLOCE (J 11) on the East coast of ISTRIA on 26 April and drove Westwards so far as PAZIN (H 92) and Northwards to ABBAZIA (H 28) against light enemy resistance. Meanwhile, striking North of PULA, the main Yugoslav force has cut across the neck of the Istrian peninsula with remarkable speed. TRIESTE has been captured after the bulk of the Istrian garrison had pulled back into the city. Virtually all ISTRIA, apart from PULA is now left to the Germans. Further South, PULA itself has fallen. The Yugoslavs believe that the bulk of the 162 Div had moved down to PULA from the TRIESTE area, and that this fmn 237 Inf Div was trapped in PULA.

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Apart from those two divisions there have been no identifications of note in the past week. The division which has recently arrived in the WARSCHAU (# 45) area from the EAST is reported to be 1st Inf Div.

THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

Developments on Army Group C's front have seriously affected the enemy's capabilities of prolonged resistance in the Reduit. The deep penetration in the direction of INSTERBURG strikes into an area where according to the source the supreme headquarters of the Reduit is to be located. It is too early yet to say that the concept of the Reduit is nullified by these developments, but the speed of our advance has been such that it is doubtful whether the enemy will have time to withdraw any substantial forces back into GERMANY, before the pincers are there. Already the KOENIGSBERG area, consistently reported as a large headquarters and base region, is outflanked to the east. Nevertheless supplies are still coming in to KOENIGSBERG from CZECHOSLOVAKIA, and the heavy Southward movement along the DANZIG - LINZ line has continued throughout the week. There has been no further photographic evidence of defensive measures nor of dug construction, while ground reports on the build-up of stocks become progressively either as the war draws nearer its end. INSTERBURG and GUMBINNEN (of Army Group Centre) vie for place as the C in C of the Reduit according to ground reports, with the odds slightly on INSTERBURG. From the mass of reports available it does seem fairly certain that a major headquarters, possibly O.K.W., is now in the ALLENSTEIN area. A report from BERN suggests that OKH and OKW have now been split into two distinct commands, North and South, and it is at least feasible that the Southern halves should set themselves up in the reasonably central location of ALLENSTEIN. The supposition is confirmed by air reports of hutted camps being built near ALLENSTEIN. However ABI reliable reports received latterly deal with headquarters and personalities and not with troops; and without troops the Redoubt will not be of any value. Moreover with HITLER now toying with the idea of peace, the fanatical enthusiasts to man the Redoubt may be hard to come by. The German soldier is losing heart everywhere and he will not mean retain the Redoubt idea now. The end of the war is imminent and he has lost it. And he knows it.

Lt Col
for G.S.O.
for C.I.S. WWCI

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[illegible] Southward movement along the [illegible] - LEIZ line has continued throughout the week. There has been no further photographic evidence of defensive measures nor of line construction, while ground reports on the building of attacks become progressively wilder as the war draws nearer its end. KESSELRING and SCHERNER (of Army Group Centre) who for place as the C in C of the Redoubt according to ground reports, with the odds slightly on KESSELRING. From the mass of reports available it does seem fairly certain that a major headquarters, possibly O.K.W., is now in the SALZBURG area. A report from SALZ suggests that OKH and OKW have now both split into two distinct commands, North and South, and it is at least feasible that the Southern halves should set themselves up in the reasonably central location of SALZBURG. The air question is confirmed by air reports of hutted camps built near SALZBURG. However all reliable reports received latterly deal with headquarters and personalities and not with troops; and without troops the Redoubt will not be of much value. Moreover with HITLER now toying with the idea of peace, the fanatical enthusiasts to man the Redoubt may be hard to come by. The German soldier is loath desert everywhere and he will not much relish the Redoubt idea now. The end of the war is imminent and he has lost it. And he knows it.

Eddlemans
Col GSC

for C.I.A. DIRECTOR
BRIG. GEN., U.S.
A.C. OF S., G-2.

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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 91

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

On the evening of the 20th the enemy suddenly started a general withdrawal from the BOLOGNA area. But VIETINGHOFF had already fallen between two stools - he had not ordered (or more likely Hitler's intuitive genius for strategical misappreciation had not allowed him to order) a fighting withdrawal to the PO and he had not succeeded in halting the Allied offensive on the Appenine line. Consequently, when withdrawal was forced upon him as the only alternative to annihilation South of the PO, he found that his Armies were already battered, he had no reserves, and his pace of withdrawal was limited to that of the foot soldier. As a result of the heavy casualties he had endured in trying to blunt our offensive he had not the force left to prevent 5 Army breaking through 90 P.G. and 34 Inf Divs and fanning out into the plain to the West and N.W. of BOLOGNA. He rapidly lost control of this part of the front and with it his chance of conducting an orderly withdrawal to the PO. Only by such an orderly withdrawal could he have hoped to offset our high morale, our greater mobility and overwhelming armoured and air superiority. Although further East 76 Pz Corps and 1 Para Corps have conducted a skilful and desperately fierce withdrawal the enemy is paying a bitter price for the collapse of 14 Pz Corps. It is still too soon to tell the extent of the disaster which has befallen the enemy, but at the moment of writing he has lost over 50,000 prisoners, large quantities of equipment and very many vehicles. We have seized several crossings over the PO, and the escape route of 51 Mtn Corps from the ARNO area and of the German forces from eastern ITALY is gravely threatened. Army Group C is experiencing its most crushing defeat in the Italian campaign and one that bids fair to be decisive.

The critical moment of the battle probably came when 8 Army wheeled through the Genghis Khan positions in the ARGENTA Gap on the 18th and advanced rapidly up to PORTO MAGGIORE and the canal running East and West through the town. At this time the enemy was still holding firm South of BOLOGNA though in the mountains to the West of the city our attack was gaining momentum despite the attempts of 90 P.G. Div to halt it. A breakthrough to PERRARA from ARGENTA would have endangered the bulk of his forces South of the PO and the divisions then available to 76 Pz Corps (29 P.G. Div, 42 Jaeger Div, which had already lost 2,000 prisoners, and 362 Div, roughly handled in our attacks on the ARNO and SANTERNO) could not have prevented this break out unaided. The only reserve the enemy had was 98 Div, resting and refitting near S. NICOLO FERRARESE after suffering heavily in the first few days of the offensive, and 26 Pz Div, still comparatively fresh and undamaged after four days of fighting in the BUSSIO area. Both were at once committed against the right wing of 8 Army, leaving the enemy with no Central reserve. This weakness soon became glaringly apparent. Making such swifter progress through the mountains than the enemy obviously thought would be possible, 5 Army tore a great hole in 94 Div, and brushed aside 90 P.G. Div. The only reinforcement the enemy had time to bring up was the Fusilier Bn of 65 Div. He had probably intended bringing round 114 Div or part of 334 Div from the West, but movement out of the mountains was very slow and he did not contact 114 Corps HQ until we had crossed

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Fifth Army reached the highway just before midday on the 20th, and although the enemy forces ahead of us were broken and disorganised, 90 P.G. Div harassed the eastern flank of our thrust all day. South of BOLOGNA 65 Div had withdrawn under pressure on to the GHISELLO line (running along the 28 Northing) the previous night. N.E. of the town, 1 Para Corps had been pushed off the MEDICINA Canal, and after a temporary pause on the G.I.N. river had been thrown back into the Genghis Khan positions along the IDICE river on the night 19/20. By midday on the 20th we had

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seized a rail bridgehead over the ISLER. Faced with a breakthrough K.H. and West of ZOLDER, the enemy abandoned the city that night. Leaving the two Para divisions and 278 Div to fight their way back towards the R.MO bend North of CEMTO, VIETINGHOFF tried desperate measures to stop Army breaking out across the plain. 305 Div was rushed through ZOLDER, on the night 20/21 April in an attempt to bring it round West of the MEMO into the area S. GIOVANNI DI MERSICANO. 8 Mtn and 65 Divs, both of which had had heavy casualties, also tried to withdraw to cover 1 Para Corps' flank. But these moves came too late and could not prevent a break out Northwestwards between route 9 and S. GIOVANNI towards the P.MANO, where only miscellaneous and isolated battle groups opposed our advance. By the 22nd we had reached the AO at CRUSCHILLI L 3598 and S. [illegible] P 5810 and had seized a crossing at the latter point. The enemy armies South of the AO were split.

The collapse of 14 Pz Corps uncovered the flanks of 1 Para Corps and 51 Mtn Corps. The two parachute divisions conducted a skilful withdrawal towards the MEMO bend North of CEMTO, but there found themselves threatened from both flanks. 362 Div had been unable to hold an armoured column which swept out from MATERA along the North bank of the MEMO to ROCCO MEMMETO: we captured the latter on the night 21/22 April despite the arrival of assistance from 362 Div's right neighbour 278 Div. By the following night we had reached the outskirts of ACERNO through which ran 1 Para Corps' axis of withdrawal. On the Western flank of the parachute divisions the remnants of 65 Division (whose Commander Gen FEURTER was killed on the 22nd), of 8 Mtn Div (which had many of its guns overrun) and of 305 Division fought bitterly to keep the escape route for the parachutists open. A desperate battle took place on the 22nd in the Northern corner of the MEMO pocket and between the MEMO and the P.MANO N.E. of CEMTO. Our tanks inflicted heavy damage on enemy columns trying to fight their way along the corridor to the only escape route across the AO remaining to the Para Corps - between CASTIGLI and ACERNO. Fighting is still going on for this bridgehead to-day and we cannot yet tell exactly how much damage has been done to the enemy. But the capture of the G.O.C. of 305 Div, Gen SCHLIEBEN, with his Artillery Commander, in his car while looking for a crossing over the AO, gives some idea of the confusion that reigns. The enemy has no bridges across the AO, only ferries, and there is a fair chance that a large part of 1 Para Corps will not reach the North bank of the river.

To the West 90 P.G. Div, 114 and 334 Divs have been slowly withdrawing up Route 9 towards P.MO covering the withdrawal of 232 and 180 Divs from the mountains. The latter was still offering stubborn resistance near [illegible] on the West coast on the 22nd, and only seems to have started its withdrawal the following day. Our patrols entered SESSA on the 24th. It is a long and weary trek through Partisan infested country to the crossings North of NAPLES, and the capture of MONTE ruy Force 14th Div to use thrust still further West. Assaulting troops are urgently required in the ANZIO area to seal off our bridgehead which is steadily expanding. As quickly as 5l Mtn Corps can transfer troops across the AO they will march Southwards.

The enemy's situation is desperate. We have a substantial bridgehead across the AO at S. [illegible]TTO, we are in process of establishing another one at [illegible] and patrols have crossed North of [illegible]. We are now only proceeding

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letter on the night 21/22 April despite the arrival of assistance from 362 Idv's right neighbour 278 Div. By the following night we had reached the outskirts of CHIESO through which run 1 Para Corps' axis of withdrawal. On the Western flank of the parachute divisions the remnants of 65 Division (whose Commander Gen PFEIFFER was killed on the 22nd), of 8 Mtn Div (which had many of its guns overrun) and of 305 Division fought bitterly to keep the escape route for the parachutists open. A desperate battle took place on the 22nd in the Northern corner of the RENO pocket and between the RENO and the P.M.80 N.E. of CENTO. Our tanks inflicted heavy damage on enemy columns trying to fight their way along the corridor to the only escape route across the PO remaining to the Para Corps - between CENTOCELLA and CORBENO. Fighting is still going on for this bridgehead to-day and we cannot yet tell exactly how much damage has been done to the enemy. But the capture of the G.O.C. of 305 Div, Gen SCHELLWITZ, with his Artillery Commander, in his car while looking for a crossing over the PO, gives some idea of the confusion that reigns. The enemy has no bridges no pontoons, only ferries, and there is a fair chance that a large part of 1 Para Corps will not reach the North bank of the river.

To the West 90 P.G. Div, 114 and 334 Divs have been slowly withdrawing up Route 9 towards P.204, covering the withdrawal of 232 and 162 Divs from the mountains. The latter was still offering stubborn resistance near SARZANA on the West coast on the 22nd, and only seems to have started its withdrawal the following day. Our patrols entered MASSA on the 24th. It is a long and weary trek through Partisan infested country to the crossings North of PARMA, and the capture of PONTREMOLI may force 148 Div to use those still further West. Fighting troops are urgently required in the MASSA area to seal off our bridgehead which is steadily expanding. As quickly as 51 Mtn Corps can transfer troops across the PO they will march Eastwards.

The enemy's situation is desperate. We have a substantial bridgehead across the PO at S. GIORGIO, we are in process of establishing contact on at CASTELLO and patrols have crossed North of FERRARA. We is not only preoccupied with evacuating 76 Pz Corps across the river East of FERRARA and withdrawing what he can of 1 Para Corps between CENTO and CASTELLO, but he still has to extricate 51 Mtn Corps as well as get his forces out of western ITALY. (Various ground sources report that 75 Corps did not start its withdrawal till the 23rd and that the German garrison of GENOA began its move Northwards on the same day). And his major worry must be that unless he can seal off our bridgehead at S. GIORGIO he is faced with a potential threat to MANTUA followed by a drive North to Lake GARDA which would cut off his troops to the West and also into banks of the extensive dumps around VERONA. We have so far only identified opposite the S. GIORGIO bridgehead Flak units, convalescents rushed straight from hospital, training units and parachutist companies, made up of recruits who have arrived in ITALY to replace the cadres sent away by 1 and 4 Para Divs in March. Some 3-4,000 of the latter

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By [illegible] NARA, Date 10-8-04

are said to have reached ITALY. Apart from 3d Mtn units it is difficult to see where reinforcement can be obtained apart from 51 Mtn Corps, but some of 5 Mtn Div may intervene if it can move across quickly enough from the TIRRI area. To the East 1 Para Corps and 76 Pz Corps are probably too preoccupied with their own worries to give any help.

We cannot yet estimate exactly how seriously the enemy divisions crossing between NAPLES and the Adriatic have been cut up. 3 Mtn Div has lost over 3,600 prisoners (most of them combat troops) and is in no position to fight as a division, 94 and 65 Divisions have also had heavy losses. 278 and 305 Divs have both probably suffered considerable casualties in the fighting for the 1 Para Corps bridgehead, and of the two Para divisions 4 Para is known to have lost over 1,200 prisoners alone. The losses of the parachute divisions in killed is believed to be heavy. We do not know how many of them escaped, but 1 Para Corps as a whole undoubtedly lost heavily in equipment. In 76 Pz Corps three of the infantry divisions had had heavy losses before they reached the PO - 42 Jaeger, 98 and 362 Divs, while the fourth 162 Div has only two regiments (329 G.R. being West of FIASCONE.), and has so far escaped comparatively lightly. 26 Pz and 29 M.G. Divs have been covering the withdrawal of 76 Pz Corps across the PO with infantry units probably under command; and these mobile divisions have had considerable though not crippling losses. In addition the enemy has lost heavily in armour on the 8th Army front: 27 Tigers and 13 Panthers are in our hands which is about two thirds of the total with which the enemy is believed to have started the battle.

The battered state of his divisions make it quite impossible for the enemy to hold the PO as a defence line. He would undoubtedly like to make it a delaying line until he can withdraw 51 Mtn Corps and the troops in Western ITALY East of the line MANFREDONIA - Lake GARDA. But 1 Para Corps and 76 Pz Corps are dangerously extended between the Adriatic and OSPEDALETTO, while 14 Pz Corps at MANTUA is still trying to scrape together a fighting force. It is doubtful if either of these three Corps can withstand a major attack, and attacks launched simultaneously against all three will force the enemy to fight a withdrawing action to the Venetian Line - running along the line of the lower ADIGE to CASTAGNARO C 3719, thence W.N.W. to MONSELICE and the twin hills of EUGANEI and BERICI, and from here West along the foothills of the Alps to Lake GARDA. We have in the past appreciated that the enemy would require at least eleven divisions at full strength to hold this sector of the line with another division plus some attached independent mountain bns to hold from Lake GARDA to the Swiss frontier. The enemy should get a nominal 12 - 14 divisions back on to this line from 1 Para, 14 Pz and 76 Pz Corps, but it is doubtful if their combined infantry strength even allowing for rapid absorption of L of C units, battle schools and replacement units etc. will amount to much more than six divisions. Their artillery regiments will also be below strength. The only division the enemy can bring up to assist are 155 Div, and that has already given off quite considerable numbers of replacements to 98 Div, and a low category formation, the U.S. KANSAS Division, which is counter-striking in the VENICE Plain. 710 Division which would have been a candidate is now known to have left ITALY early this month and has been identified on the Russian front. Divisions in YUGOSLAVIA are fully engaged trying to keep TITO's forces from reaching FIUME and no immediate reinforcement seems available from there, though 188 Mtn Div (Alpini) and some replacements to 5 Mtn Div. It is therefore imperative for the enemy that he gets [illegible]

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....2. ENEMY STATICS AND COMMUNICATIONS...

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2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

During the past week it is believed that the enemy supply position had rapidly deteriorated. In his retreat to the PO crossings he must have been forced to use up a large part of his already very low MT fuel stocks. At the same time he has lost or is about to lose the PO Valley methane resources, the distribution system of which had already been heavily damaged by air attack. In addition such alcohol producing factories as have not been bombed but should for the most part shortly fall into our hands and he therefore can no longer count on alcohol to stretch his meagre stocks of petrol. Producer gas probably remains the only substantial source of substitute MT fuel but its use will be limited to rear areas. Barring the arrival of considerable stocks of petrol and diesol from GERMANY LO and LL armies must be very close to a point where continued large scale MT movement will be impossible. What the fuel position of Army LIGURIA may be is not known, but the ground report that it had enough fuel to get its MT back to the PRASCIA area probably still holds good.

It is extremely improbable that the enemy will have been able to evacuate any substantial amount of the supplies which he held in dumps South of the river PO and thus a large part of LO and LL Army ammunition stocks will have been expended or overrun. While it is doubtful whether the enemy has either the transport, the fuel or time to evacuate the dumps in the N.W., the majority of the dumps North of the PO are in the VERONA area, along the Upper ADIGE Valley and along the North Eastern road and rail networks between the PADUA-VICENZA area and UDINE. Ammunition stocks in these areas are estimated to be sufficient to maintain ten full strength divisions for one week to ten days of hard and continuous fighting. That this situation can be saved by stopping up deliveries from GERMANY seems unlikely and whether or not ammunition available in Northern ITALY can be moved to the right place at the right time in the required amount is problematical.

During the past few days the enemy has been forced to move a considerable number of vehicles during the hours of daylight, and, taking advantage of this, our aircraft on 22 and 23 April destroyed or damaged a total of 2650 MT and 1,290 MOV. (These figures are reminiscent of last spring and bring the total of vehicles destroyed or damaged since 9 April by air attack alone to 3,371 MT and 1,983 MOV). This is a rate of loss which the enemy can not long stand. In addition the amount of transport overrun or destroyed by our ground troops must be considerable. Thus, though a shortened L of C will to some degree compensate for the losses suffered, the enemy may well be threatened with a shortage of transport.

Aside from the loss in transport the enemy's road net is being chewed up by air attack. There is such an extensive road net in the PO Valley that road interdiction perhaps achieves in most instances no more than a local

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arrival of considerable stocks [illegible] must be very close to a point where continued large scale AT movement will be impossible. What the fuel position of Army LIGURIA may be is not known, but the ground report that it had enough fuel to get its AT back to the VENETIA area probably still holds good.

It is extremely improbable that the enemy will have been able to evacuate any substantial amount of the supplies which he held in dumps South of the river PO and thus a large part of 10 and 14 Army ammunition stocks will have been expended or overrun. While it is doubtful whether the enemy has either the transport, the fuel or time to evacuate the dumps in the N.W., the majority of the dumps North of the PO are in the VERONA area, along the Upper ADIGE Valley and along the North Eastern road and rail networks between the PADUA-VICENZA area and UDINE. Ammunition stocks in these areas are estimated to be sufficient to maintain ten full strength Divisions for one week to ten days of hard and continuous fighting. That this situation can be saved by stepping up deliveries from GERMANY seems unlikely and whether or not ammunition available in Northern ITALY can be moved to the right place at the right time in the required amount is problematical.

During the past few days the enemy has been forced to move a considerable number of vehicles during the hours of daylight, and, taking advantage of this, our aircraft on 22 and 23 April destroyed or damaged a total of 2650 MT and 1,250 MGV. (These figures are reminiscent of last spring and bring the total of vehicles destroyed or damaged since 9 April by air attack alone to 3,371 MT and 1,983 MGV). This is a rate of loss which the enemy can not long stand. In addition the amount of transport overrun or destroyed by our ground troops must be considerable. Thus, though a shortened L of C will to some degree compensate for the losses suffered, the enemy may well be threatened with a shortage of transport.

Aside from the loss in transport the enemy's road net is being chewed up by air attack. There is such an extensive road net in the PO Valley that road interdiction perhaps achieves in most instances no more than a local effect. However, except for possibly one, all of the road bridges over the ADIGE from VERONA inclusive to the sea have been knocked out and the enemy is now forced to get across this major barrier largely by the slow process of ferrying. Just how laborious a method of crossing this can be we have seen on the PO the last few days, where thousands of prisoners and considerable amounts of equipment and vehicles have fallen into our hands because they were unable to get across the river. In addition the VERONA river crossings are now under attack. With the BRENNER and M.F. rail routes still well interdicted the enemy cannot count on the railways to relieve the present situation. (For details on the state of the railways see Appendix 'A').

3. WESTERN FRONT

The enemy's strategy in the West is governed by his expectation of an early Russo-American link up in the Central part of the front. Here resistance has been light, but on his Southern and Northern flanks the enemy is still striving to maintain the cohesion of his front. Fearful of Allied exploitation along the axis MUNICH-LINZ, he now transferred the main weight of

....his forces.....

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his forces in Army Group C from the Upper RHINE area to the sector South and S.E. of NÜRNBERG. On the enemy's extreme left, French forces have advanced against crumbling resistance to the Swiss border, cutting off some Volkssturm and Fortress troops under 805 Adm Div in the area East of the RHINE. The reshuffle in Army Group C was not rapid enough to prevent the fall of NÜRNBERG while SCHWEINFURT was occupied after a sharp battle. The enemy's left flank is now swinging back rapidly to the Lake CONSTANCE area and the whole line S.E. of NÜRNBERG seems to be going back to the DANUBE. It is doubtful in the extreme whether the enemy can achieve any prolonged stabilisation of the front on the DANUBE, especially as we have already crossed it in the ULM region. Between Lake CONSTANCE and the DANUBE at DONAUESCHIN there are some ten nominal divisions all in a very weakened state. Nearer NÜRNBERG the enemy situation is brighter. His traditional skill in producing divisions out of a hat has not failed him and at least three s.b.V. or Mobilisation Divisions have appeared in the general area South of NÜRNBERG. These represent an effort on the enemy's part to bring some sort of order into the confusion of miscellaneous battalions which has existed over the past three weeks. With their help some coherence has been achieved in the front line both South and North of the Western Czechoslovak tip.

North of CHEMNITZ enemy resistance has been weak and he now appears to be reconciled to an early Allied link up in the area of LEIPZIG and DRESDEN. The front is still desperately thin all the way from LEIPZIG to WITTENBERG. The only arrival of note during the week has been Pz Div CLAUSEWITZ, an ad hoc formation consisting of good quality Pz Training Units which put up a stiff fight for the town of DESSAU and also launched a sharp counter-attack last week in the area N.E. of BRUNSWICK. Otherwise there has been the usual conglomeration of training units and Home Guard battalions, most of which are suffering heavily, particularly when engaged in open country. In the towns and villages, resistance is usually heavier. A point which has become evident lately is that in the towns the enemy seems to be having difficulties in sorting out the chain of command as between Army and Party. When the Party prevails, resistance tends to be tougher and the enemy's readiness to surrender less apparent. In the area behind the Central sector of the front, the enemy pocket in the HARZ Mountains has been eliminated yielding a good prize in the form of 50,000 PW and the Commander of 11 S.S. Pz Army which arrived in the West from the Eastern Front only a month ago.

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In the North the enemy has continued to offer stubborn resistance before the North Sea ports. It is to be expected that he will try to hold these as fortresses, with the aid of newly mobilised naval units. Nor is the picture greatly different in HOLLAND. Here the incorporation of Coast Defence and Marine units has so far produced six nominal new divisions. German resistance is heavy and the enemy has a powerful weapon at his disposal in the shape of flooding. He has already breached the ZUIDER ZEE causeway, and it lies within his capabilities to flood virtually the whole of HOLLAND still remaining to him apart from a narrow coastal strip.

The enemy must this week expect a link-up between the Western Allies and the Soviet forces in the general area S.E. of LEIPZIG. When this has occurred, he is likely to hold for the time being in the South a front running

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North of GERMUTZ enemy resistance has been weak and he now appears to be reconciled to an early Allied link up in the area of LEIPZIG and DRESDEN. The front is still desperately thin all the way from LEIPZIG to WITTENBERG. The only arrival of note during the week has been Pz Div GROSSDEUTZ, an ad hoc formation consisting of good quality Pz Training Units which put up a stiff fight for the town of DESSAU and also launched a sharp counter-attack last week in the area N.E. of BRUNSWICK. Otherwise there has been the usual conglomeration of training units and Home Guard battalions, most of which are suffering heavily, particularly when engaged in open country. In the towns and villages, resistance is usually heavier. A point which has become evident lately is that in the towns the enemy seems to be having difficulties in sorting out the chain of commands between Army and Party. When the Party prevails, resistance tends to be tougher and the enemy's readiness to surrender less apparent. In the area behind the Central sector of the front, the enemy pocket in the HARZ Mountains has been eliminated yielding a good prize in the form of 30,000 PW and the Commander of 11 U.S. Pz Army which arrived in the West from the Eastern Front only a month ago.

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The enemy must this week expect a link-up between the Western Allies and the Soviet forces in the general area S.E. of LEIPZIG. When this has occurred, he is likely to hold for the time being in the South a front running along the Northern frontier of CZECHOSLOVAKIA thence Southwestwards covering MUNICH down to the DANUBE. The state of the frontier defences built by the Czechs in the pre-MUNICH days is not known but they may still be in good enough condition to enable the enemy to fight a delaying action. The crucial sector is, however, that between the Eastern tip of CZECHOSLOVAKIA and the DANUBE. Here the enemy line is still not being held, and here it must be held, for he cannot afford to see another Allied link-up in the LINZ area in the immediate future. More likely then to see a determined effort on the part of KESSELRING to halt the Allied advance on Army Group C's front before it draws much nearer to the Redoubt area. He may even be able for this purpose to make some call on the resources of Army Group South whose front has for the time being been stabilised.

The reduction in the past week of the enemy pockets on both sides of the GIRONDE estuary has drawn attention once more to the existence of the various fortress ports of FRANCE which are still in enemy hands. Throughout the

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winter the Germans have held five pockets, four of which cover the ports of DUNKIRK, LORIENT, ST. NAZAIRE and LA ROCHELLE, while the fifth, now eliminated, controlled both banks of the GIRONDE estuary covering the port of BORDEAUX. DUNKIRK, whose docks are largely destroyed, is held by a garrison now estimated at 10,000 (two thirds its original strength) and its defences include dense minefields and extensive flooding. The garrison lives on very short rations - 250 Kg of bread daily with a little pulse and occasionally a little horse-flesh; but fortunately the town's civilian population was evacuated by agreement before the winter.

At the submarine base of LORIENT, on area some 230 Kms wide and 12 Kms deep and including the ISLE DE GROIX is defended by a well organised garrison of 25,000 men collected by Arty General FAHRMBACHER (formerly commander of the REST garrison) from troops dispersed during the NORMANDY campaign as well as from ... units, marines and submarine crews. Morale and supplies are excellent, while 500 arty pieces provide a formidable defence against attack from land, sea or air.

Between the LORIENT pocket and the neighbouring pocket of ST. NAZAIRE sea communications are still maintained under cover of the CP batteries on the ISLE DE GROIX and BELLE ISLE. The latter island is part of the ST. NAZAIRE pocket which measures on the mainland some 60 Kms wide by 45 Kms deep. But the perimeter is less definitely marked than that of the LORIENT pocket and the investment looser. The garrison, some 30,000 strong, has been able to make several forays to collect food from the surrounding country; and supplies appear plentiful. Evacuation of the sick and wounded among the civilian population, and of the aged and young, has taken place on several occasions under the auspices of the Red Cross.

The LA ROCHELLE pocket extends for about 20 Kms between the MARAIS and the GIRONDE and includes the islands of RE, OLERON and AIX. Its garrison has been continuously on the defensive and many attempts have been made by both sides to negotiate an armistice but they have failed owing to the Germans' unwillingness to surrender their arms to the F.F.I., and their fear of reprisals at home. Meanwhile the VICHY appointed Prefect of LA ROCHELLE is retained in office by the Germans and acts as intermediary between the besieged and besieging forces in their negotiations for civilian supplies and evacuation.

The fifth pocket, liberated by French forces early this month occupied the area between ROYAN and ROYAN on the North bank of the mouth of the GIRONDE estuary and the PTE DE GRAVE on the South bank. It was held by a garrison of 10,000 men, whose positions north of the estuary were defended by a system of concrete pillboxes and bunkers and on the South by an anti-tank ditch running right across the PTE DE GRAVE. There were also strong A.A. defences. The elimination of this garrison which had been ordered to hold out to the last opens to the Allies the only intact French port and one capable of handling a very large volum of supplies at a cost of 45 francs per ton as against 170 francs per ton at MARSEILLES. It should be easy to ease the French supply situation.

4. THE NATIONAL REDOUT

Reports received on the National Redoubt during the

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Between the LORIENT pocket and the neighbouring pocket of ST. NAZAIRE sea communications are still maintained under cover of the CD batteries on the ISLE DE CROIX and BELLE ISLE. The latter island is part of the ST. NAZAIRE pocket which measures on the mainland some 60 Kms wide by 45 Kms deep. But the perimeter is less defensively marked than that of the LORIENT pocket and the investment lesser. The garrison, some 30,000 strong, has been able to make several forays to collect food from the surrounding country; and supplies appear plentiful. Evacuation of the sick and wounded among the civilian population, and of the aged and young, has taken place on several occasions under the auspices of the Red Cross.

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4. THE NATIONAL REDOUBT

Reports received on the National Redoubt during the past week indicate a continued build up of dumps and supplies mainly in the SALZBURG and INNSBRUCK (C.58) areas. Recent reports lay more emphasis on activity in the region of the Swiss frontier South of INNSBRUCK than on fresh developments around SALZBURG, possibly because enemy preparations in the latter region are nearer completion. Reports on the INNSBRUCK sector mention the requisition of hotels and large buildings, and the utilisation of spinning mills for food depots.

A report from 12 Army Group indicates that elements of OKH may have arrived in the SALZBURG area, while an interesting message from SWITZERLAND quotes an alleged order of C in C Home Army dated 1 March that 45% of all recruits from Wehrkreis V (STUTTGART) are to be sent to AUSTRIA. These recruits are said to be receiving special training.

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A limited amount of PR is now available on the Redoubt, but shows no major defensive activity. Some 69 cave and tunnel entrances in the VOR.[illegible], the Upper Inn Valley and the SALZK.[illegible] between [illegible] (Z 90) and [illegible] ISCHL (V 51) were covered during the first ten days of April. All but 13 showed varying degrees of activity which might be consistent with continued ground reports of underground installations.

The announcement that HITLER and GOERING are still in [illegible] raises several questions regarding the enemy's plans in the Redoubt. If the Führer in fact does choose to stay in the capital to the end (which, be it noted, he has not promised to do), the Redoubt would be, to say the least, a poorer place without him, and much of the enthusiasm of its future occupants is likely to diminish if they have to fight there without the inspiration of the Führer's presence. It is significant that the Nazi public press and radio announcements have never made any reference to continued resistance in the Redoubt, while all reports received have laid constant emphasis on the SS nature of the Redoubt. HIMMLER is apparently not in [illegible] - HITLER and GOERING are. In these circumstances consideration should be given to the possibility that the Führer is either unaware of or does not associate himself with the Redoubt; that in fact the scheme in so far as it exists at all is one sponsored and fostered by HIMMLER who hopes to continue his resistance there even if all around him fall.

5. EASTERN FRONT

EASTERN GERMANY

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The resumption of the Russian offensive across the ODER found the Germans in rivals better shape to resist it than they were two months ago when ZHUKOV came to a halt on the great river obstacle before BERLIN. Between STETTIN and BERLIN, the Russians have established bridgeheads in the area of [illegible] but have not exploited them. The main Soviet offensive has developed in two major thrusts. The 3rd White Russian Army Group attacked due west along all roads to BERLIN between FRANKFURT and SCHWEDT; its left neighbour, the 1st Ukrainian Army Group, developed its offensive in the form of a right hook which was launched initially Westwards towards [illegible] and then swung Northwards to take contact with ZHUKOV's forces in the area S.E. of BERLIN. A very grave situation has thus arisen for the enemy. In the North his capital city has been encircled. On the Russian progress in BERLIN's Eastern suburbs has been reasonably swift, and there are indications that the enemy is concerned at the tendency of the civilian populace to hang out white flags whenever they deem the Russians to be near. Nevertheless, the enemy has had time to prepare defences in the capital, and the example of [illegible] has shown just how prolonged and difficult a task the Russians may have ahead of them. A factor of some importance is the attitude which the Nazi leaders are likely to adopt. [illegible] has publicly announced his intention of staying in BERLIN and HITLER according to an official spokesman is still in the capital, but we have no guarantee that he will stay there. Meanwhile in Central GERMANY an early link-up between Soviet and American forces is imminent.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA

There are indications that the enemy is going to put up a stiff fight to defend DRESDEN and BRNO. According to the German radio HITLER regards the defence of both BERLIN and PRAGUE as vital for the continued existence of GERMANY, and the present German attitude in the field is consistent with this attitude. In the North, the natural protection of the SUDETEN Mountains has for many months prevented any Soviet incursion into Czechoslovak soil and the Russians still stand far from the frontier. To the East, Army Group Centre is still withdrawing, but in its own time and without losing grip of the situation. It was suggested last week an eventual withdrawal behind the MORAVSKA OSTRAVA corridor may be envisaged by the enemy; this however will still leave the rest of CZECHO. and MORAVIA in his hands. From the South the picture of enemy dispositions shows a determination to block the Russians on a line running S.W. from BRNO to the DANUBE, thus preventing any Soviet exploitation along the VIENNA-PRAGUE axis.

....between BRNO and....

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Between TREBIC and the DANUBE there are probably six Panzer divisions and as many Infantry divisions. These are believed to include one Panzer division transferred from Army Group Centre. With this force the enemy has succeeded in effecting a temporary stabilisation of the front North of the DANUBE. In the DANUBE Valley the threat to communications between CZECHOSLOVAKIA and BAVARIA has for the time being diminished, now that the enemy has been able to hold the Soviets at ST. POELTEN. A similar attempt to prevent Allied incursion into CZECHOSLOVAKIA and to keep open communications Southwards from PRAGUE is apparent on the Western Front. One reason for this anxiety to hold CZECHOSLOVAKIA may be a desire to retain the SKODA works in the PILSEN area. It is not known to what extent these are still functioning. However, heavy traffic Southwards along lines South from PRAGUE during the past week may imply the removal of supplies and industrial equipment from the Czechoslovak armaments industry to AUSTRIA. Until their intentions in this respect have been carried out the Germans are likely to make determined efforts to prevent an Allied breakthrough into CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

There has been little fresh from AUSTRIA. A captured map shows that Army Group South's right boundary now stretches down to the DRAVA river. On its right is 2 Pz Army on a sector between the DRAVA and MURA rivers, 6 Army is between the RABA and MUR rivers and 6 SS Pz Army between the MUR and the DANUBE. 8 Army holds the front from the DANUBE to the boundary between Army Groups South and Centre in the area East of BRNO. No further details are available regarding the progress of defences between MARBURG and GRAZ but North of the DANUBE some defences have been seen between KREMS (R 80) and HORN (R 83), which might conceivably form part of a defence line running North from GRAZ. The Russians this week have reported the identification of 719 Inf Div (from N.W. FRANCE) in the Southeastern area, but so far give no more detailed location. In view of the enemy's attempts to thicken up 2 Pz Army with infantry and mountain divisions in the Alpine foothills East of GRAZ, he may have decided to employ it in that area.

YUGOSLAVIA

The Yugoslav offensive in Western CROATIA has made further progress this week. On the mainland the enemy has been forced back along the coast to the immediate approaches to FIUME. SUSAK, the Eastern suburb of FIUME, is in Yugoslav hands, and demolitions are reported in the FIUME port area. These operations, now in their fifth week, are proving a serious drain on the enemy's resources. Two Germano-Croat Divs have almost ceased to exist as effective fighting formations. 237 Inf and 104 Jg Divs which were brought up to take their place have been heavily engaged and are alone unable to check the Yugoslavs. A report this week says that another enemy formation is due to arrive shortly in the area. This seems likely. It is known that 91 Corps H.Q. from the SYRMIA has been transferred to CROATIA and it is unlikely to come alone.

From the rest of YUGOSLAVIA, the story is of a rapid and relatively unhindered enemy withdrawal from most running of the SKOPLJE-SARAJEVO salient. It is now three weeks since SARAJEVO was evacuated and within another week the whole enemy

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From the rest of YUGOSLAVIA, the story is of a rapid and relatively unhindered enemy withdrawal from what remains of the SARAJEVO - SARAJEVO salient. It is now three weeks since SARAJEVO was evacuated and within another week the whole enemy salient West of a line from VISEGRAD to the SAVA river should be eliminated. On the whole the enemy may feel well satisfied with the success of his withdrawal movement. Casualties have been relatively light and even 369 Germano-Croat Division has been saved from complete disintegration by the precaution of putting it at the head and not the rail of the withdrawing column. It may not have lived to fight another day, but at least it has lived.

J.R. Rawes Lt Col

for C.E.R. WILSON,
MAJ-GEN, G.S.
A.C. OF S, G-2.

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APPENDIX "A" to 15 ARMY
GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
NO 91 of 24 APR 1945.

Despite the enemy's feverish repair activity, the BRENNER railway has remained blocked to through trains for another seven days. Notwithstanding well-dispersed interdictions, the rolling stock has continued to be moderately active with most of the movement seen to be North of BOLZANO. This activity does not reflect through traffic, but it is probably localised stock movements and/or transhipment. Each of the three lines leading towards Central GERMANY from INNSBRUCK is blocked by a badly damaged bridge.

In N.E. ITALY the main TREVISO-UDINE line, on which there appears to have been very little movement, had by the end of the week been repaired to a point where only one bridge blocked through traffic. The bridges at SACILE (S 8407) and PORDENONE (S 9909) have now been repaired to a point where they could be made "operational at will", leaving NERVESA bridge (S 6493) as the only block on this line; West of TREVISO, however, all bridges over the BRENTA river are out. The two main Southerly routes remain well interdicted with traffic appearing to be almost stagnant.

The TARVISIO frontier route remains interdicted by virtue of three badly damaged bridges and although activity continues to be evident, no definite signs of troop movement have been seen since around 20 April. Ground sources report that the formation picked up by 2R some time ago moving out of N.E. ITALY was 710 Inf Div, and this division has in fact been identified on the Russian front. No statement concerning activity on the interdicted PREDIL/RAIBL or POSTUMIA routes is possible owing to lack of 2R: however, it is safe to assume that small scale movement continues. Work on the rail diversion by-passing the destroyed DOBROVNIC Viaduct (D 2303) is nearing completion, and the POSTUMIA route might thus be re-opened during the next week barring further attacks. In the PO plain North of the river there was little overall clearage except for repair of a bridge near MANTUA and the return of LEGNAGO bridge over the ADIGE on the POSTUMIA-LEGNAGO stretch to night operational status. (For status of enemy railways as of 25 April see attached map).

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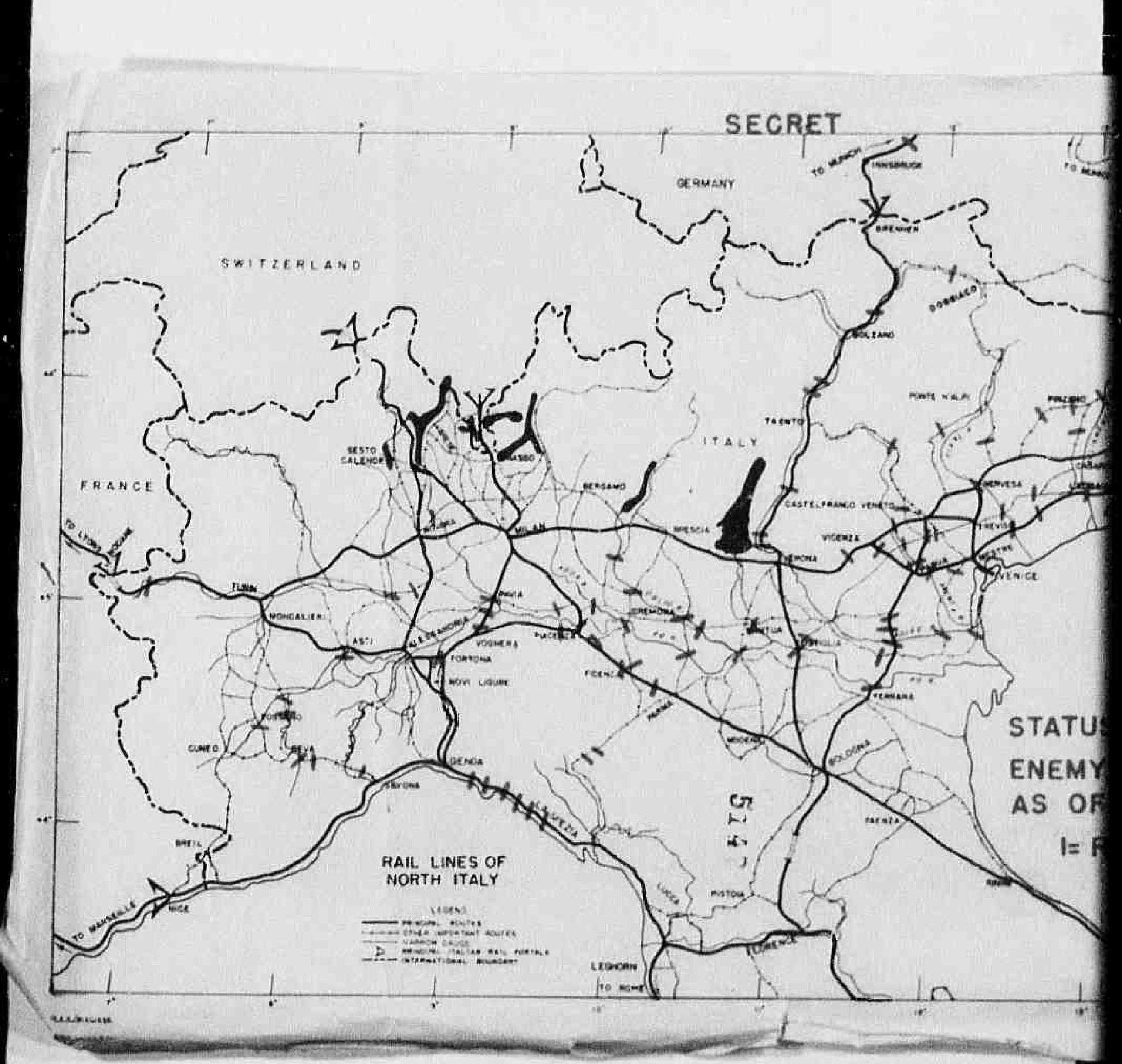

RAIL LINES OF
NORTH ITALY

LEGEND
PRINCIPAL ROUTES
OTHER IMPORTANT ROUTES
NARROW GAUGE
PRINCIPAL ITALIAN RAIL YARDS
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY

STATUS
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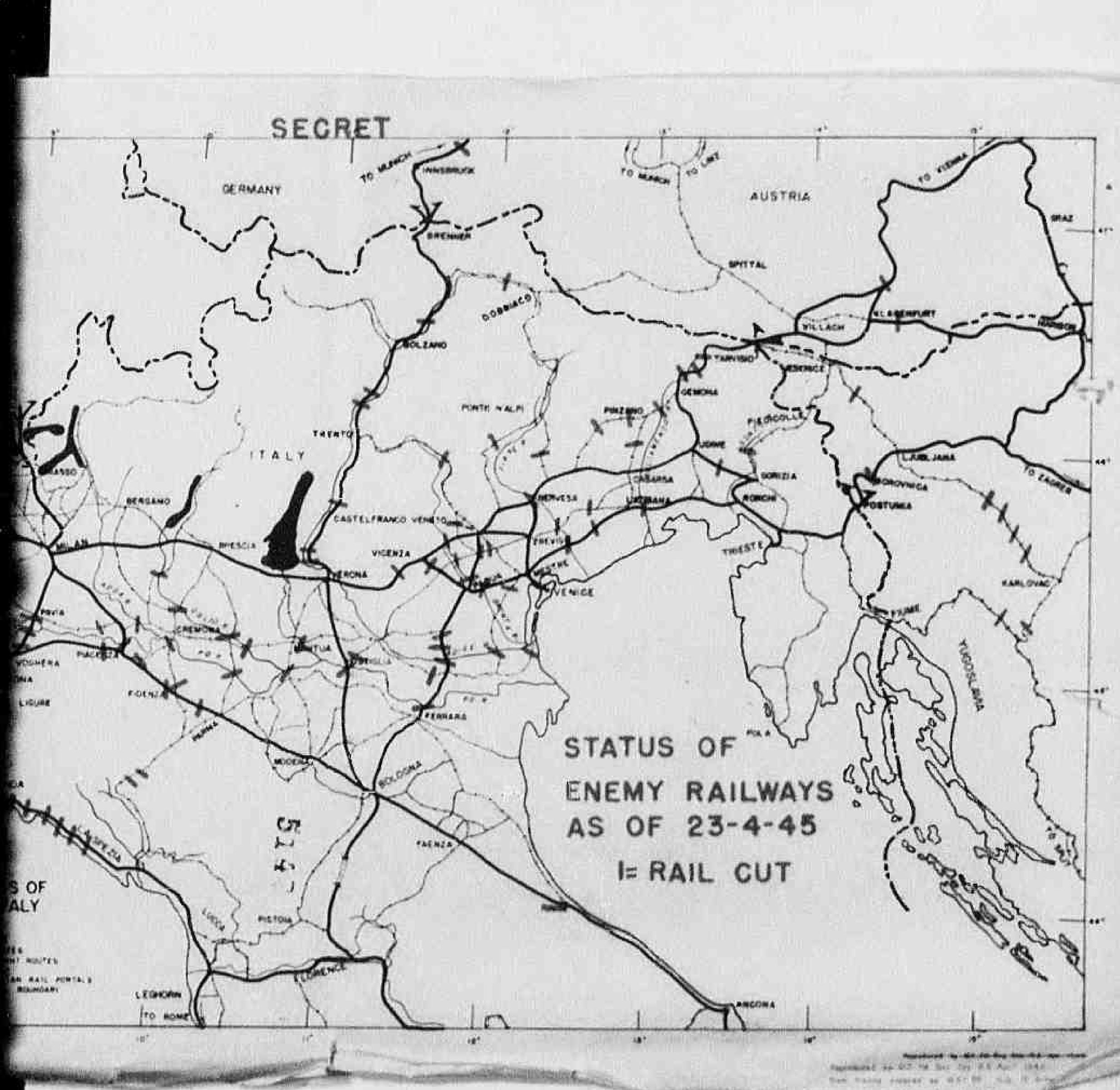

To Sec (GOC / GS / G1 / G1(Ops)) 10 Corps

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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 90

OF 17 APRIL, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

GENERAL

The Allied spring offensive has started inauspiciously for Army Group C. Since the beginning of the month VIETINGHOFF, confirmed by a captured document as successor to KESSELRING as C in C South West, has lost close on 10,000 prisoners (6,000 of whom have fallen to 8 Army in the last eight days), at least four of his divisions have been badly cut up (148, 42 Jaeger, 98 and 362) and he has been forced to dig into his meagre reserve and commit both 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divisions. At the time of going to press 10 Army is being pushed relentlessly back to the IDICE river line while on the 14 Army front after two days of very stubborn fighting the enemy suddenly cracked yesterday on the right wing of 94 Div and we have now advanced rapidly along the mountain ridge West of the RENO to capture M. MOSCOSO L 6955. On the West coast what started out as a minor attack has developed into a very successful operation leading to the capture of CARRARA, and we are still on the move. Only immediately South of BOLOGNA where an attack yesterday made very little progress, has the enemy any solid grounds for satisfaction. Nor can the successful development of operations for the Allies be ascribed to any sudden break in enemy morale, due to the disaster on the Western Front: the enemy has fought hard and at times desperately and the only difference between his fighting spirit today and that of last May is that when cut off or threatened with being cut off the German soldier surrenders more easily. War weariness and a sense of the futility of the struggle against overwhelming material superiority lead him to give in more readily, but it would be dangerous to see in this any sign of an imminent collapse in morale. As has been pointed out so often the divisions in ITALY represent some of the best troops left in the German Army, and while they have weapons and ammunition to fire we must expect no easy victory. They are likely to fight with what KESSELRING in his last Order of the Day called the "old unbowed bearing of the German troops in ITALY".

EIGHTH ARMY MAIN FRONT

Our attack on the SENIO came as no surprise to the enemy. The troops in 76 Pz and 1 Para Corps had been alerted since the beginning of the month, and a renewal of the offensive from the G.SENIO D'ALMO sector was expected. On both coastal flanks the anti-invasion scare has been in full swing: all troops along the Ligurian coast were alerted in the first week of April, and in the Northern Adriatic the enemy was so sensitive that he considered it necessary to move 29 P.G. Div North across the PO into the FERRARA area. The weight of our attack, preceded by carpet bombing bombing

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Jaeger, 90 and 362), and he has been forced to dig into his meagre reserve and commit both 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divisions. At the time of going to press 10 Army is being pushed relentlessly back to the IRIGNI river line while on the 14 Army front after two days of very stubborn fighting the enemy suddenly cracked yesterday on the right wing of 94 Div and we have now advanced rapidly along the mountain ridge West of the SENIO to capture M. MORSONO L 6935. On the West coast what started out as a minor attack has developed into a very successful operation leading to the capture of CAPRARA, and we are still on the move. Only immediately South of BOLOGNA where an attack yesterday made very little progress, has the enemy any solid grounds for satisfaction. Nor can the successful development of operations for the Allies be ascribed to any sudden break in enemy morale, due to the disaster on the Western Front: the enemy has fought hard and at times desperately and the only difference between his fighting spirit today and that of last May is that when cut off or threatened with being cut off the German soldier surrenders more easily. War weariness and a sense of the futility of the struggle against overwhelming material superiority lead him to give in more readily, but it would be dangerous to see in this any sign of an imminent collapse in morale. As has been pointed out so often the divisions in ITALY represent some of the best troops left in the German Army, and while they have weapons and ammunition to fire we must expect no easy victory. They are likely to fight with what KESSELRING in his last Order of the Day called the "old unbowed bearing of the German troops in ITALY".

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bulge South of IMOLA the enemy began to withdraw as early as the night 10/11th. This was a notable step because a year ago the parachutists would certainly have held on to their positions considerably longer and not withdrawn till the last moment. But on this occasion the enemy changed his policy and the reason is clear - by pulling back in the bulge the enemy could find much needed reinforcement for the main battle area. That is in effect what happened and 278 Div was squeezed out between 1 and 4 Para Divs and by the evening of the 12th was already largely in reserve. By the 14th it was again in the line having relieved 98 Div astride the MEDICINA-MASSA LOMBARDA railway opposite the bridgeheads we had by then seized over the SILLARO river. Withdrawal to the SILLARO, carried out on the 13th, had been forced on the enemy by his failure to drive in our bridgeheads over the SANTERNO: in the resulting confusion we were able to get a tenuous foothold on the West bank of the SILLARO. Even the arrival of a fresh formation (278 Div) failed to reduce our hold and bitter counter-attacks against our bridgeheads all morning on the 14th met with no more success than previous attempts to drive us back over the SANTERNO.

THE ARGENTA GAP

Meantime at the Northern end of the line amphibious operations across the COMACCHIO Lake were started on the 11th, where we landed near MENATE M 4158 and quickly pushed inland to capture some 200 PW from 42 Jaeger Div. At this time the enemy was already withdrawing voluntarily from the ALFONSINE sector. Starting on the 10th 42 Div began to pull back its forces into the ARGENTA Gap, the name given to the narrow strip of land astride Route 16, with flooded areas to East and West. 42 Div offered stubborn resistance in this withdrawal, especially at FILO M 3557, while troops of the division were engaged in heavy fighting for the CANDO bridge M 3362 near which we made another landing on the 15th. The fighting for this bridge continued for three days and it was not captured till early on the 17th. It was near here that the first prisoners were taken from 29 P.G. Div on the 15th. All six infantry battalions of this division have now been identified in the ARGENTA Gap, as well as the Recce Unit. It is known from prisoners' statements that I Bn 15 P.G.R. did not leave the CANDO area till the evening of the 11th while other units of the division are believed to have come from further North-east. The division has taken over the ARGENTA area allowing at least part of the battered 42 Div (it has lost 1,400 prisoners) to join 362 Div in the marshy ground West of Route 16. Against stubborn opposition we have made good progress in the Gap. ARGENTA was captured tonight and our troops have crossed the MARINA Canal. We are now up against the Genghis Khan position at its Northeastern extremity and the enemy cannot fail to be anxious lest we should break through at this point towards FERRARA, thus threatening all his forces South of the PO. 29 P.G. Div is likely therefore to get assistance from 42 Div and if needed from one of the divisions refitting (98 Div or 26 Pz).

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to reduce our hold and bitter counter-attacks against our bridgeheads all morning on the 11th met with no more success than previous attempts to drive us back over the SANGRO.

THE ARGENTA GAP

Meantime at the Northern end of the line amphibious operations across the COMACCHIO Lake were started on the 11th, where we landed near MENATE M 4156 and quickly pushed inland to capture some 200 PW from 42 Jaeger Div. At this time the enemy was already withdrawing voluntarily from the ALFONSINE sector. Starting on the 12th 42 Div began to pull back its forces into the ARGENTA Gap, the name given to the narrow strip of land astride Route 16, with flooded areas to East and West. 42 Div offered stubborn resistance in this withdrawal, especially at FILO M 3557, while troops of the division were engaged in heavy fighting for the BANDO bridge M 3362 near which we made another landing on the 13th. The fighting for this bridge continued for three days and it was not captured till early on the 17th. It was near here that the first prisoners were taken from 29 P.G. Div on the 13th. All six infantry battalions of this division have now been identified in the ARGENTA Gap, as well as the Recce Unit. It is known from prisoners' statements that I Bn 15 P.G.R. did not leave the BANDO area till the evening of the 11th while other units of the division are believed to have come from further North-east. The division has taken over the ARGENTA area allowing at least part of the battered 42 Div (it has lost 1,400 prisoners) to join 362 Div in the marshy ground West of Route 16. Against stubborn opposition we have made good progress in the Gap. ARGENTA was captured tonight and our troops have crossed the MARINO Canal. We are now up against the Genghis Khan position at its Northeastern extremity and the enemy cannot fail to be anxious lest we should break through at this point towards FERRARA, thus threatening all his forces South of the PO. 29 P.G. Div is likely therefore to get assistance from 42 Div and if needed from one of the divisions refitting (98 Div or 26 Pz).

THE IDICE LINE

Immediately West of Route 16 is an area of floods, extending as far over as the 10 Bunting and garrisoned at present by 362 Div and elements of 42 Div - both divisions badly knocked about but still able to hold a sector which is unlikely to see heavy fighting. From MEZZOLARA M 0758 to Route 9 the Genghis Khan line follows the IDICE River and defences have been well developed. Having been pushed back off the SILLARO and across the MEDICINA Canal (in the process of which the infantry of 26 Pz Div were squeezed out into reserve between 278 Div and 4 Para) the enemy is tonight back on the GAILLA, River from the marshes South to Route 9. Although the enemy will continue to offer stubborn resistance on the canals forward of the IDICE it is doubtful if he can now make a determined stand till he reaches the IDICE itself. To hold the line between MEZZOLARA and Route 9

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...S.2. of BOLOGNA.....

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S.E. of BOLOGNA he will have 278 Div (at the moment being cut up and having already lost 600 prisoners), 4 Para Div, 1 Para Div and 305 Div, the latter anchoring the XIVCE position on to the defences South of BOLOGNA. The only other reserve available is either 98 Inf or 26 Pz Div so that the enemy will have none too many troops to hold this last line covering the city. True, he has two untouched Parachutist Divisions, but both have recently had to give up fairly large drafts of trained personnel, which will inevitably affect to some extent their fighting quality.

FIFTH ARMY MAIN FRONT

South of BOLOGNA there has been little change. 305 Div has been unaffected by the offensive, but to its West 65 Div was involved in an attack launched by us yesterday morning. It resisted very strongly and we made only small gains. On its right it is now known that 157 Mtn Div has been renumbered 8 Mtn Div for some reason best known to the German Command. Only the Western wing of the division has so far been drawn into the battle, where we have captured H. SOLE L 7829 and H. RUSICI L 8428 from 296 G.R. after encountering very extensive minefields. Early on the 14th, 5 Army attacked North from CASTEL D'ALANO. Heavy opposition was encountered all day from 334 Div but by the evening we had pushed forward 2 Kms, while on the 94 Div front we had entered the Southern outskirts of VEDUTO. To the West 114 Div was driven out of MONTESE. All the following day very bitter fighting raged with 334 Div and 94 Div, with heavy casualties to both sides. But on the 16th the right wing of 94 Div collapsed and capturing TORE L 6550 we advanced rapidly N.W. to reach H. BERCOSO L 6935 early next morning. More prisoners were taken from 190 Recce Unit, and later in the day II Bn 361 P.G.R. was identified some 3,000 yards to the West at S. PROSPERO L 6634. Despite the deteriorating situation West of BOLOGNA the enemy had stolidly refused to move 90 P.G. Division from the area MEDICINA-BUDRIO, where it had been placed in evident anticipation of a renewal of the 5 Army attack. In view of the heavy losses suffered by 334 and 94 Divs it is not surprising therefore that 90 P.G. should move down to assist, apparently coming into the line between the two of them. Operations on this front have now resulted in the capture of VEDUTO and progress has been made up the West bank of the RENO as far as the 30 Northing, while striking N.W. from TORE Allied troops are tonight reported to have reached H. TRAMONTO L 7434. N.W. of CASTEL D'ALANO 334 Div still holds H. MONTETTI L 6029 where 754 G.R., the Westernmost Regt has launched attack. In the MONTESE area there has been little further activity. The enemy now has both 232 and 114 Divs sitting in the mountains off the main axis of our attack, and since reinforcements will be badly needed soon between the SANTERNO and RENO rivers, we may expect to see some thinning out from their sectors West of H. BELVEDERE. 721 Jaeger Regt (114 Div) which has been resting for a month may well reappear South of CASTEL FRANCO. Total prisoners in the 5 Army attack so far is believed to be about 2,000.

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WEST COAST

On the West coast we have now captured some 1,400 prisoners since 5 April when operations started. On the 11th Partisans captured CARRARA and our troops advancing from MASSA linked up with them the same day. Since then enemy resistance has been sorely, despite the despatch of a battalion of 90 P.G. Div (I Bn 361 P.G.R.) which came down to counter-attack on 13 April and lost some 40 prisoners. We are now some 8 - 10 Kms beyond CARRARA due East of SARZANA and just short of FOSDINOVO F 0112; further inland we are on TORNIOLO F 0514. 148 Div has taken a bad knock, despite the maintenance of various units - the M.G. Bn Nasselring 1, 4 High Mtn Bn, I Bn 361 P.G.R., and I Bn 286 G.R. (brought from the SERCHIO Valley). There are now signs that the Italians in the SERCHIO Valley are beginning to thin out, and their front may well be pulled back to conform with the present line on the coast.

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ENEMY RESERVES

The enemy situation is becoming critical. Within eight days of the start of the Allied offensive both reserve divisions have been committed and in exchange the enemy has only managed to withdraw from the line one battered division (98 Div) and one wounded division (26 Pz). Both are held at the moment opposite 8 Army, where they are probably absorbing replacements from the divisional replacement battalions which were believed to be up to strength before the battle. They are unlikely then to be out of the line for long. Apart from divisional replacement units there appears to be no immediate sign of any further reinforcement for the main front. Both 5 Mtn and 34 Divs are probably fully occupied in Western ITALY, particularly following the start of a French offensive over the Alps, and in N.E. ITALY there are only 155 Div and 710 Div available. Fear of an Allied landing must retain at least one there, while recent photo cover has noted troop movement over the TARVISIO route from the UKRNE Plain so that it is possible that either or both of these divisions are being called on to provide units for the Austrian front. In other words, 8 Army has to be held on the ISONZO with the enemy's present resources, and now that 90 P.G. Div has been committed West of BOLOGNA, the enemy can only draw on units from unaffected parts of the line to hold off 5 Army from the Plain.

ENEMY POLICY

If VIETINGHOFF persists in his present policy of trying to wear down our attacks he must accept heavy losses with the prospect, should he fail to halt us, of being so crippled as to be unable to withdraw his armies intact across the PO. The alternative is to decide now, for time is short, on a fighting withdrawal to the PO. Such a decision would be contrary to previous policy, and its implementation will depend primarily on whether the German Command merely intends to stand and fight to the last man, or whether it will disregard prestige (which could not matter less at this stage of the war) and try to withdraw Army Group C North of the PO, possibly with an eye to employing it in the Redoubt. Supply problems and petrol shortage may influence the decision, especially if we are to believe a normally reliable ground source that the enemy has only sufficient petrol to get 10 and 14 Armies to VERONA and Army Liguria to BRESCIA. Other agents report several high powered meetings early this month, at one of which, attended by VIETINGHOFF and MUSSOLINI, it was decided to withdraw to the ADIGE. This report is completely without confirmation from other sources but we cannot ignore it entirely as a withdrawal is an enemy capability. At present the enemy's policy continues to be one of fighting hard for every feature and every delaying position. The next few days should show whether he intends to alter that policy, or fight it out to the finish.

3 ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

There has been no radical change in the overall rail picture

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there are only 155 Div and 710 Div available. Fear of an Allied landing must retain at least one there, while recent photo cover has noted troop movement over the TARVISIO route from the UDINE Plain so that it is possible that either or both of these divisions are being called on to provide units for the Austrian front. In other words, 8 Army has to be held on the ISONZO with the enemy's present resources, and now that 90 P.G. Div has been committed West of BOLOGNA the enemy can only draw on units from unaffected parts of the line to hold off 5 Army from the Plain.

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2 ENEMY RAILWAYS AND COMMUNICATIONS

There has been no radical change in the overall rail picture in enemy occupied ITALY during the past week. Although close support targets in connection with the ground offensive have greatly reduced the medium and fighter bomber effort on the railways, they have by no means been neglected, especially in the NE and along the BRENNER where the heavy bombers have done good work.

The BRENNER line remains well blocked South of BOLZANO and the three NS routes between the PISA - VICENZA area and UDINE continue to be heavily interdicted. The three NE frontier routes are also closed to through traffic. (For the status of enemy railways as of 16 April see map attached.) Traffic on the BRENNER line has been normal this week and though transhipment is still necessary at several points between VERONA and BOLZANO, through traffic has been possible on most days from BOLZANO North. In the NE there has been an exceptional amount of traffic on the UDINE - TARVISIO

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line and FR reveals strong indications of a movement of troops Northwards from the UDINE area, with transhipment taking place at the three damaged bridges about half-way between UDINE and TARVISIO. Although it is as yet too early to make any definite statement as to what is moving, it would appear to be a fairly large formation, possibly as much as a division.

All permanent road and rail bridges over the river PO East of PAVIA remain impassable. Night activity has been noted at pontoon bridge and ferry sites, but only one of the four pontoon bridges heretofore seen to be operating during the past week, and no pronounced increase in the volume of traffic crossing the river has been noted. However, night PR is of necessity limited in its scope and 29 P.G. Div was able to cross undetected. Some increase in traffic has undoubtedly occurred, but to what extent it is impossible to state. In any event it is apparent that so far the enemy has not been forced to use the river crossings during the hours of daylight to any appreciable extent.

With successful attacks on MT substitute fuel resources and the continued blocking of the railway routes from the REICH, shortage of fuel continues to be the enemy's main supply trouble, and now that the battle necessitates a heavier expenditure and, consequently a large demand for ammunition by the forward troops, the position is undoubtedly deteriorating. On 10 April a ground source reported that in the case of a general withdrawal fuel stocks were then only enough to take 10 and 14 Armies' vehicles as far as VERONA and those of Army LIGURIA to BRESCIA. This report is considered reasonable, and the estimate presumably made no allowance for fighting which might occur meanwhile.

Second only to the shortage of fuel is the shortage of coal. Practically no coal is produced in Northern ITALY, and except for a small amount from ISTRIA, all the coal required by both the German armies and the Italian industries and railways has to be imported from the REICH. Up to 1 March the majority of this coal supply was directed through SWITZERLAND; however on or about that date the Swiss Government placed an embargo on the passage [illegible] 5139 and by mid-March it was reported that only one fifth of the daily requirements were reaching ITALY. Coal stocks in the country were at that time reported to be sufficient for 30 to 40 days and it is probable that they are now much lower. In any event it is known that railway steam engines have been forced to burn wood.

Two reports have lately been received to the effect that all the ammunition for the German armies on this front is now being manufactured in ITALY, and, whilst this is not believed to be correct, it is thought that the enemy has for some time been making use of Italian factories and filling plants for certain types of ammunition. These have been attacked from time to time. On 14th April the ammunition factories at AVIGLIANO (N 8131), SPILAMBERTO (O 1526), MONCRETA (G 5019) and MEBUZZA (G 5206) were attacked by heavy bombers with excellent results, whilst on 10 April a shell filling plant at [illegible]

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Enemy supply difficulties are not confined to ammunition and fuel nor to this theatre. A captured order dated 10 Feb of 47 Volksgrenadier Div (now fighting in South GERMANY) shows that rations and clothing have been in short supply on the Western Front. Extracts from this order appear at Appendix 'A'.

3. WESTERN FRONT

Two new developments have altered the situation in the West this week. One is the growing proximity of the West Front to the East Front

....which has made....

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which has made the transfer of enemy forces from one to the other a relatively simple process: the other, connected with the first, is the division of responsibility between KESSELRING and BUSCH. Both are the direct result of the collapse on the central sector of the Western Front. The picture of enemy resistance has not materially altered during the week. In the main it has changed only in its deterioration. In the South the tenuous coherence of Army Group G's front is breaking. No fresh divisions have been contacted North of the STUTTGART-NÜRNBERG line, and those that are there have been heavily engaged. The greatest weakness is apparent in the NÜRNBERG rather than the STUTTGART area, and we are now fighting in the outskirts of NÜRNBERG. If the enemy has any intention of withdrawing into a National Redoubt in AUSTRIA, it must be a major concern of KESSELRING to keep intact the forces of Army Group G. They alone of the troops in the West can be expected to make any substantial contribution to the Redoubt. It may be of significance that 19 Army, the most Southerly of the German Armies in the West, has recently acquired a new commander in the form of an SS Obergruppenführer - one KNABLEIN by name. Vague reports have been circulating in the past week of heavy movement back to the Austrian area. These so far lack any reliable confirmation from the air.

The centre of the front remains a wide open gap. In the earlier part of last week it looked as if the enemy was trying to build up a front somewhere East of KASSEL, where we identified two Panzer and two Parachute divisions. The attempt was vain. Before this small concentration of forces was able to take any offensive action, 116 Pzs Div in the KASSEL area crumbled, and the enemy concentration was dispersed. Since then the situation on the Central sector has been completely out of hand. Such resistance as has appeared comes from miscellaneous independent battalions of whatever shape or size is currently available. Some fight well - officer or NCO schools can always be relied upon to put up stubborn local resistance. Others less well: the calibre of such units as the Stemmh Battle Group contacted last week is perhaps not all it might be. However until we reached the EDER there was little coherent resistance of any kind. We crossed the great river without undue difficulty but on the East bank the enemy has fought harder. Identifications of units operating East of the river show them to be in the main ad hoc formations operating under the courtesy title of a division. Divisions SCHLIEMANN, WOLFF and VON HUFFEN have been contacted. In view of the proximity of the Western Front to the East these are probably made up in part of rear units servicing the Western Front. Far behind the front Army Group B in the RUHR pocket has already lost over 200,000 PW and appears to be near the end of its resources. The Army Group Commander, Field Marshal MODEL, is reported to have avoided the ignominy which threatened him as a war criminal by taking his own life.

There is still coherent enemy resistance along the front from South of HANNOVER to HOLLAND. Two parachute and elements of four Infantry divisions are in contact and show no disposition to give ground unless forced to. Only between the EMS and the IJSSEL has opposition been relatively weak and in the corridor between the two rivers we have been able

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There is still coherent enemy resistance along the front from South of HANOVER to HOLLAND. Two parachute and elements of four Infantry divisions are in contact and show no disposition to give ground unless forced to. Only between the EMS and the IJSSEL has opposition been relatively weak and in the corridor between the two rivers we have been able to push on to the North sea. Further West, the decision has been taken to retain western HOLLAND as a fortress, and very heavy resistance has been encountered by our forces attacking Westwards over the IJSSEL river. The reorganisation of coast defence units into divisional frameworks mentioned in last week's Summary has now produced at least six new divisions. These represent no increase in real strength, but may represent some increase in the enemy's capabilities for organised resistance.

No official details have yet been received of the new division of command in the West. Field Marshal BUSCH who is reported to have command of the Northern half of the front, commanded Army Group Centre in the East

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until June of last year. The split in the command is certainly in anticipation of an early link up of the Anglo-American and Soviet forces, which would substitute for the present East and West fronts, receding Northern and Southern fronts. The assumption cannot however be excluded that there is a more sinister significance to it than that. With reports of the National Redoubt now being received from all quarters, the choice of an expert in defensive mountain warfare to run the Southern part of the Western Front is ominous. If they are going back to the Redoubt it is time now for the Nazis to make their final arrangements. There is not much future left in the West. Last February, we know from a captured document, the enemy was preparing to set up the 33rd wave of new divisions which was to be ready about the end of May or early June. These will be comprised in the main of the 1928 class. A number of these divisions were setting up in DENMARK and it is significant that many of the miscellaneous battalions recently contacted in the West have come from DENMARK. The implication is that the embryo divisions have been milked of their drafts to meet the requirements of the deepening crisis. It looks unlikely that we shall see any of the 33rd wave. Meanwhile the thinning out from NORWAY continues at the tantalisingly slow pace which Allied anti-shipping strikes have imposed. 199 Inf Div has now started disembarking in DENMARK. It is to be followed according to one report, by 7 Mtn Division. After that there will be ten more divisions to leave at the rate of one a month. Their prospects are not bright.

4. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND GERMANY

Enemy resistance continues on the SAMLAND peninsula, where the port of PILLAU is still in German hands.

Details of operations on the ODER front come so far wholly from enemy reports. According to these, the Russians have attacked on both sides of FRANKFURT AN DER ODER on an 80 mile front between FÜRSTENBERG and SCHWEDT. Fighting is reported at SEELOW, 30 miles east of the ODER and 30 miles from the centre of BERLIN. The two Soviet bridgeheads at KÜSTRIN and LEBUS reported by the enemy over a month ago are said to have joined up near SEELOW.

A captured document has clarified the lay-out of Army groups in the East. LATVIA is the responsibility of Army Group VISTULA, and the East Prussian battle was conducted by Army Group North under the command of Col-Gen REINHARDT formerly commander of 20 Mtn Army in FINLAND. On the main front in GERMANY there are two Army Groups. In the Northern half of the front is Army Group VISTULA under HEINRICI, while further South is Army Group Centre commanded by Field Marshal SCHÖRNER. CZECHOSLOVAKIA and AUSTRIA are the responsibility of Army Group South.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA

While the enemy accelerates his withdrawal from the high terrain of Eastern SLOVAKIA the Soviets appear to be developing their offensive in Southern SLOVAKIA along the Northwesterly axis of the LUDERNBERG - BRNO road

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA

While the enemy accelerates his withdrawal from the high terrain of Eastern SLOVAKIA the Soviets appear to be developing their offensive in Southern SLOVAKIA along the Northwesterly axis of the LUKENIEC - ZENO road and railway. Enemy resistance is so far moderate. Now that the Germans have given up the HIGH TATRA and NIZKE TATRY mountains, the rest of the terrain through which they must withdraw from SLOVAKIA slopes gradually downwards to the MORAVSKA OSTRAVA gap, and is generally less suitable for defence than that which they have abandoned. In view of this, the enemy's plan may now be to pull right back behind the gap to the mountainous terrain of Central MORAVIA, thereby ironing out his Slovak salient and eliminating the danger of a link up between the First and Third Ukrainian Army Groups. Some thinning out of the German forces in SLOVAKIA is already in progress and 3 Mtn Div formerly in the Slovak region has recently been transferred to Southern AUSTRIA.

...In AUSTRIA, the.....

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In AUSTRIA, the reduction of VIENNA was accomplished rather more easily than had been expected. While there is no evidence of any serious demoralisation on the part of the German armed forces, it seems clear from all reports that the Austrian civilian population is not showing that degree of hostility and fear towards the invaders which has characterised the occupied provinces of Eastern GERMANY. North of the DANUBE, the Russians have now captured the large oil field at ZISTERSDORF. This has an annual capacity of 1½ million tons and was the last major source of natural crude oil now available to the enemy. The whole of 6 SS Pz Army has been identified in the VIENNA region during the past week. II SS Pz Corps with 2 and 9 SS Pz Divs, as well as 3 SS Pz Div, and possibly 6 Pz and elements of 16 Pz Division are all believed to be operating North of the DANUBE and are trying to block Soviet progress Northwestwards towards the Czechoslovakian frontier. South of the DANUBE the enemy forces appear to be less strong, probably because the ground is more suitable for defence than it is North of the river. 1 and 12 SS Pz Divs are believed to be in the ST POLTEN area and 37 SS Cavalry Division was identified in the same area on 12 April. This is a new formation and bears the highest number yet contacted. It is believed to include those remnants of 8 and 22 SS Cavalry Divs which escaped from BUDAPEST. So far the enemy has not been able to bring the Soviet progress along the LINZ gap to a halt, and it seems likely that he has underestimated the Russian strength in this area. The picture of his dispositions suggests more concern with the Russian progress towards CZECHOSLOVAKIA than towards LINZ which is nevertheless ultimately of far greater significance. Further reinforcement may be on the way, however. 10 SS Pz Div was reported to be moving Southwards from PRAGUE on 9 April and may be destined for Army Group South. Its arrival would raise the total of SS Divs in Army Groups South and E to eleven.

Between the DANUBE and GRAZ the enemy is resisting strongly in the high terrain of the FISCHLHORN Alps covering the INNSBRUCK - MARIBOR railway. Some Soviet progress has however been made along the MUR Valley where PEGGAU (C 15) 24 miles from GRAZ is in Russian hands. PW shows several sectors of anti-tank ditch recently constructed along the general line MARIBOR-GRAZ. Probably the enemy is prepared to give ground gradually under pressure forward of this line but he will try to hold the Russians on a line covering the railway.

YUGOSLAVIA

In YUGOSLAVIA there has been no change in the situation along the DRAVA. The enemy's withdrawal from the SAVA and the SARAJEVO areas is now well under way. In the SISAK 41 Inf and 11 G.F Divs appear to be conducting the retreat North of the SAVA with 22 Inf Div to the South of the river. OSIJEK, VINKOVCI and VUKOVO are now all in the hands of the Yugoslavs who are however, following up the enemy retreat rather than driving him out. The only area where Yugoslavs are really troubling the enemy's withdrawal is in the DOBOJ (K 28) sector. This town lies on the main SARAJEVO - BROD highway and its capture would cut off the forces of XXI

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It is not so in Western CROATIA. Here the Yugoslav 4th Army's offensive is in its fourth week. This is the largest and most successful operation which has ever been mounted by Tito's forces. Considerable

.... territorial gains have...

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territorial gains have been made and at least two enemy divisions - 392 and 373 Legion - have both been badly battered. Two Yugoslav thrusts are now apparent, and each is being countered by a division which was not in western CROATIA when the offensive started. It is in fact clear that the enemy can no longer place any reliance upon the Legionary divs which are near disintegration, and is having to call upon proper German formations. One Yugoslav column is pushing Northwestwards along the coast road to FIUME and has now reached CRIKVENICA 15 miles S.E. of FIUME. Elements of 237 Inf Division have come down from the FIUME area and 104B G.R. has now been contacted near CRIKVENICA. The second Yugoslav thrust is in a North Easterly direction towards KARLOVAC (K 25). Here the enemy seems to have the situation rather more in hand and 104 Jg Div is offering stubborn resistance about 12 miles S.W. of KARLOVAC. Meanwhile further successes have been achieved in the QUARNERO island group and RAB was captured by the Yugoslavs last week.

5. Distributed with this Summary is a paper on the German National Socialist Redoubt.

F R Rawes for Ld

C.E.R. HERSCH,
BRIGADIER, G.S.
A.C. OF S. G-2.

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APPENDIX 'A' TO H.Q. 15 ARMY GROUP
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 90 DATED
17 APRIL, 1945

EXTRACTS FROM CAPTURED DOCUMENT

47th VOLKS-GRENADIER DIV
The Commanding General

Div GP, 10 Feb 45.

SUBJECT: General Supply Situation

++++++++++++++++++

The supply situation, which continues to grow more and more serious, necessitates utmost economy and retrenchment in all classes of supplies. I reproduce below the instruction of Army Group G for the benefit of subordinate commanders, to acquaint them with the supply situation. I expect units to appreciate the prevailing conditions and use supplies as thriftily as possible. This instruction will be destroyed after having been received and noted by the persons concerned. Its contents will be disseminated orally to the commanders of lower formations and units. Report of execution will be filed with Div Qu by 15 Feb 45.

"According to a report by the German Army QM on the supply situation, based on the 1944 harvest and the stocks of raw material for clothing and equipment available after the loss of the enemy-occupied territories in the EAST and WEST, it appears that the supply situation must be regarded as critical:

"The following appears to be the picture as presented by the above report:

1. Rations

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As rations decrease, increasing stress must be placed on the complete utilization of all available food and on increased care in its preparation. ++++++++++++++++

It is not permissible to ask automatically for increased rations when a unit is subjected to added strain. ++++++++++++++++++++

According to the yield of the grain and roughage harvest it can be expected that fodder rations will be further reduced. ----------

2. Clothing and Equipment

At the end of our withdrawals it was clearly demonstrated to what extent the combat efficiency of an army is dependent upon the state of its clothing.

Losses, such as suffered last summer by faulty orders or neglect, must not occur again, since the scarcity of raw materials prohibits replacement. The soldier is punished if he loses his weapon. Appropriate measures will be taken in future if clothes and equipment are lost.

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Unfortunately the soldier cannot be issued a second pair of boots which would allow him to change and facilitate repairs; all that can be used for this purpose are the modest unit reserves. Therefore the footgear in possession of the individual must especially be cared for, the necessary leather grease has been issued.

There is sufficient basic winter equipment for every soldier. Extra winter equipment for the EAST has not been authorised; substantial quantities have nevertheless been issued, but these are destined for the combat troops only. No extra winter equipment may therefore be used in rear of rest [illegible]. If every soldier realises that clothing is obtainable at home almost exclusively for bomb casualties, he will take the right attitude toward these measures.

.....3. Quarters .....

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3. Quarters

The general shortage of raw materials for textiles also affects the available supplies for quarters, especially blankets and sheets. ++++++++++ The difficulties in the supply of dresses necessitate for rescking economies in the use of combs of all kinds." +++++++++

(signed) DORE, Maj-Gen,
Commanding.

(SOURCE: II Corps G-2 Report No. 603
dated 14 Apr 45)

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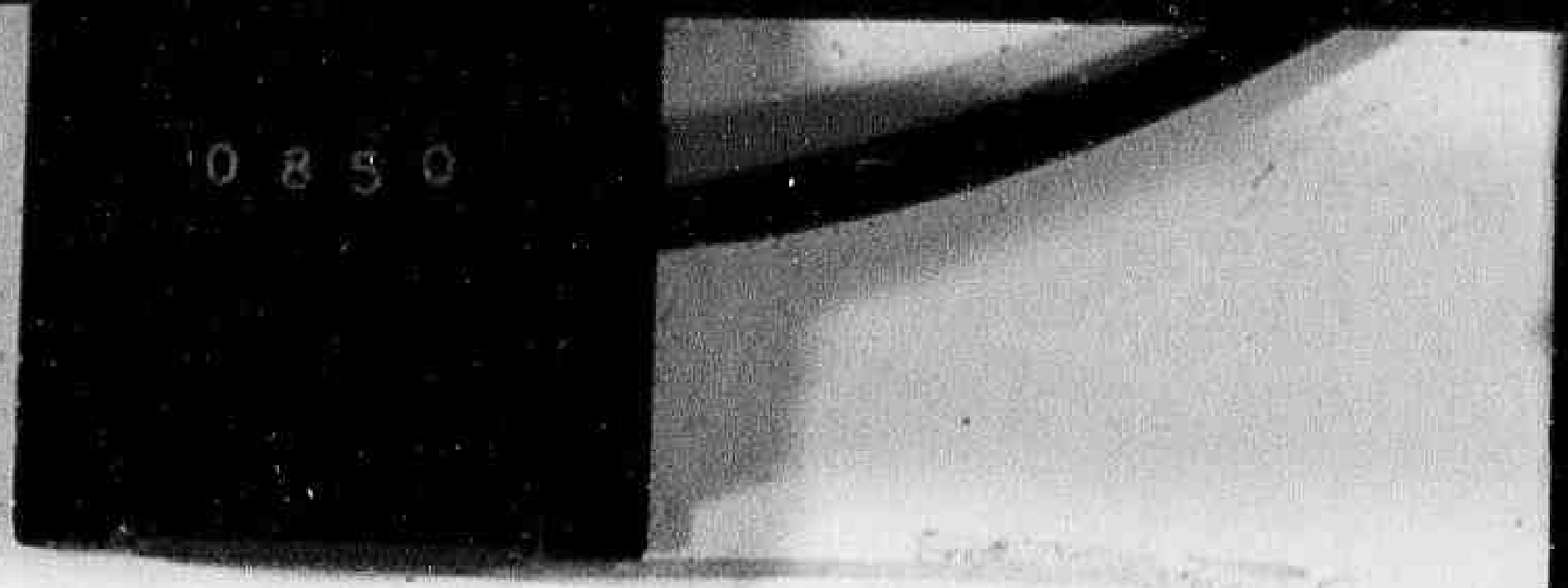

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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 89

ON 9 APRIL, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

On both flanks of the Appennine Line we have in the past week mounted successful limited attacks. The operations on the GARIBALDI Isthmus came to a close on the 4th by which date the whole spit of Land South of the Canale VALLETTA had been swept clear of the enemy, the total prisoners reaching the figure of 850, of which over half were Germans and the remainder Turkomans. The Northern bank of the Canal is now held for the most part by the Kesselring M.G. Bn 2, with 305 Regt (162 Div) on lay-back along the Adriatic coast to the North. On the 5th, we captured four small islands in the Lagoon which the enemy had used as O.Ps. This resulted in an interesting identification the following day. Three boats put out from COMACCHIO Village to investigate what was going on on the islands, and we captured the crew of one boat, which included three men from 129 Recce Unit as well as a couple of signallers from 162 Div. The first was a somewhat surprising identification, as reports from various ground sources had suggested that 29 P.G. Division had transferred North of the PO in the latter part of March and the first days of April. But the prisoners soon allayed our fears: they said the Recce Bn was about to cross over the river to join the rest of the division which was already North of it, when the plans were changed and it was sent early on the 4th to take up positions along the North shore of the Lake between COMACCHIO Village and the SS Existing. Although we have no further information the battalion is probably still there as the enemy obviously does not trust the ability of the Turkomans to hold unaided the left flank of the line. An unidentified Italian battalion is reported to be East of the Recce Unit.

Disaster has overtaken another battalion of 42 Div. Having lost the greater part of its Recce Unit in the Spit operations, it has now had III Bn 25 Jaeger Regt cut to pieces by an attack we launched across the RENO in the S.W. corner of the lake. We have advanced some 4,000 yards and pushed the enemy back behind the Navigation Canal between the Lake and the RENO. This attack has brought in about 250 prisoners, nearly all from III Bn, and has forced the rest of 25 Jaeger Regt to pull its main positions back to the RENO. In the circumstances a prisoner's statement that most of the Field Replacement Bn was due to move into the Front line on 8 April is hardly surprising. The enemy shows every sign of nervousness as to our intentions on Route 16 and in the Lake area.

On the rest of the 8 Army front there has been no change in dispositions, and between 42 Div and R. GRANDE the enemy holds with from East to West, 362, 98, 26 Pz, 4 Para, 278 and 1 Para Divs. The first three divisions have each a bn in reserve while 4 Para may have up to two out of the line. There have been plenty of signs of jumpiness on the enemy's part along the RENO and prisoners say that they have been warned to expect operations to start any moment. They also say that divisions have been on continuous alert since about the 2 April. On the night of the 6th the enemy was particularly nervous and put down defensive

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on on the islands, and we captured [illegible] men, including three men from 129 Recce Unit as well as a couple of signallers from 162 Div. The first was a somewhat surprising identification, as reports from various ground sources had suggested that 29 P.G. Division had transferred North of the PO in the latter part of March and the first days of April. But the prisoners soon allayed our fears: they said the Recce Bn was about to cross over the river to join the rest of the division which was already North of it, when the plans were changed and it was sent early on the 4th to take up positions along the North shore of the Lake between COMACCHIO Village and the 50 Bearing. Although we have no further information the battalion is probably still there as the enemy obviously does not trust the ability of the Turkomans to hold unaided the left flank of the line. An unidentified Italian battalion is reported to be East of the Recce Unit.

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South of BOLOGNA prisoners taken on the 910 Bearing from I Bn 147 G.R. provide further evidence of 65 Division's extension Eastwards to relieve the right hand regt of 305 Div which in turn took over from 4 Para Regt on R. GAMBIER.

...Confirmation is still.....

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Confirmation is still lacking that 4 Para Regt is on the SENIO under command 4 Para Div, but as it has not reappeared on 1 Para Div's sector its reported move Eastwards may well be true. There is clearly considerable reorganisation going on in the parachutist divisions. Prisoners from 12 Para Regt stated that III Bn had left about three weeks ago for Northern ITALY to provide a nucleus for a new division, and it is reported that the other two regiments also had to give up a battalion. Ground sources have reported movement of parachutists Northwards towards the PO and in one case stated that three trainloads arrived in INNSBRUCK over the BRENNER from ITALY. At the same time we have received reports of parachutists arriving in ITALY, and the only reasonable deduction is that 1 Para Corps has had to give up some of its seasoned warriors in exchange for recruits. Exactly to what extent that has affected the fighting quality and strength of 1 and 4 Para Divs it is too early to say.

West of 65 Div, identifications yesterday of 1057 Recce Unit and 296 Mtn Regt show that 157 Mtn Div is unchanged, and 94 Div to its right is still believed to be on an extended front across the RENO Valley. The third regiment of 334 Div (755 G.R.) is still unidentified but it has not taken over any part of 114 Div's sector. The latter division has at the moment three battalions forward on a 4,500 yard front (114 Recce Unit and I and II Bns 741 Jaeger Regt) while two independent sources place the other regt (721) between SAN SUSO (L 4455) and MONTESA where it is said to be reforming with recently arrived replacements. 232 Div, West of 114 Div, is still believed to be reduced to two regiments of two bns each, persistent reports having come in that 1043 G.R. has been dissolved.

On the night of 4th April we launched an attack against 148 Div in the Coastal Plain forward of MASSA and along the high ground overlooking it. M. CARCHIO P 9501 was captured the following day, from where we exploited to seize M. SERVIERRE (P 9401) against strong opposition. At the same time our forces in the Plain had advanced their positions astride Route 1 to within 2 miles of MASSA. By the 6th MONTIGNOSO was in our hands and we had reached the outskirts of MASSA, and that night troops in the plain withdrew behind the FRIGIDO River. This operation has so far brought in about 400 prisoners. Opposition was entirely by German units - 261 G.R. and I Bn 285 G.R. - reinforced on the 7th by the Kesselring M.G. Bn No. 1, which came down from the GARFAGNA area. Otherwise there has been no important reaction to our attack.

If our interpretation of agents reports is correct there is now only one mobile division left in reserve South of the PO - 90 P.G. Div - of which we have heard very little apart from one report that troops of the division are immediately West of BOLOGNA astride Route 9. Following the move reported last week of a regimental group of 29 P.G. Div into the area N.W. of ROVIGO, one source has told us that the Divisional H.Q. was to move on the night 2/3 April to ZEVIO, a route followed by other units of the division crossing the PO. Since then agents have reported movement of troops in considerable numbers N.E. as far as PIAVE River (29 P.G. Div is not specifically associated with these troops but from the reports a motorised formation appears involved) while one source has gone a step further and said that troops of 29 P.G. Div which staged in the area ARPALO P 9822 - MONTEBELLO G 0130 about 24 March, continued on toward TARVISIO. We have however, still no firm evidence that 29 P.G. Div is leaving ITALY, and the only other explanation for its move must be a very real fear of an Allied seaborne landing in the Northern Adriatic. Ground reports bear out that the enemy is particularly

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On the night of 4th April we launched an attack against 148 Div in the Coastal Plain forward of MASSA and along the high ground overlooking it. M. CARCHIO P 9501 was captured the following day, from where we exploited to seize M. PELVERINE (P 9401) against strong opposition. At the same time our forces in the Plain had advanced their positions astride Route 1 to within 2 miles of MASSA. By the 8th MONTIGNOSO was in our hands and we had reached the outskirts of MASSA, and that night troops in the plain withdrew behind the FRIGIDO River. This operation has so far brought in about 400 prisoners. Opposition was entirely by German units - 281 G.R. and I Bn 265 G.R. - reinforced on the 7th by the Nebelwerfer M.G. Bn No. 1. which came down from the SPEZIA area. Otherwise there has been no important reaction to our attack.

If our interpretation of agents reports is correct there is now only one mobile division left in reserve South of the PO - 90 P.G. Div - of which we have heard very little apart from one report that troops of the division are immediately West of BOLOGNA astride Route 9. Following the move reported last week of a regimental group of 29 P.G. Div into the area N.W. of ROVIGO, one source has told us that the Divisional H.Q. was to move on the night 2/3 April to BONDENO, a route followed by other units of the division crossing the PO. Since then agents have reported movement of troops in considerable numbers N.E. as far as PIAVE River (29 P.G. Div is not specifically associated with these troops but from the reports a motorised formation appears involved) while one source has gone a step further and said that troops of 29 P.G. Div which staged in the area MEDELANA P 9822 - MONTEBELLO G 0130 about 25 March continued on toward TREVISO. We have however, still no firm evidence that 29 P.G. Div is leaving IT.LY, and the only other explanation for its move must be a very real fear of an Allied seaborne landing in the Northern Adriatic. Ground reports bear out that the enemy is particularly sensitive to this threat and is at the moment putting into effect anti-invasion preparations. For the present therefore, 29 P.G. Division is carried North of the PO, its exact location unknown but suggested to be N. E. of VERONA. Its Recce Unit has remained behind and it is possible that some of its armour has also not crossed the PO.

The departure of 29 P.G. Div on the eve of 8 Army's attack is most opportune for us. VIETINGHOFF, who is believed to be C in C South West, has now to make a ticklish decision. Is he justified in assuming that no landing will in fact take place and that the whole weight of 15 Army Group is to be thrown against his forces South of the PO, or must he wait a few days to find out whether the 8 Army attack is not merely meant to distract his reserves? Having moved 29 P.G. all the way by road, a costly incursion into his limited petrol resources, he may well

....hesitate to rush....

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hesitate to rush it down South of the river straightaway. One way or another the choice is a gamble, and a faulty decision may jeopardise his forces South of the PO.

Hardest at home the enemy is faced with much the same decision in respect to 90 A.C. Division. Is he to commit the whole division against 8 Army thus leaving no mobile reserve opposite 5 Army? If the battle goes right for us he is almost certain to have to send at least a regimental battle group across to the SANGRO. Immediate reinforcements for the threatened sector are otherwise limited to battalions or even regiments which might be withdrawn from quiet parts of the line to stiffen resistance at the key points. Parachutists are likely candidates for such a rôle. One thing seems clear, there is no sign that the enemy intends to fight a delaying action and withdraw across the PO. He appears to have committed himself to another battle of attrition, along the lines of those we have previously met in IT.LY, and he will only withdraw under pressure. Once again he hopes to be able to wear down our attack and finally bring our offensive to a halt. If he fails he risks the major part of his armies South of the PO.

2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

During the past week the rail situation has remained difficult for the enemy. No through trains have moved over the BRENNER and all three of the North East frontier routes have remained cut. Interdiction between the PADUA-VICENZA area and UDINE has held up during the entire week, though repair activity seems to be making some progress here. All rail bridges as far West as PAVIA remain cut on the PO river where ferries and pontoon bridges continue to be active. Night photos showed the pontoon bridge at PIACENZA (N 2299) completely assembled on two nights out of the four it was covered. North of the PO interdiction in the plain remains effective though the important lines leading South from VERONA to CREMONA and ROVIGO are still open. South of the PO attacks by both medium and fighter-bombers have blocked some of the lines leading into the general area of BOLOGNA.

The BRENNER railway has been blocked throughout the week under continuous attacks by heavy, medium and fighter-bombers and high water in the ADIGE river has been slowing up repair activity. (See Appendix 'A' for effect of recent high water-levels on enemy communications). Photos of 8 April showed the BRENNER to be cut at no less than fourteen points, the majority of these cuts being the result of that day's attacks. Interdiction extends as far North as the VIPITENO bridge about 15 rail kilometres South of the frontier. Most of these cuts are cratered tracks and bridge approaches, but three bridges are down on the main line and an additional two bridges block the OS. - S. CROCE diversion South of BOLZANO. If weather conditions were to prevent further attacks on the BRENNER (this is highly improbable), it is thought that the existing interdiction would prevent through traffic till 11 or 12 April. On the TRENTO - CAMPOLONGO loop line the CIVIDEN bridges (B 2407) remain cut while further North the line running Eastward from the BRENNER at FORTEZZA has been impassable all week by virtue of the damaged bridge at PERCA (W 4668) as well as the cut approaches to the OBERBRUNN bridge (C 2295).

Activity on the BRENNER railway has been moderate with coverage decreasing towards the end of the week in inverse proportion to [illegible]

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Activity on the BRENNER railway has been moderate with movement decreasing towards the end of the week in inverse proportion to increasing rail cuts. TRENTO continues to be one of the more active stations while ORA and BOLZANO have also shown a fair turnover. Practically all of the smaller stations have shown at least some increase or decrease during the week, undoubtedly reflecting localised movement. North of BOLZANO the tempo of activity seems to have definitely decreased as compared to previous weeks. It is believed that no large turnover has been taking place on the BRENNER for a considerable period though it is of interest to note that whereas in February rolling stock between inclusive BOLZANO and exclusive VERONA totalled about 1,500 wagons, this increased during March to between 3,000 to 3,500 and the average so far for April is roughly the same.

In the N.E. rail activity has been on an extremely small scale. Between the PADUA and UDINE areas little movement has been noted and both the FORTOGRUARO and PORDENONE frontier routes appear to be relatively inactive.

...TARVISIO route however.....

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T.RVISIO route however definite signs of activity have been noted. On 5 April a number of apparent troop train lengths including about 30 flats loaded with MT or AFV and equipment were seen in UDINE and on the following day at least some of those were picked up further to the North on a point not far South of the T.RVISIO route interdiction belt. This strongly suggests that troops are moving out of North East ITALY by way of the T.RVISIO route but it is too early as yet to state how many troops may be involved.

With the railways disrupted and MT fuel in short supply it is considered that the enemy in ITALY faces our Spring offensive with a vulnerable administrative position. No early collapse is expected by reason of lack of supplies, but it is expected that with rising supply demands appreciable difficulty in moving the necessary tonnage to meet battle requirements will develop.

For the past eight months the German Command in ITALY has done everything in its power to cut down on the consumption of petrol and diesel, both by the use of substitute fuels, heavy reliance on horse-drawn transport, movement of troops on foot and other varied economy measures. However, the continual dislocation of the railways during the past several months has nevertheless forced him to use a large number of MT. It is also known that for some time no major MT fuel reserves have existed in North ITALY. These facts coupled with the overall German fuel position and air attacks on fuel dumps and production centres in ITALY are believed to have reduced [illegible] stocks in North ITALY to a critical level.

Since April our aircraft have been paying considerable attention to the enemy's substitute fuel sources. Attacks have been carried out against oil and gas fields, and methane compressor plants in the P.DA-FERRARA area and the ROVIGO-FERRARA area. The attacks on compressor plants have destroyed at least four and done considerable damage to others. A methanol plant near [illegible] and a sugar refinery in the ARIL (G 4808) area, believed to be producing alcohol, were also attacked with good results during the past week.

As regards ammunition the enemy is very much better off than he is for MT fuel. There are a relatively large number of ammunition [illegible] both North and South of the river PO and the enemy has been making use of [illegible] production facilities. Furthermore during the past few months his expenditure has been negligible so that while it is not thought that he has built up large ammunition reserves he now does probably have in North ITALY about a month's supply of ammunition for hard fighting. Distribution, however, to meet the demands of heavy fighting is likely to be affected by the shortage of MT fuel.

A report from a usually reliable source states that since March 1944 all rations for the German forces in ITALY have been drawn from Italian resources. These supplies are normally requisitioned by the Republican Government but major German formations are in the habit of taking direct action to ensure their own ration supply by commandeering what they need and German units on the move are in the custom of requisitioning as they go. In addition to the regular consignments of foodstuffs supplied by the Republican Government for shipment to GERMANY, the Germans have in the last two months alone carried off from the PO Valley 100,000 tons of corn, 50,000 head of cattle and large quantities of pork and fats.

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him to use a large number of MT. It is also known that for some time no major MT fuel reserves have existed in North Italy. These facts coupled with the overall German fuel position and air attacks on fuel dumps and production centres in Italy are believed to have reduced fuel stocks in North Italy to a critical level.

Since April our aircraft have been paying considerable attention to the enemy's substitute fuel sources. Attacks have been carried out against oil and gas fields, and methane compressor plants in the Parma-Piacenza area and the Rovigo-Ferrara area. The attacks on compressor plants have destroyed at least four and done considerable damage to others. A methanol plant near Casalmaggiore and a sugar refinery in the Mirandola (G 4808) area, believed to be producing methanol, were also attacked with good results during the past week.

As regards ammunition the enemy is very much better off than he is for MT fuel. There are a relatively large number of ammunition dumps both North and South of the river Po and the enemy has been making use of Italian production facilities. Furthermore during the past few months his expenditure has been negligible so that while it is not thought that he has built up large ammunition reserves he now does probably have in North Italy about a month's supply of ammunition for hard fighting. Distribution, however, to meet the demands of heavy fighting is likely to be affected by the shortage of MT fuel.

A report from a usually reliable source states that since March 1944 all rations for the German forces in Italy have been drawn from Italian resources. These supplies are normally requisitioned by the Republican Government but major German formations are in the habit of taking direct action to ensure their own ration supply by commandeering what they need and German units on the move are in the custom of requisitioning as they go. In addition to the regular consignments of foodst ffs supplied by the Republican Government for shipment to Germany, the Germans have in the last two months alone carried off from the PO Valley 100,000 tons of corn, 50,000 head of cattle and large quantities of pork and fats.

3. Western Front

The enemy's efforts to stabilise the front in the West have enjoyed little more success this week. Such slowing down as has occurred in the Allied advance has been in the main due to factors other than enemy resistance. Only in limited sectors has Kesselring been able to build up any sort of coherent front and even there the structure is flimsy and liable to topple quickly under pressure.

Such a sector is that part of Army Group C's front covering Strasbourg and Karlsruhe. The original plan of Army Group G after the initial Allied breakthrough in the Falaise sector was probably to build up a front based on the Seine, the Marne and the Rhine, with the main defensive effort at Metz-Nancy. Apart from some strong resistance at Soissons [illegible] this plan proved completely

...beyond the enemy's...

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beyond the enemy's resources, and KESSELRING had to resort to a modified version of the original plan. Scraping together all the elements and remnants of the Army Group's weakened divisions, he tried and to some extent succeeded in establishing a coherent, if not a stable front, covering STUTTGART and NÜRNBERG. Elements of sixteen divisions have been identified between KARLSRUHE and WÜRZBURG. The state of some of these is shown by the fact that 17 Volksgrenadier Division last week had three other divisions under command. The main weight of Army Group G is now concentrated in the area North of STUTTGART where we have encountered moderate to heavy resistance this week. Heavy fighting is however the one thing which the enemy must avoid and already there are signs that he is paying the price for his brief moment of coherent battle. To the East of HEILBRONN the front has once more surged and we have advanced 25 miles to capture the road junction of CRAILSHEIM. In the NÜRNBERG region too, resistance is less stiff and we have penetrated into FÜRTH. A document captured on Army Group G front this week is of some interest. It is dated March 26th and is an authorisation from 11 SS Pz Army at NÜRNBERG for Ersatz Bns of 9 and 12 SS Pz Divs going to 17 SS P.G. Division to draw fuel on the way. This is the first identification of 11 SS Pz Army. Its function is not wholly clear, for it is certainly not operational, nor would there at the present time appear to be need for a further Army headquarters on any front. Its interest in Ersatz Bns may imply some connection with the handling of replacements while its location in Southern GERMANY might have some bearing on recent reports of U.S. troops arriving in the National Redoubt. In this connection a statement by a PW in the GOTHA area may be relevent. He says that on 31 March all higher headquarters in the GOTHA and ERFURT areas were ordered to move South to join the Wehrmacht Führungstab in the BURGHOF SCHLEY area.

On the front that used to be Army Group B's responsibility before the latter's unfortunate isolation in the RUHR pocket, enemy resistance continues to be disorganised. Only in the KASSEL area where 166 Res Div made ineffectual but determined efforts to break through to the RUHR pocket, has there been any semblance of organised opposition. Otherwise resistance has been offered by the now conventional assortment of Homeguard, NCO's schools and other miscellany which have so far not been given the usual formality of a divisional number. There are some indications that stormer stuff may be on the way however. A prisoner has said 18 SS P.G. Division is coming up to the Western Front from the East and there is some support for this from the trend of rail movement in Central and West Central GERMANY. Moderate loadings were apparent in the KASSEL area on 6 April, while nearer the Western Front, considerable activity was seen on the GÖTTINGEN and NORDHEIM yards East of HEIFELD. The only identification so far on the ground is one regiment of 166 Inf Div in the GOTHA area. This should be treated with reserve as a second regiment of 166 Div was identified in the WEIMAR area on 4 April. Nevertheless some fresh arrivals may be expected on the Central sector during the week.

North of KASSEL and as far over as the line of the ISSEL river in HOLLAND, the enemy completely lacks the initiative and is at present in no position to recover it. Our most rapid advances have been in the direction of MÜNSTER and HAMBURG but good progress has also been made [illegible]

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North of KASSEL and as far over as the line of the IJSSEL river in HOLLAND, the enemy completely lacks the initiative and is at present in no position to recover it. Our most rapid advances have been in the direction of BREMEN and HANNOVER but good progress has also been made in HOLLAND between the ZUID and IJSSEL rivers. Further West the enemy has offered stubborn resistance along the IJSSEL line to our attempts at pushing Westwards into Western HOLLAND. It is too early yet to say that a decision has been made to hold Western HOLLAND as a fortress. However a certain amount of reorganising and incorporation of administrative units into divisional frameworks is at present in progress in Western HOLLAND, and at this late stage it is unlikely that the enemy would follow such a course of action unless he intended to hold at least the ports of Western HOLLAND as fortresses.

Two interesting identifications are reported from HOLLAND this week. The Dutch S.S. Division is now known to be 34 S.S. Div, while PW have been taken from a regiment of 11 Para Div, the first identification of this formation on the ground. It is interesting that one PW taken in HOLLAND this week said he belonged to a Division GERICKE. GERICKE was commander of 11 Para Regt in ITALY and is thought to have left ITALY fairly recently, possibly to take charge of the setting up of 11 Para Div.

...In the RUHR.....

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In the KÜSTRIN pocket, on the basis of identifications during the past week it now seems unlikely that more than twenty divisions are isolated. The bulk of the armour consisting of four Panzer divisions plus an armoured brigade has been concentrated in the N.E. corner of the pocket and initially made determined efforts to break out. With the failure of the attacks, and the consequent abandonment of all hope of rescue, the enemy has gone back on to the defensive and his resistance appears to be weakening slightly although he still maintains a coherent front and is making a fight for every inch of ground gained.

To sum up, the events of this week have clearly shown that the enemy is still unable effectively to build up and maintain a coherent front line. There are however at last indications that forces are being transferred to the Western Front from the East. Whether they will arrive in time and in adequate quantities to stabilise the front is questionable. What is beyond doubt however is that this is a policy of despair. Not only is it a confession that RUNDSTEDT is at the end of his resources, it is an illustration of the desperate shortage of available reserves that the only source apparently capable of assisting the Western Front is the inadequately held East Front. The enemy's policy cannot even be described as one of buying time, since it is too late now for forces transferred from East to West to have any decisive effect on the Western battle, and the only effect winning out from the Western Front is likely to have is to precipitate the final Russian assault.

4. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND EASTERN GERMANY

In EAST PRUSSIA the Russians have captured the fortress of KÖNIGSBERG. The attack was launched on 6 April after a three hour artillery barrage and met at first considerable opposition from the extensive belt of fortifications around the town which includes 13 large forts. The reduction of the fortress was however completed within 36 hours.

North of GOERLITZ, Soviet forces have cleared the last pocket of enemy resistance in PEILAU, a small group of which was holding out on the FRISCHER HAFF.

The rest of the front has been quiet apart from considerable enemy air activity against Soviet troop concentrations in the KÜSTRIN area, which suggests some enemy nervousness about the progress of the Russian build-up in this area.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

This week the enemy has started pulling back the flank of his long salient in SLOVAKIA without apparently being unduly troubled by Soviet pressure. It is not clear whether the HIGH TATRA mountains are still in enemy hands; in any case he must soon abandon them in view of his withdrawals west of the HIGH TATRA along the ORAV and HRON Valleys. Further east the Soviet advance along the North bank of the DANUBE has led to a further crossing of the post-March Czech

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Western Front is the inadequately head[illegible] front. The enemy's policy cannot even be described as one of buying time, since it is too late now for forces transferred from East to West to have any decisive effect on the Western battle, and the only effect thinning out from the Eastern Front is likely to have is to precipitate the final Russian assault.

4. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND EASTERN GERMANY

In East PRUSSIA the Russians have captured the fortress of KÖNIGSBERG. The attack was launched on 6 April after a three hour artillery barrage and met at first considerable opposition from the extensive belt of fortifications around the town which includes 15 large forts. The reduction of the fortress was however completed within 36 hours.

North of GUMBINNEN, Soviet forces have cleared the last pocket of enemy resistance in POLAND, a small group of which was holding out on the FUTZIGER WICK.

The rest of the front has been quiet apart from considerable enemy air activity against Soviet troop concentrations in the ELBING area, which suggests some enemy nervousness about the progress of the Russian build-up in this area.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

This week the enemy has started pulling back the flank of his long salient in SLOVAKIA without apparently being unduly troubled by Soviet pressure. It is not clear whether the HIGH TATRA mountains are still in enemy hands; in any case he must soon abandon them in view of his withdrawals West of the HIGH TATRA along the ORAV and NITRA Valleys. Further West the Soviet advance along the North bank of the DANUBE has led to a further crossing of the post-MUNICH Czech border in the BRATISLAVA-BRNO region. Both the latter towns have fallen to MALINOVSKY's forces who have now cut the VIENNA-BRNO railway N.W. of BRATISLAVA. So far as can be seen the Second Ukrainian Army Group is advancing in two main directions. One force is pushing Northwards along the BRATISLAVA-BRNO railway towards BRNO, making slow progress in difficult country and against tough resistance. A second force North of the DANUBE is attacking due West towards VIENNA and has linked up with the Third Ukrainian Army Group in the VIENNA region.

South of the DANUBE, the main Russian thrust has been in the direction of VIENNA and has outflanked the capital by a drive which has reached the DANUBE N.W. of the city. It seems clear that the enemy is resolved to let VIENNA share the same fate as BUDAPEST, although the Russians are making

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such satisfactory headway that this plan may be frustrated. 6 S.S. Pz Army is believed to be defending the capital with the assistance of elements of the 6th Army which includes 356 Inf Div identified in the VRANJE region this week.

Further South the Russian thrust down the MORAVA Valley towards SKOPJE has not developed during the week although South of the river some progress has been made in the high ground East of the PTICE-GORA Alps. It seems evident as was suggested in last week's Summary that the enemy will attempt to hold us in the high terrain covering SKOPJE (S 69), GOSTIVAR and KICEVO (S 27). 2 Pz Army is now right across the Yugoslav frontier and appears to be falling back to the line of VARDAR river as no attempt was made at a stand on the MORAVA river South and S.W. of NIS. The Russians supported by Bulgarian forces have in fact established a bridgehead over the DRINA near the confluence of the DRINA and SAVA rivers. However the Soviets have in the past been noticeably reluctant to operate in the area South of the DRINA and may be content to leave operations here in the hands of the Bulgars while they concentrate on the situation in Eastern AUSTRIA.

YUGOSLAVIA

The scope of the enemy withdrawal has quickened as the enemy situation deteriorates in AUSTRIA and HUNGARY. The heavy westward road movement from the SAVA has continued all the week and there can be little doubt that the enemy will soon have to abandon this area completely. Meanwhile the thinning out on this front had by last week reached a stage where the enemy forces further South in the SARAJEVO salient stood in serious danger of isolation from the rest of Army Group E, and on the morning of 5 April the last German forces pulled out of SARAJEVO. Considerable damage was done to enemy traffic moving Northwards along the SARAJEVO-BROD road and it is likely that XXI Mtn Corps will have no easy passage back North. As the road bridges at both ZENICA (M 12) and BROD have been destroyed considerable bottlenecks are likely to arise in the course of the withdrawal.

5133.

In N.W. YUGOSLAVIA the Yugoslav offensive is making rapid headway. Last week another important enemy base - GOSPIC (P 95) fell to the Yugoslavs who are now advancing along the GOSPIC-SENJ road towards the Adriatic coast. A second partisan force advancing along the West road has captured KARLOVAC (O 85) and is reported to be 12 miles due South of SENJ. On 4 April the Yugoslavs with Allied artillery, air and naval support, landed on KRK Island, opposite KRALJEVO and in an extremely successful operation cleared all enemy from the island within 48 hours.

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YUGOSLAVIA

The tempo of the enemy withdrawal has quickened as the enemy situation deteriorates in AUSTRIA and HUNGARY. The heavy westward road movement from the SAVA has continued all the week and there can be little doubt that the enemy will soon have to abandon this area completely. Meanwhile the thinning out on this front had by last week reached a stage where the enemy forces further South in the S.A.R.J.E.V.O salient stood in serious danger of isolation from the rest of Army Group E, and on the morning of 5 April the last German forces pulled out of S.A.R.J.E.V.O. Considerable damage was done to enemy traffic moving Northwards along the S.A.R.J.E.V.O-BROD road and it is likely that XXI Mtn Corps will have no easy passage back North. As the road bridges at both ZENICA (M 12) and BROD have been destroyed considerable bottlenecks are likely to arise in the course of the withdrawal.

5139.

In N.W. YUGOSLAVIA the Yugoslav offensive is making rapid headway. Last week another important enemy base - COSPIC (P 05) fell to the Yugoslavs who are now advancing along the GOSPIC-SENJ road towards the Adriatic coast. A second Partisan force advancing along the coast road has captured KARLOBAG (O 35) and is reported to be 12 miles due South of SENJ. On 4 April the Yugoslavs with Allied artillery, air and naval support, landed on PAG island, opposite KARLOBAG and in an extremely successful operation cleared all enemy from the island within 48 hours.

for TRIGG, G.S.
A.C. of S. G-2.

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APPENDIX 'A' TO 15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE
SUMMARY NO. 85 dated 9 APRIL, 1945

THE EFFECTS OF RECENT HIGH WATER LEVEL ON ENEMY COMMUNICATIONS

The recent high water level reached by many of the rivers and streams in North ITALY has joined MUD in further disrupting enemy communications. This assistance, not totally unexpected, has been manifested in two forms, namely the destruction of existing bridges, diversions, and roads, and the hindering of repairs to already damaged lines and structures. Two outstanding examples of the former can be seen in damage inflicted upon the [redacted]ENZA (G 6493) and CITTADELLA (G 2373) rail diversions.

The diversion at [redacted]ENZA, an important rail crossing over the PIAVE river, was severely damaged when the swollen current washed several spans away and undermined and destroyed much of the fill embankment.

Night photographs of CITTADELLA taken on the 29th of March showed that the rising of the BRENTA river had inundated approximately 400' of the existing rail diversion, swept away part of the diversion under construction, and almost completely submerged the road diversion to the North. Photographs taken after the water had receded showed 250' - 260' of the existing diversion completely washed away and another 100' damaged by the current. Fifty feet of the new uncompleted diversion had been destroyed and the road diversion cut and left partially submerged.

Other interesting examples include the road diversions at CASARSA, which had about 1,000' of its length submerged by high water, and at PONTE DI PIAVE, where a smaller section was also under water when last photographed.

Although the extent to which repairs have been retarded cannot be assessed, it is very probable that high water has created a difficult soil condition on the sites of certain damaged rail bridges and fills on the BRENNER route, and reported repairs which were underway. The situation was probably aggravated by the fact that in performing quick repair jobs the enemy has not always provided adequate drainage facilities at the repair sites. Considerable difficulty has apparently been encountered by repair crews at the S.P. MICHELE (A 8141) rail diversion bridge, and at ROVEREDO (A 6901). In other cases, such as MONTEBELLO (F 9756), where repairs were underway, water has backed up on the formerly dry river bed and hindered repair crews working on the base of a new pier.

Although unfavourable weather at the end of March grounded many of our medium fighter-bombers thus preventing our customary strikes against enemy communications, the high water which occurred during this period certainly had somewhat of a compensating effect.

(SOURCE: [redacted] PIS Interpretation Report

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Right photographs of CIVITANELA taken on the 29th of March showed that the rising of the MARTA river had inundated approximately 400' of the existing rail diversion, swept away part of the diversion under construction, and almost completely submerged the road diversion to the North. Photographs taken after the water had receded showed 280' - 260' of the existing diversion completely washed away and another 100' damaged by the current. Fifty feet of the new uncompleted diversion had been destroyed and the road diversion cut and left partially submerged.

Other interesting examples include the road diversions at CASARSA, which had about 1,000' of its length submerged by high water, and at PONTE DI PIAVE, where a smaller section was also under water when last photographed.

Although the extent to which repairs have been retarded cannot be gauged, it is very probable that high water has created a difficult soil condition on the sites of certain damaged rail bridges and fills on the BRENNER route, and by the fact that in performing quick repair jobs the enemy has not always provided adequate drainage facilities at the repair sites. Considerable difficulty has apparently been encountered by repair crews at the SAN MICHELE (A 6141) rail diversion bridge, and at ROVERETO (A 6903). In other cases, such as MONTEBELLO (A 9755), where repairs were underway, water has backed up on the formerly dry river bed and hindered repair crews working on the base of a new pier.

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(SOURCE: 3 PRU Interpretation Report 328 (V).

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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 88

DATED 3 APRIL, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

On 2 April a small scale attack was made by 8 Army against enemy positions on the COMACCHIO Spit. Two forces crossed the S.E. corner of the lagoon to land on the Western shores of the Spit while a third force pushed up the tongue of land between the RENO and the sea, captured the small island at M 6358 from a squadron of 236 Recce Unit (162 Div) and struck West across the river. By the end of the day all enemy resistance had ceased between the RENO and the small ditch which runs East and West on the 605 Northing. An extremely successful operation brought in a bag of about 800 prisoners; some 300 are Turkomens and twelve are German officers. Today our forces advanced North across the ditch, and reached the Canale VALLETTA at PORTO GARIBALDI meeting negligible opposition on the way and picking up only 30 prisoners.

This attack has brought in [illegible] surprising identifications. 142 Recce Unit lost heavily, and the Bn Commander is a prisoner and most of his officers either killed or captured; a Company of ROSENBERG M.G. Bn 2 was badly knocked about, and 162 Div provided a large number of Turkomens from I Bn 314 G.R. and 236 Recce Unit. A Russian officer prisoner gave some interesting information: he placed two bns of 162 Div along the Northern shore of the Lake between COMACCHIO village and CASTELLATO M 3774 and confirmed that II Bn 329 G.R. remained behind in the PLACENZA area when the rest of the division moved Eastwards. 303 G.R. is believed to be counter-attacking North of PORTO GARIBALDI. Our troops met stiffer opposition when they reached the banks of the CANALE VALETTA this evening, and the enemy must be expected to resist strongly any further attempt on our part to develop an outflanking movement Westwards along the Northern shore of L. COMACCHIO. The R has revealed no reaction to this attack on the part of 90 P.G. Div in the BOLOGNA area and the enemy is obviously not prepared to commit his reserves prematurely. But Tac R on the evening of 3 April noticed about 30 MT and 12 AFVs moving North West along Route 16 from ALFONSINE passed ARGENTA, which does suggest that 42 Jaeger Div may be detaching a reserve battalion with some armoured support to move round to the Northern shores of the Lake. On the 42 Div front the difficult nature of the terrain favours defence, and this would probably allow the division to thin out to the extent of a battalion.

Along the SENIO the front has been quiet and there have been no major changes in dispositions. 362 Div is at last confirmed as having taken over from the Northernmost battalion of 98 Div and its right boundary is now on the 37 Northing. The Italian battalion under command of 362 Div just East of LUGO has been identified as the N.P. (Parachute) Bn of the 10 FLOTTAS Inf Div; it apparently replaced the LUGO Bn now resting North of the PO [illegible]

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small ditch which runs East and West on the 605 Northing. An extremely successful operation brought in a bag of about 800 prisoners; some 300 are Turkomans and twelve are German officers. Today our forces advanced North across the ditch, and reached the Canale VALETTA at PORTO GARIBALDI meeting negligible opposition on the way and picking up only 30 prisoners.

This attack has brought in no surprising identifications. 242 Recce Unit lost heavily, and the Bn Commander is a prisoner and most of his officers either killed or captured; a Company of KESSELRING M.G. Bn 2 was badly knocked about; and 162 Div provided a large number of Turkomans from I Bn 314 G.R. and 236 Recce Unit. A Russian officer prisoner gave some interesting information: he placed two bns of 162 Div along the Northern shore of the Lake between COMACCHIO Village and CAMPLATO M 3774 and confirmed that II Bn 329 G.R. remained behind in the PLACENZA area when the rest of the division moved Eastwards. 303 G.R. is believed to be coastwatching North of PORTO GARIBALDI. Our troops met stiffer opposition when they reached the banks of the CANALE VALETTA this evening, and the enemy must be expected to resist strongly any further attempt on our part to develop an outflanking movement Westwards along the Northern shore of Lake COMACCHIO. Too R has revealed no reaction to this attack on the part of 90 P.G. Div in the BOLOGNA area and the enemy is obviously not prepared to commit his reserves prematurely. But Too R on the evening of 3 April noticed about 30 MT and 12 AFVs moving North West along Route 16 from ALFONSINE passed ARGENTA, which does suggest that 42 Jaeger Div may be detaching a reserve battalion with some armoured support to move round to the Northern shores of the Lake. On the 42 Div front the difficult nature of the terrain favours defence, and this would probably allow the division to thin out to the extent of a battalion.

Along the SENIO the front has been quiet and there have been no major changes in dispositions. 362 Div is at last confirmed as having taken over from the Northernmost battalion of 98 Div and its right boundary is now on the 37 Northing. The Italian battalion under command of 362 Div just East of LUGO has been identified as the N.P. (Parachute) Bn of the 10 FLOREAS Inf Div: it apparently replaced the LUGO Bn now resting North of the PO. 362 Div has also an Italian artillery bn (CORLENCHI) under command. 98 Div has a bn of 117 G.R. in reserve and the division is now on a 7,000 yard sector between the 37 and 32 Northings. It is still not clear whether all four infantry bns of 26 Pz Div are in the line, but the Recce Bn is definitely in reserve. Astride Route 9, we have only one identification from 4 Para Div (I Bn 12 Para Regt in its normal area) and a trace of our positions between the 17 and 22 Eastings headed "Positions in front of 4 Regt", taken off an Italian saboteur captured near CIFFLANC M 2023, has given rise to much speculation. This may refer to 4 Para Regt which has been unboosted since relieved on M. GRANDE by 305 Div. It is not impossible, therefore, that part of it at least is now on the SENIO under 4 Para Div, though the reason for this curious move is obscure. At any rate a prisoner from I Bn 993 G.R., the left hand Regt of 278 Div, has placed the divisional boundary between 4 Para Div and 278 Div on the 170 Easting, so it is clear that 4 Para Div has taken over no further commitments.

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The indications of a relief of the parachutists on the Northwestern slopes of M. GRANDE noted in last week's Summary, were confirmed by the capture of a prisoner from II Bn 578 G.R. (305 Div, at L 9832 on 1 April. This Regt was previously on the Western flank of 305 Div, and it has apparently been relieved in that sector by 65 Div because II Bn 146 G.R. was identified on the same day on the 918 Heating. In short, 305 Div has taken over a two-battalion sector from 1 Para Div and 65 Div has had to extend its left boundary to include the former sector of 578 G.R. This should still leave 65 Div with two bns as local reserve astride the main BOLOGNA-FLORENCE road.

On the rest of 5 Army front little change has been noted, and from East to West the enemy line is held by 157 Mtn, 94 Inf, 334 Inf, 114 Jaeger, 232 Inf, [illegible] and 148 Inf Divs. The enemy is still anxious lest we should renew the attack Northwards from C. [illegible] and 334 Div has directed civilians to evacuate all buildings South of a line L 5028 - L 6330 by 5 April. The reason given was that this area is likely to become one of heavy fighting early in April.

The enemy general reserve remains two P.G. Divisions. 90 P.G. Division is still carried in the area North and North East of BOLOGNA, but we have received a number of reports from agents on the activities of 29 P.G. Div. It moved as we saw last week out of the line into the area between MODENA and the PO, where elements of the division took part in a successful anti-Partisan drive near CARPI L 5331 late last month. As early as the 23rd however, movement started Northwards across the PO, and one source has reported 3,000 troops with supporting arms (with the 29 P.G. Div sign) crossing the PO between the 25rd and the 26th. This amounts to about a regimental group. Destination was given as the area [illegible] R. F 9822 - [illegible] G 0130. Since then there have been other reports of units of the division moving North from the area [illegible] L 6893, but it is not clear whether these are delayed reports on the earlier move or whether they indicate that more of the division has crossed over. According to one source units of the division were due to move on beyond the PO Plain 300 Kms to the North, but this is as yet unconfirmed by any other agents, and it seems more likely that the enemy is placing the division where it can intervene either on the main front or near VENICE, should we try a seaborne landing. Agents in N.H. H.Q. have sent in many reports which imply that the enemy is extremely worried about a possible Allied landing in the Northern Adriatic: civilians have been evacuated from the coastal strip GRADO-LIGNANO (and troops are also reported arriving in this area) while flooding precautions have been taken between [illegible] G 9481 and GRADO H 5276. In addition many current rumours indicate that we intend to carry out a seaborne operation. To meet this the enemy has 257 Div in ISTRIA, with some of its troops reported South of PISAN, 188 Div in the [illegible] area and 710 Div in UDINE Plain. We have less evidence for troops in the VENICE area. 155 Training Div has according to one source moved down from the [illegible] area towards ROVIGO, but it is not known whether it is yet sufficiently strong to undertake any active role. The move of 29 P.G. Div North of the river may therefore be explained by anxiety lest we should land near VENICE, thereby threatening the whole enemy forces South of the PO. (Its role may also be to prevent any Allied airborne force from seizing the PO bridges). This same preoccupation with his coastal flanks was very evident last year before the May offensive, and the enemy may fear that a landing is intended in the Northern Adriatic to link up with the Russian drive into AUSTRIA. The recent talks between [illegible]

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From N.W. ITALY there is little to report: 5 Mtn and 34 Inf Divs are still in Western ITALY, and though there has probably been some local readjustment of sectors, there is no sign that either division intends to leave its present area.

.....2. ENEMY SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS..

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2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

The bad weather which set in at the end of last week continued until 29 March and consequently rail interdiction dropped off, notably on the BRENNER which might just possibly have been open all the way from VERONA to INNSBRUCK on one, perhaps two, days. In any event attacks on 29 March closed the BRENNER and on 2 April, the date of the most recent cover, the line was out at four points South of BOLZANO and three to the North. While it was thought that the enemy would be able to open a through route between the PO Valley and UDINE this now seems improbable particularly since PR shows that at least two rail diversions were washed out owing to rising water in the river. Beyond UDINE all three frontier routes remain blocked and there is evidence to indicate that the enemy may have abandoned his effort to repair the TARVISIO route which hitherto has been the most important of the three frontier routes.

In the PO Valley rail interdiction has been appreciably stepped up. As of 1 April only three of the twelve lines running South to the PO between VENICE and MILAN were open; the three open were the VERONA-ROVIGO, VERONA-OSTIGLIA and MILAN-PIACENZA lines. The MILAN-PIACENZA line does remain out at the PO river bridge and all other PO bridges West of the one South of PAVIA inclusive remain down. Railways South of the PO are still active. A report places an enemy railhead at VIGNOLA (L 6347) and another states that the railway running Southeast from FERRARA to RAVENNA operates as far South as the RENO river, thus indicating a continuance of the enemy's policy of running trains well forward.

The cutting of the railway running Southwest from VIENNA in the WIENER NEUSTADT area by the Russians is unlikely to affect the situation in either ITALY or YUGOSLAVIA. If, however, the line is cut further South in the area West of GRAZ, which would entail about a 70-kilometre advance by the Russians, the only rail lines available between GERMANY and both ITALY and YUGOSLAVIA will be the BRENNER and the KLAGENFURT-VILLACH (L 3880) lines. That they will be adequate seems at best extremely doubtful, particularly in view of the damage done to and the attacks continuing against railways in Southeastern BAVARIA by heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force, a report on which appears at appendix 'B'.

At the Northern end of his L of C the enemy already appears to be fairly well strangled owing to heavy restrictions on military traffic through SWITZERLAND. According to an official report from BERNE, under the agreement with the Allies on March 8th, the Swiss have added coal, iron, steel and scrap iron to the list of goods which they will not accept for transit from GERMANY to ITALY. In addition, they have agreed to limit such traffic as is permitted in any one month to the tonnage which passed in February, 1945 - that is about 8,200 tons per month Southbound. In regard to the Northbound traffic from ITALY to GERMANY, all traffic will be regarded as "loot" or "goods sold under pressure" and therefore prohibited until the contrary is proved; the maximum Northbound traffic permitted in any one month will be 5,900 tons. For practical purposes the Germans have now lost the use of the Swiss routes by which in the first half of 1944 the average monthly tonnage of transit traffic was 404,000 tons Southbound and 56,000 tons Northbound.

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From an operational viewpoint the above is significant in that no longer will the enemy be able to bring coal into ITALY via SWITZERLAND. There already exists in ITALY an acute coal shortage and according to reliable reports this is affecting operation of the railways.

There is little new information of significance on the enemy overall supply position. With current requirements very low and a brief partial breakdown of rail interdiction, supplies in ITALY may have increased but no major change is likely to have occurred. Reports continue to indicate a rather extensive use of methane as a substitute MT fuel, but attacks are now being made on the methane distribution system which should shortly effectively deny to the enemy this source of fuel. The enemy continues to take material, including foodstuffs, out of ITALY, but the amount must be strictly limited owing to rail interdiction. In connection with the general German food situation it is reported that two million Italian workers and "internees" are returning from GERMANY owing to shortage of food; because of lack of transport they are said to be coming by foot - a long walk!

.....3. WESTERN FRONT.....

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5. WESTERN FRONT

The disintegration of the German armies in the West has continued all week. For the enemy it has now become a question of offering effective local resistance wherever enough forces can be scraped together, rather than of attempting to build up any sort of coherent continuous front. Two major strategical developments in the enemy situation have occurred during the week. One is the encirclement in the RUHR of Army Group B; the other is the apparent decision to pull out of HOLLAND. The full extent of the disaster which has overtaken Army Group B cannot yet fully be assessed. Probably up to 100,000 men comprising elements of as many as twenty-five different German divisions have been cut off including possibly the Army Group Headquarters and its commander Field Marshal MODEL, branded as a war criminal by the Russians. In HOLLAND there have been clear indications that the enemy is pulling back although there is not yet sufficient evidence to assess the full extent of the withdrawal. If he withdraws at all, it looks as if he must go back to the fortified line of the IJSSEL river. Defences have, it is true, been reported running South Eastwards from the ZUIDER ZEE to ARNHEM. Unless however, the enemy's intention is to hold Western HOLLAND as a fortress, it is unlikely that he will stand on such a line. The present Allied thrust in HOLLAND is in a Northerly direction just West of the German frontier, so that any forces facing Eastwards and trying to hold the ARNHEM-ZUIDER ZEE line would already find themselves outflanked. The enemy still disposes of two divisions between ARNHEM and the Dutch coast, while six divisions are in contact between ARNHEM and NIJMEGEN.

In the central sector of the front it is now possible to see something of the plan ARNHEIM adopted to meet the situation arising from the Allied breakthrough. His main object was to hold the flanks of our penetration. Hence the strongest resistance we have encountered has been in the area of ARNHEIM to the South of the U.S. Third Army's breakthrough, and along the SIEG river on the Northern flank of First U.S. Army's old REMAGEN bridgehead. The former area was held by 2 Pz and 6 S.S. Mtn Divs, the Northern area by a force which contained the remnants of at least four former divisions and five infantry divisions. Having secured the flanks, it seems probable that ARNHEIM hoped to blunt the Allied drive North and N.E. towards PADERBORN and FULD, by shifting the armour on the SIEG river Eastwards and attacking the left flank of the great Allied salient extending up to PADERBORN. On paper it was not a bad plan, as good as could be devised in the circumstances of the moment. On the ground it was completely valueless for although the enemy achieved a measure of relative stability on our flanks at ARNHEIM and SIEGEN, there were no forces at all to stem or even oppose the Allied forces which covered the 55 miles from North of PADERBORN to the SIEGEN area in one day. When the enemy eventually attempted to shift his armour Eastward to attack the left flank of our penetration, he only involved himself in worse trouble, for the remnants of the armoured divisions were merely swept aside by the impetus of our advance. Elements of 11 Pz Division were contacted over an area of 60 miles. On the front of one Allied armoured division alone, no less than elements of seven different German divisions were contacted in one day. By this time any hope ARNHEIM may have had of carrying out the plan suggested above will have vanished with

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he will stand on such a line. The present Allied thrust in HOLLAND is in a Northerly direction just West of the German frontier, so that any forces being Southwards and trying to hold the ARNHEM-CUTTER ZEE line would already find themselves outflanked. The enemy still disposes of two divisions between ARNHEM and the Dutch coast, while six divisions are in contact between ARNHEM and MUNSTER.

In the central sector of the front it is now possible to see something of the plan KESSELRING adopted to meet the situation arising from the Allied breakthrough. His main object was to hold the flanks of our penetration. Hence the strongest resistance we have encountered has been in the area of SCHIJNDEL to the South of the U.S. Third Army's breakthrough, and along the SEINE river on the Northern flank of First U.S. Army's old REMAGEN bridgehead. The former area was held by 2 Mtn and 6 S.S. Mtn Divs, the Northern area by a force which contained the remnants of at least four former divisions and five infantry divisions. Having secured the flanks, it seems probable that KESSELRING hoped to blunt the Allied drive North and N.E. towards PADERBORN and FULDA, by shifting the armour on the SEINE river Eastwards and attacking the left flank of the great Allied salient extending up to PADERBORN. On paper it was not a bad plan, as good as could be devised in the circumstances of the moment. On the ground it was completely valueless for although the enemy achieved a measure of relative stability on our flanks at ARNHEM/SCHIJNDEL and SEINE, there were no forces at all to stem or even oppose the Allied forces which covered the 55 miles from North of FRANKFURT to the PADERBORN area in one day. When the enemy eventually attempted to shift his armour Eastward to attack the left flank of our penetration, he only involved himself in worse trouble, for the remnants of the armoured divisions were merely swept aside by the impetus of our advance. Elements of 11 Pz Division were contacted over an area of 60 miles. On the front of one Allied armoured division alone, no less than elements of seven different German divisions were contacted in one day. By this time any hope KESSELRING may have had of carrying out the plan suggested above will have vanished with the link up between Allied forces at LIPPSTADT and our penetration into SIEGEN which has greatly weakened the enemy resistance on our North flank.

In the confusion which is general along the Western Front it is impossible to draw any clear picture of the enemy's present dispositions, certainly on the Central sector of the front. In the South it looks as if the remnants of Army Group G have been pushed Southwards as the result of the Allied breakthrough North and N.E. of FRANKFURT. Indeed one of the reasons for the relatively feeble resistance which the enemy offered in the FRANKFURT sector was that Army Group G, having got its remnants back across the RHINE, was much too far South when the breakthrough occurred to play any effective part in the battle. Of the twenty six divisions originally in Army Group G, twelve have probably been destroyed completely, and of the remainder it is doubtful if more than two are even of average strength. Nevertheless with Army Group B written off as nothing more than a delaying factor to the Allied advance, Army Group G is now probably the stronger of the two Army Groups left to KESSELRING.

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By [illegible] NARS, Date 10/8/76

So far as the enemy's prospects of obtaining reinforcements are concerned, the situation in the West has changed since last week only in its further deterioration, not in the emergence of any new factors. One new division has been contacted this week, but it was a case of the mountain coming to Mahomet: 166 Res Division did not come up to the front; the front overran it. Other than this nothing new has appeared. The rail network in Western and N.W. [illegible] during the week has been almost completely dead. The only movement seen was on 30 March when a little traffic was moving West on railways into the Ruhr, a journey for which no return tickets were necessary. Moreover, even if there had been no major disaster in the West this Spring it is doubtful whether the enemy would have been able to procure much in the way of replacements from Central [illegible]. Total replacements in the west for February were only 12,000 compared with an average of 30,000 per month over the previous eight months. For March the figure was probably smaller still and perhaps no one will ever know the figure for April. It is no exaggeration to describe the situation as desperate, and there is little KESSELRING can do to remedy it. A situation has arisen where he is Commander in Chief in name only for he has neither a central reserve nor the power to influence the battle decisively by transferring forces from one Army Group sector to another.

4. [illegible]

EAST PRUSSIA AND EASTERN GERMANY

The fall of DANZIG has been one of the principal events in an extremely quiet week. Enemy resistance in the port proved tough, and according to prisoners, the garrison had received orders from HITLER to hold on to the last. Enemy casualties in killed alone were estimated by the Soviets at 40,000 while 10,000 PW were taken in the town. KOENIGSBERG remains now the only garrison holding out behind the Northern half of the Eastern Front.

There has been no change on the main front opposite BERLIN. The Commander of 402 Lds Divisional Staff has been captured recently in this sector and states that a number of military schools in POMERANIA have been brought up to the front and incorporated in existing divisions. Further South, Marshal KONIEV has scored two notable successes this week in the reduction of GLOGAU and the capture of RATIBOR. BRESLAU is now the only fortress left in GERMANY behind the Russian rear. The capture of RATIBOR gives the Soviets a road and rail centre of considerable importance for any advance Southwards through the OSTRAVA gap into CZECHOSLOVAKIA. An interesting identification on the First Ukrainian front this week has been that of both regiments of 715 Inf Div (which left ITALY in March) in the area of SORAU (North of [illegible]) on March 27.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

Although there has been a lull in the fighting in CZECHOSLOVAKIA during the week, Soviet progress in HUNGARY has been such that further German withdrawal from the Slovak salient is now very likely. The enemy still has the tip of his salient based on the High Tatra Mountains and may well be holding this natural defensive position and the High Tatra Mountains [illegible]

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4. EASTERN FRONT

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In HUNGARY it has been a very bad week for the Germans. The Soviet offensive last week extended to the North bank of the DANUBE where MALINOVSKI has made surprisingly rapid progress along the axis of the ESZTERGOM - KOMARNO railway. The enemy seems to have been badly disorganised and offered little effective resistance on either the GRAN or VAH rivers. Soviet forces are now some seven miles from KOMARNO and only 27 miles from the oil field at ZISTERSDORF (S 63) 30 miles N.E. of VIENNA. This has a maximum annual capacity of 1½ million tons and following the loss of the NAGYKANIZSA fields becomes an increasingly important factor in the enemy's present oil situation.

....South of the DANUBE....

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South of the [illegible] the Soviets are advancing on two main axes - along the GYÖR - VIENNA railway and the SOPRON (X 6) - VIENNA highway. The former thrust is not yet across the Austrian border but the latter has thoroughly pierced the enemy's frontier defence line running from the [illegible] Southwards through KÖSZEG (C 76) and has led to the fall of WIENER NEUSTADT (X 34). Further South there are some indications that the Russians have effected a deep penetration into the Upper MUR Valley towards GRAZ (R 66). By of 1 April saw fighting in progress at FELSŐLÖK (C 25), 22 miles East of GRAZ, and on the following day oil towns in the area East of GRAZ were seen to be burning, as too was WIENER NEUSTADT. It is clear that the enemy intends to adopt a scorched earth policy in AUSTRIA as he withdraws. Meanwhile South of Lake BALATON the Russians have captured NAGYKANIZSA (X 25) and are penetrating into the SZENTLŐRINC and LOVASZI oil regions. The exact importance of these fields is difficult to assess. By the end of 1943 it is probable that they were producing as much as 1,000,000 tons of crude oil annually. By this year bombing and transportation difficulties will appreciably have reduced output, but they may still have been worth a million tons annual crude oil to the enemy.

A very serious situation with far reaching implications has thus arisen for the enemy. Quite apart from the complete loss of the Hungarian oil fields which may be expected in the coming week, the Soviet advance open up a grave threat to the main supply routes from GERMANY into ITALY. The Russians are now only a few miles from the main railway line South from VIENNA to BRUCK (R 69); if they cut it, all Yugoslav and some of the Italian rail traffic will have to be routed to BRUCK via subsidiary lines West of VIENNA. Moreover if the Russian drive along the MUR Valley continues to make headway there is a likelihood that the Soviets may soon be across the BRUCK-KÖFLACH (R 27) railway - the only double track main line into YUGOSLAVIA. Russian progress further West still into the BRUCK - ST. MICHAEL (R 48) area which is now only about 50 miles behind the front would make the use of the North Eastern routes into ITALY extremely difficult for the enemy, especially as Army Group E would be using the VILLACH and KLAGENFURT junctions for its own traffic. An attempt at a stand by the enemy East of BRUCK is therefore likely, but with the defensive positions on the Austrian frontier pierced, it is not thought that the enemy has any prepared defense line left in AUSTRIA. It is possible that he may try to hold the Russians in the mountainous terrain South of VIENNA then along the PISCHELSDORF Alps as far as the MUR river somewhere East of BRUCK, thence Southwards along the MUR river. This would entail the loss of the BRUCK-MARIBOR railway but would keep the Soviets away from the rail junctions at LEOBEN (R 59) and ST. MICHAEL where subsidiary lines from the area West of VIENNA join the VIENNA-KLAGENFURT line.

The only interesting identification reported from HUNGARY this week comes from the morning's sitrep which places 16 S.S. P.G. Division (ex ITALY) in the area of Army Group South. No location has been reported but it has probably been incorporated into 6 S.S. Pz Army whose Commander Supp DIETRICH has been entrusted with the defence of VIENNA.

YUGOSLAVIA

The heavy Westward road movement from the SERVI reported last week has continued throughout this week. 297 and 11 S.S. Pz Divs are reported to be associated with the movement, but it is likely that in fact all the German

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YUGOSLAVIA.

The heavy Eastward road movement from the SKDM reported last week has continued throughout this week. 297 and 11 G.A.F. Divs are reported to be associated with the movement, but it is likely that in fact all the German forces are beginning to thin out from the SKDM. The curious thing is that there has been no sympathetic withdrawal from the SARAJEVO salient. It is clear that the thinning out of the SKDM front leaves 21 Mtn Corps for the third but undoubtedly the last time in danger of complete isolation from the rest of Army Group E; none the less there are no fresh indications that the enemy is going to abandon SARAJEVO yet.

So far no firm destination is apparent for the troops leaving the SKDM apart from the elements of 104 Jg Div which have gone to HELLAS. On 2 April, the

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trend of of traffic in N.W. YUGOSLAVIA appeared to be generally Northward. At this late stage it is improbable that the enemy will send any forces across the DRAV. or MURA into HUNGARY to support 2 Pz Army. More probably he is trying to build a front along the DRAV. or MURA in anticipation of the Soviet arrival on the North bank.

More of 104 Jg Division from the SRIJEM has arrived in the BIHAC sector this week. The initiative in this area however is still in Partisan hands. They have advanced some 25 miles North of BIHAC along the BIHAC-KARLOVAC (R 25) road and have reached a point 22 miles from KARLOVAC. 373 Gebirgs-Grenz Div is reported to have suffered very heavily in the recent battles.

for [illegible]
[illegible], G.S.
A.C. of S, G-2

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APPENDIX 'L' TO H.Q. 15 ARMY GROUP
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 68 DATED
3 APRIL, 1945.

RAILWAYS

BRENNER

The BRENNER railway probably remained blocked all last week though owing to poor flying weather the enemy undoubtedly came very close to getting it open to through trains all the way from VERONA to INNSBRUCK. The bad weather which set in on 26 March continued for three consecutive days during which air operations were severely restricted and no attacks were made on the BRENNER. The weather broke sufficiently on 29 March to permit fighter-bomber attacks on this vital railway, but the medium bombers were unable to attack until the 30th and even then only a limited effort was possible. In fact it was not until 2 April that the mediums were able to put up a good effort against the BRENNER having been forced until then to attack less vital railways as alternate targets. Lack of PR early in the week makes day by day reassessment of the status of the BRENNER impossible, but it is clear that interdiction dropped off appreciably; by the end of the week, however, interdiction had been built up again.

The first PR since 25 March was on the morning of the 29th, at which time the line was seen as open from VERONA up to within about 30 Kms of BOLZANO, with the exception of PARONA bridge just North of VERONA, which, however, is confirmed as operational when desired (see below). The block South of BOLZANO on the 29th was between S. MICHELE (A 7837) and ORA (A 8254) at two bridges on the main line and 12 mile loop-line respectively; since photos of the 25th also showed these two bridges as impassable and no attacks were made between the 25th and 29th it is presumed that the BRENNER was continuously blocked at these points. However, it seems curious that at least one of these bridges was not repaired in view of repairs made elsewhere on the BRENNER, and it is suspected that the S. MICHELE main line bridge may be operational when desired; PR of this bridge tends to support this suspicion. In any event it is now known that there is at least one bridge on the BRENNER which is operational when desired. As indicated above this is the PARONA bridge over the ADIGE just North of VERONA at ? 611565; this bridge, twice knocked out by heavy bombers, has been suspect for some time and night photos taken at 2150 hours on 2 April showed the two 60 foot spans, invariably missing on day photos, to be in place and the bridge passable to single line traffic. If the S. MICHELE bridge, like PARONA bridge, was in fact operational when desired the BRENNER was open almost all the way to the Pass for at least part of the time between 25 and 29 March. However, of the three bridges in the area of the Pass itself (one to the South and two to the North) seen as blocked on the 25th, at least one probably remained blocked up until the 28th. Thus, in so much as fighter bomber attacks of the 29th blocked the lower stretches of the BRENNER, it is very unlikely that the line was open throughout, i.e. from VERONA to INNSBRUCK, for more than one day, perhaps two at the most, even if it is assumed that S. MICHELE bridge was operational. [illegible]

that it was not until 2 April that the Axis were able to put up a good effort against the BRENNER having been forced until then to attack less vital railways as alternate targets. Lack of PR early in the week makes day by day assessment of the status of the BRENNER impossible, but it is clear that interdiction dropped off appreciably; by the end of the week, however, interdiction had been built up again.

The first PR since 25 March was on the morning of the 29th, at which time the line was seen as open from VERONA up to within about 50 Kms of BOLZANO, with the exception of PARONA bridge just North of VERONA, which, however, is confirmed as operational when desired (see below). The block South of BOLZANO on the 29th was between S. MICHELE (.7837) and ORA (.9254) at two bridges on the main line and 12 Kms on the loop-line respectively; since PR photos of the 25th also showed these two bridges as impassable and no attacks were made between the 25th and 29th it is presumed that the BRENNER was continuously blocked at these points. However, it seems curious that at least one of these bridges was not repaired in view of repairs made elsewhere on the BRENNER, and it is suspected that the S. MICHELE main line bridge may be operational when desired; PR of this bridge tends to support this suspicion. In any event it is now known that there is at least one bridge on the BRENNER which is operational when desired. As indicated above this is the PARONA bridge over the ADIGE just North of VERONA at ? 611505; this bridge, twice knocked out by heavy bombers, has been suspect for some time and night photos taken at 2150 hours on 2 April showed the two 60 foot spans, invariably missing on day photos, to be in place and the bridge passable to single line traffic. If the S. MICHELE bridge, like PARONA bridge, was in fact operational when desired the BRENNER was open almost all the way to the Pass for at least part of the time between 25 and 29 March. However, of the three bridges in the area of the Pass itself (one to the South and two to the North) seen as blocked on the 25th, at least one probably remained blocked up until the 28th. Thus, in as much as fighter bomber attacks of the 29th blocked the lower stretches of the BRENNER, it is very unlikely that the line was open throughout, i.e. from VERONA to INNSBRUCK, for more than one day, perhaps two at the most, even if it is assumed that S. MICHELE bridge was operational. In any event the BRENNER has been blocked continuously since the 29th South of BOLZANO and since the 31st North of BOLZANO. On the latest available cover, that of 2 April, the line was seen as cut at four bridges between VERONA and BOLZANO, not including the PARONA bridge which operates at night, and beyond BOLZANO approaches to one bridge just South of the Pass were cut while North of the Pass two bridges were impassable, one with cratered approaches the other very severely damaged.

The two bridges beyond INNSBRUCK, one to the N.E. the other to the N.W. are now known to be passable.

Though the BRENNER may have been blocked to through traffic all week, it has shown a great deal of activity. This movement, which has been noted for the most part North of BOLZANO, undoubtedly reflects the movement of

.....material along...

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material along the axis of the railway by means of transhipment. Due to adverse weather conditions, no photo cover was available between 25 and 29 March, but cover on the 29th revealed an unusual amount of movement since the 25th along the entire line, while subsequent daily cover has continued to show considerable activity, and it is evident that the enemy took full advantage of the several days of bad flying weather. No signs of rail troop movement have, however, been picked up. More activity than usual was also noted on the secondary railway running Eastward from the BRENNER at FORTEZZA (W 1302), though this line appears to have been blocked for most of the week.

NORTH EAST ITALY

The rail state in the North East remains highly satisfactory with rail routes out at many points. While PR was not available for several days and it was thought possible that through rail traffic might have been possible from the PO Valley to the UDINE area early in the week, subsequent PR indicates that this is extremely unlikely. That the interdiction has held up, however, is probably largely due to the fact that our rail interdiction effort has been materially assisted by rising rivers which have partially washed out two diversions on the main TREVISO-UDINE line. It is also now evident that beyond UDINE all the frontier routes remain cut. In fact there is evidence to indicate that the enemy has abandoned his effort to keep the TARVISIO route open; four bridges still effectively cut this line. It is interesting to note that progress still continues on the rail diversion around the heavily damaged viaduct at SOVERZENE on the line to LATISANA which was recently seen as 75% complete, though considerable work remains to be done.

Relatively little rail activity is evident in the North East. Although the VENICE-VICENZA-TREVISO line has been in use during the week, no unusual activity has been seen, while the general PADUA-VICENZA-TREVISO area has remained only very moderately active. The main TREVISO-UDINE line has been quiet, as is to be expected in view of the heavy interdiction, while the Control rout e remains little used. Traffic on the Southern route is still stagnant West of CERVIGNANO (H 4693), but East of the ISONZO River interdictions an unusual amount of rolling stock has arrived on the line going towards TRIESTE.

The main UDINE-TARVISIO frontier route, while it has remained closed to through trains all week, has, like the BRENNER, been quite active both North and South of the belt of interdiction. This activity undoubtedly reflects transhipment around these cuts. The PEDICCLLO and POSTUMIA routes have both been in use though no unusual activity was noticed.

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to indicate that the enemy has abandoned his efforts to keep the TARVISIO route open; four bridges still effectively cut this line. It is interesting to note that progress still continues on the rail diversion around the heavily damaged viaduct at BOROVNICA on the line to LJUBLJANA which was recently seen as 75% complete, though considerable work remains to be done.

Relatively little rail activity is evident in the North East. Although the VENICE-VICENZA-TREVISO line has been in use during the week, no unusual activity has been seen, while the general PADUA-VICENZA-TREVISO area has remained only very moderately active. The main TREVISO-UDINE line has been quiet, as is to be expected in view of the heavy interdiction, while the Central route remains little used. Traffic on the Southern route is still stagnant West of GORIZIA/NO (H 4693), but East of the ISONZO River interdictions an unusual amount of rolling stock has arrived on the line going towards TRIESTE.

The main UDINE-TARVISIO frontier route, while it has remained closed to through trains all week, has, like the BRENNER, been quite active both North and South of the belt of interdiction. This activity undoubtedly reflects transhipment around these cuts. The PREDIL and POSTUMIA routes have both been in use though no unusual activity was noticed.

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APPENDIX 'B' TO H.Q. 15 ARMY GROUP
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 38 DATED
3 APRIL, 42

M.A.F BOMBERS AID SOVIET ARMIES

The devastating blows which aircraft of Mediterranean Allied Air Forces are striking against the enemy in Southeastern Europe aim at paralyzing rail, road and river traffic carrying troops and supplies to the Wehrmacht on the Red Army fronts. At the same time, crippling blows have been dealt the enemy's few remaining sources of fuel in Austria and Hungary. This article, taken from "15th Air Force - Operations in Southeastern Europe," gives the overall plan behind these attacks.

In November, 1944, the Fifteenth Air Force, realizing that the drive of the Russian armies through Hungary provided an exceptional opportunity to utilize its striking power to prevent the adequate and timely supply, replacement and reinforcement of the defending axis troops south of the T.[illegible] mountains, undertook a detailed analysis of the rail transportation systems in Austria, Western Hungary and Yugo-slavia. A comprehensive photo reconnaissance program was initiated, and the resulting information, combined with reports from ground agents and prisoners of war, had by the end of the year, revealed a reasonably clear picture of the flow of traffic to meet the urgent needs of the hard pressed axis forces in Southeastern Europe.

On 23 December, the Russian High Command requested Strategic bombardment of rail lines leading from the Linz area in Northwestern Austria to Hungary and Yugoslavia, and connecting lines to Northeastern Italy. Plans were made immediately to comply with this request. The rail system analysis showed clearly that no major lines of interdiction, such as the D[illegible]UBE or TIS[illegible] rivers, existed in Austria or Western Hungary. However, it did seem possible at the appropriate time to sever the rail connections between Yugoslavia and Hungary at the DR[illegible]V[illegible] river, thus supplementing the isolation of the axis forces in Italy achieved by the Italy-based Tactical Air Force. In view of weather uncertainties and the then relatively light scale of ground activity, it was decided to postpone this program until a time when temporary interdiction by bombardment of bridges would seriously affect the mobility of the enemy forces. Another limitation on the scope of the original plan was the bomb line, which excluded targets in Hungary from strategic attack.

The plan as finally developed involved the immobilization of marshalling and major handling facilities at the rail centers on the main lateral double-track rail line running from VIENNA through WIENER NEUSTADT, BRUCK A.D. MUR, GRAZ and MARIBOR to [illegible]ARAZD, from which virtually all lines to the front branch to the East and Southeast; followed by the progressive destruction of supplies, rolling stock and facilities in the rail yards west of this lateral line as military trains backed up following the initial attacks. The execution of this plan was hampered by extremely adverse weather during January, but attacks were made whenever pos-

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the Russian armies through Hungary provided an exceptional opportunity to [illegible] its striking power to prevent the adequate and timely supply, replacement and reinforcement of the defending axis troops south of the TATRA mountains, undertook a detailed analysis of the rail transportation systems in Austria, Western Hungary and Yugo-slavia. A comprehensive photo reconnaissance program was initiated, and the resulting information, combined with reports from ground agents and prisoners of war, had by the end of the year, revealed a reasonably clear picture of the flow of traffic to meet the urgent needs of the hard pressed axis forces in Southeastern Europe.

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The plan as finally developed involved the immobilization of marshalling and major handling facilities at the rail centers on the main lateral double-track rail line running from VIENNA through WIENER NEUSTADT, BRUCK A.D. MUR, GRAZ and MARIBOR to ZAGREB, from which virtually all lines to the front branch to the East and Southeast; followed by the progressive destruction of supplies, rolling stock and facilities in the rail yards west of this lateral line as military trains backed up following the initial attacks. The execution of this plan was hampered by extremely adverse weather during January, but attacks were made whenever possible. Starting 15 February improved conditions permitted a series of heavy blows which virtually immobilized most of the rail yards from VIENNA to ZAGREB. As had been appreciated, traffic immediately backed up in the LINZ area, where attacks were then commenced. At the same time, occasional attacks on the line connecting BRUCK A.D. MUR with Northeastern Italy served to strain further the enemy's available repair effort and hamper the use of by-pass lines.

As the attacks progressed, certain tactical factors became clear. Interdiction of through lines by bombardment of rail yards was temporary at best. Likewise, destruction of repair facilities caused only inconvenience, as abundant alternative facilities were available in most areas. However, it was soon found that a heavy density of bombs in a crowded yard caused maximum destruction of rolling stock and in many cases immobilized for some time all undestroyed stock.

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Thus, while a through line could generally be put in operation in a few hours, in many cases no substantial amount of rolling stock was moved in or out for one to three weeks. It therefore became the policy of the Air Force to select fleeting targets - the yards most heavily loaded with military supplies as revealed by current daily photography - and to concentrate on each a sufficiently heavy tonnage to immobilize it while the remaining yards in the same system were attacked in similar fashion. Thus, each attack, by restricting handling capacity in the area, automatically tended to set up another good target.

By the end of February, most of the important rail centers in the areas selected had been attacked and their handling facilities severely damaged. The efficient German repair system had been strained too far. Repairs were lagging far behind the damage being caused, and drastic alternatives came into use. Stock piled up in the Hungarian yards east of the main lateral line, with every indication that supplies were being pushed through the blasted belt between LINZ and the Hungarian border, and reclassified into divisional trains in Hungary. At the same time, the Russian High Command requested the attack of the major rail centers along the two main lines running east from VIENNA, north and south of the DANUBE. This request was supplemented on 12 March with the addition of targets in north Yugoslavia and Austria.

Forthwith, a supplemental photo reconnaissance program was initiated, giving almost daily coverage of the Hungarian rail system, and a plan for the immobilization of handling facilities between the VIENNA - BUDAPEST line and the front was put into operation. The major portion of this plan has been carried out.

Recent reports indicated that strong formations of axis troops have been moving from Yugoslavia north presumably to join in the German offensive northeast of LAKE BALATON. Consequently the DRAVA interdiction program has been put into operation and partially completed by the virtual destruction of the rail bridge at PTUJ and a successful strike at the VARAZDIN yard.

Bombardment was not the only available weapon. The inherent weakness of the German defensive fighter force resulting from the 1944 all out strategic bombing of the fighter aircraft and fuel industries, combined with the commitment of the available fighters in the Southeastern area to ground cooperation tasks, reduced the necessity for large scale escort for our bombers and permitted the use of strategic fighters for strafing and dive bombing. The dive bombers have been used to attack pinpoint targets not readily identifiable from high altitude. The strafing plan, carried out in conjunction with virtually every bombing attack, was designed to add to the mounting total of destroyed locomotives and rolling stock, and in addition to achieve a major degree of traffic interdiction by wrecking moving trains at numerous points on the main lines.

Communications were the principal targets. However, attacks on industrial installations contributed materially to the success achieved. In line with strate-

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indication that supplies were being pushed through the blasted belt between LINZ and the Hungarian border, and reclassified into divisional trains in Hungary. At the same time, the Russian High Command requested the attack of the major rail centers along the two main lines running east from VIENNA, north and south of the DANUBE. This request was supplemented on 12 March with the addition of targets in north Yugoslavia and Austria.

Forthwith, a supplemental photo reconnaissance program was initiated, giving almost daily coverage of the Hungarian rail system, and a plan for the immobilization of handling facilities between the VIENNA - KOMÁROM line and the front was put into operation. The major portion of this plan has been carried out.

Recent reports indicated that strong formations of axis troops have been moving from Yugoslavia north presumably to join in the German offensive northeast of Lake BALATON. Consequently the MARSHALLING interdiction program has been put into operation and partially completed by the virtual destruction of the rail bridge at PTUJ and a successful strike at the VARAZDIN yard.

Bombardment was not the only available weapon. The inherent weakness of the German defensive fighter force resulting from the 1944 all out strategic bombing of the fighter aircraft and fuel industries, combined with the commitment of the available fighters in the Southeastern area to ground cooperation tasks, reduced the necessity for large escort for our bombers and permitted the use of strategic fighters for strafing and dive bombing. The dive bombers have been used to attack pinpoint targets not readily identifiable from high altitude. The strafing plan, carried out in conjunction with virtually every bombing attack, was designed to add to the mounting total of destroyed locomotives and rolling stock, and in addition to achieve a major degree of traffic interdiction by wrecking moving trains at numerous points on the main lines.

Communications were the principal targets. However, attacks on industrial installations contributed materially to the success achieved. In line with strategic bombardment policy, the communications plan was supplemented by attacks on fuel and tank production and storage facilities in Southeastern Europe, which it was clear were producing primarily for the axis troops in that area.

The rich Hungarian oil fields, whose crude oil yields an exceptionally high percentage of gasoline, were still in German hands. Refining capacity in the VIENNA area, including the large new plant at MOOSBIERBAUM, was capable of a monthly output of over 10,000 tons of gasoline, enough to support a substantial scale of effort on the Hungarian plain. During the course of attacks on these plants, intelligence revealed that the modern SZONY and ALMASFUZITO refineries near KOMÁROM,

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heavily bombed last year, had been repaired and were capable of substantial production. It seemed probable that these plants, ideally situated near the active front, were processing Hungarian crude oil for the supply of the attacking panzer forces northeast of Lake BALATON. Forthwith they were attacked.

Several large tank depots, repair and production plants had been spotted by photo reconnaissance - notably at VIENNA, whose great arsenal was teeming with tanks, at LINZ and in the KAPFENBURG area. These two felt the destructive weight of aerial bombs, for the Germans could not transport to the front products destroyed before they started.

Thus, the plan has unfolded, always flexible and capable of alternation to fit current intelligence and the enemy's defensive moves, always directed at a single overall objective; to prevent axis men, weapons and supplies from reaching the Russian armies.

(Source U.S.F.Air Intelligence Weekly Summary No. 123, Intel 25 March, 1945).

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single overall objective; to prevent Axis men, weapons and supplies from reaching the Russian armies.

(Source MAF Air Intelligence Weekly Summary No. 123, dated 25 March, 1945).

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SECRET

IS ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 67 OF 5 MAR '45

NOTE: The security classification of this Summary has now been downgraded to SECRET. In view of this, the publication of "15 Army Group Intelligence Notes" has been discontinued and all recipients of the latter have been placed on the distribution of this Summary.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

Once more 29 P.G. Div is in reserve, having been relieved in the CASTEL D'AIANO sector by 334 Inf Div. The first evidence of this change was provided by two prisoners taken early on the morning of the 24th near CASTELVO L 6425. They said that 756 Regiment had come into the line on the 21st March after having marched across from DALLA. That same night a short patrol encounter 3,000 yards to the west resulted in several enemy being killed and documents taken from one body identified the Engineer Co of 334 Div in a sector previously associated with 15 P.G.R. Since then, though there have been no further contact identifications of 334 Div, we have had several reports of the divisional sign being seen in the area South of MONTE. In addition tanks of 29 P.G. Div were seen on the 24th March as far North as MIRANDOLA L 6893 while a battalion of the div was reported by O.P.'s just West of C.2921 L 5281 on the same day. It is safe to assume therefore that 29 P.G. Div is in reserve in the general area North of MODENA.

There is little other news from the Fifth Army front. More activity has been confined to normal patrolling on both sides. 114 Div is still carried in and N... of MONTESE L 5524 with probably at least two battalions of 721 Regt still out of the line reforming. Identifications of 1044 G.R. and 1045 G.R. confirm that 232 Div has taken over West of 114 Div and its responsibilities apparently include the defence of the MONTE ... area, where we continue to get prisoners from III Bn 5 Mtn Regt 200 Regiment which is under its command. Within the division the lay-out is 1045 G.R. on the ... and 1044 G.R. in the MONTESE sector on the West. While the divisional boundary with 114 Div apparently runs North West from P. TOMBACCI L 5020. 1040 G.R. is indicated and must still be in reserve reorganising. When supposing that two whole of 334 Div is committed in the line this leaves the Corps approximately four battalions (two from 114 Div and two from 232 Div) in immediate reserve West of V.46.70.

In the SANTO Valley we have now identified ... Division and ...

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Once more 29 P.G. Div is in reserve, having been relieved in the CASTEL D'AIANO sector by 334 Inf Div. The first evidence of this change was provided by two prisoners taken early on the morning of the 26th near CASTIGLIO L 6425. They said that 756 Regiment had come into the line on the 21st March after having marched across from IMOLA. That same night a sharp patrol encounter 3,000 yards to the west resulted in several enemy being killed and documents taken from one body identified the Engineer Bn of 334 Div in a sector previously associated with 15 P.G.R. Since then, though there have been no further contact identifications of 334 Div, we have had several reports of the divisional sign being seen in the area South of IMOLA. In addition tanks of 29 P.G. Div were seen on the 24th March on the North-East RIBBOLLA L 6693 while a battalion of the div was reported by O.P.'s just West of CAZZI L 5281 on the same day. It is safe to assume therefore that 29 P.G. Div is in reserve in the general area North of MONTE.

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There is little other news from the Eighth Army front, where activity has been confined to normal patrolling on both sides. 114 Div is still carried in and N.E. of MONTESE L 5824 with probably at least two battalions of 721 Regt still out of the line reforming. Identifications of 1024 G.R. and 1045 G.R. confirm that 232 Div has taken over West of 114 Div and its responsibilities apparently include the defence of the ZENZONI Pass, where we continue to get prisoners from III in 5 Mtn Bn 1.909 Regiment which is under its command. Within the division the lay-out is 1045 G.R. on the West and 1044 G.R. in the MONTESE sector on the East, while the divisional boundary with 114 Div apparently runs North West from L 1038 to L 5520. 1043 G.R. is unlocated and must still be in reserve reorganising. Even supposing that the whole of 334 Div is committed in the line this leaves the enemy approximately four battalions (two from 114 Div and two from 232 Div) in immediate reserve East of VADO.

In the SAVENA Valley we have now identified the Rocca Unit of the 356 Div and the whole division appears to be complete in this area. We have had no recent prisoners or deserters from 305 Div and it can be assumed that all its elements have now left for North West ITALY. To the East of 334 Div there has been a steady trickle of deserters from 94 Div, none of them bringing any startling information but all providing useful confirmation that the divisional sector remains unchanged, except on its extreme left flank where 157 Mtn Div have apparently taken over responsibility for MONTE SOLE L 7826. We know from prisoners that the mountaineers have under their command 7 S.A.F. Bn s.b.v. which is holding from L 5021 to the SETT. river.

From 1 Para Div sector come reports which hint at a relief on the Northern slopes of M. GRANE. In the sector where we had previously identified II Bn 4 Para Regt, troops were seen on the 25th wearing a different type of uniform and helmet, and it is possible that some Infantry unit may have taken over from the Fortschutzstab in this sector. Possibly connected with this is a report from a source in BOLOGNA, that troops of 65 Div who had been billetted in the Southern outskirts of the city for the last two months had moved away about the

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the intention of securing prisoners. One on the 26th was put in by 7 Coy 9 P.G.R. in strength of about a platoon in the area M 3030. This particular raid was singularly unsuccessful and cost the enemy two killed and five wounded and left us with fourteen prisoners including one officer. II Bn is the Northernmost one in the divisional sector and its right neighbour is I Bn 9 P.G.R. Apart from rumours that 26 Recce Unit was on the right flank of the div, we had no firm identifications until the 25th when a deserter arrived from II Bn 67 P.G.R. in the area M 2820. It is still not certain whether the other battalion of this regiment provides the divisional reserve or is also in the line. Further downstream the occupants of the sector immediately West of LUGO who had escaped identification for some time are now known to be 105th G.R. - the right hand regiment of 362 Div. Up till the 24th only one battalion of the Regt had been forward, the other being in reserve supervising Italians constructing the SANTERNO defences. It is now rumoured by prisoners that both battalions are forward and that I Bn has relieved the Northernmost battalion of 90 Div - a relief that was expected by prisoners taken over a week ago. Whether this has occurred or not 362 Div still remains on a very extended front. Yesterday there were two useful identifications from the CODRONCHIO Spit where 142 Recce Unit still have squadron on the Western shores of the Spit while elements of the Kesselring Trg. Bn No. 2. are at the south of the MANO. There have been no recent deserters from 162 Turcoman Div so that the story that the Turcomans were going to be relieved by Germans may well have come true.

Prisoners taken recently on the Eighth Army front from 26 Pz Div said that the enemy is expecting an Allied attack to be launched shortly either up the axis of Route 9 or directed on LUGO. The enemy is showing similar anxiety on the front S.W. of BOLOGNA where he apparently construed our attack at the beginning of the month West of VERGATO as a preliminary to the launching of a larger scale offensive in that sector. The committing of 29 P.G. Div from reserve is proof enough of this and its more recent replacement by 334 Div, probably the best Infantry Div in ITALY, shows that the enemy is still unwilling to take a risk here. In view of the enemy's anxiety as to our intentions a brief comparison of his present situation with that at the beginning of the year is not without interest. Early in January the enemy line was held by sixteen German divisions and one Italian division, while there were four divisions in immediate reserve North of BOLOGNA. Of these sixteen divisions nine held from the Adriatic to M. GRANDE, the remaining seven being on the 5 Army front. By the middle of the month 356 Div had been taken out of the line on the CERRO front and was on its way out of ITALY and one division had been switched from the 5 Army to the 8 Army front. At present there are fifteen divisions in the line, seven of which are East of M. GRANDE representing a loss of two divisions on this front between the middle of January and now, with a corresponding gain on the 5 Army front. (162 Div was switched during February from Ostera E. Bn to North of Lake COMACCHIO but its poor fighting qualities restrict its activities to constructing, and its arrival merely offsets the departure for N.A. ITALY of the battalions of 710 Div previously in that sector). There are, however, only two divisions (both mobile) in reserve as compared with four early in January, the net loss being

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accounted for by the departure of 16 S.S. and 715 Divs, the latter by now probably clear of ITALY. It would be misleading however to regard the departure of three divisions as implying that the enemy's fighting strength is proportionately lower now than it was at the beginning of January, since during the interim period, which has been a quiet one, the enemy has undoubtedly been able to build up again those divisions which at the beginning of the year were below strength. Although the enemy has lost some twenty battalions of infantry South of the PO, replacements for the divisions in the line and in immediate reserve will have probably very nearly made good the difference if expressed in terms of numbers of fighting men.

The situation confronting KESSELRING's successor might be a great deal worse. He has at least the satisfaction of taking over an unbroken fighting force composed of some of the best divisions now available anywhere to the German Army, and he has two good mobile divisions (29 P.G. and 90 P.G.) in reserve, which is apparently all that KESSELRING found awaiting him when he assumed the appointment of C in C West. We still lack definite evidence as to who has taken over Army Group C, but providing that the report that he was hurt in a car crash is false, Col. Gen VIETINGHOFF who deputised for KESSELRING when the latter was injured in December, is the most likely choice. Assuming that no one has been brought in from outside (Colt General LEYERS, C.O.S. 1 Army, would be second favourite. Whoever the successor is, it is unlikely that there will be any major change of strategy in ITALY. Despite the loss of three divisions the enemy commander has still been able to remain on the same line as at the beginning of the year (though in the ROMAGNA plain this is not the shortest line he could choose) and he shows no sign of relinquishing it voluntarily. On the Eighth Army front he has appreciated that the main blow is likely to be struck up Route 9 or between here and FLORENCE, and it is on this sector that he has concentrated three good divisions (4 Para Div, 26 Pz Div and 98 Div) at the expense of thinning out to the North and South. On the key feature of M. CASSINO, despite some local regrouping to 1 Para Div, while the approaches to MONTE CAIRO are covered by a highly developed system of defence works. In the sector West of VENAFRO, where presumably from a remark of the attack, he has placed his best Infantry division - 334 - and has also at least some four battalions in local reserve should we launch an attack. In general reserve South of the PO are the mobile divisions with which the C in C S.W. may hope to influence the battle. Except for the need to keep three divisions East of VENAFRO where previously one had sufficed, the enemy's dispositions are the most economical he can make with the forces available, - always provided he is not called upon to give up any more divisions. And at present there is no sign that any formation is following 71st Div out of the country.

2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

This week no major developments are apparent on the enemy L of C and railways remain well interdicted. On the [illegible]

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reserve, which is approximately all that [illegible] found existing, six when he assumed the appointment of C in C West. We still lack definite evidence as to who has taken over Army Group G, but providing that the report that he was hurt in a car crash is false, Col.-Gen. Gotz VON [illegible] who deputised for [illegible] when the latter was injured in December, is the most likely choice. Assuming that no one has been brought in from outside [illegible] General LUEDDER, G.O.C. 14 Army, would be second favourite. Whoever the successor is, it is unlikely that there will be any major change of strategy in Italy. Despite the loss of three divisions the enemy commander has still been able to remain on the same line as at the beginning of the year (though in the ROCCA SECCA sector this is not the shortest line he could choose) and he shows no sign of relinquishing it voluntarily. On the Eighth Army front he has apparently that the main blow is likely to be struck up Route 5 or between here and PESCARA, and it is on this sector that he has concentrated three good divisions (4 Para Div, 26 Pz Div and 90 Div) at the expense of thinning out to the North and South. On the key feature of M. CROCE, despite some local regrouping in 2 Para Div, while the approaches to [illegible] are covered by a highly developed system of defence works. In the sector West of VENAFRO, where [illegible] expect a renewal of the attack, he has placed his best infantry division - 334 - and has also at least some four battalions as local reserve should we launch a attack. In general reserve South of the 20 are two mobile divisions with which the C in C S.W. may hope to influence the battle. Except for the need to keep three divisions West of VENAFRO where previously one had sufficed, the enemy's dispositions are the most economical he can make with the forces available, - always provided he is not called upon to give up any more divisions. And at present there is no sign that any formation is following 71 Div out of the country.

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2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

This week no major developments are apparent on the enemy L of C and railways remain cold interdiction. On the ADRIATIC, due to bad weather on 26 and 27 March and the fact that a large portion of our medium bomber effort against the railroad has fallen on the upper stretches of the line, considerable repairs have been effected between [illegible] and VENAFRO. It is probable that by the 28th the line may be open one far North as TERMOLI. In the S.W. many repairs are slow and all lines from the PO DELL. ORO across the frontier are blocked at many points. Through traffic is also impossible from the middle PO Valley to MILAN.

Only slight indications of rail troop movement have been picked up recently, again on the ADRIATIC North of [illegible], and it is most probable that by this time 715 Inf Div has cleared ITALY.

Most of the PO no pronounced road movement has been seen from the air and little reported by ground sources. Ground reports covering the last week of February and the first half of March show that troops going North along the roads VENAFRO-ISERNIA-CAMPOBASSO moved largely by road, thereby confirming the effectiveness of our rail interdiction. One report shows that in late February a considerable number of troops were forced to march by road all the way to [illegible] Rome; these troops will have been the tail of 16 S.S. Div. It is probable that a fairly large proportion of 715 Div has been forced to do the

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some thing. Another ground source states that large amounts of goods and materials destined for GERMANY are stored in the ADIGE Valley owing to transportation difficulties; unless moved by AF there is little likelihood that they will ever reach their destination.

No major changes have been noted of late along the PO river where all traffic East of PIACENZA continues to cross by ferry or night pontoon bridges. None of the pontoon bridges have been seen assembled this week but night AP has shown activity at CASALMAGGIORE (F 1704), BORGOFORTE (F 4911), S. NICOLO (F 5112) and CREMONA (F 7411). With very few of our aircraft operating on 26 and 27 March the PO crossings may have been operating 24 hours a day.

No change is evident in the enemy's supply position. Reports continue to be received of the enemy's shortage of petrol and many indicate an extensive use of methane as a substitute. According to a PW who formerly belonged to a tank recovery unit, vehicles frequently ran out of petrol and had to wait on the road until more was brought up from their own workshops. The situation which this type of report reflects is unlikely to be remedied by the recent offer made by 98 Div to award 1,000 cigarettes to any man who returns from petrol with a can of captured petrol.

3. WESTERN FRONT

The line of the RHINE has been finally broken this week. Before the last German had been cleared from the West bank South of LUDWIGSHAFEN, new crossings had already been effected in the Northern and Southern sectors to supplement the steadily expanding Allied bridgehead at WORMS. Three major bridgehead areas are now discernible - in the DUSSELDORF-KREFELD area, at REMAGEN and North of the RUHR in the WESEL sector. These are in addition to a large number of subsidiary crossings, which are being rapidly merged into the larger bridgeheads as the latter expand. The quality and degree of enemy resistance at each is in direct proportion to the success achieved by the enemy in withdrawing his forces across the RHINE in the various sectors; only the quality of inadequacy is common to all.

In the South the battle West of the RHINE ended with the almost complete destruction of the German Seventh Army and the partial elimination of the First Army. Seventh Army had definitely lost all hope of withdrawal across the RHINE by about March 19th when Allied columns swirling through BAD KREUZNACH reached the MAINZ-WORMS area. Prior to that very little had been able to escape. The collapse of the Seventh Army affected the right wing and centre of the First Army holding the Siegfried line west of WISSEMBOURG, and the front folded up from North to South with very heavy losses to the enemy. Only on the extreme left of First Army did the line hold firm; here one F.C. and two infantry divisions fought very hard to cover the crossings at SPEYER and KARLSRUHE, and were themselves able to pull back over the RHINE in reasonably good order. Before this happened Allied forces were able to exploit the disorganisation of the few enemy forces in the area South of MAINZ

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In the ARNHEIM bridgehead area, the enemy's main concern has been with his Northern flank which he reinforced with two additional infantry divisions brought down from the GRONAU plain during the week. He made some efforts to extract some armour from the line and indeed nearly succeeded in extricating 7 P.G. Div, only to recommit it hastily as the Allied armour started to exert pressure. The reinforcement of the Northern flank did not however, take into account the disastrous weakness of the centre and the Southern flank of the bridgehead. Here at least four infantry divisions had ceased to exist

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as fighting formations. An indication of the state those forces were in lies in the fact that 26 Volksgrenadier division had three infantry divisions under its command. An average of 1,000 a daily has been taken over the past seven days in the bridgehead and the inevitable has now occurred. Allied armour has broken out of the bridgehead and is pushing East against decreasing enemy resistance.

Further North, the large scale Allied WHITE crossing in the WESEL area has produced no surprises, neither for the enemy who was probably expecting the attack, nor for us in the form of unexpected identifications. In the first 36 hours three parachute and three infantry divisions were contacted by our forces; these have now been joined by the two mobile divisions held in Army Group H reserve - 116 Pz and 15 P.G. The enemy as might be expected in view of the better quality of his troops here is fighting harder than in most other sectors of the front. The trouble is that he has not enough of anything and already an ominous expansion of this bridgehead is taking place. A few more troops may perhaps be spared from HOLLAND to reinforce the area: [redacted] has now the bulk of four divisions in the area between the Dutch coast and [redacted], excluding the elements of an unidentified parachute division which are reported to have arrived recently in HOLLAND. Even with all these reinforcements (and they are the best I Para Army can hope for) the enemy has virtually no prospect of reducing or containing the bridgehead.

[redacted] when he arrived in the West is alleged to have informed his staff that he was the new V-3 secret weapon. He needs to be, for there is little prospect of anything else arriving in the West in time to save the situation. The courses open to the enemy are now limited. The basic choice lies between fighting until his armies are destroyed in detail or accepting unconditional surrender. There is still no indication that the enemy is in any way disposed to follow the second course and it must be assumed that he intends to fight on so long as organised resistance is a possibility. This granted, he must without delay stabilise the front, and it is now extremely doubtful whether this lies within his capabilities. Two essential conditions are needed. The first is adequate forces. It is now abundantly clear that the enemy is in no position to contain any single one of the present Allied bridgeheads let alone all of them. Only a rapid and substantial reinforcement of all threatened sectors can retrieve the position. This appears to be beyond the enemy's present capabilities. Apart from a possible two divisions in HOLLAND which might be spared, all the divisions on the Western Front are either wholly committed or destroyed. 19 Army has been drained dry and 5 Pz Army's forces in the [redacted] are few of the steadiest. There are certainly outside the Western Front forces which could be spared, a dozen divisions in NORWAY, possibly half a dozen from the [redacted], at least that number from ITALY and a few from the Eastern Front. But these are not in any true sense available. The enemy's transportation situation is such that before the first of these could take its appointment, the whole front in the West may have collapsed. It now takes a month to get a division out of NORWAY; it takes rather longer to transfer a division from East to West, and judging by the speed at which 715 Inf

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The second essential for stabilisation is to have a defence line on which to stand. It is not easy to see where the enemy can now hope to do this. The SIEGFRIED and the RHINE lines were the best and most economical available to him in the west. No other position now offers similar advantages. A line running from EMDEN along the EMS down to the RHINE near EMMERICH has been reported. This is in danger of being turned by the expansion of our WESEL bridgehead. Apart from this the only projected defence line of any sort is a series of fortifications

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built in the area East of FRANKFURT prior to the German re-occupation of the [illegible]. The state of these is not known but it is unlikely to be very satisfactory. There is thus small prospect that ARNSBERG can quickly stabilise the situation. His main hope must now be to inflict the maximum casualties upon the Allies in the hope that like the Soviet advances, our attack will lose its momentum in time for some fresh forces to come up. On the present form it now seems within our power to inflict a crippling disaster on the enemy, and so to isolate and disorganise his Army Groups that it will not be possible for him to pull any substantial forces from the Western Front back to the last ditch positions in the Austrian National Redoubt where the Germans may hope to end the war.

4. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND GERMANY

There have been few developments of importance in this past week. South of KÖNIGSBERG, the enemy pocket around HEILIGENBEIL has been eliminated, but little further headway has been made towards KÖNIGSBERG itself by the Third White Russian Army Group. In the area of DANZIG and GDYNIA stiff enemy opposition continues and ROKOSSOVSKY's forces have been held to small gains, although by the capture of ZOPPOT, a wedge has been driven between GDYNIA and DANZIG. One of the pocket battleships which was at GDYNIA at the start of this month has now been transferred to SWINEMÜNDE and it is possible that the other has followed it.

There has been no activity of importance on the main front in GERMANY as far South as the Upper Silesian region. In this latter area, progress has been made by Marshal KONIEV's forces towards the SUDETEN Mountains, but without knowing the full extent of KONIEV's objectives, it is difficult to assess the success of this attack. The German bridgehead over the ODER S.E. of OPPELN has been eliminated, itself a development of some significance. Apart from that however no success of major strategic importance seems to have been achieved, nor has KONIEV yet got his flank resting firmly on the SUDETEN mountains. Moreover it is clear that by the time the Russians gave the news of the attack, it had in fact virtually come to an end, and little further progress has been made in the past few days. The attack may of course be the prelude to an all-out offensive by the First Ukrainian Army Group across the SUDETEN mountains towards QUEDLINBURG and the Bohemian plain. To judge by the comments of German military spokesmen, this is a Soviet capability which the enemy considers to be current and likely.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

The Czechoslovak and Hungarian region has seen the most important Soviet progress on the Eastern Front in the past week. North of BUDAPEST, the enemy, possibly fearful of deep Soviet penetrations into his rear across the SUDETEN mountains, has been pulling in the Southern flank of his long salient in SLOVAKIA. The pace of the German withdrawal has been rather less hurriedly than in previous weeks

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The Czechoslovak and Hungarian region has seen the most important Soviet progress on the Eastern Front in the past week. North of BUDAPEST, the enemy, possibly fearful of deep Soviet penetrations into his rear across the CARPATHI mountains, has been pulling in the Southern flank of his long salient in SLOVAKIA. The pace of the German withdrawal has been rather less leisurely than in previous weeks and he seems to have abandoned the road centre of B.NSK. BYSTRICA (C 76) in the heart of the Slovak mountains in some disorder. An interesting development has been the transfer of 3 SS Pz Division from the area South of the DANUBE to the ERON river sector North of the DANUBE.

South of the DANUBE, the enemy has suffered a heavy set-back this week. The Russian counter-offensive North of Lake BALATON has made very considerable headway. Striking initially North Westwards, the Russians reached the DANUBE at DUNAUJVAROS (F 95) thereby forming a German pocket South of the DANUBE between DUNAUJVAROS and KECSKEMET (E 27). This has now been virtually eliminated. Meanwhile driving West and South West other Soviet forces have captured the road and rail centres of SZEKESFEHERVAR and PAPA (F 36), the latter 30 miles from the Austrian frontier and are reported to be pushing on to SZOMBATHELY (C 76), 65 miles S.E. of VIENNA. Latest reports place the Russians less than 30 miles

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from the Austrian border. Considerable casualties have certainly been inflicted on the enemy, although the Russian claim virtually to have destroyed 6 SS Pz Army and 8 Pz Army formation is probably somewhat exaggerated. 356 Inf Div, formerly north of the DRAVA, has been heavily engaged in the Lake BALATON area, while 6 Pz Div has been identified in the same sector. At least six German Pz divisions have thus been recently identified on the 20 mile front between Lake BALATON and SZEKESFEHERVAR.

The events in HUNGARY are likely to have a very profound influence on the whole German position in South-Eastern EUROPE. It seems clear that the enemy retreat has not been voluntary, and speculations that he is pulling back to a shorter line so as to release 6 SS Pz Army for re-transfer to the Eastern front are not at present supported by any independent evidence. What has happened in fact is that after an ambitious and unsuccessful counter-offensive, the enemy has fairly heavy losses to himself has been forced off one of the few defensive lines he could forward of the Inner German Fortress. By so doing, the BALATON position, the Soviets have done more than force the Germans off one defence line on to another. They will have forced the enemy to reconsider his whole basic strategy in the South Eastern area. Having failed to move his Eastern front forward to the line of the DRAVA, the enemy can now have no hope or even any reason for continuing to cling to the extended front he still holds in YUGOSLAVIA. Unless the situation in N.W. HUNGARY deteriorates still further he may temporarily try to hold a defence line in Southern HUNGARY from Lake BALATON down to the DRAVA so as to cover the Yugoslav oil fields, although even this is now becoming difficult. In YUGOSLAVIA however a withdrawal from the SREM and the SARAJEVO salient would now appear probable and prudent. It would not be without its disadvantages, particularly with regard to the administrative and economic difficulties likely to arise with the Croats. It would give the disadvantage too of giving the partisans much more freedom of movement between Eastern and Central CROATIA on the one hand, and SERBIA and MACEDONIA on the other hand. Nevertheless a front running from Lake BALATON to the DRAVA at BARCS (A 61, thence South Eastwards towards the Adriatic coast at SEK (F 70) would have the double advantage of leaving the German still in possession of the MAGY KANIZSA oilfields and of being in a better position to hold their present awkward front. It would permit too a certain, though not a large economy in forces.

Page 2

Here we close that the policy outlined above is now being put into effect in YUGOSLAVIA. Throughout the past week considerable Northward road movement has been observed, the SARAJEVO-BROD (C 12) highway, and 114 Inf Div is reported to be moving up to BRCD. A number of small villages in the area 6 - 10 miles South of SARAJEVO have been evacuated and everything now seems ready for a withdrawal from the town whenever the word is given. On 25th March too, there was heavy movement East and South East from the SRIM towns of ORLJAK (C 67) and DONJI MIHOLJAC (C 29) towards NASICE (D 06). It is still too early to assess the full extent of this movement, but it may imply the start of a withdrawal from the SREM area. It is likely that some of the forces involved

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[redacted]

There are signs that the policy outlined above is now being put into effect in [redacted]. Throughout the past week considerable northward road movement has been observed, the [redacted]-[redacted] (B 12), highway, and 1st Lw Div is reported to be moving up to [redacted]. A number of small villages in the area 5 - 10 miles South of [redacted] have been evacuated and everything now seems ready for a rapid withdrawal from the town whenever the word is given. On 15th March too, there was heavy movement N.W. and South East from the [redacted] towns of [redacted] (C 67) and [redacted] (C 29) towards [redacted] (C 06). It is still too early to assess the full extent of this movement, but it may imply the start of a withdrawal from the [redacted] area. It is likely that some of the forces involved in the movement are going to the [redacted] (F 42) area where the partisans last week launched a highly successful offensive from the S.W. leading to the fall of [redacted] and the capture of over 500 prisoners with much booty. Enemy reactions to the attack have so far been moderate, but it is to be expected that some reinforcement for the demoralised Croat forces in the area will soon appear. The possibility of a partisan attack Northwards from [redacted] towards [redacted] is one which the enemy must likely ignore.

F.R. Rawes Maj

for BRIGADIER, G.S.
A.A. & Q.M.G., 8th Army

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...raised the total of cuts to six, but by the following day repairs had removed two points of interdiction possible. On the 24th while repair work continued, no change was noted except that another block was effected. Photos of the 25th, the most recent available cover, showed that two cuts had been made possible but three bridges still were down effectively blocking through traffic. Between INNSBRUCK and BOZEN both the S. MICHAEL bridge and diversionary line remained out all week, while between BOZEN and INNSBRUCK on the Northern stretch of the BRENNER, 22 of 25 tbrs showed two bridges were still out, one having been impassable all week.

Complete overcast on 26 and 27 March held RECCE's operations to a minimum, no attacks being made on the BRENNER line, and it is probable that the line will be open to through traffic from VERONA to as far North as INNSBRUCK by the 28th.

North of INNSBRUCK the BRIDGE (R 1279) bridge on the main INNSBRUCK-MUNICH line was attacked and badly damaged on 22 March and was seen to be still out on 25 March; it is probably still out. On the alternative INNSBRUCK-[illegible] route the bridge at MITTENWALD (D 6261) was seen on the 22nd to have sustained a demolition which did not appear to have been repaired by the 25th.

The BRENNER, while closed to through traffic all week, has shown a certain amount of localised movement. Just North of VERONA a doorstep of rolling stock has been noticed between the destroyed S. MICHAEL bridge (F 5164) and the VERONA PORTA bridge (F 6154). In view of the fact that the PORTA bridge needs very little repair work to render it fully serviceable, all factors point towards its being "night-operational".

As the result of repairs our interdictions on the BRENNER South of BOZEN activity, as is to be expected, increases. TRENTO yards, for example, were more movement than last week, but are by no means as active as they were at the beginning of the month. North of BOLZANO the line is appreciably more active though some drop in overall movement has been noted over the past seven days, owing no doubt to stepped-up interdiction.

Troop movement along the BRENNER line this week continues on a limited scale. Some flats loaded with AT have been noted on the Northern portion and although duty flats have shown a certain amount of activity, it is not possible to state definitely that this ties in with troop movement.

In the VERONA-PADUA-MESTRE area there were on 25 March a total of ten blocks effectively cutting all lines in the sector, with all the PIAVE river bridges impassable. This is the heaviest interdiction accomplished in this area for some time. The main VERONA-MESTRE line is also heavily interdicted and no through traffic has been possible on the line for at least a month. Although PR of 25 March is the most recent cover available, the line is believed to have been still impassable as of the 27th.

.....The main TRENTO.....

The main TAIVISIO frontier route was seen blocked at four bridges on the 25th and it does not seem likely that the route could be open yet. The PIRDIOKLE route remains closed to through traffic by virtue of an impassable bridge, while two heavily damaged bridges block the POSTUNL route.

The F.DU-VIGNAL-TAIVISIO area has remained quiet during the week, although some movement has been noted on the line between OUSTERHOUT VENERO and TAIVISIO. Further East along the routes to UDINE activity continues to be slight. The main TAIVISIO-UDINE line has shown almost no movement as far E as [illegible] (about 25 miles West of UDINE). Activity has, however, been noted between [illegible] and UDINE itself. This activity undoubtedly reflects rail movement between [illegible] (C 7240) just South of our belt of interdiction. UDINE yards have shown slight movement during the week; ten loaded flats were seen there on 21 March and 20 loaded flats in another yard on the 25th. The Central and Southern routes West of UDINE are now beginning to show activity on a very limited scale.

The TAIVISIO frontier route has been in use both North and South of our belt of interdiction, while the POSTUNL and PIRDIOKLE routes look adequate for any definite statement.

SHIPPING

In the Gulf of [illegible] 4 AP ships continued to move rapidly in pairs between [illegible] and [illegible] from 19 to 24 March, and there has also been the usual turnover of E-boats and S-barges. [illegible], however, has apparently been inactive since 22 March.

There has been no photo cover of the Northern Adriatic ports since 23 March, but two coasters reached VENICE from TRIESTE between 19 and 22 March, while a MV and another coaster arrived from PORTO NOGARO during the same period. At TRIESTE on 23 March, two coasters arrived from VENICE and one from FANO730, whilst a further coaster had arrived from VENICE by the 22nd. Both POLA and ANCONA were inactive up to 25 March and there was only light diesel ferry and F-boat activity at FIUME. There was the usual barge activity along the Venetian coast.

MAIN RAIL TARGETS NORTH & SOUTH OF RIVER PO

1. Depot [illegible], Milan. There are a considerable number of dumps and installations of all kinds along the main MILAN-VENICE railway line between TREVIGLIO and ROGOREDO and the branch line from ROGOREDO to MILANO. Further North there are a few installations scattered along the line which runs West from PORTO [illegible] (W 1502) to [illegible] (X 1505). North of [illegible] as far as VARESE there are no important installations except for two large [illegible] areas round the stations of ROGOREDO (A 7043) and [illegible] (A 6701) which are adjacent to the Northern end of Lake GARDA.

There are at least five AP parks, two workshops and a spare-parts depot scattered throughout the above area. [illegible]

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...in for any detailed assessment.

SHIPPING

In the Gulf of GENOA 4 AK ships continued to move rapidly in pairs between GENOA and LEGHORN from 19 to 24 March, and there has also been the usual turnover of F-boats and S-barges. SAVONA, however, has apparently been inactive since 22 March.

There has been no photo cover of the Northern Adriatic ports since 23 March, but two coasters reached VENICE from TRIESTE between 19 and 22 March, while a MF and another coaster arrived from PORTO NOGARO during the same period. At TRIESTE on 20 March two coasters arrived from VENICE and one from PANSERO, whilst a further coaster had arrived from VENICE by the 22nd. Both PORTOGRUARO and ARSA. Ports were inactive up to 23 March and there was only light ribbon ferry and F-boat activity at PULA. There was the usual large activity along the Venetian coast.

MAIN ARMY DUMPING AREAS NORTH OF RIVER PO

1. Upper ADIGE Valley. There are a considerable number of dumps and installations of all kinds along the main BRENNER railway line between TRENTO and BOLZANO and the branch line from BOLZANO to MERANO. Further North there are a few installations scattered along the line which runs East from FORTEZZA (W 1502) to LIENZ (X 1505). South of TRENTO as far as ZANON, there are no important installations except for two large dumping areas round the stations of ROVERETO (A 7043) and ARCO (A 6701) which are adjacent to the Northern end of Lake GARDA.

There are at least five AF parks, two workshops and a spare-parts depot scattered throughout the above area. The spare-parts depot is situated at A 1733 just South of BOLZANO and there are workshops at MERANO (A 6190) and N.E. of BRUNICO at A 729475, and a park at A 790409 which contained 150 AF on 9 Jan '45. In the far North there is an AF park, reported to be No. 575, North of BRESSANONE (B 1890) and two more along the FORTEZZA-LIENZ road. South of TRENTO there is a possible AF park at ROVERETO.

2. VERONA. Owing to its geographical position, VERONA is the ideal off-loading and forwarding point for stores coming down the BRENNER railway and thus, in the area VERONA - S. GIOVANNI - PESCHIERA there is the largest single concentration of dumps in the whole of area occupied by AFHQ. It is notable, however, that there are very few fuel dumps in this area, those are mainly scattered over the Lombardian plains or South of the River PO. East of VERONA along

....the road....

the road and railway line to KILLA there are small concentrations of dumps and installations at both SHASKA and ZIGANO, and the road tunnels on the West shore of Lake G.RD. are all reported to be used for storage or workshops.

Only two of the 12 installations reported by ground sources in the VERON area and confirmed by PR are still active; these are the OPEN vehicle park at PASCHINA (J 1254) and an E storage depot at P 711545. Besides these there is a possible MT park at P 711545 and a block of barrack buildings known to exist at P 6354 is reported to contain a Base Ordnance Workshop. It is also possible that some of the many installations which are known to be active but whose function and contents cannot be identified by PR are workshops or spare-parts stores. West of Lake G.RD. there is an MT park at BASKAL.KO and another at G.VORDO (P 8271) whilst an installation at PORNO D'ALLAO (J 1520) is reported by a PW to be the 115 Central Spare-parts Depot. North of BASKALKO at ZABLINO (K 7396) there is an E workshop which was extensively damaged in Dec 44.

3. MILLA In the industrial areas of MILLA, MENZA and PUERTO MADERO (J 90), and as far north as the line V.MENE (E 8.06) - GOMO - LAGOO (E 4305) there is a considerable number of installations of all kinds. These include a relatively large amount of fuel. Ground source reports, which cannot be confirmed by PR, indicate that the railway tunnels on the net work of secondary lines in the MENZA - GOMO-LAGOO triangle are being used to store fuel and ammunition. S.E. of MILLA along the railway and road that runs East from COLICO (S 4336) to TIRANO (J 0413) there is a row of ten permanent installations the contents of which are not known.

In the area round MILLA there are MT depots near LAGO G.MENZA (J 0295) and MENZA (K 3478) and a large one at K 256620. In addition there has been a number of MT parks and workshops reported in MILLA itself which cannot be confirmed, and it is probable that the large factories such as ISOTTA FRASCHINI, BIANCHI and ALFA ROMEO are all working for the enemy as well as the MAF and other maintenance depots.

4. The Plain of LOMBARDY There are 60 confirmed installations of all kinds 25 of which are fuel dumps, refineries or alcohol refineries scattered over the plain North of the River PO and South of the MILAN-TRENTO-P.DEL road and railway line. Of these the majority cling to the main lateral MILAN-VERONA-P.DEL road and the roads running South to the River PO crossings from MILAN, MENZA, VERONA, and P.DEL, with a small concentration at ALFRO, which forms the main communications centre of the central plain. 5126

There appear to be very few workshops or other ordnance installations in the plain. The main ones believed to be active at present are an anti-tank artillery depot at CREMONA, an MT spare-parts depot at CASTELLO DELL OGLIO (P 1524), an MT park at GOITO (P 3935) and a reported transit park for MT and AFVs at LODINO (P 9647).

5. N.E. ITALY There is a fair number of installations, including a relatively large quota of fuel dumps in the PADUA-VICENZA-MESTRE-VERONA quadrilateral with

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3. [redacted] In the industrial areas of [redacted] and [redacted] (J 90), and as far North as the line V.[redacted] (D 8406) - 0080 - L2000 (E 4305) there is a considerable number of installations of all kinds. These include a relatively large amount of fuel. Ground source reports, which cannot be confirmed by AR, indicate that the railway tunnels on the net work of secondary lines in the [redacted] - 0080-L2000 triangle are being used to store fuel and ammunition. N.E. of [redacted] along the railway and road that runs East from 0081.00 (H 4338) to T[redacted] (.. 0443) there is a row of ten permanent installations the contents of which are not known.

In the area round [redacted] there are AF depots near [redacted] (J 8295) and [redacted] (K 3476) and a large one at K 255620. In addition there has been a number of MT parks and workshops reported in [redacted] itself which cannot be confirmed, and it is probable that the large factories such as [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted] are all working for the enemy as well as the PLAF and other maintenance depots.

4. The plain of [redacted] There are 60 confirmed installations of all kinds 51126 20 of which are fuel dumps, refineries or alcohol refineries scattered over the plain North of the River 20 and South of the [redacted] road and railway line. Of these the majority still belong to the main lateral [redacted] road and the roads running South to the River 20 crossings from [redacted], [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted] with a small concentration at [redacted] which forms the main communications centre of the central plain.

There appear to be very few workshops or other ordnance installations in the plain. The main ones believed to be active at present are an anti-tank artillery depot at [redacted], an MT spare-parts depot at [redacted] (B 1924), an AF park at 0081.0 (F 3935) and a reported transit park for MT and AFVs at [redacted] (F 9647).

5. [redacted] There is a fair number of installations, including a relatively large quota of fuel dumps in the [redacted] quadrilateral with a small concentration of fuel and ammunition at [redacted] (B 4100). There is a further concentration, mainly ammunition, immediately West of the River [redacted] North of [redacted] on the main [redacted] railway line and about a dozen spread out along the Valley North of [redacted] as far as [redacted] (C 2358). There are also two fuel, one ammunition and a general stores dump on the railway line North of [redacted] (K 5277) from where stores are shipped by barge to [redacted].

North of [redacted] there is an AF park and workshops near [redacted] at C 648669 and a park at [redacted] (C 2458). There are also workshops and a large park at [redacted] (C 2561). S.W. of [redacted] there is an AF repair depot at [redacted] (C 5114), and in the [redacted] area there is an AF workshop at S. [redacted] near [redacted] and an artillery workshop at [redacted] (H 4909).

.....6. M.E. [redacted].....

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6. N.W. ITALY West of the PIGINO river there are comparatively few installations, those which there are are grouped around the cities of GENOA, MESSANDRIA and TURIN.

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SECRET

COPY NO 73

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO.52 OF 20 MAR 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The past week has been a quiet one, and the enemy has been able to continue his regrouping undisturbed. The reason for the reshuffling which was noted along the SENIO in last week's Intelligence Notes has proved to be the withdrawal of 334 Division from the TOSSIGNANO sector, and the division is now carried in unallocated reserve. Regrouping on the 5 Army front which is going on at present in the 114 Jaeger, 232 Inf and 29 P.G. Div sectors has not so far resulted in any of these divisions moving into reserve (all three have been identified in the last 48 hours) and consequently the enemy has three divisions committed in a comparatively unimportant part of the front where previously one sufficed. This is obviously a situation which the enemy will seek to remedy as soon as possible.

On the 8 Army front we have seen little of 162 Div, and the only interesting comment on its activities comes from a Turkoman Sjt-Major who said that it was rumoured that all Turkomans on the COMACCHIO Spit are to be replaced by Germans. This is hardly a surprising step in view of the unreliability of the Turkomans, and it is a little difficult to see why the enemy persists in retaining this division as a fighting formation. The identification of 1.G. Bn Kesselring No.2. by a document in the area North of Lake COMACCHIO shows that this battalion is needed to stiffen the units of 162 Div holding the Northern shores of the Lake.

Along the SENIO there is further evidence to show movement South-wards [illegible] each division. 42 Jaeger Div is believed to have stretched some 2,000 yards S.W. of CASTEL BOLOGNESE at the expense of considerable thinning out North of the [illegible]. As a result 1060 G.R. is now the left hand regiment of 356 Div, and 1059 G.R. which has been squeezed out is rumoured by prisoners from 117 G.R. (98 Div) to be due to take over their sector between LUGO and CRISTOFORO. This will give 362 Div, with its 7 bns and the Italian LUPO Bn, a very extended front of about 11,000 yards. 98 Div would gain by this move on its sector, unless it also sidesteps to take over from part of 26 Pz Div, would be from inclusive CORTICELLA to about the 31 Easting. 26 Pz Div is at present on a 5,000 yard front from the 31 Easting to just short of the main BOLOGNA-RIMINI railway. When 117 G.R. is relieved both divisions will have a regiment in reserve, though this may be only a temporary measure. 4 Para Div is still astride Route 9 and now probably extends as far West as [illegible] M 3622. On the 16th March II Bn 11 Para Regt carried out a strong attack on our outpost position South of the river at point 92 M 1922. The enemy raid was successful. On the 16th we counter-attacked and drove the parachutists back North of the river, capturing some eight prisoners and killing at least 20 enemy. 11 Para Regt had previously been North of Route 9 and was relieved by 26 Pz Div to move across to the

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Along the SENIO there is further evidence to show movement Southwards by each division. 42 Jaeger Div is believed to have stretched some 2,000 yards S.W. of ALFONSINE at the expense of considerable thinning out North of the 50 grid. As a result 1060 G.R. is now the left hand regiment of 362 Div, and 1059 G.R. which has been squeezed out is rumoured by prisoners from 117 G.R. (98 Div) to be due to take over their sector between 1060 and CONIGNOLA. This will give 362 Div, with its 7 bns and the Italian LITO Bn, a very extended front of about 11,000 yards. 98 Div would gain by this move and its sector, unless it also sidesteps to take over from part of 26 Pz Div, would be from inclusive CONIGNOLA to about the 31 Easting. 26 Pz Div is at present on a 5,000 yard front from the 31 Easting to just short of the main BOLOGNA-RIMINI railway. When 117 G.R. is relieved both divisions will have a regiment in reserve, though this may be only a temporary measure. 4 Para Div is still astride Route 9 and now probably extends as far West as ISOLA M 1622. On the 16th March II Bn 11 Para Regt carried out a strong attack on our outpost position South of the river at point 92 M 1922. The enemy raid was successful. On the 16th we counter-attacked and drove the parachutists back North of the river, capturing some eight prisoners and killing at least 20 enemy. 11 Para Regt had previously been North of Route 9 and was relieved by 26 Pz Div to move across to the Westflank of 4 Para Div to take over from 278 Div. The latter is now believed to stretch from ISOLA to the boundary with 1 Para Div on S. MAGGIORE M 0526, having relieved 334 Div. The only clue as to 334 Div's

.....movements in the....

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movements in the statement by a parachutist prisoner from III Bn 3 Para Regt (taken in the normal area) that he had met a friend from 756 G.R. on 12 March North of ISSEL who said his Regt had been relieved suddenly in the line and was bound for an unknown destination.

South of BOLOGNA there has been no apparent change in the enemy layout. A copy of a Mountain Unit newspaper found in the area L 7726, together with the recent statement by a prisoner from II Bn 276 G.R. (94 Div) that his battalion was expecting to be relieved in this very area by Mtn troops, suggests that 157 Div has extended slightly Westwards and that its right boundary may now be along the 77 Easting. In the area behind M. BELVEDERE and C. SPEZ. D'ALLO various sources have reported much movement of troops, and prisoners and deserters from 114 Jaeger Div, 232 Div and 29 P.G. Div have all brought rumours of relief. These are now beginning to take shape. 232 Div appears to be relieving 114 Div in the area West of MONTESE L 5924 - prisoners from 741 Regt taken in that area were expecting their relief on 19 March, and since then 1044 G.R. has been placed between the 48 and 54 Positions. On 19 March I Bn 741 Regt lost prisoners 1,000 yards N.E. of MONTESE, previously the sector of the Mittenwald Mountain Bn which has gone into reserve, and prisoners from 114 Recce Unit were taken near MONTESE on the same day. At the moment therefore, it looks as if the divisional boundary between 232 and 114 Divs is about 1,000 yards S.W. of MONTESE. 1043 G.R. of 232 Div is said to have been temporarily cannibalised to bring the other two regiments up to strength, but 1045 G.R. is not yet identified and it may come in East of 1044, thus involving a further shift Eastwards by 114 Div. How far Eastwards 114 Div extends now is unknown, nor is it known to what extent 29 P.G. Div is still in the line. Despite a rumour in 15 P.G.R. that the Regt was going into reserve East of BOLOGNA, prisoners were taken from II Bn on night 19/20 March at L 6326.

The enemy's Central reserve now amounts to two divisions - 90 P.G. East of BOLOGNA near RUBBIO and 334 Inf Div unlocated. There have been many agents' reports of movement of troops across the AO towards the BRENNER and N.E. ITALY, proving conclusively that a division is involved. Though there has been no identification of 715 Div, there is no other candidate at the present, as it is assumed that 715 Div is leaving the country. Though most of 29 P.G. Div appears to be still committed S.W. of BOLOGNA it is believed that the enemy will make every effort to withdraw this division into Central reserve, as soon as 114 and 232 Divs have been more firmly re-established in the line.

In Western ITALY, 148TH RCT. Div is reported arriving in the area N.W. of TURIN from the SERCHIO Valley, where it has handed over to the ITALIAN Div (included in the hand-over is Gen CLARK who is now said to command ITALIAN Div). Its arrival in Western ITALY thickens up the defenders of the Alpine Passes, and though some of its units have replaced units of 5 Mtn Div in the line, there is nothing to suggest that those are more than routine reliefs. Both Regts of 5 Mtn have been identified on the Alps in the last week. From the Southern sector of the line there have been reports of a

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In Western ITALY, HONET BOX. Div is reported arriving in the area N. of TURIN from the SERCHIO Valley, where it has handed over to the ITALIAN Div (included in the hand-over is Gen C.RLONI who is now said to command ITALIAN Div). Its arrival in Western ITALY thickens up the defenders of the Alpine Passes, and though some of its units have replaced units of 5 Mtn Div in the line, there is nothing to suggest that those are more than routine reliefs. Both Regts of 5 Mtn have been identified on the Alps in the last week. From the Southern sector of the line there have been reports of a Northward move of part of 34 Div towards IMPERIA but it is too early to say how much truth there is in them.

In N.E. ITALY 710 Div has been identified coastwatching near the mouth of the TAGLIAMENTO river, with elements of the division engaged in fighting partisans N.E. of GORIZIA at CHIAVORNO C 8417. Of the progress in building up 155 Mus Training Division there is no further news.

2. WESTERN FRONT

Last week another German Army was drawn into the maelstrom of defeat which has engulfed the Western Armies this Spring. This time

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it was the First Army which found itself in imminent danger of a major disaster. At the time of writing last week, the Allies were closing up to the line of the MOSELLE, where the enemy might have hoped to reestablish a firm front. Events rapidly proved this to be a vain hope. No attempt was made at even a temporary stand on the river, which we crossed against negligible opposition. Yet the enemy did not lack due appreciation of the seriousness of the new threat to the PALATINATE and attempts were certainly made to stiffen and reinforce the MOSELLE front. Their failure was due to lack of forces and lack of mobility on the part of such forces as existed, rather than to any decision voluntarily to pull back. The whole line West of the RHINE is now yielding. Between KARLSRUHE and SAARBRÜCKEN the enemy retains a fairly coherent front, but was pulled back rapidly to the Siegfried defences where a certain stiffening of resistance is apparent. However, the decision whether or not to stand on the Siegfried line is likely to be dictated by developments further North where the right wing of First Army and the whole of Seventh Army have collapsed. The outwardly healthy appearance of the SAAR front, reinforced this week by one infantry division from reserve, was of small avail when a deadly virus had penetrated the interior. The American drive swept over the RHINE river as quickly as it did the MOSELLE and is rapidly eliminating all enemy North of the river where a pocket consisting of some 2,000 enemy troops has been cut off. The MAINZ - SAARBRÜCKEN railway has been cut and a very real danger exists that the remaining withdrawal routes for the First and Seventh Army fronts will be cut. There is no sign of any stabilisation on the Northern flank of the enemy pocket West of the RHINE despite the arrival of a limited number of reinforcements. These have again been largely drawn from the ranks of 19 Army. 198 and 159 Infantry Divisions have both left the Upper RHINE area leaving probably only one and at best two infantry divisions to hold the 100 mile front along the RHINE North of KARLSRUHE. Other reinforcements for the Northern flank of the PALATINATE front have been drawn at the expense of the TRIER-SAARBRÜCKEN sector, from which at least one infantry division has been transferred to the area of BAD KREUZNACH. Apart from these, the action South of the MOSELLE, in so far as it has been fought at all, has been conducted by the remnants of 7 Army's divisions, amongst which 2 Pz and 6 A.S. Mtn appear to be rather less battered and more aggressive than the rest. There is now a serious danger that the enemy may fall between two stools. Last week he had the possibility either of holding on the MOSELLE-SIEGFRIED line thus defending the SAAR basin, or of cutting his losses in the SAAR and pulling back to the shorter line of the RHINE. The first alternative has proved beyond his capabilities and he must reckon with the early loss of the SAAR, while his lack of reserves and mobility now make it doubtful whether he can withdraw to the RHINE without suffering a major disaster on route.

Meanwhile on 15 Army front the REMAGEN bridgehead has been the main cause of concern to the enemy. Despite hi[s] efforts to [illegible]

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-as apparent. However, the decision whether or not to stand on the Siegfried line is likely to be dictated by developments further North where the right wing of First Army and the whole of Seventh Army have collapsed. The outwardly healthy appearance of the S.W.R front, reinforced this week by one infantry division from reserve, was of small avail when a deadly virus had penetrated the interior. The American drive swept over the NAHE river as quickly as it did the MOSELLE and is rapidly eliminating all enemy North of the river where a pocket consisting of some 2,000 enemy troops has been cut off. The KAING - SAARBRUCKEN railway has been cut and a very real danger exists that the remaining withdrawal routes for the First and Seventh Army fronts will be cut. There is no sign of any stabilisation on the Northern flank of the enemy pocket West of the RHINE despite the arrival of a limited number of reinforcements. These have again been largely drawn from the ranks of 19 Army. 198 and 159 Infantry Divisions have both left the Upper RHINE area leaving probably only one and at best two infantry divisions to hold the 100 mile front along the RHINE North of KARLSRUHE. Other reinforcements for the Northern flank of the H.L.TRIERE front have been drawn at the expense of the TRIER-SAARBRUCKEN sector, from which at least one infantry division has been transferred to the area of BAD KREUZNACH. Apart from these, the action South of the MOSELLE, in so far as it has been fought at all, has been conducted by the remnants of 7 Army's divisions, amongst which 2 Pz and 6 S.S. Mtn appear to be rather less battered and more aggressive than the rest. There is now a serious danger that the enemy may fall between two stools. Last week he had the possibility either of holding on the MOSELLE-SIEGFRIED line thus defending the S.W.R basin, or of cutting his losses in the S.W.R and pulling back to the shorter line of the RHINE. The first alternative has proved beyond his capabilities and he must reckon with the early loss of the S.W.R, while his lack of reserves and mobility now make it doubtful whether he can withdraw to the RHINE without suffering a major disaster on route.

Meanwhile on 15 Army front the REMAGEN bridgehead has been the main source of concern to the enemy. Despite his very determined efforts in this past week to contain it, the bridgehead has continued to expand in ominous fashion. It constitutes a double embarrassment to the enemy. In the first place the establishment of a bridgehead on the East bank of the RHINE at all is a very serious threat to the enemy position in Western GERMANY. There is more to it than that, however. Strategically the REMAGEN bridgehead is not particularly well chosen, and were it not for the windfall of the intact LUDENDORFF bridge it is doubtful whether we should ever have attempted to cross the RHINE in what is a relatively unpromising sector. Thus to a certain extent the strategy of both sides is at present governed by an unexpected chance. The point is, however, that by establishing the bridgehead at REMAGEN we have forced the enemy to make heavy inroads on the reserves which he would otherwise have been holding in readiness against Allied crossings at a later stage and in other sectors. Already eleven divisions, including four mobile, have been committed around the perimeter and the build-up is clearly still inadequate to contain the bridgehead, let alone enable the enemy to launch a decisive counter-attack.

...Indeed the enemy's...

Indeed the enemy's own rate of attrition around the bridgehead has been such that 3 Para Div has now wholly disintegrated. Its Commander and staff were captured some eleven days ago. The spell of office of their successors was brief but hectic; eight days only after they arrived to replace the original staff, both the new commander and his staff followed them into captivity. Hence, if further crossings are effected in other sectors of the front, the old dilemma resulting from his inadequacy of troops once more confronts the enemy, with as little likelihood of solution that of the RHINE as there was most of it.

The rest of the front has been quiet. It is a measure of the extensive thinning out on 19 Army's front that our patrols across the RHINE North of EMMERICH on 17 March found a casemate empty and made no contact with the enemy in a radius of a quarter of a mile. Movement behind the front shows no striking reinforcement, although it seems very probable that 1 Para Army in the North is getting a priority in replacements. This Army is now probably in better shape than any other in the West and indeed needs to be for its sector is vital. From SCANDINAVIA there are reports that another division, 199 Inf, is now on its way from NORWAY after an interval of about three weeks since the departure of 169 Inf Div. There is no further indication of its destination.

3. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND EASTERN GERMANY

The reduction of the East Prussian garrison has been carried a stage further this week by the Russian push to the Baltic coast S. of KOENIGSBERG. This has split the East Prussian Army Group in two. One pocket is still left holding KOENIGSBERG and the SAMLAND peninsula, while the other pocket consists of a narrow coastal stretch around HELLIGENBEIL. Enemy resistance continues to be stubborn, and the HERMANN GOERING Pz Corps has been given a special mention this week by the German radio for its distinguished conduct of the operations. Further West, the Russians are still held at the approaches to DANZIG and GDYNIA, and it is clear that the enemy intends to make a determined effort to hold these two ports. GROSS DEUTSCHLAND P.G. Div has been heavily engaged in this area. It is of interest that as late as 4 March, on which date a serious threat was developing to GDYNIA, the pocket battleships LUETZOW and SCHEER and the 5.9" cruiser ADMIRAL HIPPER were all present at GDYNIA.

In Northern POMERANIA, with the reduction of the KOLBERG garrison, the whole Baltic coast between the SWINEMUENDE BAY and the German frontier is clear of the enemy. 23 SS Division NORDLAND was identified at the approaches to KOLBERG last week; this is an interesting identification, as 23 SS KAMA Division was in the Balkans up to the end of last year when it was no longer accepted on grounds of inadequate evidence. It now seems clear that it was in fact disbanded and its SS number transferred to a newly forming SS Division.

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In Northern POMERANIA, with the reduction of the KOLBERG garrison, the whole Baltic coast between the STETTINER HAFF and the German frontier is clear of the enemy. 23 SS Division NEDERLAND was identified at the approaches to KOLBERG last week; this is an interesting identification, as 2nd SS Pz Division was in the Balkans up to the end of last year when it was no longer accepted on grounds of inadequate evidence. It now seems clear that it was in fact discarded and its SS number transferred to a newly forming SS Division.

The remainder of the German front was relatively quiet until about 14th March with the exception of heavy fighting around the German bridgehead East of CUSTRIN which has now been eliminated by the Russians. On 10 March, however, according to the Germans, attacks by Marshal KONIEV's forces South of GUBEN culminated in deep penetrations on both sides of LUBBENAU and near LUCKAU. There has so far been no confirmation of these reports from Soviet sources but there seems no reason to doubt them. The attack looks like an attempt by Marshal KONIEV firstly to eliminate the German GUBEN bridgehead South East of GUBEN and then to continue the offensive so as to establish his left flank firmly on the NEISSE/QUIRIS, which his earlier efforts had failed to do. The attack may well represent too the final phase of the mopping up operations on the Soviet flanks prior to

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the resumption of the offensive into Central GERMANY. To judge by his public statements, the enemy considers that this will not now long be delayed.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

In the sector North of BUDAPEST limited progress has been made by the Russians West and S.W. of ZVOLEN (C 74). The terrain is very difficult here, reminiscent of the worst sectors of the Italian front, and the enemy who has been fighting hard in the ERZGEBIRGE does not appear to be unduly concerned at the Russian pressure. German Alpine troops in this area were given a mention in the Wehrmacht communiqué on March 19, a reference probably to either 3 or 4 Mountain Division.

In HUNGARY there has been a considerable change in enemy fortunes this week. It is clear now that the operations of the past fortnight represented a large scale and carefully planned German counter-offensive which has so far proved almost completely unsuccessful. The attack had been preceded by the elimination of the Soviet bridgehead over the IPOLY river at the end of February thus reducing the prospects of an early Russian break through towards BALATON. This having been done, the main offensive started. It developed as a three-pronged attack. N.E. of Lake BALATON the enemy attacked on both sides of the SARVIZ Canal with at least five Panzer divisions. The five were an interesting assortment. Three of them (1 SS Pz, 2 SS Pz, 12 SS Pz) belonged to 6 SS Pz Army, all of which bar one division has now been committed. The other two divisions were 5 SS Pz, transferred South from the IPOLY river sector, and 23 Pz which has long been in HUNGARY South of the DANUBE. The enemy also attacked South of Lake BALATON, but therefore unfortunately no identifications of the forces employed in this sector apart from a rather vague Russian reference to three Panzer divisions. It is clear that this attack was wholly unsuccessful. Finally, Army Group F supported the operation by the establishment of bridgeheads over the DRAVA at DARUVAR (G 29) and VALPOVO (G 43). Elements of 297 Inf, 104 Jg and 11 S.S.P. Divs were involved.

It is evident that the Russians have reacted sharply to this offensive and have now themselves counter-attacked on a large scale. Their greatest success has been N.E. of Lake BALATON where they threaten to outflank SZEKES FEHERVAR by a thrust North of the town which has penetrated as far West as the VELENCE Mountains North of AJKA (Y 61). The Russians have also been attacking hard to eliminate the DRAVA bridgeheads and have had some success as the Germans admit the loss of the DARUVAR bridgehead and now speak of "the DRAVA bridgehead" in the singular.

YUGOSLAVIA

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YUGOSLAVIA.

It has been an unusually quiet week in YUGOSLAVIA and the only operations of any note have been in the SARAJEVO area. II S. 7 SS Mtn Div has moved South into the town which suggests that the division may be intended to form the rearguard for XXI Mtn Corps when the latter's withdrawal is resumed. There is no evidence however that this is imminent and indeed the indications are that the enemy proposes to cling to SARAJEVO for some time yet. 7 SS Div has been launching sharp counter-attacks South of the town and has retaken JABLANICA (R 57) and TREBOVO (R 56).

Reports received during the past fortnight suggest that 14 SS GRENZ Div has arrived in the CRNA (D 93) area from the Central sector. The division is said to have arrived in SLOVENIA to fight partisans and according to one report, three of its companies have already attempted to desert to the partisans. The area in which the division is reported is roughly the same as that vacated by 31 SS Division on its departure for GREECE

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three weeks ago, and like 21 SS Div, 14 SS may have arrived for a rest and refit. The evidence so far available is not altogether strong enough to accept it as a firm identification, and the total strength of Army Group F is still placed at thirteen divisions.

C. P. A. Hauch

BRIG.DIER, G.S.
A.C. of S, G-2.

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ENG. 2nd, U.S.
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COPY NO 73

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 51

OF 13 MARCH, 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

There has been very little change in the enemy's dispositions and attitude so far as can be definitely established but there have been various small incidents and pieces of information which suggest that something is going on. What it is exactly is hard to see; on the face of it the enemy's main preoccupation should be to create a larger reserve for the main front than is at present available. The position will no doubt become clearer when the reliefs now apparently in progress are completed.

On 8 Army front 162 Div continues to lose deserters and shows itself to be even more worthless as a fighting formation than in its previous turns in the line. It is only engaged on the very narrow front presented by the isthmus between the lake and the sea but it seems to regard this not so much as a front as a funnel to the comforts of Allied PW camps and, for the Turcomans, eventual repatriation. On the SENIO front the situation is more obscure. 98 Div appears to be extending its sector Southwards to relieve part of 26 Pz Div and is being relieved in turn in its Northernmost sector by 362 Div. This may call for a complementary move South by 42 Jaeger Division, which is feasible, especially if 42 Pus Bn returns from the isthmus. More surprising is the identification of 992 G.R. in TOSSIGNANO; if we believe the deserter both Bns are there, having arrived night 10/11 March. There has been a good deal of movement in this area of late though it would be surprising if 278 Div were to take over the whole of 334 Div's sector. Perhaps if the intention is to take out 334 Div 1 Para Div might extend its front Southwards to assist in the relief. It remains to be seen what the result of these moves will be but it looks as though some division or other is going out into reserve, possibly preparatory to leaving the country.

On the Eastern part of the front the week has been fairly quiet. Recent deserters confirm that the losses inflicted on 114 Jg Div were heavy; 721 Regt in particular, according to them, has now been reorganised as a single battalion. Both it and 232 Div, however, which also suffered severe losses, are still in the line. The position

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.....In North East.....

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In North East ITALY both 188 Reserve and 237 Divs appear to be taking a greater interest in North DALMATIA and elements from both are reported on the islands of the QUARTERO. Otherwise they have changed little; 188 still has its four regiments and must be busy at its primary job of training the young intake. ITALY is now the most favoured site for training in what remains of German occupied EUROPE.

2. WESTERN FRONT

The disaster which befell 1 Para and 15 Armies a week ago has spread itself to 5 Pz and 7 Armies this week. The Allied attack has indeed developed on a classical model. To meet the attack of the Canadian Army in the REICHSWALD area, the enemy had been forced to send reserves in support of 1 Para Army. When the Allies struck North of the COLOGNE Autobahn in the direction of KREFELD, a hasty reshuffle had to be made in order to create some sort of a front covering the RHINE crossings at WESEL. Before this could be properly effected, the Americans struck in the sector North of the MOSELLE Valley, where 5 Pz Army and 7 Army were stretched tight and devoid of reserves. Of the four German armies which have been involved in the past fortnight's debacle, those in the centre have probably suffered most. In the extreme North, 1 Para Army fought with traditional vigour and efficiency and held the WESEL bridgehead long enough to get a substantial proportion of men and equipment back across the RHINE. In the South, 7 Army, though heavily battered, has been able to retain some sort of coherence as it fell back to the RHINE pivotting on 2 Pz Division, which has been fighting hard East of WITTLICH. In the Centre, however, 15 Army and 5 Pz Army have presented a sorry spectacle. The former, though it got some forces back across the RHINE, never offered much more than feeble resistance to our drive on KREFELD and NEUSS. The latter has suffered a major disaster, the full extent of which it is still too early to assess. Few elements succeeded in crossing to the far bank of the RHINE, and the remainder of the Army has found itself split into large and small pockets which are being eliminated. The extent of the disorganisation prevailing is shown by our capture intact of the bridge at REMAGEN. 167 and 326 Inf Divs have probably been wiped out and the Commander of 3 Parachute Division is in our hands. How many other divisions have been submerged in the flood and will not again come to the surface it is still impossible to say, but the cost to the enemy has been heavy.

On the Central sector of the front, two major problems confront the enemy and demand immediate solution if worse disasters still are not to ensue. The first is the elimination of the REMAGEN bridgehead, and the other is the establishment of a firm front along the MOSELLE so as to form a right flank for the R.U.R. The reaction to the REMAGEN bridgehead has naturally been fierce. On the ground 11 Pz Div has been launching heavy counter-attacks and fighting extremely well; but it alone is not enough to deal with an increasingly fire allied position, and further reinforcements [illegible]

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reinforcement of the Bielefeld on the MEUSE crossings in 1940 and as costly. All three were shot down.

On the MOSELLE, the enemy is now trying to build up a coherent front. If, as seems possible, a proportion of 7 Army lives to fight another brief day, a temporary stand on the MOSELLE may be feasible. The enemy is reinforcing the area to the best of his ability. 15? Inf Div has moved up from TRIER to the COCHEM area, and 6 S.S. Mtn Div seems to have shifted Northward to take up positions covering the river N.E. of TRIER. Even so it will be a thinly held front and is in danger of being turned by Allied progress South of the MOSELLE beyond TRIER, where 2 Mtn and 79 Inf Divs are offering moderate resistance to our pressure. Elsewhere, the picture on the front is little changed and shows clearly the growing shortage of enemy reserves. On the Upper RHINE 19 Army has now surrendered four divisions and an armoured brigade since the start of the offensive and is left with three divisions to hold its 90 mile front. On the SAAR - PALATINATE front the enemy's strength is unchanged, and there are still ten divisions between SAARLOUIS and the RHINE. It is unlikely, however, that we shall see much thinning out here, for it will be hard enough to defend the SAAR on the MOSELLE line without running the risk of letting the Allies in by the front door. In HOLLAND, the front remains thinly held, and there are at least 14 divisions holding from the RHINE south to ROERMOND without much hope of reinforcement.

Strategically the enemy's situation has deteriorated still further by the failure to blow the bridge at REMAGEN, for he can now no longer count upon the respite he might otherwise have expected while the Allies prepared for a major crossing of the RHINE. Moreover, any stabilisation he can achieve on the Centre is at the expense of the North and South. The front in HOLLAND has long been thinly held, but that in the South has never looked as bare as at present, and the potential danger of an Allied encircling movement down the RHINE Valley from ARNHEM is a risk which the enemy has got to accept. The dividend on the faulty strategy of the past four months has to be paid - the strategy which in November and December sent to the West to be decimated in the COLOGNE plain divisions which should have gone to the East; and which in January took away from the West to send to the East a Panzer Army which has so far never effectively operated in the East. The dividend has to be paid and RUNDSTEDT is bearing the cost.

3. EASTERN FRONT

GERMANY

The Baltic coast from STETTIN to the German frontier with the exception of the pockets at KÖSLIN and N.E. of KÖSLIN has now been virtually cleared by the First and Second White Russian Army Groups, and the Soviets despite strong enemy resistance are steadily closing in on DANZIG and GDYNIA. In the port area, TCHEW, KRIEMHOLD and PUCK, the latter a port of some importance in the Bay of DANZIG some 20 miles North of GDYNIA, have all

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The rest of the front in GERMANY has been relatively quiet. Fighting of Local importance has taken place to the West of the besieged city of BRESLAU. Here the Germans claim to have encircled the Soviet forces in SPREMBERG, a claim on which the Russians have remained silent. A report received in the past week refers to an Army Group KURLAND. This is a new identification and to judge by the title is responsible for operations in LATVIA. Whether its responsibilities extend to East PRUSSIA and DANZIG is not known, but the probabilities are against it. It is none the less conceivable that there might be another Army Group in the latter area since there are at least two Armies there. On the main front, HIMMLER and SCHOERNER have again had recent mentions from the German radio as commanders of Army Groups and it is clear that "reliable" hands are still at the head of operations in Eastern GERMANY.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In CZECHOSLOVAKIA fierce fighting has taken place between BANSKA STIAVNICA and ZVOLEN but the Russians, apart from the capture of the former town, have made little progress. IV Pz Corps and Pz Corps Feldherrnhalle have been identified in action under Army Group South during the week.

It is now clear that the enemy is undertaking an operation of major proportions in HUNGARY. The Schwerpunkt appears to be just North of Lake BALATON where the enemy claims to have made gains on both sides of the SARVIZ Canal and no doubt hopes to reach the DANUBE. The Russians report enemy attacks in some strength to the South of the Lake and a report, to be treated with reserve, states that three Pz Divs are engaged in this area. 1 Mtn, 118 Jg and 13 SS Divs are probably engaged and there may also be present elements of 297, 11 G.A.F. and 10A Jg Divs. Simultaneously, the enemy has crossed the DRAVA at DONJI MIHOLJAC and VALPOVO and established bridgeheads on the North bank in spite of Russian and Bulgarian resistance. At the former locality the enemy has erected a pontoon bridge and it appears that his intention is to clear the whole of Southern HUNGARY up to the DANUBE. The formations employed in these crossings are believed to be 297 Inf and 11 G.A.F. Divs less those elements which may have transferred to HUNGARY.

JUGOSLAVIA

Apart from the DRAVA operation, mentioned above, there has been little activity. The situation in which XXI Mtn Corps now finds itself is very much the same as it faced in MONTENEGRO. Then 22 Inf Div was sent South to open up an escape route, now 7 SS Mtn Div "Prinz Eugen" has been alloted the same task. The precarious plight of XXI Corps is evident from the fact that 7 SS Div, probably the best division in YUGOSLAVIA, which otherwise could and probably would have been employed in the attack in Southern HUNGARY, has been sent to its aid. Fighting its way down from the DOBOJ area this veteran Balkan Div cleared the whole of the BOSNA Valley down to ZENICA. Here it was engaged in heavy fighting with the Partisans

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In CZECHOSLOVAKIA fierce fighting has taken place between BANSKA BYSTRICA and ZVOLEN but the Russians, apart from the capture of the former town, have made little progress. IV Pz Corps and Pz Corps Feldherrnhalle have been identified in action under Army Group South during the week.

It is now clear that the enemy is undertaking an operation of major proportions in HUNGARY. The Schwerpunkt appears to be just North of Lake BALATON where the enemy claims to have made gains on both sides of the SARVIZ Canal and no doubt hopes to reach the DANUBE. The Russians report enemy attacks in some strength to the South of the Lake and a report, to be treated with reserve, states that three Pz Divs are engaged in this area. 1 Mtn, 118 Jg and 13 SS Divs are probably engaged and there may also be present elements of 297, 11 G.A.F. and 10 Jg Divs. Simultaneously, the enemy has crossed the DRAVA at DONJI MIHOLJAC and VALPOVO and established bridgeheads on the North bank in spite of Russian and Bulgarian resistance. At the former locality the enemy has erected a pontoon bridge and it appears that his intention is to clear the whole of Southern HUNGARY up to the DANUBE. The formations employed in these crossings are believed to be 297 Inf and 11 G.A.F. Divs less those elements which may have transferred to HUNGARY.

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Confused fighting continues in the BIHAC area but here the enemy situation seems to be easier than hitherto. A Partisan success was however reported near BIHAC where SALAKOVAC P 2963 fell into their hands. This village forms the Southern suburbs of BIHAC proper and straddles a road crossing of some importance.

..... DALMATIAN ISLANDS .....

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PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

The enemy continues to show a degree of nervousness in the islands where defence work goes on apace. The latest development is the despatch of some 800 troops to LUSSIN via CEBU. The garrison, already believed to be about 500 troops will therefore amount to 1,300 - the highest figure yet reported for the island. In this connection it is of interest that 6 Coy 1047 G.R. of 237 Inf Div was manning a strong point on the Island when our raiding forces paid a profitable visit on the night 8/9 March. It would appear that 352 Legion Div hitherto responsible for the Islands, has its hands full on the mainland and troops from Army Group C have been called upon to help. An unconfirmed report places elements of 188 Res Mtn Div on XEK, this would appear reasonable as 158 Res Mtn Regt has its main forces in the PISAY area.

Col GSC
for BRIG.GEN., U.S.
A.C. OF S. G-2.

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MIG.DIR, G-2
A.C. of S, G-2

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COPY NO 73

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 50 OF 6 MARCH, 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

Enemy regrouping this week has been forced by our own action for the first time since January and the extent of his reaction to our attack in the CAPPEL D'ARLENO sector shows a certain nervousness about our intentions. The capture of the M. BELVEDERE feature and the ridge running N.E. from there to M. DELLA SPE represents a considerable territorial advantage to the Allies but the possession of this ground is still rather a long-term threat to the enemy's Appennine positions and an enemy who was thinking of a withdrawal from that position within, say, a month would scarcely have defended it with such stubbornness or counter-attacked with such violence or brought in two fresh divisions from a dwindling reserve. It looks as though there has been no change in the policy of resisting on the present line.

On 3 and 4 March Italian troops on our extreme right flank put in a limited attack to clear up some enemy positions on the Southern part of the GARIGLIANO Isthmus. The operation was very successful and brought in 200 odd prisoners not only from 142 Fusilier Bn but also from 162 Division, confirming the information from prisoners of 114 Div that 162 Div had relieved them in this area. Both 303 and 314 G.R. were identified and prisoners say that 329 G.R. is also in the same area though it must have arrived there rather late since about 30 deserters came into our lines in the area L 2704 on 5 Army front having deserted on 22 Feb. 162 Div does not seem to have improved much in quality and Turcomers still represent about 60% of its strength. This was the main event on 8 Army front, apart from some bickering for the Eastern flood bank of the SENIO in the [redacted] sector. We have, however, cleared up the enemy's order of battle in the area South of IMOLA; 278 Div may, as suggested last week, have taken over the Western part of 715 Div's former sector but it certainly also relieved 90 P.G. Division. Prisoners from 992 and 993 G.R. have been taken in the former area of 200 and 361 P.G.R. respectively. (Actually 4 Para Div has taken over a battalion's worth of 200 P.G.R's former sector and handed over a battalion sector on its left flank to 26 Pz Div.) 90 P.G. Div has now presumably taken the place of 29 P.G. as Central mobile reserve.

The second phase of our attack S.W. of BOLOGNA opened on 3 March with an advance N.E. from M. TORRICCHI which once more seems to have caught the enemy in the middle of a relief. This time it was 721 Regt which was coming in and it lost over 500 prisoners, including the Bn H.Q. of III Bn, in fairly quick time. All three regiments of 232 Div were also identified and it appears that II Bn 104, which had been taken out of the line in a weakened state to absorb reinforcements was rushed back in again. Our advance on 4 March continued with the capture of M. GRANDE D'ARLENO, M. BACUCCO and M. della CROCE and the enemy clearly decided that a more powerful reinforcement was necessary. On 4 March heavier MT movement announced the arrival of a motorised formation and on 5 March [redacted]

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Although rail communications between ITALY and the rapidly dwindling Great German REICH remain frantically difficult there is evidence that more troops

.....are attempting....

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are attempting the passage of the BRENNER. On 2 March PR for the first time since 21 Feb showed a definite movement of military trains between VERONA and the Pass; this was continued on 3 and 4 March. This can scarcely still be 16 S.S. and must be the beginning of another troop movement. There are fewer candidates for this than usual and practically speaking the only likely starter is 715 Div which has been out of the line since about 25 Feb. It is not the division which one would have expected to be sent to a more vital front nor was 356 Div) but all the other divisions in ITALY are firmly located.

2. WESTERN FRONT

The battle of the COLOGNE Plain is nearly over with 15 and 1 Para Armies defeated and withdrawing as best they can to the safety of the East bank of the RHINE. The enemy disorganisation apparent last week becomes even more pronounced as the battle developed (a measure of it is the prisoner total of 9,200 in 24 hours on 27 Feb). With inadequate forces and even these mostly of doubtful quality the enemy has not since the start been able to make any effective stand, while in the area between MÖNCHEN GLADBACH and the RHINE his front collapsed completely. The four divisions hastily brought down from the HOCHWALD sector to stem the tide were certainly too little and probably too late to be of much avail. Nor did the enemy fight East of DUREN with the tenacity to be expected of the rather better quality troops facing us there. 9 Pz Div proved a broken reed, and made little effort to halt us on the fortified ERFT line; 11 Pz and 3 P.G. Divs fighting on the COLOGNE Autobahn made a better showing but were unable to make any effective stand on the perimeter of COLOGNE, the Western part of which is now all in our hands.

The grave shortage of troops has become more and more apparent in every move KESSELRING has made this week. In the South he has taken a chance and is making heavy inroads into the ranks of 19 Army across the RHINE South of STRASBOURG. Two of its divisions have been sent to the COLOGNE sector, and a third has moved up to the SAAR to relieve 6 S.S. Mtn Div, which is probably being sent to plug the hole torn open at TRIER. This leaves four weary infantry divisions to hold 19 Army's 90 mile front. These moves seem to represent very nearly the maximum contribution Army Group G can make to the sore need of the other Army Groups, for much more thinning out would let us into the SAAR basin, a disaster very nearly as bad as that which has already taken place further North.

In the TRIER-METZ sector the situation is as bad. On paper there is a fair number of infantry divisions in this area - adequate perhaps to hold us if they had been up to strength. But four have already been reduced to remnants, all are weary and none seem to have any early prospect of relief from the battle apart from that which extraction may bring. Certainly not one has been able to extricate itself this week to help the hard pressed defenders of the COLOGNE plain. TRIER fell after a brief struggle and we took a bridge intact over the MOSELLE there. Its loss opened a dangerous gap in the front covering the MOSELLE Valley which has been exploited by the U.S. 3rd Army in the direction of COBLENZ. Further North BITBURG and SCHLEIDEN are both in our hands and we are now fighting in PRÜM.

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In the COLOGNE Plain a number of reinforcements have been making their tardy appearance. Elements of 169 and 338 Inf Divs and 106 Pz Bde from 19 Army have been detected between DÜREN and COLOGNE, and the trend of rail movement suggests that the remainder of these formations is coming up and taking position on the East bank of the RHINE near COLOGNE, which we have now entered. The enemy has blown all the RHINE bridges as far North as WESEL, and we are closing up to the RHINE all the way between COLOGNE and WESEL. Enemy resistance has been generally light all week, although German armour showed some fight on the high ground of the VORGEBIRGE earlier in the week. Further North however the enemy situation became almost a rout. MÖNCHEN GLADBACH KREFELD, UERDINGEN and NEUSS were abandoned after little more than sharp skirmishes, although mopping up of isolated enemy pockets has taken some time. So rapid was our advance that one bridge over the RHINE was found intact when we entered WORRINGEN South of DÜSSELDORF.

....However, even with...

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However even with a disorganised enemy, an intact RHINE bridge was too much to hope for, and it was not to be. The bridge went up before we were able to cross. It was not until reinforcements taken from the Cen. Afrn Army front appeared about 1 March that there was any attempt at a stand by the enemy North of KREFELD. Pz Lehr Div was the first to appear and was followed by 2 Para, 15 P.G. and 84 Inf Divs on 3 March. These, according to a captured map, hoped to hold a line from the RUHR through KREFELD to REMPEN. They failed in this, but their arrival did at least help to re-establish some sort of a coherent front now consisting of a rapidly diminishing bridgehead covering the crossing at WESEL. With their move Southwards, only six divisions were left on the Canadian front and enemy resistance weakened considerably: contact was established between 1 Canadian Army and the U.S. 9 Army South of GELDERN, and the forces of 1 Para Army South of MUNCHEN are now withdrawing across the RHINE via the WESEL crossing.

It has been a very bad week for RUNDSTEDT; almost a decisive week. For if he could not hold us with his inadequate but organised force before the attack what prospects has he now with his armies in confusion and having suffered probably 100,000 casualties in a fortnight of whom about 60,000 are prisoners? From COBLENZ Northwards he may soon be able to disengage his divisions temporarily, but he cannot expect to do so for long and the next attack may be even heavier than this one. He must by now be reaching the stage where the element of desperation is entering into his strategy. For the first time there are signs of a serious decline in the morale of his troops - a tendency to surrender too early or at best to offer only feeble resistance when surrounded. Only the Panzers and Parachutists seem relatively unaffected, and they will surely fight on to the last, as too will RUNDSTEDT for he has no other choice. But there is no future in it now, nothing but final defeat, or at best the slender hope that an unexpected salvation may appear from the barren womb of time.

3. EASTERN FRONT

GERMANY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, and HUNGARY

The attack launched by the Second White Russian Army Group in the direction of the Baltic coast has achieved spectacular success. Pushing on from BUBLITZ, ROKOSSOVSKY's forces on 4 March reached the coast in the area West of KOLBERG thus cutting off the German forces in the Polish Corridor and DANZIG from those in the STETTIN area. It is not clear how firm this wedge is as yet, but to judge by Soviet announcements it appears that so far only light forces have reached the coast. The enemy put up very fierce resistance all through the week making the most of the flooded Pomeranian lake and forest terrain. 4 S.S. P.G. Div which left CZECHOSLOVAKIA about three weeks ago was heavily engaged at KOESLIN; so was a new S.S. Pz Division KOLSTEIN which has not previously been identified. The attack was taken up by the 1st White Russian Army Group operating on ROKOSSOVSKY's left which captured the two junction towns of STARGARD and [illegible]

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This operation was a necessary prelude to any large scale advance on the First White Russian front towards BERLIN. ZHUKOV's right flank is now very much more secure than before and the prospects of a successful German counter-attack from POMERANIA seem negligible. STETTIN itself stands in grave danger and if ROKOSSOVSKY can now clear up the enemy forces remaining in N.E. POMERANIA and DANZIG, his Army Group too should be in a position to play a leading part in the main assault on BERLIN. Nevertheless the operation was the end of an old battle: not the start of a new. It was the culmination of the Soviet winter offensive which has cost the enemy up to ½ million permanent casualties. ROKOSSOVSKY has now done for ZHUKOV's right flank what KONIEV in the South has almost but not quite achieved for his left flank; he has secured for it the protection of a natural defensive barrier.

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Meanwhile along the rest of the front in GERMANY an uneasy lull has set in affecting even the battle for BRESLAU, which the Russians have not mentioned in their communiqué for the past four days. Amongst the identifications reported by the Russian General Staff this week are 2 and 9 S.S. Pz Divs of 6 S.S. Pz Army and 10 S.S. Pz Div. No location other than that of the Central sector is given. 2 and 9 S.S. Pz Divs belong to II SS Pz Corps which had not previously been contacted on the Eastern Front this year, although I SS Pz Corps has already been in action in HUNGARY. 10 S.S. Pz Div was on the Western Front up to about three weeks ago and was believed to have left the West, but this is the first confirmation received of its transfer.

On the 2nd Ukrainian Front, MALINOVSKY's forces have been engaged in heavy fighting in the sector ZVOLEN - BANSKA STIAVNICA (usually referred to as the ZILINA - SCHEMNITZ area in the German communiqués). Limited progress has been made but the enemy appears to be fighting hard, and both ZVOLEN and BANSKA STIAVNICA are still in his hands.

There has been no change in the situation in HUNGARY.

YUGOSLAVIA

The heavy Westward movement from VIROVITICA to VARAZDIN mentioned in last week's Summary has been followed up by a reliable report that 11 GAF and 297 Inf Divs have crossed the DRAVA into HUNGARY South of NAGYKANIZSA. The only independent confirmation of this is an air report of heavy troop concentrations East of ZAGREB which by 1 March appeared to be moving North Eastwards towards VARAZDIN. Meanwhile the Partisans continue to gain successes North of the PAPUK Mountains and it is evident that this area is now comparatively thinly held. One reason for this apart from the move of 297 and 11 G.A.F. Divisions lies in the deterioration of the enemy situation further South. Two serious threats have now developed against the withdrawal route of 21 Mtn Corps up the SARAJEVO - MOSTAR L of C. The Partisans who captured TRAVNIK have advanced Eastwards and cut the main road at BUSOVACA while to the North a Partisan force from the TUZLA area is advancing towards DOBOJ from which it is only 5 Kms distant. To meet this threat the ubiquitous rescuer of isolated formations, 7 SS Mtn Div, has had to despatch post haste a force from the PAPUK Mountains, elements of which have arrived to reinforce DOBOJ while further elements had pushed South by 4 March and were in the ZENICA area. It is likely that the enemy will have no little difficulty in clearing the main road, for 21 Mtn Corps is in a depleted condition and the Partisans are in some strength in this area. Last week they captured one of their biggest prizes of the war in the person of Colonel KREKLEIN, one time Police Chief at MUNICH and the commander in GREECE of a Battle Group bearing his name. He was taken near ZENICA.

NORTH DALMATIAN ISLANDS

In the North Dalmatian Islands there has been some activity in the past week. On 24 February Partisans supported by our aircraft and light coastal forces landed on PAG and penetrated to the outskirts of PAG town without opposition. The enemy soon reacted sharply however and landed [illegible]

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for BRIGADIER, G.S.
A.C. OF S. G-2.

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COPY NO 23

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 49

OF 27 FEBRUARY, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The rumours of an imminent German withdrawal from ITALY have continued all last week with a great show of detail but with rather less conviction and there is rather more evidence to show that some at least are German-inspired. The remainder, based on intelligent anticipation of what OKW might be expected to do with the Russians so close to BERLIN and the Western Armies of Liberation so close to COLOGNE, are dying down and the intelligent anticipators are now veering to a conception of ITALY as the granary and, in part, workshop of the Nazi Alpine redoubt. The fact remains that no further formation has followed 16 SS Div out of the country yet and, so far as is known, none has even started. There are at the moment only two German divisions uncommitted, one recently withdrawn from the line, which is not excessive in view of the improvement in the weather, and the Westerly move of 114 Jaeger Div can scarcely be reconciled with any intention to withdraw. The Italian front is still, however, held in greater strength than either its intrinsic importance or Allied capabilities here could warrant and we must be prepared for it to be called on for further contributions to other fronts.

On 8 Army front 42 Jaeger Division is now known to command the whole sector from the GARIBALDI Isthmus to about ALFONSINE. 162 Turcoman Division has apparently taken over from 114 Jaeger the responsibility of coastwatching in the area North of Lake COMACCHIO. The reshuffle last week gives 362 Div the sector from exclusive ALFONSINE to exclusive LUGO, then 98 Div as far as two kilometres up stream from COTIGNOLA and then 26 Pz Div which has taken over the small sector previously held by 278 Div together with part of 98 Div's previous sector. Both regiments of 26 Pz Div are in the line. The sectors of 4 Para and 90 P.G. Divs remain apparently unchanged but it looks as though 715 Div has been completely relieved, partly by the extension Eastwards of 334 Div's sector. It is less likely now than it seemed last week when 278 Div was being relieved, for no apparent reason, by 26 Pz Div, that the former is to move out of ITALY, while in view of past disappointments it is dangerous to predict the same of 715 Div. There must be some reason for the latter's relief, however, and it must take 278 Div's place as favourite for withdrawal.

In our [illegible] attack, after the initial surprise, we had a certain surprise ourselves to identify prisoners from 114 Jaeger Div, although Two & reports of the previous

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German-inspired. The remarks, based on intelligent anticipation of what OKW might be expected to do with the Russians so close to BERLIN and the Western Armies of Liberation so close to COLOGNE, are dying down and the intelligent anticipators are now veering to a conception of ITALY as the granary and, in part, workshop of the Nazi Alpine redoubt. The fact remains that no further formation has followed 16 SS Div out of the country yet and, so far as is known, none has even started. There are at the moment only two German divisions uncommitted, one recently withdrawn from the line, which is not excessive in view of the improvement in the weather, and the Westerly move of 114 Jaeger Div can scarcely be reconciled with any intention to withdraw. The Italian front is still, however, held in greater strength than either its intrinsic importance or Allied capabilities here could warrant and we must be prepared for it to be called on for further contributions to other fronts.

On 8 Army front 42 Jaeger Division is now known to command the whole sector from the GARIGLIANO Isthmus to about ALFONSINE. 162 Turcoman Division has apparently taken over from 114 Jaeger the responsibility of constructing in the area North of Lake COMACCHIO. The reshuffle last week gives 362 Div the sector from exclusive ALFONSINE to exclusive LUGO, then 98 Div as far as two kilometres up stream from CASTIGNOLA and then 26 Pz Div which has taken over the small sector previously held by 278 Div together with part of 98 Div's previous sector. Both regiments of 26 Pz Div are in the line. The sectors of 4 Para and 90 P.G. Divs remain apparently unchanged but it looks as though 715 Div has been completely relieved, partly by the extension Eastwards of 334 Div's sector. It is less likely now than it seemed last week when 278 Div was being relieved, for no apparent reason, by 26 Pz Div, that the former is to move out of ITALY, while in view of past disappointments it is dangerous to predict the same of 715 Div. There must be some reason for the latter's relief, however, and it must take 278 Div's place as favourite for withdrawal.

In our HELVETIERS attack, after the initial surprise, we had a certain surprise ourselves to identify prisoners from 114 Jaeger Div, although Tac R reports of the previous day prepared us for some new arrival. Prisoners taken on 26 Feb were from 741 Jaeger Regt, all three bns of which have since been identified. It does not appear that their arrival was due to early warning of our impending attack as the first elements started to move on 12 February and, according to prisoners, the division was intended for further West - LIGURIA according to some - and was diverted down the ADRIATIC road on arrival at MODENA when news of our attack was received. The Recce Bn has been identified but not 721 Regt which is presumably West of the HELVETIERS area as the divisional Artillery Regiment has been reported by ground sources in the ARETONE area. The arrival of 114 Jaeger Div will allow 232 Div to sidestep Eastwards and take over some of 94 Div's sector, up to inclusive VERGATO according to one report. Also involved in unsuccessful counter-attacks were 4 Alpine Bn and the MITTENWALD Alpine Lehr Bn.

....On the French....

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On the French frontier 5 Mtn and 34 Divs are still apparently in position. The Russians claim to have taken prisoners in East PRUSSIA from "a battle group of 34 Div" but we have also had prisoners from 107 G.R. of the division in the area N 7206 on 24 Feb. There is no confirmation, therefore, of reports of a withdrawal of German troops from this sector and reports of the thinning out of 5 Mtn Div in small detachments so as not to arouse suspicion can be explained by the fact that units of the division have been withdrawn to fight Partisans, e.g. in the area between ASTI and ALEXANDRIA as paybooks captured by the Partisans indicate. It is important, however, to keep a close watch on the movements of these divisions as, if the Germans are going to evacuate N.W. ITALY, they will be the first to depart.

2. WESTERN FRONT

HITLER, some months ago in a moment of unusual clarity, pointed out that the great danger of a two front war lay in the fact that substantial forces are likely at any given time to be engaged not in fighting the enemy but in travelling from one front to the other. 6 S.S. Pz Army is a case in point. It was transferred to the East nearly a month ago, but played no part in halting the Russian advance, and now it is missing in the West at a critical moment when armour is in shorter supply than it has ever been.

By the end of last week RUNDSTEDT had three Panzer Divisions out of the line. They were 10 S.S. Pz, Pz Lehr and 11 Pz. No more of 10 S.S. Pz Div has been heard, and it seems likely that it has now left the West altogether. Pz Lehr Division has appeared in the REICHSWALD battle area, and 11 Pz Division moved from the Southern EIFEL up to the DUREN area. The Germans have been making determined efforts to extricate further forces from the line and during the few days preceding the Allied attack enjoyed rather greater success. 9 Pz Div was pulled out from the PRUM area and moved up to DUREN while elements of three battered infantry divisions were withdrawn from the area South of DUREN. This gave RUNDSTEDT by 25 February a mobile reserve of two Panzer and eight Infantry Divisions, of which both the Panzer Divisions have now been committed.

In the South, the Allied pressure in the SAARBRÜCKEN area was beginning to tell however and two of the divisions in Army Group G reserve appeared on the First German Army Front. These were 245 Inf and 2 Mtn Divisions. The latter had been in Southern ALSACE and with 338 Inf Div, was reported to be moving Northwards. Across the RHINE in Southern ALSACE there are still out of contact, apart from occasional patrol clashes, five other Infantry Divisions.

Meanwhile further North, the departure of 11 Pz Div from the MOSELLE - SAAR triangle had to be paid for. Confronted with our attack, the enemy withdrew rapidly behind the SAAR river. SAARLAUTERN fell [illegible] difficulty, but the

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Meanwhile further North, the departure of 11 Pz Div from the MOSELLE - SAAR triangle had to be paid for. Confronted with our attack, the enemy withdrew rapidly behind the SAAR river. SAARBURG fell without difficulty, but the enemy was unable to prevent us establishing a bridgehead over the SAAR which is now 2 miles deep and four miles wide. Enemy resistance still remains moderate in this area.

In the Southern EIFEL, too, the enemy's resistance has been light. The enemy divisions in this area are now all in an extremely weary state. Most of them have had no rest since the ARDENNES offensive and they have nearly all been engaged in heavy fighting over the past fortnight. Even the arrival of 2 Pz Division from the PRUM sector did not help and there has been evidence of considerable disorganisation in the enemy ranks as we pressed home our attack. Two bridges were captured intact over the PRUM river and the fall of the road junction of BITBURG now seems to be imminent. One of the Infantry Divisions pulled out five days before has been hastily recommitted in this area.

.....The main battle.....

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The main battle of the week has been in the DUREN sector where we attacked across the ROER river on a broad front North and South of DUREN. Considerable progress has been made in this attack and for the first time since last summer there are signs of serious enemy disorganisation. The initial attack was taken by six infantry divisions all of them in their usual place, but as the attack developed, RUNDSTEDT was forced to draw more and more on his scanty reserve. 9 Pz Division which had scarcely extricated itself from the PRUM sector was thrown in on the second day of the attack and was heavily engaged. I/10 P.G.R. provided a spectacle not seen in the West for long, when the whole Bn surrendered on 24 Feb. Since then 11 Pz Div which had only just arrived from the MERZIG area has been committed, and now 336 Inf Div from Southern ALSACE has been identified. These reinforcements have not been able to prevent an Allied break through. In the direction of COLOGNE, Allied armour operating in five columns on both sides of the AACHEN - COLOGNE autobahn has reached ELSDORF, 15 miles from the REMAGEN bridge and 3 miles West of the ERFT river. The enemy may well hope to stand on this river, on which defences have long been developed. Further North, on the front North of LINNICH, Allied armour has reached a point four miles from MUNCHEN - GLADBACH.

On the Canadian Army front the commitment of Pz Lehr Division raised to ten the number of enemy divisions engaged in the REICHSWALD battle. They present a formidable array for four are Parachute and three are good quality mobile divisions. However, with the ground to some extent drying, we have been able to make good progress, notably North of GOCH where CALCAR has been taken after heavy fighting. German resistance in the area remains heavy and so far the enemy armour is still fully committed.

RUNDSTEDT's situation is deteriorating rapidly. His lack of infantry in the REICHSWALD sector, which forced him to commit his scanty mobile reserves in that area, may cost him dear; for he can at present reckon only four somewhat doubtful Infantry Divisions and no armour at all against his reserves. And this, when in the really crucial sector of the front the Allies are advancing faster than they have ever done; when strong forces of his own are still fully engaged in the REICHSWALD battle; and when he is losing in prisoners alone about 3,000 men per day. It took us nearly a month of bitter costly fighting to cover the 15 miles from ROER to the ROER river; in three days now we have crossed one major river obstacle and gained seven miles. The road to COLOGNE was never likely to be an easy one, and there are still the defences of the ERFT to overcome, but it is becoming every day a shorter one, and RUNDSTEDT may soon be hard put to it to retain his position West of the RHINE.

3. EASTERN FRONT

Apart from the sharp battles in the area of the KRIESS river North of GUBLITZ, there were signs last week that the great battles of the winter were over. The Soviet offensive was six weeks old on 26 February and as in the fifth week of last summer's offensive, seemed to have passed its peak. By 23 July last year, five weeks after the offensive started,

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By [illegible] NARA Date 4/6/01

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Apart from the sharp battles in the area of the NEISSE river North of GÖRLITZ, there were signs last week that the great battles of the winter were over. The Soviet offensive was six weeks old on 26 February and as in the fifth week of last summer's offensive, seemed to have passed its peak. By 23 July last year, five weeks after the offensive started, the deepest Russian penetrations into POLAND had been made, and thereafter Soviet operations were primarily concerned with closening up the flanks, securing bridgeheads and preparing for the next major move. (Incidentally, this took place exactly four weeks later, but on a wholly different sector when the Russians attacked towards GALATZ). In East PRUSSIA last week, ROKOSSOVSKY captured ZINTEN, 15 miles South of KÖNIGSBERG, and further reduced the German East Prussian pocket by advancing across the main WORMDITT - KÖNIGSBERG road. In SAMLAND he was less successful and German counter-attacks in an Easterly direction seem to have re-established land contact between KÖNIGSBERG and PILLAU.

In N.W. POLAND, despite an initially bitter resistance put up by the enemy along the front between encircled GRUDZIADZ and STARGARD,

.....considerable Russian.....

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considerable Russian progress has been made. ROKOSSOVSKY has been able to achieve a deep breakthrough in the direction of the Baltic coast and has captured the road and rail junction of BUELITZ, about 25 miles from the coast, thereby threatening to split in two the enemy forces in the area between STETTIN and DANZIG. This move has incidentally done much to eliminate the danger to the long flank of the Russian Central Group of Armies.

Opposite BERLIN, ZHUKOV seems prepared to wait and build up for the bitter 38 miles which he must traverse to the REICH capitol. Neither side leaves much doubt of Soviet preparations in this sector. If MOSCOW talks of thousands of guns and fleets of aircraft, the enemy is no less loth to concede "two huge tank armies preparing for the forthcoming assault on BERLIN". But this battle has not yet started, and a lull has fallen with the issue of the Soviet bridgeheads over the ODER still not closer; for the Germans do not claim their complete elimination, nor the Russians their very cobstones. Behind the front, however, POZNAN fell at last to ZHUKOV during the week.

On the First Ukrainian front, the battle for the NEISSE crossings has been bitter. Here again the Germans admit Soviet bridgeheads, while MOSCOW maintains its sphinx-like silence. Much is at stake in these operations. KONIEV's forces have maintained the impetus of their attack longer in the present offensive than any other of the Army Groups. Neither the ODER nor BOBER rivers checked them for long, and once across the NEISSE in strength only the lesser barrier of the SPREE river would stand between them and DRESDEN on the ELBE. Hence the desperate battles which have been in progress in the approaches to GUBEN and FORST, and the comparative slowness of KONIEV's progress. Behind the front the battle for BRESLAU is on, and the exhausting, costly, block by block reduction which characterised the BUDAPEST battle is apparently to be repeated. GLOGAU, too, has been encircled and may prove an additional drag on KONIEV's progress.

Further South there is little to report. The troublesome German bridgehead on the East bank of the ODER near GROSWITZ has not yet been eliminated, although German reports of Russian attacks in the general area of RATIBOR suggest that KONIEV is continuing his efforts to eliminate this bridgehead.

There has been little interesting news of enemy dispositions this week. The bulk of 7 Pz Division seems to have been destroyed in the battle for KUBIN, while the Russians report the presence of a battle group of 34 Infantry Division in East PRUSSIA. There is no confirmation, however, of this identification, and as prisoners have been taken this week from 34 Division on the Alpine front, the report looks doubtful; possibly a few diverted drafts have been encountered. Further evidence confirms that HIMMLER is commanding the more Northerly of the two Army Groups on the Central sector, as his Head Quarters was at DEUTSCH KRONE on Jan 27.

HUNGARY

North of the DANUBE, the Ger[illegible]

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HUNGARY

North of the DANUBE, the German operations to eliminate the Russian bridgehead over the DRAU river have achieved their object, and the Soviets are now back on the East bank of the river from KOZARVCZE, North of LEVICE, down to the DANUBE. A startling identification was reported here last week. On 22 February the Rumanian General Staff, a normally reliable source, reported the identification of advanced units of 1 and 12 SS Pz Divs in the DRAU river sector. These belong to I S.S. Pz Corps of 6 S.S. Pz Army. Whether the whole of 6 S.S. Pz Army is in HUNGARY or not, and if so, what its role is, we do not know. Prior to the Rumanian report, there had been some very slight indications that the Army was bound for the Southern and not, as had been expected, for the Central sector. A prisoner on the Western front said that he had heard AUSTRIA mentioned as the Army's destination, while another report has mentioned the HITLER Division as being in HUNGARY - probably a reference

....either to.....

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either to 1 S.S. Pz Div or to the Führer Escort Brigade of 5 S.S. Pz Army. Moreover there has been no satisfactory explanation for the heavy bombings of the GYOR marshalling yards some a fortnight ago. There seems to be thus a prima facie case for placing 6 S.S. Pz Army in the AUSTRIA - Western HUNGARY area. Whether it has come as a replacement for armour withdrawn from HUNGARY to the Central sector or whether it is to have an offensive rôle is at present only a matter for speculation. The identifications on the HRON river suggest that even that limited German operation was beyond the resources of the existing enemy forces, and that 6 S.S. Pz Army had to be drawn upon for assistance. At this stage the holding of Western HUNGARY may well take a high priority in the German strategic plan. Considerations affecting this are no doubt the oil fields of S.W. HUNGARY, and the industrial areas of Eastern AUSTRIA including the a/c factories of GRAZ and WIENER NEUSTADT.

YUGOSLAVIA

The main news in YUGOSLAVIA comes from the SREM - DRAVA front, where there seems to have been a considerable thinning out in the enemy garrison. Important and surprising Partisan successes have been reported in the general area of the old BARCS bridgehead. The towns of VOCIN, NIJEMCI, PIVNICA, DARUVAR and SIMO POLJE have all been recaptured, thus largely neutralising the recent enemy gains. Immediately after the BARCS operation the enemy had a strong force of some five divisions in this area and it is quite inconceivable that the Partisans could have achieved the success they have unless a considerable thinning out had taken place. Heavy Westerly movement from VIROVITICA towards VARAZDIN has been reported, which suggests that some of the enemy forces between the DRAVA and SAVA may be about to leave the area of Army Group E. The effect this will have on the operations further South may be considerable. An early withdrawal from SARAJEVO itself seems inevitable, and H.Q. 21 Mtn Corps has already left for the North. How far the withdrawal will then go is not clear. If the SREM is to be abandoned, a halt short of the BALATON - SREM line seems improbable. But this will probably mean the abandonment of the Hungarian oil, and is unlikely to appeal to the enemy. In present circumstances he will certainly prefer to cling to the SREM which in turn implies retention of the ZAGREB - BROD - VINKOVCI railway. The line of the SAVA South of this railway will bring the Partisans too close to it for comfort, so it is conceivable that the enemy may be planning to hold a line somewhere South of the river in sufficient depth to break up any Partisan attempt to cross it and threaten his main L of C.

C.B. Thorpe
Lt Col GSO

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s/o factories of GRAZ and WIENER NEUSTADT.

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Col GSC
for C.E.R. HIRSCH,
BRIG.DIR, G.S.
A.C. OF S. G-2.

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SECRET

COPY NO 74

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 46 OF

20 FEBRUARY, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

16 S.S. Div is well on its way out of ITALY and may by now be clear over the border but there is as yet no sign of any other formation following it. There is, however, some reshuffling taking place on 5 Army front, the significance of which is not clear at the moment. Elsewhere dispositions are normal and evidence of a change in strategic intentions, despite a flood of rumours, is still to seek.

On the Eastern flank there is no further evidence that 114 Jaeger Div is taking over part of the front near Lake COMACCHIO; the dead man who provided the main weight for the theory could tell no tales and has not been corroborated by prisoners or deserters. The gap left by 16 S.S. Div has been filled mainly by an extension Northwards of the sector of 362 Div which has involved a move North by 98 Div also. In what was the extreme right-hand sector of the latter's front, held by 117 G.R., three deserters on 20 Feb identify both bns of 67 P.G.R. of 26 Pz Div. The Division has not been in action since before Christmas and there is no obvious reason why it should have come in again now. 278 Div has only been holding a regiment's worth of front and could easily have taken over another two bns' worth from 98 Div and the fact that it has not may give support to the idea that it is wanted elsewhere. If 9 P.G.R. comes in on the South of 67 P.G.R. we shall be fairly certain that the frostbitten deserter's story was right and General [illegible] is going off to seek new glory on the Eastern Front. It is perhaps worth pointing out that, although the chances are against such a move in the present strategic situation, the enemy could launch an offensive down route 9 and on to F[illegible]A from the North with 4 Para, 90 P.G. and 26 Pz Divs. An offensive in this area might perhaps have more point if it were intended as a cover to a withdrawal movement. In the meantime another candidate for release, 715 Div, now seems firmly in place and it appears that the sidestepping of 90 P.G. Div had as its purpose only the relief of 1028 G.R. for reasons not known to us but apparently urgent.

On 5 Army front our attack in the Monte [illegible] area seems to have hit the right flank of 232 Div, as expected, and prisoners have been taken from 232 Fusilier Bn and both bns of 1044 G.R. We appear to have achieved a fairly complete measure of surprise and enemy reaction so far has been slow. Prisoners provide evidence that both 4 Alpine Bn and the [illegible] Lehr Bn are still on our front; the former appears to be between 232 and MONTEROSI. Divs and the latter may have moved forward to the same area from PONTECORVO. 1 [illegible] Regt of ITALY has provided a large number of deserters and has now been bolstered up by a bn from [illegible]

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Behind the lines 162 Turcoman Division continues to concentrate. A battalion of its artillery regiment which was under command of 232 Div left about 14 Feb, presumably to rejoin. None of its units seems to have come into the line on 5 Army front; possibly it is intended for coast-watching North of Lake COMACCHIO. Further North still the S.S. KOCH Division appears to have acquired the more official designation of 24 S.S. Mountain Div, but there is no evidence that the change involves either an increase in numbers or improvement in quality.

..... 2. WESTERN FRONT.....

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2 WESTERN FRONT

It is said of one of our great naval commanders when presented with a high award at a critical stage of the present war that he remarked "I would rather they had given me a squadron of Spitfires". A similar thought may have passed through Field Marshal von RUNDSTEDT's mind this week when he was awarded the Oak Leaves with Swords to his Ritterkreuz. It was a recognition of great services rendered and a reminder perhaps that greater tasks have still to be carried out. It was a portent too; for in these days saddle are easier to come by than troops. Last week, RUNDSTEDT's attempts to extricate sufficient Divisions from the line for a refit and to form a strategic reserve were no nearer solution. Against the two Volksgrenadier Divisions, the one Para Div and one Pz Div which had been withdrawn from the AIFEL front, had to be weighed the increased dangers of the ROERMOND battle into which have been drawn elements of four more divisions, and the certainty that further armour has left the Western Front.

In the South, the week has been quiet. 2 Mtn and 338 Inf Divs of 19 Army are still unaccounted for although train movement suggests that further forces are leaving ALSACE probably for the SAAR, and these two divisions seem to be the only ones to fit the present bill. 21 Pz Div has now been identified in the west, while 10 S.S. Pz Div is still missing but prisoners have said that it is leaving for GERMANY. It may be following the other S.S. Pz Divisions which have left the West. Only two S.S. Divisions - 17 S.S. and 6 Mtn are thus left on the Western Front. Apart from these absentees, all Army Group G's divisions are still in the line, although enemy reaction to our local attack west of DUREN between the ROER and SAAR rivers was initially slow. Further North, however, a number of limited counter-attacks, never more than a battalion strong, have characterised the week. In one of these near VENLO, 11 Pz Div was engaged and lost five tanks. 11 Pz Div has now been out of contact for several days and is probably in reserve.

In contrast, the AIFEL-ROER sector was the quietest of the whole front last week. The enemy continued to offer only moderate resistance to Allied attacks near SCHMIDHEIM, and seemed content to let us expand our bridgehead over the ROER river without undue interference. The bridgehead is now about four miles deep and twice as many wide. We did we have very great difficulty in capturing VLAUDEN which fell after a short street battle. However, the enemy has been holding very firm in the HÜRTGEN region and to the North, and we have made little further headway. It is clear however, that here he is trying hard to have his cake and eat it, for efforts are being made to get troops out of the line without thereby allowing us to exploit our penetration of the Siegfried defences. Armour is the crying need, but the one S.S. and two Pz Divisions in the area North of HÜRTGEN are still engaged. Two Volksgrenadier Divisions and one Parachute Division have however been extricated, and are probably resting somewhere East of the ROER.

The bitterest fighting of the week has been in the area of the ROERMOND. When last week's Summary was written five enemy divisions had already been engaged in the battle, and in the past week a further four have appeared. The most interesting identification has been 15 S.S. Division which was brought back after a very brief period in reserve. It was the last

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of 19 Army are still unaccounted for although train movement suggests that further forces are leaving ARNHEM probably for the SAAR, and these two Divisions seem to be the only ones to fit the present bill. 21 Pz Div has now been identified in the East, while 10 S.S. Pz Div is still missing but prisoners have said that it is leaving for GERMANY. It may be following the other S.S. Pz Divisions which have left the West. Only two S.S. Divisions - 17 P.G. and 6 SS are thus left on the Western Front. Apart from these absentees, all Army Group B's divisions are still in the line, although enemy reaction to our local attack west of ARNHEM between the RHINE and SAAR rivers was initially slow. Further North, however, a number of limited counter-attacks, never more than a battalion strong, have characterised the week. In one of these near ARNHEM, 11 Pz Div was engaged and lost five tanks. 11 Pz Div has now been out of contact for several days and is probably in reserve.

In contrast, the ROER-DÜREN sector was the quietest of the whole front last week. The enemy continued to offer only moderate resistance to Allied attacks near SCHMIDHACH, and seemed content to let us expand our bridgehead over the ROER river without undue interference. The bridgehead is now about four miles deep and twice as many wide. Nor did we have very great difficulty in capturing VLATTEN which fell after a short street battle. However, the enemy has been holding very firm in the JÜLICH region and to the North, and we have made little further headway. It is clear however, that here he is trying hard to have his cake and eat it, for efforts are being made to get troops out of the line without thereby allowing us to exploit our penetration of the Siegfried defences. Armour is the crying need, but the one P.G. and two Pz Divisions in the area North of JÜLICH are still engaged. Two Volksgrenadier Divisions and one Parachute Division have however been extricated, and are probably resting somewhere East of the RHINE.

The bitterest fighting of the week has been in the area of the REICHSWALD. When last week's Summary was written five enemy divisions had already been engaged in the battle, and in the past week a further four have appeared. The most interesting identification has been 15 P.G. Division which was brought back after a very brief period in reserve. It was the last uncommitted P.G. Div in the West. This has been followed by elements of one parachute division and one infantry division transferred from Western HOLLAND, and one parachute division from the ARNHEM area. Of the nine divisions engaged, four are thus parachute. As a result of these developments there has been a considerable stiffening of the enemy resistance in the CLEVE-GOCH area achieved partly at the expense of the now very thinly held front in Western HOLLAND. Another dam has been blown by the enemy during the week, this time North of CLEVE, and we are confronted with the worst floods of the whole campaign. Nevertheless appreciable progress has been made and we are now fighting in GOCH itself against embittered resistance.

MONTGOMERY's account this week thus shows a slight increase in the amount of infantry which he has in reserve, but an appreciable deterioration in his armoured reserves. There are now five infantry or parachute divisions

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encountered so far in the West, but at best only three Panzer Divisions and no S.S. Divisions at all. The demands of the Eastern Front have indeed taken their toll. Excluding the four Panzer Divisions of 6 S.S. Pz Army which are still unbloodied, at least seven divisions two of them mobile, have been transferred to the Eastern front since the beginning of this year. RUNDSTEDT may thus legitimately feel that he has done his part and may hope that no further major demands will be made upon him. For his own situation is not happy. The unforgiving minutes are passing and the sombre tune to which they are played is once more called by his enemies.

5. EASTERN FRONT

(a) East PRUSSIA and Eastern GERMANY

There has been little change in East PRUSSIA where ROKOSSOVSKY is making only slow progress in the approaches to KÖNIGSBERG. The death of General CHERNYAKOVSKY, Commander of the 3rd White Russian Army Group, is a serious loss to the Soviet forces in East PRUSSIA. CHERNYAKOVSKY was the youngest Army Group Commander in the Soviet Union and in the present campaign was responsible for the capture of TILSIT and the breakthrough the INSTERBURG Gap towards KÖNIGSBERG. He was, incidentally, the first Russian commander to penetrate into German territory last November.

On the main Front in POLAND and GERMANY the enemy is offering firm resistance to the Soviet forces in POMERANIA. No further Russian progress has been made in the direction either of DANZIG or of STETTIN, but the capture of CHOJNICE just East of the German border about 70 miles S.W. of DANZIG gives the Russians control of a useful road centre. Now that SCHWIEBUS has fallen, the Russians hold a 150 mile stretch of the BERLIN-DANZIG trunk line between KÜSTRIN and CHOJNICE. Further West there seems to be little doubt that Marshal ZHUKOV has crossed the ODER on the direct approaches to BERLIN in the FRANKFURT-KÜSTRIN area. For over a fortnight the Germans have reported several Soviet bridgeheads in this area, and they now speak of BERLIN as being practically surrounded. The Soviets have made no official claim of crossings, but have spoken for the first time of the battle for the fortified approaches to BERLIN. 25 S.S. Div from the Western Front seems to have been engaged in the battle for KÜSTRIN and is reported to have suffered severe losses.

Further South Marshal KONIEV's drive into Southern GERMANY has made slower progress during the week. The BOBER and QUEISS rivers have been crossed and the Soviets stand 6 miles from GÖRLITZ. However, the advance seems to have slowed down in the past two days with KONIEV's left flank still just short of the RIESENGEBIRGE. This may be in part due to the recent thaw, in part to the development of the battle ground BRESLAU. BRESLAU, as forecast last week, was encircled by a link-up of the two ODER bridgeheads North and South of the town, and the Soviet ring is closing in on the town. To the S.W., however, the Germans still cling to their bridgehead on the East bank of the ODER South of OPPELN. As this lies very close to the vital OBERWITZ industrial region, the enemy's continued retention of the bridgehead is a little disturbing and the area needs very careful watching.

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Several interesting identifications are reported by the Russians from the Central sector. 21 Panzer Division from the West and 20 Pz Div from RUHRORT have been identified under Army Group Centre, together with a curious miscellany of new infantry divisions which appear to bear titles rather than numbers. Some of these may, of course, be S.S. Divs with an S.S. number, although none has been reported. Some of the titles suggest that they may be hastily formed Volkssturm Divs. They are as follows: Infantry Divs SCHMIDT, BERLIN, BRANDENBURG, MARKISCH-FRIEDLAND, GROSS ADMIRAL DÖNITZ and (a new venture in German divisional terminology reminiscent of Italian Blackshirt practice) P.G. Div '30th January'. We know nothing of the quality of these formations, but there is certainly need of further forces in Eastern GERMANY. 4 Pz Army seems to have taken a particularly bad knock in the Silesian fighting, while Soviet claims for the whole front suggest that enemy casualties are averaging 5,000 men a day. Casualties in the west are

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at present about 2,000 men per day; so that the enemy is now losing roughly the equivalent of one division every two days.

(b) CZECHOSLOVAKIA and HUNGARY

4 S.S. P.G. Div, formerly in the LOSONC area, is reported to have left for the North. Otherwise there has been no major change in the situation in CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

In HUNGARY the week has seen renewed German counter-attacks in the area North of the DANUBE. The enemy has been able to gain some ground between the HERNAD and the IPOLY rivers, and according to one report has been able to establish a small bridgehead from the South bank of the DANUBE East of ESZTERGOM on to the North bank in the area West of the IPOLY. There is so far no satisfactory evidence as to the scale or objective of these operations, but it may be of significance that 356 Inf Division from ITALY has already been identified in action N.W. of BUDAPEST.

The cost to the enemy of the defence of BUDAPEST is now clearer. Total German and Hungarian casualties amounted to some 175,000 men, and the Germans lost the bulk of, if not the whole of, the following five divisions under command of 9 S.S. Mtn Corps: 271 Inf, 13 Pz, 60 P.G., 8 S.S. Cav and 22 SS Cav Divisions. After the final reduction of BUDA was completed, a number of German forces attempted to break out to the West. A few of these seem to have succeeded in getting through to the German lines West of BUDAPEST, but the majority were destroyed North-West of BUDAPEST. What remnants remained of 8 S.S. Cav Division after the BUDA battle seem to have been eliminated in this last desperate attempt.

(c) YUGOSLAVIA

There is evidence that the withdrawal of Army Group E which halted about a month ago South of SARAJEVO, has once more been resumed. Last week, two of the advanced outposts covering SARAJEVO, - MOSTAR and VISEGRAD - fell. The former was abandoned by the enemy after a sharp battle, the latter without any interference from Partisans. Rear guards of 21 Mtn Corps, consisting probably of elements of 369 Division are now about six miles N.E. of MOSTAR, while West of VISEGRAD considerable westward road movement is reported. TUZLA too is again in Partisan hands. The suddenness of the German withdrawal from the DRINA line at VISEGRAD has not been without its embarrassments, particularly to the unfortunate 22 Inf Division at ZVORNIK which, as report would have it, is now reduced to eating fodder. Prior to the German withdrawal from VISEGRAD it was already cut off from SARAJEVO by the Partisan occupation of VLASENICA. Since then it has been engaged in very heavy fighting in the ZVORNIK area and is now reported to be isolated in three main pockets in the DRINA Valley - ZVORNIK, MEDJUK (C 19) and TRNAKOVO (X 20). 7 S.S. Mtn Division, only recently arrived in the SREM from the DRINA Valley, has had to send down a relief force from BJELJINA to extricate the isolated forces and will no doubt succeed in so doing with the ruthlessness which has characterised its past two years of anti-bandit warfare.

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Total German and Hungarian casualties amount to some 175,000 men, and the Germans lost the bulk of, if not the whole of, the following five divisions under command of 9 S.S. Mtn Corps: 371 Inf, 13 Pz, 60 P.G., 8 S.S. Cav and 22 SS Cav Divisions. After the final reduction of [redacted] was completed, a number of German forces attempted to break out to the West. A few of these seem to have succeeded in getting through to the German lines West of [redacted], but the majority were destroyed North West of [redacted]. What remnants remained of 8 S.S. Cav Division after the [redacted] battle seem to have been eliminated in this last desperate attempt.

(c) YUGOSLAVIA

There is evidence that the withdrawal of Army Group E which halted about a month ago South of SARAJEVO, has once more been resumed. At least two of the advanced outposts covering SARAJEVO, - KOSLJUN and VISEGRAD - fell. The former was abandoned by the enemy after a sharp battle, the latter without any interference from partisans. Rearguards of 21 Mtn Corps, consisting probably of elements of 369 Division are now about six miles N.E. of KOSLJUN, while West of VISEGRAD considerable westward road movement is reported. VISEGRAD thus is again in partisan hands. The suddenness of the German withdrawal from the DRINA line at VISEGRAD has not been without its embarrassments, particularly to the unfortunate 22 Inf Division at ZVORNIK which, as report would have it, is now reduced to eating fodder. Prior to the German withdrawal from VISEGRAD it was already cut off from SARAJEVO by the partisan occupation of VLASENICA. Since then it has been engaged in very heavy fighting in the ZVORNIK area and is now reported to be isolated in three main pockets in the DRINA Valley - ZVORNIK, KOSLUN (C 19) and SREBRENICA (X 20). 7 S.S. Mtn Division, only recently arrived in the SARAJEVO from the DRINA Valley, has had to send down a relief force from PALE-JAHORINA to extricate the isolated forces and will no doubt succeed in so doing with the ruthlessness which has characterised its past two years of Balkan warfare.

Fighting has also been taking place South of the NERETVA in the PRIMORJE mountains to which some of the former Partisan garrison in the NERETVA bridgehead withdrew after the elimination of the bridgehead. DUBROVNIK, P 57 has been cleared by the enemy, but the Partisans seem to be retreating in good order into the hills.

Apart from those mentioned above, there have been few changes in enemy dispositions this week. A number of reports indicate that 369 or 373 Germano-Croat Division or both may be leaving N. W. YUGOSLAVIA. These reports are so far unconfirmed. There is however, good evidence that a Cossack Corps is setting up from 1 Cossack Division. Lt.Gen HELMUTH von PANNWITZ, ex G.O.C. 1 Cossack Div, is stated to be the new Corps Commander with H.Q. at KUPINO, P 15. 2 Cossack Div is setting up in the SISAK-KUPINO area where 8 Cossack Regt formed from recent arrivals from GERMANY, is located. The presence of 8 Cossack Regt in 2 Cossack Div presupposes the inclusion of 7 Cossack Regt also.

C E R Sherrard

Brig, D.S.O.
G.S.O. 1, G-2

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SECRET

COPY NO 23

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 47 OF 13 FEBRUARY, 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

There have been patrol actions and raids at many points along the front and a more ambitious reconnaissance in force on our part at the Western end, but no change in the dispositions of the opposing forces has been effected. Our picture of enemy order of battle is also unchanged and the general tendencies noted last week continue.

On the enemy's left it appears likely that 114 Jaeger Division is taking over part of the line S.W. of Lake COMMACCHIO. The intention no doubt is to allow 42 Jaeger Div to shorten its front since 16 S.S. must by now be all out of the line and its sector appears to be split between 42 and 362 Divs. Troops of 16 S.S. Div were probably passing through CASTELFRANCO (G 37) for TREVISO on 7 Feb and it may have been some of their equipment which was spotted by PR on the 12th at GEMONA, North of UDINE, where there were 37 flat cars loaded with AFV's. Evidence of any other Division following 16 S.S. from 10 Army is still very scanty: a prisoner has a credible story about 278 being due to leave, which might be supported by the fact that it has certainly been most inconspicuous of late but by no other evidence. There is nothing to show that 90 P.G. has taken over more of 715 Div's sector and a corpse from II Bn 735 in the area M 1420, though it may have been lying there since 4 Feb, is a slight indication that the latter Division is not after all intended for the East just yet. Going further West everything is usual; 148 Div, as expected, had to bring much more of its strength into the line to meet our thrusts in its sector. All three German regiments were identified among an assortment of Italian deserters, mainly from [illegible] Division. We took a fair number of prisoners in this area, though we failed to retain any ground seized, and the enemy must still be convinced of the necessity of keeping German troops at least available if his whole Western flank is to be prevented from dissolving.

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The situation in rear remains much the same. There is further s[illegible] evidence that 29 P.G. Division was still in its old rest area N.W. of BOLOGNA on 8 Feb though a prisoner states that he saw troops from it crossing the PO on 21 Jan, alleging that they were bound for the Eastern Front. This part of his story is not considered very likely. 26 Pz Div has been reported sporadically up to 11 Feb as being in the area East and West of FERRARA; the places mentioned are fairly far apart and suggest a wide, but not improbable, dispersion. If 114 Jg Div has been definitely recommitted, as seems likely, it would leave those two mobile Divisions as the only reserve for the front; however it appears that another formation is on the way, no less than 162 Turcoman Division. According to a good source this Division left the TARO Valley, South of PIACENZA, for BOLOGNA on 5 Feb "hurriedly" and it has since been reported on 11 Feb on route 9, S.E. of BOLOGNA. Clearly the intention is to find some more active employment for the Lame duck of Army Group C. It may be that the quality has been improved; according to one report recent drafts of Germans have considerably reduced the percentage of Turcomans in the Division.

North of the PO there have been no important changes in the Alpine [illegible] A good source puts 710 Div between UDINE and CHIOGGIA, a [illegible]

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GEMONA, North of UDINE, where there were 37 flat cars loaded with AFV's. Evidence of any other Division following 16 S.S. from 10 Army is still very scanty: a prisoner has a credible story about 278 being due to leave, which might be supported by the fact that it has certainly been most inconspicuous of late but by no other evidence. There is nothing to show that 90 P.G. has taken over more of 715 Div's sector and a corpse from II Bn 735 in the area M 1420, though it may have been lying there since 4 Feb, is a slight indication that the latter Division is not after all intended for the East just yet. Going further West everything is usual; 148 Div, as expected, had to bring much more of its strength into the line to meet our thrusts in its sector. All three German regiments were identified among an assortment of Italian deserters, mainly from ITALIA Division. We took a fair number of prisoners in this area, though we failed to retain any ground gained, and the enemy must still be convinced of the necessity of keeping German troops at least available if his whole Western flank is to be prevented from dissolving.

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North of the PO there have been no important changes in the Alpine sector. In N.W. ITALY a good source puts 710 Div between UDINE and CHIOGGIA, a vague statement which suggests the Division may be engaged in the coastwatching duties to which it became accustomed in NORWAY.

There is no change in enemy capabilities. If KESSELRING has been called on for more divisions than the two already surrendered he will no doubt comply as expeditiously as possible, but under present conditions, unless its onward journey is to be entirely by road, with consequent expenditure of precious fuel, it is calculated that not much less than fifteen days must elapse between the time a division is withdrawn from the line and the time it clears from ITALY. At this rate it will be the end of March before KESSELRING really begins to feel the pinch in ITALY and must begin to consider a withdrawal to a shorter line.

.....2. WESTERN FRONT.....

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2. WESTERN FRONT.

Last week saw the end of the German bridgehead in Southern ALSACE. Apart from a thinly held pocket North of COLMAR, which was quickly wiped out by French troops, the enemy succeeded in getting his forces back to the East bank of the RHINE without suffering many additional losses. However, most of the divisions which were in the pocket will have need of considerable rest before they are in any state to resume active operations. A probable exception is 2 Mtn Division which despite a notably bad performance appears to be leaving ALSACE, possibly for employment further North. The general trend of movement appears to be Northwards from Northern ALSACE as well as from the South and there are several notable absentees on First German Army's front. 25 P.G. Div is now probably in the East, while 21 Pz and 10 S.S. Pz Divs are both out of the line. This leaves twelve infantry divisions and one P.G. Div holding the First Army front between TRIER and the RHINE North of STRASBOURG. There is little evidence for the location or destination of the missing divisions. Rail movement continues N.W. from FRANKFURT as well as Eastward, suggesting that some forces at any rate are on the way to the RUHR sector.

There has been little fresh to report from the EIFEL. 11 Pz Division not conforming to the prevailing fashion in the West is still in the line and has been firmly reidentified in this past week in its old sector South of TRIER. It has in fact been indulging in limited and inconclusive aggressiveness. Further North, the infantry of the German Seventh Army continues to give ground albeit stubbornly. A notable success was gained last week when we cleared the enemy from the high ridge of the SCHNEE EIFEL overlooking the town of PRUM. We have breached the Siegfried defences in this area and are fighting in PRUM itself against fierce enemy opposition. The enemy seems to have been a little surprised at the comparative ease with which the Siegfried line was pierced, and has hastily brought up 2 Pz Div from reserve and 256 Infantry Division from HOLLAND, both of which are now fighting in the PRUM sector.

North of the EIFEL bulge, the stiffened enemy resistance in the SCHNEE area following the arrival of 3 P.G. Div did not stop the American First Army reaching the ROER river along its whole front. As a result of the operations of the past three weeks we now hold all of GERMANY West of this river. A battle has now developed for the dams over the river. Although we were able to seize intact part of one dam, the enemy by blowing the outlet pipes on all three dams in the region has succeeded in raising the level of the ROER river by four feet, and a considerable stream is now running. Some flooding has been caused, and operations are proving extremely difficult.

Enemy reaction to the British attack in the REICHSWALD was at first slow, although extensive minefields were encountered. In the first five days of the attack elements of only three divisions were contacted amounting to some seven regiments in all. However with the fall of CLEVE, a considerable stiffening of German resistance has become apparent. 7 Para Div, missing from Northern ALSACE for over a fortnight, has put in an appearance; so has 116 Pz Division which had been in reserve in the DUSSELDORF area. Ground conditions in this sector are very

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There has been little fresh to report from the EIFEL. 11 Pz Division not conforming to the prevailing fashion in the West is still in the line and has been firmly reidentified in this past week in its old sector South of THIER. It has in fact been indulging in limited and inconclusive aggressiveness. Further North, the infantry of the German Seventh Army continues to give ground albeit stubbornly. A notable success was gained last week when we cleared the enemy from the high ridge to the SCHMEE EIFEL overlooking the town of PRÜM. We have breached the Siegfried defences in this area and are fighting in PRÜM itself against fierce enemy opposition. The enemy seems to have been a little surprised at the comparative ease with which the Siegfried line was pierced, and has hastily brought up 2 Pz Div from reserve and 256 Infantry Division from ALSACE, both of which are now fighting in the PRÜM sector.

North of the EIFEL bulge, the stiffened enemy resistance in the SCHMIDT area following the arrival of 3 P.G. Div did not stop the American First Army reaching the ROER river along its whole front. As a result of the operations of the past three weeks we now hold all of GERMANY West of this river. A battle has now developed for the dams over the river. Although we were able to seize intact part of one dam, the enemy by blowing the outlet pipes on all three dams in the region has succeeded in raising the level of the ROER river by four feet, and a considerable stream is now running. Some flooding has been caused, and operations are proving extremely difficult.

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The Western Front is now going through a transitional period. The great battles of the winter are over, and although many bitter actions are in progress at the present time they do not constitute the major battles which RUNDSTEDT must expect in the Spring and Summer. In fine weather with the ground hard the present operations on the Dutch frontier would be a serious threat to the RUHR and to the whole German line in the West. Even now when the prevailing conditions make progress of necessity slow, RUNDSTEDT has shown clearly that he is not disposed to take the threat lightly. He would probably at present like to play a waiting game, using the time still left to him to prepare for the battles of the Spring. There are at the moment out of the line one P.G. and three Pz Divisions, but little infantry.

....Nor can RUNDSTEDT.....

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Nor can RUNDSTEDT expect to enjoy now the priority in infantry replacements which he did at the end of last year. True two divisions (233 Pz Trg and 166 Res) are at this time leaving DENMARK, destination unknown. In December there would have been a reasonable certainty that they were Westward bound, but there can be no guarantee of that to-day, nor that no further claims will soon be made on the West. Hence, uncertain of the future, RUNDSTEDT's policy must be to keep intact as much of his armour as he can, and to try to rest the infantry. His tardy reaction to the British attack is a measure of his reluctance to commit reserves. Nevertheless he is being forced to commit them, and he is succeeding neither in keeping his armour intact nor in resting the infantry. In these circumstances the success of our present attacks is to be measured as much by the extent to which they compel RUNDSTEDT to keep or commit in the line divisions which would otherwise be resting as by the territorial gains made.

3. EASTERN FRONT

(a) EAST PRUSSIA AND EASTERN GERMANY

Notable gains in East PRUSSIA and GERMANY have marked the opening of the second month of the Soviet winter offensive. In East PRUSSIA, the capture of ELBING has reduced the German hold to a small area South of KONIGSBERG and t. the city itself which is still being stubbornly defended, although BOROSSOVSK continues to make slow progress from the South. ELBING was the second largest town in East PRUSSIA, its importance lying mainly in the SCHICHAU yards which were at one time producing six submarines a month, as well as M.T.Bs. 170 Inf Div appears to have taken a heavy battering at the hands of the Soviets in the course of this battle.

No further progress has been made by the Russians in their drive on DANZIG but in POMERANIA the left wing of the 2nd White Russian Army Group has been extended in the direction of STETTIN. NEUTREF KRONE, a junction of five railways and six highroads, has been captured while troops of the First Polish Army took MARKISCH FRIEDLAND to the N.W. The Russians are now within 10 miles of STARGARD having by-passed and encircled ARNSWALDE. The capture of STARGARD would cut the main trunk line from STETTIN to DANZIG and would confine land communication between BERLIN and the German forces in DANZIG and N.W. POLAND to the road and subsidiary rail network passing through the bottleneck at STETTIN.

While the First White Russian Group has been able to broaden the Northern flank of the Soviet salient pointing at BERLIN Marshal KONIEV has been securing the left flank of his First Ukrainian Army Group by a break out from the STEINAU bridgehead in the direction of GORLITZ. This drive has made very considerable headway. After cutting the BRESLAU-BERLIN highway, the Russians took LIEGNITZ and are now within 25 miles of GORLITZ. BRESLAU itself is in grave danger of encirclement from a a link-up of the two large Soviet bridgeheads over the ODER on both sides of it. This drive is undoubtedly the most important development of the past week. KONIEV is now in a fair way to getting his left wing resting safely on the RIESENGEBIRGE, a natural defence considerably more reassuring than that of the ODER. The prospects of a German counter-attack against the Central

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Some changes in the chain of command in the East have been reported during the past week. A document captured by the Russians is signed by Col-Gen SCHÖRNER as Commander of Army Group Centre. SCHÖRNER was last known as Commander of Army Group North. There is no news of his successor in Army Group North, but on 6 Feb the VÖLKISCHER BEOBACHTER came out with the statement that HIMMLER had an Army Group on the Central sector. Another report associates him with POMERANIA. The situation is thus a little obscure. It is of course conceivable that the disasters in the East have led

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....to a rapid.....

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to a rapid change of commanders similar to that in the West last summer. However SCHOERNER is a violent Nazi and would probably be regarded as a reliable General at the present time. It seems more likely in view of this that a further Army Group has appeared in the East to relieve Army Group North of part of its present three front commitment in LATVIA, East PRUSSIA and N.E. POLAND. North could then be left to deal with the Latvian and possibly East Prussian battles while HIMMLER and SCHOERNER cope with the war on German soil. Excluding YUGOSLAVIA there would then be five Army Groups on the Eastern Front.

(b) HUNGARY

The main news from HUNGARY is of the fall of BUDA. An indication that the end was near came on Feb 12 when the Soviet night communiqué reported the capture in two days of 30,000 prisoners. By the following morning came the admission from BERLIN that resistance in the capital had come to an end. Thus ends the long protracted battle which has probably cost the Germans the better part of some six divisions, not to speak of the wasted efforts expended in two fruitless counter-attacks. For the Russians the capture of the city will vastly simplify the supply problem in any further advance into Western HUNGARY since all the main roads and railways of Central HUNGARY converged on the capital. Elsewhere in HUNGARY there has been little to report. Russian counter-attacks have continued S.E. of SZEKESFEHERVAR but without making any great headway.

A number of order of battle changes are reported this week. 44 Inf Div appears to have moved from the BALATON sector to the area North of the DANUBE near KOMAROM. In the same area 211 Inf Div has been identified. This is a new arrival in Army Group South; it was last identified in October 1944 on the Central sector. It now seems clear too that 2 Pz Army has passed from command of Army Group F to Army Group South. This would be a logical development since it extends Army Group South's sphere of command down to the Hungarian Southern frontier, thus confining Army Group F's command to the Yugoslav area. 2 Pz Army is believed to control 1 Mtn, 71 Inf and 118 Jg Divisions. As a result of these changes the strength of Army Group South is now estimated to be thirty divisions.

(c) YUGOSLAVIA

Events in the DRVAR bridgehead have dominated the Yugoslav scene in this past week. An attack against the two-months old Partisan-Soviet bridgehead over the UNA was launched from the East and South on the morning of 8 Feb, and it soon became apparent that this operation was on a very much larger scale than either of the two previous attempts to eliminate the bridgehead. Elements of at least four German Divisions took part in the attack, from right to left, 11 S.S.P., 297 Inf, a battlegroup of 7 S.S. Mtn (from the MILJEVINA area) and the KUPA Division. The latter is an ad hoc formation believed to be equated with 264 Reserve Division which has been consistently reported in YUGOSLAVIA over the past six months. The attack made considerable headway and was taken to be a Chetnik Division

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By [illegible] NARS, Date 7-6-01

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In ALBANIA, the Partisans have made a rapid come-back after the German drive in the MOKTAR area. A counter-attack launched from the S.W. led to the fall of SIROKI BRIJEG, the important stronghold covering MOSTAR from the West.

.....M.E. of SARAJEVO.....

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N.E. of SARAJEVO enemy operations in the DRINA Valley are continuing to make progress. Having captured ZVORNIK 22 Inf Div has been pushing Northwards to the BIJELJINA area where it has been engaged in heavy fighting. Something of a set-back has been suffered however by the Partisan recapture of VLASENICA on the main SARAJEVO-ZVORNIK road. 22 Inf Div storming Northwards may have swept the Partisans off the road itself, but that was about all it did; now that the storm has passed the Partisans have had little difficulty in re-assuming occupation of VLASENICA. Presumably 181 Inf Div will now be called upon to retake the town again.

A Partisan source states that II/1047 of 237 Inf Div is at LIPOGLAV. Of the fifteen Yugoslav villages which bear this name, that at J 6618 North of SISAK is the nearest to ISTRIA and the most likely location. Elements of 237 Division may well have been sent to DALMATIA possibly to reinforce the Island of KRK or to act as a counter-attack force in the event of an Allied landing. There is some evidence that the enemy is concerned about the security of this Island, and the garrison has recently been raised to 1,200 men by the arrival of 500 Ustachi troops.

From the SISAK area further reports have been received of a concentration of Cossack troops. An earlier report has stated that 2 Cossack Division was forming in this area, and while this lacks confirmation, it appears quite reasonable.

C E C Hazel

BRIGADIER, G.S.
A.C. of S. G-2.

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APPENDIX 'A' TO H.Q. 15 ARMY GROUP
INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 47 DATED
13 FEBRUARY, 1945.

GERMAN AMMUNITION SHORTAGE

The following information on a probable overall German ammunition shortage is extracted from SHAEF Weekly Intelligence Summary for the week ending 4 Feb '45.

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1. FW EVIDENCE

Over the past week there is ample evidence that the shortages previously reported by prisoners of war as prevalent in Wehrmacht formations continue to make themselves felt and influence operations in the West.

Foremost among these is the fuel shortage which continues to leave tanks stranded, which forces artillery units to employ horses as motive power and which restricts the use of those motor transport still available for the supplying of forward troops. These conditions are further complicated by the prevailing shortage of serviceable motor vehicles, whose ranks are increasing depleted by air attacks and numerous mechanical failures.

However, more difficult to appreciate are the frequent references to shortages of ammunition, particularly the most commonly used types such as LFH and MFH ammunition. While prisoners occasionally report deficiencies of heavy mortar and werfer ammunition, the frequency with which support artillery and even 7.5 cm infantry gun ammunition is reported by enemy prisoners as being in short supply gives weight to the possibility that an overall shortage of one or all of these ammunition types may exist. The practice of rationing available stocks of artillery ammunition has been in force for several months, and a statement by a recently captured prisoner from the artillery regiment of 18 Volksgrenadier Division to the effect that owing to the necessity for saving LFH ammunition only interdiction missions could be fired, is but one of many reports which indicate that economies of this nature continue in effect. Another prisoner reported that his artillery battalion ran out of MFH ammunition completely and consequently had to withdraw. While it is probably true that ammunition difficulties are most frequently a result of the breakdown of supply transport, it is worth noting that enemy infantry units engaged in the front lines are rarely stated to be suffering from small arms or mortar ammunition shortages and sometimes are even reported as having so much on hand that it proves an encumbrance. Although the supply problem in the case of artillery is complicated by virtue of the weight of the ammunition itself, it would seem reasonable to suppose that with the advantage of more open road communications and the added protection of bad weather as well as periods of darkness, adequate supplies of these important types of ammunition would be on hand if indeed such were available.

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References among enemy prisoners to shortages of these main ammunition types, while in themselves not concrete evidence that an overall shortage exists, have been surprised with such regularity over the last few months that transport difficulties notwithstanding, the possibility remains and bears close watching that an artillery ammunition shortage in the overall sense has joined fuel and motor transport shortages in limiting the enemy's operational capabilities.

This suggestion of overall ammunition shortage arising from the statements of prisoners would appear to be borne out by economic evidence presented below.

2. ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

A number of recent reports have indicated that the production of

...ammunition in general....

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ammunition in general in GERMANY and German occupied territory has been on the decline. One of these reports stated that output of shells dropped during the last months of 1944, being only 12 million shells of all calibres during October, instead of 45 million required.

It is extremely difficult to check figures of this kind and to gauge their effects on the supply position. Nevertheless, the report was of interest as being the first to state that the drop in ammunition production which, on general grounds had been expected, had actually occurred.

Of the various processes involved in the production of ammunition - projectile body manufacture, high explosive manufacture, filling, etc - the one which ground reports had indicated as the weakest section of the industry up until the recent Russian occupation of the Silesian steelworks was propellent manufacture. The recent advances on the Eastern Front deprived the enemy of sources of explosive supply through the occupation of factories at PIONKI and BROMBERG. In 1942 PIONKI contributed 6 per cent of German propellent supplies for the Western theatre of war, besides an unknown proportion to supplies for the Russian front. The output of the factory was stepped up from 400 tons per month during the latter half of 1943 to nearly 700 tons per month in March 1944 and was no doubt part of a general drive by the Germans to increase production of propellants. BROMBERG contributed 6 per cent to German propellent supplies in the West in 1943, and its capacity for high explosives production and high explosives filling has been estimated to represent some 8 per cent of the German total at mid-summer 1944. At that time the factory was incomplete and had probably reached only about one-half of its intended ultimate production.

It is likely, therefore, that the loss of these two plants represents 10 to 15 per cent of German propellent supplies and about 10 per cent of German high explosives manufacturing and filling capacity at the end of 1944.

An estimated 12 per cent of the total German production of sulphite pulp, a product used in the manufacture of explosives, has been lost through the Russian occupation of the WALDHOF's mills at KLOSTER and TILSIT. It is thought that by substantially reducing sulphite pulp supplies for rayon, paper and board mill, the priority requirements of the explosives industry will probably continue to be met.

Though propellant manufacture may still remain a weak link in ammunition production, the recent loss of the Silesian steel industry will probably have created an even weaker link. It is thought that the loss of iron ore supplies may cause such a reduction in German steel output during 1945 as to interfere

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Though propellant manufacture may still remain a weak link in ammunition production, the recent loss of the Silesian steel industry will probably have created an even weaker link. It is thought that the loss of iron ore supplies may cause such a reduction in German steel output during 1945 as to interfere seriously with allocation of steel to shell production, the largest consumer. The occupation of SILESIA may well deprive German ammunition factories of at least 25 per cent of their supplies of shell bodies immediately. It seems very probable, therefore, that these factors, combined with the difficulties being experienced by the Germans in maintaining steel production in the RUHR as a result of the bombing of communications, may now mean that steel is an even more critical factor in ammunition than propellants.

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T.S.-HQ { GOC N / G1 }

SECRET

COPY NO 61

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 46 OF 6 FEB 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The patrol activity which has monopolised the communiqués of the last week has been most valuable in widening our picture of the enemy's dispositions and intentions. Assisted by the services of a larger number of deserters than usual the prisoners taken have confirmed in general terms the conclusions reached in our last Summary that no great changes in policy were yet being effected, though regroupings and reliefs continue.

On 8 Army front the main point of interest is the relief of part of 16 S.S. by 42 Jaeger Div. So far as our evidence goes only the Northern battalion of the former has been relieved as yet though a deserter taken yesterday has a story which suggests that the Jaegers may now have taken over as far as the 418 Sector. The S.S. men themselves confirm that there is a strong rumour in the division that it is going to GERMANY; a story we have heard before of many divisions but three Alsatian deserters add corroborative detail. According to them I Bn 36 S.S. has already left for FERRARA and II Bn was expecting to go on the night 4/5 Feb (which was why they deserted). They had already seen the advance party of the relieving troops. It seems not unreasonable that the Reichsfuehrer S.S., who has just taken over the command in the vital sector of the Eastern front, should wish to recall his own division from a secondary theatre, possibly to fill the gaps in 6 S.S. Pz Army which is also believed to be now on that front. At any rate we can accept the fact that 16 S.S. is in the process of being relieved.

Further South and West another reshuffle is taking place. 1 Para Div has taken over part of the former sector of 90 P.G. which in turn has relieved some of 715 Div and a deserter states that it intends to take over the whole of 715 Div's sector. It is not quite clear why this portion of 90 P.G. division should be relieved, especially since it seems that 90 P.G. Div, a motorised formation, takes over a mountainous sector, and again the possibility presents itself that it may be required elsewhere. But there is no evidence whatever that this is so, nor even any great evidence that it has yet been wholly relieved.

Otherwise dispositions are normal. Prisoners have confirmed that it was 157 Mtn Div, as we expected, which relieved 1 Para Div West of route 65. 232 Div is still in its old position with four battalions forward and three in reserve. The 148 Division sector has been the scene of considerable vicissitudes during the past few weeks, due to political and psychological reasons rather than military. The main factor is the arrival of a regiment of ITALIA Division plus the divisional Engineer Bn; the other Regt is allegedly in the area South of FORLI and is not expected in the line till March. In the early part of the period the trend was to relieve forward German battalions by Italians to allow the latter to gain experience, and the former to rest. The

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There has been no change visible in the aspect of the German reserves. 114 Jaeger Div is still reported from time to time in the area North of Lake [redacted]. 26 Pz Div has not been reported since about 14 Jan, when its divisional sign was seen in the area East of [redacted], but there is no evidence that it has left or is intending to leave. 29 P.G. Div too is still believed to be somewhere North of [redacted]. So far, therefore, [redacted] is almost as strong as ever; his front line is still solidly held and he has one mobile division in reserve behind both the Fifth and Eighth Army fronts. Like [redacted] on the [redacted] Redoubt, though with rather more [redacted] glances over the shoulder than the gallant Franco-Scottish Marshal of [redacted]self, [redacted] can still say "J'y suis, j'y reste".

....2. WESTERN FRONT....

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2. WESTERN FRONT

VON RUNDSTEDT's problem this week has been to form a strategic reserve which will at least in part compensate for the departure of 6 S.S. Pz Army. The four Armoured Divisions of the latter are now definitely away, although the six or seven Infantry Divisions which had been operating with them appear for the present to be staying. The destination of the armour is certainly Eastwards. If the captured document showing the move of I S.S. Pz Corps to HOLLAND was not a plant, it was at any rate outdated by events in the East. Although the farewell to the West has been a slow business with the weather and the air forces alternating in their efforts to protract it, it has none the less been final. 6 Pz Army's crowded and not inglorious hour in the West is over, though the East offers it prospects fateful as ever it had in the forests of the ARDENNES.

RUNDSTEDT's problem now, if he is allowed to keep the remaining seven Panzer Divisions, is to make them do the work of eleven or at any rate so to dispose them that he will still have some form of reserve on which to fall back when the next Allied attack starts. His first action has been to start reducing his unnecessary commitments in the West of which the COLMAR pocket was apparently judged to be the least essential. The effort has not been wholly successful. True the pocket is now virtually eliminated but the cost was probably higher than RUNDSTEDT had expected. At least two Infantry Divisions (708 and 16) have been reduced to remnants while 338 Infantry Division which had been defending the Western edge of the pocket collapsed quickly when the French attack on the VOSGES ridge started. French forces attacking from the South nevertheless have had a hard fight of it all week against 2 Mtn Div reinforced by elements of 5 Mtn Div from ITALY; harder by far than the French-American forces in the North of the pocket who took COLMAR, cut the COLMAR-BREISACH railway and reached the RHINE on a 35 mile front South of STRASBOURG against light to moderate resistance. The pocket is now half its size of a week ago and in view of the absence of any good roads, the German position West of the RHINE looks untenable. What economy RUNDSTEDT has effected by withdrawing is problematic but on the principle that every little helps, he may feel that the withdrawal has probably been worth his while.

While these operations were in progress in the South, the armour remaining in the West after the departure of 6 S.S. Pz Army was being quietly taken out of the line. In Northern ALSACE 25 P.G. and 21 Pz Divs are missing, although 10 S.S. Pz Div (NOW of 6 S.S. Pz Army) and 17 S.S. P.G. Div are still there. The former has helped the infantry of First German Army to offer surprisingly firm resistance to our attacks particularly around HAGUENAU where we have made little headway. Extensive floodings, natural rather than Teutonic in origin, are adding to the difficulties in this sector. An increase in rail movement has been observed this week down the RHINE Valley from KARLSRUHE through HEIDELBERG. It need not necessarily imply further transfers from the West and probably does not, for the indications are that the RUHR is being reinforced at the expense of other areas.

The same thing has been going on all along the front.

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has been to start reducing his unnecessary commitments in the West of which the COLMAR pocket was apparently judged to be the least essential. The effort has not been wholly successful. True the pocket is now virtually eliminated but the cost was probably higher than RUNDSTEDT had expected. At least two Infantry Divisions (708 and 16) have been reduced to remnants while 338 Infantry Division which had been defending the Western edge of the pocket collapsed quickly when the French attack on the VOSGES ridge started. French forces attacking from the South nevertheless have had a hard fight of it all week against 2 Mtn Div reinforced by elements of 5 Mtn Div from ITALY; harder by far than the French-American forces in the North of the pocket who took COLMAR, cut the COLMAR-BREISACH railway and reached the RHINE on a 35 mile front South of STRASBOURG against light to moderate resistance. The pocket is now half its size of a week ago and in view of the absence of any good roads, the German position West of the RHINE looks untenable. What economy RUNDSTEDT has effected by withdrawing is problematic but on the principle that every little helps, he may feel that the withdrawal has probably been worth his while.

While these operations were in progress in the South, the armour remaining in the West after the departure of 6 S.S. Pz Army was being quietly taken out of the line. In Northern ALSACE 25 P.G. and 21 Pz Divs are missing, although 10 S.S. Pz Div (NOT of 6 S.S. Pz Army) and 17 S.S. P.G. Div are still there. The former has helped the infantry of First German Army to offer surprisingly firm resistance to our attacks particularly around HAGENAU where we have made little headway. Extensive floodings, natural rather than Teutonic in origin, are adding to the difficulties in this sector. An increase in rail movement has been observed this week down the RHINE Valley from KARLSRUHE through HEIDELBERG. It need not necessarily imply further transfers from the West and probably does not, for the indications are that the RUHR is being reinforced at the expense of other areas.

The same thing has been going on all along the front. 11 Pz Division has been out of contact from the REMICH area for several days, while at the end of last week none of 5 Pz Army's armoured divisions were left in the line. The infantry remaining in the ARDENNES has fought an undistinguished but orderly rearguard in the area South of ST. VITH. Our bridgehead over the OUR river was quickly expanded and we have pushed across the German frontier to within 5 miles of PRUM, the first town of any size East of the frontier in this region. Now that we are in contact with the Siegfried defences once again, there is some stiffening of enemy resistance here.

However, RUNDSTEDT was not to solve his difficulty as easily as that. No sooner had he got a force of six armoured and three P.G. Divisions out of the line than a new crisis arose. The American First Army attack

....in the MONSCHAU.....

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in the REICHSWALD forest seems to have caused some confusion in the enemy ranks. Resistance on the first day was light, and offered largely by a miscellany of dubious units ranging from a Home Guard on to elements of 15 Army's Engineer School. Considerable progress was made. We cleared the REICHSWALD forest and the high ground to the South before RUNDSTEDT's counter-measures started. The situation must have been sadly reminiscent to him of the days before 6 S.S. Pz Army appeared on the scene, when his armour had to be rushed to and fro to plug each hole as it appeared. First of all he put 3 P.G. Division back into the line and quickly after it came 9 Pz Idv accompanied by 12 Volksgrenadier Division not yet properly recovered from its ARDENNES battles. So far there has not been any great stiffening in enemy resistance, and as we are astride both banks of the ROER river it would seem that the enemy must go back to the line of the ERFT river covering the GERMENDER Forest. In this attack we have penetrated to points 12 miles inside GERMANY and are well into the SIEGFRIED defences, having gained most valuable ground for any resumption of large scale attacks towards the RHINE.

There are now five armoured and two Panzer Divisions allocated in the West - almost exactly the same number as in the week preceding RUNDSTEDT's ARDENNES attack. The situation is far from analogous however. One has learnt by now the dangers of thinking the Germans to be wholly on the defensive at any time; but if only a limited and costly success could be achieved in December with the full employment of the fresh 6 Pz Army, the prospects of even a spoiling attack are at present slight. Moreover the deported Pz Army was the better of the two and in better shape when it left than is 5 Pz Army to-day. Of the rest of RUNDSTEDT's armour, 116 Pz Div is tentatively placed in the DUREN area, and the general trend of traffic suggests that a proportion of the remainder is moving into the area west [illegible] RHINE. Confirmation is given to this suggestion by the identification of 8 Para Div from GERMANY in the VENLO area, an indication that RUNDSTEDT is once again worried about the security of the RUHR Valley, and is taking steps to thicken up the thinly held approaches to it from HOLLAND. The brief breathing space which he may hope to have before the spring will surely be spent in resting and strengthening the defenders of the RUHR. For what was said in this Summary long before the December battles has more force to-day than it ever had. Loss of the RUHR will finally decide the issue.

3. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA AND POLAND

There has been an appreciable slowing down of the Russian advance in this past week. The extended L of C, with POSNAN still in German hands, a stiffening enemy opposition, particularly in East PRUSSIA, and a premature thaw in the Central sector have all contributed to the Soviet difficulties. In East PRUSSIA, the Russians have now occupied about five

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3. EASTERN FRONT

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There has been an appreciable slowing down of the Russian advance in this past week. The extended L of C, with POZNAN still in German hands, a stiffening enemy opposition, particularly in East PRUSSIA, and a premature thaw in the Central sector have all contributed to the Soviet difficulties. In East PRUSSIA, the Russians have now occupied about five-sixths of the entire province, and the defence of what is still left resolves itself for the enemy into the defence of KÖNIGSBERG and ELBING. He is clearly determined to hold on to these two ports as much to deny them to the Russians as for their own worth to him. The Soviets have already this week acquired one important naval base in the shape of MEMEL; they have also developed the threat to DANZIG and GDYNIA, while STETTIN itself is only 37 miles from the front. The whole German position in Eastern Baltic waters is thus endangered - a threat which if it matured would have the gravest consequences for the twenty-odd enemy divisions at present isolated in LATVIA. Fierce enemy resistance is to be expected as the Soviets draw nearer to these naval bases and ports. However the German efforts to break through the Russian wedge which isolates East PRUSSIA seem to have abated. The measure of success achieved by these attacks is not clear. There are no claims

....or admissions that.....

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or admissions that the Soviet wedge has been broken, but this proves little, for the Russians might not admit a setback nor the Germans that they were ever really firmly isolated. It is clear however that in the past week, the Russians have been able to broaden their salient to the West and are within seven miles of DANZIG. Further to the S.W. ROKOSSOVSKY has made satisfactory progress in extending the left flank of his 2 White Russian Army Group across the German frontier on a broad front S.E. of STETTIN. SCHNEIDEMÜHL at the junction of seven railway lines remains however an isolated garrison in enemy hands behind the front. This obstacle combined with the marshy lake country of POMERANIA is likely to make the advance on STETTIN a formidable business.

Marshal ZHUKOV's First White Russian Army Group continues its advance to the ODER though at a much reduced pace. If the German defences between ZELLICHAU and MESERITZ proved no great difficulty to the Russians, the enemy hold on POZNAN and the rapidly lengthening L of C must do so. The ODER has been reached at only two points North of the bend at FÜRSTENBERG, and the direct assault on FRANKFURT and KÜSTRIN has not yet commenced. FRANKFURT at any rate is reported to be strongly defended and the reduction of both FRANKFURT and KÜSTRIN is likely to be a difficult task. FRANKFURT itself lies on both banks of the ODER, though KÜSTRIN is largely on the West bank. In this region the ODER reaches its widest point - about 200-250 yards - and remains at this width to its mouth. The establishment of Soviet bridgeheads on the West bank will probably present considerable difficulties, although the task would be easier now than in the thaw period when the current becomes fairly rapid. However ZHUKOV at this stage is probably more concerned with closing up to the West bank of the ODER on a broad front South and if possible North of KÜSTRIN than with establishing bridgeheads on the far bank. The Soviet line has now developed into a vast salient which narrows down through Western POLAND to its tip near FRANKFURT. As such it offers two crossy possibilities of counter-attack from North and South, and ZHUKOV must be anxious to get his flanks resting firmly and without delay on the natural protection of the ODER.

From the remainder of the Central sector, the only development of importance this week has been the German report of a new Soviet attack from the bridgehead over the ODER N.W. and S.W of BRIEG. This has now been confirmed by the Russians, showing that the relative calm of the preceding week was probably put to good effect by KONIEV in bringing up fresh forces. The attack may be intended only to broaden and deepen the Soviet bridgehead, and to cut the main highway from BERLIN to Upper SILESIA; nevertheless the important nickel mines at FRANKENSTEIN, 35 miles S.W of BRIEG, offer a tempting prize to KONIEV now that GERMANY has already lost her main nickel supplies at PETSAMO. In any case the next few days should show whether this is the end of an old battle or the beginning of a new.

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HUNGARY

There has been little change in the situation in HUNGARY. The long battle for BUDAPEST seems to be drawing nearer its end and the garrison is reduced to a small force holding the area of the castle in BUDAPEST.

South of the capital the Soviet counter-attacks against the German salient are making good progress, although it is evident from the Soviet claims of towns recaptured that the German drive of a fortnight ago made more progress in a Southeasterly direction than had previously been thought. After recapturing SZEKES FEHERVAR, the enemy seems to have driven East to the DANUBE and S.E. towards DUNAFOLDVAR with his left flank resting on the SARVIZ Canal. The Soviets have now counter-attacked Northwestwards along the same ground and are within eight miles of SZEKES FEHERVAR.

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No change in the enemy Order of Battle is reported from HUNGARY this week.

YUGOSLAVIA

The main news of the week ha... from DALMATIA where the enemy has carried out a strong sortie from the MOSTAR region, in the direction of the Dalmatian coast. This drive was probably conducted by elements of 369 Germano-Croat Division supported by 9 Croat Div and seems to have taken the Partisans completely by surprise. KAPLJINA (W 09) was quickly overrun and the enemy continued the attack as far as METKOVIC in the NERETVA estuary seven miles from the coast. A wedge was thus driven which prevented Partisan movement between Northern and Southern DALMATIA. A hint that the enemy occupation was not to be permanent however was given when the Germans blew the bridges over the NERETVA in the METKOVIC area. This was followed by a withdrawal from METKOVIC to KAPLJINA, which was abandoned by the enemy on 1 Feb after heavy fighting. The Germans are thus almost back to their start line of a week ago. What exactly was the object of the operation is still not clear. If it was to interrupt the Partisan communications in DALMATIA a certain limited and temporary inconvenience has certainly been achieved. The Partisans however see more in the sally than this and suggest that it may have been designed to cover the withdrawal of supplies and troops from MOSTAR. Further reports have indeed been received this week of supplies leaving MOSTAR, but such stories have been coming in for nearly a month now, and stronger evidence will be needed before we can assume that the withdrawal from the SARAJEVO base has been resumed. A more plausible explanation is that the enemy wishes to tighten his hold on the bauxite mines in the MOSTAR area, and to disperse Partisan concentrations which might threaten them. Now that he has lost so much through Allied forces of arms in Upper SILESIA, he may be loth to abandon voluntarily any source of economic supply, however small, in other regions.

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There has also been a recrudescence of reports of heavy Eastward road movement from VISEGRAD to SARAJEVO. The only certain facts about all these rumours are that both MOSTAR and VISEGRAD are in enemy hands, and that VRANJNIC, the third outpost covering SARAJEVO is being used by the enemy as a base for a new drive Northeastwards. This drive has led to the capture of DRINJAC in the DRINA Valley 50 miles N.W. of SARAJEVO, and the enemy is now advancing Northwards down the DRINA Valley in the direction of ZVORNIK. His objective here appears to be twofold: firstly to open up the L of C through the DRINA Valley to VUKOVAR; and secondly to follow last week's capture of the old VISEGRAD-DRINA south defence line by securing a firm Eastern flank for Army Group F in the Balkans along the line of the DRINA river.

The enemy layout in the SARAJEVO area has become clearer during the past week. H.Q. XXI Mountain Corps is at SARAJEVO with four divisions under command disposed as follows :

364 Germano-Croat Div	-	MOSTAR-TRAVNIK
104 Jg Div	-	TRAVNIK area

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104 Jg Div	-	TRAVNIK area
22 Inf Div	-	VLASENICA-DRINJACA (probably conducting the present DRINA Valley operations)
181 Inf Div	-	VISEGRAD-SARAJEVO road. (largely concerned with protecting Southern flank of 21 Corps).

H.Q. Army Group E which was at SARAJEVO appears to have left for the North and is variously reported at NOVA GRADISCA and BROD, either of which would be a healthier location than SARAJEVO. Army Group F and the whole of C in C S.E's staff is also said to have moved, abandoning its long though not wholly happy associations with ZAGREB for the more homely surroundings of the fatherland at GRAZ.

CERMUSCI

BRIGADIER, G.S.
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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 45

OF 30 JANUARY, 45

1. ENEMY SITUATION

There has been little activity along the front but considerable activity behind it and it appears that the crisis on the Eastern Front has at last begun to have an effect on the situation of Army Group C. One Division is already on its way out of ITALY and the reshuffling which has gone on suggests that it is intended to release other formations as well. As might have been expected the stress of great events has led to a plentiful crop of rumours that the Germans are evacuating the whole of Northern ITALY and although this is a cry which has become tedious from repetition during the past seventeen months the justified scepticism with which it has been received in the past should not prevent us from conceding that there may now be some truth in it.

At the beginning of the week Army Group C, as far as was known, had five divisions in reserve; it was well placed, therefore, to answer a sudden call for help. However not all of these divisions were suitable for despatch to the Eastern Front: not 157 Mtn Div, for instance, which was relatively inexperienced and in any case would find no mountains between the VISTULA and BERLIN, though many in ITALY; 26 Pz Div was the only mobile division available and perhaps KESSELRING still retains enough pull to make sure of keeping his only Armoured Division. It had been appreciated, therefore, that the first sign that reinforcements were on their way to GUDERIAN would be a quick reshuffle between the reserves and the front line divisions, and this expectation was not disappointed. On 24 Jan two prisoners were taken from II Bn 290 G.R. of 98 Div at M 3534; there was a little doubt whether they had relieved a unit of 356 Div or 1060 G.R. of 362 Div which had earlier been identified in that area. The next day revealed a more thorough change when two prisoners were taken from 3 Coy 11 Para Regt of 4 Para Div, at L 296288. From their story it appeared that they had been relieved in their former position, S.W. of BOLOGNA, by 157 Mtn Div and that they themselves had relieved 29 P.G. Div. A recent deserter from 305 Div who lay concealed near CASTEL BOLOGNESE for some time and watched the coming and going gives more information. According to him troops of 29 P.G. Div on their way back to the front told him they were going to GERMANY. Unfortunately this is what troops just relieved from the line always say, and especially at a moment of crisis like this; however it may still be true. He also said that 4 Para Div was going to relieve 90 P.G. Div as well as 29 P.G. - not impossible in view of the great strength in infantry of 4 Para Div, but it does not seem to have happened yet. 90 P.G. might, however, be in process of moving over slightly to the West and allow the relief of either 715 or possibly 334 Div.

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Our appreciation of the destination of 356 Div was soon confirmed by reports from ground sources in the North East. On 25 Jan a great deal of loading activity was reported at various stations in the Padua area -

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Our appreciation of the destination of 356 Div was soon confirmed by reports from ground sources in the North East. On 25 Jan a great deal of loading activity was reported at various stations in the PADUA area - CITTADELLA, CASTELFRANCO VENETO and CAMPOSAMPIERO - and troops, MT and equipment were being shipped off in a Northeasterly direction. A later report stated both that this movement had been going on since 23 Jan, and that it was paralleled by heavy road movement, and also that the troops involved were from 356 Div. The divisional sign was observed on both the road and rail moves. Unusual concentrations of rolling stock have continued to be observed at various points in North ITALY on the routes leading out of the country and one cannot be certain that 356 Div will be ITALY's only contribution: 29 P.G. Div is at least a candidate for the Eastern Front and it is the type of division which would be most needed there. The enemy is in a strong position in ITALY; his reserves out of the line have never been so plentiful and it is suggested that he could spare up to five divisions without thereby

....abandoning a line....

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abandoning a line South of the PO, holding more or less the same positions as now though perhaps with a slight withdrawal on his left flank. Any large contribution would probably involve a withdrawal to the line of the TICINO and the PO and subsequently to his strongest prepared line in N.E. ITALY, the ADIGE. Such a move would mean abandoning N.W. ITALY and it must be said at once that there have been several reports that such is in fact the German intention. These reports should not be given too much credence for the simple reason that many armchair strategists work out the reasons why such a move should be made, and most are not above representing speculations as facts. We must wait for harder evidence. There is one piece of evidence which might point that way; the heavier movement observed recently at night in the MILAN area, mainly in an Easterly and Northerly direction. But we cannot know what is being carried in those vehicles; if troops, the evacuation theory is strongly supported; if Fascist civilians fleeing the wrath to come, evacuation may be about to begin; but it may just as well be merely a rather larger consignment than usual of the loot in the form of industrial equipment and war material which the Germans have been removing from ITALY for many months past.

To recapitulate: one Division has left ITALY and although a second may be on the way there is no firm evidence that any more are booked to go. The enemy can spare up to five divisions before he need think of withdrawing to the line of the PO and there is no firm evidence that he has any such intentions. On the basis of past precedents and in view of the travelling conditions between ITALY and GERMANY today, any help KESSELRING is likely to send to the Eastern Front will probably be too little and too late.

2. WESTERN FRONT

Ever since it was reported in the West last November, the movements of 6 S.S. Pz Army have been a major consideration in assessing the enemy's long term intentions. As a strategic reserve it remained uncommitted West of the RHINE during the November battles. As an armoured spearhead it played a leading part in the successes achieved by RUNDSTEDT's December offensive. Today its movements are still of predominant interest in the enemy situation on the Western Front. Since RUNDSTEDT decided (or had the decision made for him) some ten days ago to pull back from the general line HEINRICH - HOUFFALIZE - ST. VITH to the shelter of the Siegfried defences, there has been little contact with 6 S.S. Pz Army. At least three if not all four of its armoured divisions are out of the line, and the ARDENNES rearguard action has been conducted by 5 Pz Army. Moreover, considerable and in the main incautious road movement has been in progress for several days from the ARDENNES, the trend of the traffic being for the most part Northeastwards. The suggestion that 6 S.S. Pz Army is to be the first of RUNDSTEDT's contributions to the Eastern front seemed to be confirmed by the heavy loadings at COLOGNE and other major Marshalling yards West of the RUHR on 23 Jan and subsequent days. This was followed by air reports of definite Eastward rail movement from MUNSTER, OSNABRUCK and

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.....of ANTWERP.....

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of ARNHEM, it seems incredible [illegible] should split his still powerful armoured [illegible], at a time when [illegible] employment as a whole on the Eastern Front might be of decisive significance in halting the Russian advance. It is of course just possible that II S.S. Pz Corps with 2 and 9 S.S. Pz Divs is in fact to go East alone, but until there is confirmatory evidence that I S.S. Pz Corps has appeared in HOLLAND, the evidence of the captured document is at least open to considerable prediction.

With the withdrawal of 6 S.S. Pz Army the front in the ARDENNES has had few features of interest. Identifications have shown no surprises although 2 Pz and 9 Pz Divs of 5 Pz Army continue to lose prisoners and show no immediate disposition to yield place to infantry elements. Enemy resistance has been generally light throughout the week but the appalling weather conditions have considerably impeded Allied progress. Nevertheless by now the enemy is virtually back on the December start line and gives no sign of further aggressiveness in this area.

The whole front has indeed been quieter than for some time past. In the COLMAR pocket, the enemy has resisted vigorously the French attack near MULHOUSE and we have made little further progress. Elements of 106 Pz Bde which has been North of STRASBOURG have been identified in the pocket. North of COLMAR, however, the enemy seems to have been surprised by the American attack of 27 Jan and has given ground rather unexpectedly. We have reached the outskirts of COLMAR while to the East the RHONE-RHINE Canal has been reached without resistance. It seems evident that the enemy has no further intentions of developing the immediate thrust to STRASBOURG from the South.

5094

North of STRASBOURG there has been little further to report. According to the German radio, HIMMLER is now on the Western Front, and has thus presumably left the Army Group Upper [illegible] in the hands of the aged Von MUR. The last firm date on which HIMMLER was still known to be in the West was 13 January when he addressed a congratulatory message to the troops in the then newly formed [illegible] bridgehead North of STRASBOURG. Since HIMMLER's departure, Von MUR seems to have felt the weight of his 81 years and has shown little further aggressiveness. The bridgeheads which were established over the MODER river West of [illegible] were short-lived and the attack has not yet been resumed. His failure to press home the attack on STRASBOURG suggests that the enemy may no longer feel it worth his while to maintain the initiative in the West as a matter of basic strategy. On 5 January Von MUR had hoped to be able to tell the Führer "in a few days" that the Swastika might fly from STRASBOURG Cathedral. Being so far unable to say this, he may now be satisfied at having forced the Allies to pay attention to the Southern sector long after MODEL had lost the initiative in the Centre.

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The only other area of interest in the West has been HOLLAND. In the region of the Dutch-German frontier, the British attack encountered rather stiffer enemy opposition after the capture of HEINSBERG, although no new divisions have been identified. However under pressure, the enemy has fallen back to the line of the MEER river, and we are now established along the West bank of this river all the way from its confluence with the MAAS to a point approximately 10 miles South of DURER. The enemy's front in HOLLAND remains thinly held and along its 200 miles there are now only thirteen divisions in contact. A new Army H.Q. - 25 Army - is now reliably reported in HOLLAND, and is believed to be commanding on the extreme right of the German line under Army Group H. We thus have eight Army HQs in the West controlling rather more than 80 divisions, a more generous allotment of Armies than is enjoyed by either the Eastern or Italian fronts.

.....4. EASTERN FRONT.....

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3. EASTERN FRONT

EAST PRUSSIA, POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The Soviet winter offensive sweeps on to the ODER without any apparent slowing down after eighteen days of battle. While in the North the Third and Second White Russian Army Groups are completing the conquest of EAST PRUSSIA, in the centre the First White Russian Army Group has reached across the German frontier to within 75 miles of BERLIN and cut the BERLIN - DANZIG railway. On the left Marshal KONIEV's First Ukrainian Army Group has completed the capture of the Upper Silesian industrial region. In CZECHOSLOVAKIA, the German withdrawal has brought the Russians up to the HIGH TATRA Mountains.

After the capture of INSTERBURG General CHERNYAKOVSKY continued his advance due West in the direction of KONIGSBERG, at the same time pushing his left wing South and Southwestward to make contact with ROKOSSOVSKY's Army Group somewhere in the region of ALLENSTEIN. A two pronged thrust on KONIGSBERG has now developed from the North and from the South; both drives have reached the outskirts of the East Prussian capital. The Germans estimate that CHERNYAKOVSKY is using some forty-three Divisions in his present attack. On the enemy side the Russians have reported the destruction of 68 Inf Division in the Masurian Lake fighting, while 61 Inf and 31 Inf Divisions have both received mentions from the German radio for their "defensive successes".

Meanwhile ROKOSSOVSKY, striking up the DANZIG-BERLIN railway with a force estimated by the Germans at fifty-eight divisions, has made spectacular gains. After making contact with the Third White Russian Group near ALLENSTEIN he has cut off East PRUSSIA from land communication with the outside world by a drive which has reached the Baltic at TOLKEMIT. What proportion of the German 3 Pz Army and 4 Army is now cut off is not known. Between them these Armies were thought to contain about twenty-four divisions. The enemy now appears to be launching counter-attacks against the Russian wedge from the area N.W. of ALLENSTEIN and claims to have reached PREUSSEN-HOLLAND.

In the central sector of the front Marshal ZHUKOV has continued his attack South of the VISTULA along the DANZIG-BERLIN railway. The Germans estimate that at least thirty-seven Soviet Divisions are engaged in this attack. (The German forces involved are the 2nd and 9th Armies probably worth about thirty divs). ZHUKOV has by-passed POSEN and crossed the German frontier on both sides of SCHNEIDEMUHL. His Army Group has cut the BERLIN-DANZIG trunk line at SCHNEIDEMUHL and is now about 75 miles from BERLIN itself. On the 1st White Russian Group's left Marshal KONIEV, whose force (1st Ukrainian Army Group) the enemy has estimated at forty divisions, has now reached the ODER N.W. and S.E. of BRESLAU. It seems evident from German admissions, although the Soviets themselves say nothing, that KONIEV has succeeded in establishing at least

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...The situation developing.....

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The situation developing on the great battlefield of the central sector is strongly analogous to that in Eastern POLAND in the summer of 1944. Once again the Russians are approaching a major river obstacle. Once again they are faced with the reduction of a large city on both banks of the river, and once again, as with every river they have ever reached, they are making determined efforts immediately to establish bridgeheads on the west bank. On the First Ukrainian Front KONIEV's efforts are already being directed to establishing firm bridgeheads and to reaching BRESLAU. Further North, however, the river has yet to be reached and the Russian drive has not yet lost its momentum. It seems possible that the Soviets have kept more forces in reserve in the Northern half of the central sector than in the South, so that the impetus of the advance could be maintained over the longer distances to be covered before reaching the ODER. The present Russian object is probably to close up to the ODER all along its length before a German counter-attack can be mounted, and to establish at least one firm bridgehead over it; but old German defences, which may have been modernised, exist between the ODER near ZIELLICHAU, North of STEINAU, and the WARTHE at SCHWERIN, and may continue Northwards to the Baltic. Although these may not be strong, they may be sufficient temporarily to stem the Russian tide whose strength must be affected in some degree by the German hold rocks of POSEN and THORN. But wherever the Germans may stabilise the reduction of East PRUSSIA can meanwhile be completed. The stage will then be set for the battles of the spring.

HUNGARY

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The impact of events in the Central sector has not yet made itself felt on the Hungarian front and there is so far no evidence of any large scale enemy withdrawal. Nevertheless with Debreczen at hand on the Central Front, it is to be expected that a major transfer of armour from BUDAPEST to the North will soon take place, if it has not already started. The shortening of the line [illegible] makes it possible however for the enemy to release a certain number of Infantry Divisions from there for use elsewhere, and it is [illegible] that some of these may be used to cover the approaches to the CZECHOSLOVAK Gap, to replacement for any armour withdrawn.

North of the DANUBE it appears that recent enemy efforts to clear the Russians from the West bank of the VISTULA River and the area of KOMARNO have met with some success. The Russian line is now reported to run through ESZTERGOM and North of SARTO - in other words, the Soviet held area West of the DANUBE river has been reduced to a comparatively small bridgehead.

In SERVIA mopping up continues. South of NIS, the German drive reached the area of VLA, 17 miles S.W. of BULGARIAN during the past week and appears to have halted there in the face of Russian counter-attacks. The Russians are attacking the lost and scattered flocks of the German salient from both North and South and seem to have liberated

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North of the DRAVA it appears that recent enemy efforts to clear the Russians from the East bank of the MURA river and the area of KOMLOSD have met with some success. The Russian line is now reported to run through BAJCSA and North of SUTTO - in other words, the Soviet held area East of the RABA river has been reduced to a comparatively small bridgehead.

In BUDA mopping up continues. South of BUDA the German drive reached the area of VAL, 17 miles S.W. of BUDAPEST during the past week and appears to have halted there in the face of Russian counter-attacks. The Russians are attacking the long and exposed flanks of the German salient from both North and South and seem to have frustrated this second large scale German attack to relieve the Hungarian capital. On the other hand the enemy may feel that, although his main object has not been achieved, he has given the Soviets a sharp blow which may preclude an immediate resumption of the attack on BUDAPEST.

Heavy road movement in the past week from TABOR Northwards to VARAZDIN suggests that 11th SS Division may now be operating on 2 Pz Army's front South of Lake BALATON.

YUGOSLAVIA

There has been little operational news from YUGOSLAVIA.

.....after the sharp.....

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After the sharp activity of the previous week the enemy attack on the BANJA bridgehead has once more subsided. This may in part be accounted for by the arrival of Bulgarian artillery reinforcements on the North bank of the DRAVA. Nonetheless it is strange that the enemy has not pressed home the successes which he so easily gained at the start of his attack on the bridgehead. Further East, however, the attack in the DRAVA has continued and appears to have achieved its objective in regaining for the enemy the old VIROVAR - SIB - DRAVA south defence line, which now seems to be firmly held in his hands. 297 Inf Division may well have been involved in the Southern flank of these operations as its presence in the SAVA Valley was reliably reported on 24 Jan.

The main feature of interest in YUGOSLAVIA in the past week has however been the temporary halt in the withdrawal of Army Group E. On 19 January the supplement to the German communiqué was devoted to a summing up of Army Group E's retirement from the S.E. and since that date no further towns have been evacuated by the enemy. On the contrary there is every evidence that he intends to hold on to the SARAJEVO area with advanced outposts at VLASENICA, VISEGRAD and MOSTAR. To the N.W. the enemy has in the past week cleared the SARAJEVO-VLASENICA highway and is now continuing offensive operations Northwestwards from VLASENICA; so far that he still holds on to the strong natural defensive positions at VISEGRAD and to the S.W. the enemy is not only conducting offensive operations in the MOSTAR region but he is actually reported to be reinforcing the area: 1,000 Germans and 800 Ustaschi troops have arrived there since about 15 January. It seems very probable, in view of this evidence, that a change in enemy policy has now taken place and that, until higher policy dictates a further withdrawal, Gen LOHR has decided for the time being to stay where he is. The present enemy held territory in YUGOSLAVIA corresponds very roughly to the borders of CROATIA. It is thus at least conceivable that HITLER has ordered LOHR to halt his withdrawal on the present line in fulfilment of obligations he may feel towards the Croat State for its contribution to the German war effort.

The only other area of interest in YUGOSLAVIA is TRAVNIK where the enemy after several unsuccessful efforts over the past two months has at last succeeded in capturing the town. This is of some importance in that it strengthens his hold on the L of C from SARAJEVO to BIHAC and may well be followed by further efforts to open up an additional L of C Northwestwards towards BANJALUK or SISAK.

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CFK/Mrs/ic1

BRIG. GEN., U.S.
A.C. OF S., G-2.

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GOC:-
2/c.-
G-1 :-
GS I :-

SECRET

COPY NO 65

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 44

OF 23 JANUARY, 1945.

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The whole front has been more than usually quiet, particularly in the latter part of the week. The enemy continues to make raids on 5 Army front, mainly for the purpose of obtaining identifications and keeping track on our reliefs, which he must still suspect to be frequent. 1 Para Div has been, as might be expected, especially active in this line; it has been stiffened by the addition of two G.A.F. Penal battalions, 3 and 4 G.A.F. Jaeger z.b.V., which are apparently combined into a Regiment HEUSER, no doubt called after the commander. This raises 1 Para Div to the unprecedented total of twelve battalions and a Recce Company. On 8 Army front the enemy reacted with strong patrolling to his discovery that an Italian division had come into the line, and on 17 Jan he put in quite a strong raid further South in the area West of SUSIGNANO which cost III Bn 36 S.S. heavy casualties for no gain. Since 21 Jan, however, the enemy appears to have gone over to a more passive defence on the SENIO, evacuating and demolishing houses on our side of the river which he previously held and generally pulling back to the West bank almost all along the line. He still, however, remains forward on the POSSO VECCHIO at the Northern end of his position.

The relief of 356 Div, of which there are certain indications 505. if confirmed, be the only change in enemy forward dispositions. In rear areas there have been a few changes and a few new identifications. 135 Fortress Bde is stated by prisoners to have moved from SPEZIA to GENOA. Elements of 162 Div have been reported North East of TURIN and in the UDINE area while the bulk remains South of PARMA; since it is not, in its present state, likely to fight as a division it is not surprising to find it making detachments in battalion strength to widely separated areas. On the French frontier 5 Mtn Div has been firmly identified in its old place by prisoners taken from both of its Jaeger regiments; there have been reports of a move by 34 Div from its sector at the Southern end of the Franco-Italian frontier but these are not confirmed and are probably due to the employment of elements of the division in an anti-Partisan drive North of SAVONA. Various reports, none of them explicit, appear to locate the hitherto elusive 155 Field Training Division at TREVISO, having collected thither elements from VERONA and BELLUNO. The S.S. KARSTJAGER Division, which is apparently only in brigade strength, appears to have moved from ISTRIA or VENEZIA GIULIA to FRIULI; more information is needed on this formation which is probably only of value as an anti-Partisan force at present.

2. WESTERN FRONT

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2. WESTERN FRONT

Despite the winter-bound conditions of the Western Front, there have been developments of considerable significance in this past week. The threat to STRASBOURG from the North has increased as the enemy has linked up all his RHINE bridgeheads, while in the ARDENNES there are signs that a change of enemy policy has taken place. Two new Allied attacks have also started, one of which has led to yet another penetration of REICH territory.

The French attack in ALSACE between COLMAR and MULHOUSE gained initial surprise, and the enemy was forced back some three miles without great difficulty. He recovered rapidly, however, and, although we continue to gain ground, it is against a stiffening defence characterised by frequent local counter-attacks. The enemy has clearly no intention of yielding without a struggle the COLMAR bridgehead to which he has clung so doggedly over the past two months. He has, in all, elements of five divisions in the bridgehead area, but is reported to be transferring some forces from the bridgehead up to the area North of STRASBOURG.

.....The troops actually...

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The two ps actually holding the bridgehead are probably only in poor condition. They have had little rest since the heavy battles of the VOSGES in November and December, and have not had high priority in the matter of replacements. The position in ALSACE seems to be in fact that the enemy is content to conduct a stubborn defensive in the bridgehead area while he exploits and reinforces his successes achieved North of STRASBOURG. A recently captured document leaves little doubt of the enemy's intentions here. It is signed by SS OBERGRUPPENFUHRER von MAUR as CO for C in C Army Group Upper RHINE - a new identification, but probably the new title for Army Group G. An Obergruppenfuhrer is the Waffen S.S. equivalent of a full General, but whether Von MAUR is in fact the Army Group Commander, or is only Chief of Staff to HIMMLER whom rumours would have as the Army Group Commander, is not clear. The document is of interest, however, in that after the usual preamble about the Hour of Destiny being at hand, STRASBOURG is indicated as the objective of the present offensive.

The enemy has indeed made considerable headway North of STRASBOURG. On 17 January a third bridgehead was established over the RHINE North of STRASBOURG in the area due East of HAGENAU: the identification of 10 SS Pz Div, previously reported in the SAAR area, was an indication that this constituted a more serious threat than the previous bridgeheads. It was rapidly reinforced and the enemy succeeded in penetrating about three miles inland from the RHINE, cutting across the STRASBOURG - KARLSRUHE railway. At the same time renewed enemy pressure developed on the left wing of the First German Army in the area of HATTEN and a junction was effected between the new bridgehead and the First Army troops. This was followed by a link up of all three RHINE bridgeheads North of STRASBOURG, thus giving the enemy a continuous front West of the RHINE. First Army has continued the attack on its left wing and elements of 17 SS P.G. Div have been transferred from the SAARBRUND area to reinforce the drive. The enemy has penetrated as far as the outskirts of BISCHWILLER and HAGENAU and strong pressure continues.

The PALATINATE front has been generally quiet, although in a limited offensive operation on German soil near ZEICH we advanced about two miles and have clung to our gains in the counter-attacks conducted by 11 Pz Division, at last located after its disappearance in the latter half of December. It is worthy of record that the Russians claim to have identified 11 Pz Div on the Central sector during the past week, and as SHARP reidentified it at ZEICH on the following day, the Division seems to be as mercurial in its appearances as in its disappearances.

The ARDENNES salient had shrunk to a bulge by last week, and it seemed as if the enemy had decided to call a halt to his withdrawal. Resistance stiffened appreciably after the fall of HOUFFALIZE, although we continued to gain ground, notably North of St. VITH. The ARDENNES line was held in the main by infantry, and, although fleeting glimpses were observed of all the armour which took part in the December attack, these were in the main only rearguards, and not more than four mobile divisions have recently been firmly in contact. By 21 Jan it became apparent that a change in enemy policy was taking place. Resistance slackened

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On 17 January a third bridgehead was established over the RHINE North of STRASBOURG in the area due East of HAGENAU: the identification of 10 SS Pz Div, previously reported in the SAAR area, was an indication that this constituted a more serious threat than the previous bridgeheads. It was rapidly reinforced and the enemy succeeded in penetrating about three miles inland from the RHINE, cutting across the STRASBOURG - KARLSRUHE railway. At the same time renewed enemy pressure developed on the left wing of the First German Army in the area of HAGUENAU and a junction was effected between the new bridgehead and the First Army troops. This was followed by a link up of all three RHINE bridgeheads North of STRASBOURG, thus giving the enemy a continuous front West of the RHINE. First Army has continued the attack on its left wing and elements of 17 SS P.G. Div have been transferred from the SAARBRUCK area to reinforce the drive. The enemy has penetrated as far as the outskirts of BISCHWILLER and HAGENAU and strong pressure continues.

The PALATINATE front has been generally quiet, although in a limited offensive operation on German soil near REICH we advanced about two miles and have clung to our gains despite counter-attacks conducted by 11 Pz Division, at last located after its disappearance in the latter half of December. It is worthy of record that the Russians claim to have identified 11 Pz Div on the Central sector during the past week, and as SHAEF reidentified it at REICH on the following day, the Division seems to be as mercurial in its appearances as in its disappearances.

The ARDENNES salient had shrunk to a bulge by last week, and it seemed as if the enemy had decided to call a halt to his withdrawal. Resistance stiffened appreciably after the fall of HOUFFALIZE, although we continued to gain ground, notably North of ST. VITH. The ARDENNES line was held in the main by infantry, and, although fleeting glimpses were observed of all the armour which took part in the December attack, those were in the main only rearguards, and not more than four mobile divisions have recently been firmly in contact. By 21 Jan it became apparent that a change in enemy policy was taking place. Resistance slackened, and close contact with the enemy was lost all along the front from DIEKIRCH to N.W. of ST. VITH. Conditions once more resembled those of the previous disengaging movement. Road blocks and heavy minefields constituted the main obstacle to the advance, and only in the area North of ST. VITH was there anything resembling the earlier heavy resistance. Considerable Eastward movement is reported as the enemy pulls back in the direction of his December start line, and heavy losses have been inflicted on him by the Allied air forces.

In HOLLAND, the week has been characterised by the opening of an Allied offensive North of SITTARD in the direction of HEINSBERG. This attack initially provoked comparatively little reaction from the enemy who seemed content to leave the sector in the hands of two low grade infantry divisions.

.....The attack.....

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The attack continued to make headway, penetrated across the German frontier due West of HEINSBERG, and is now about two miles from HEINSBERG itself, where enemy resistance is stiffening appreciably. This attack is not yet in contact with the main defences of the SIEGFRIED Line. Further North in HOLLAND, the enemy has been in aggressive mood and effected a local penetration in an strength into our positions N.W. of NIJMEGEN. This has now been eliminated. 344 and 712 Divisions, which have been missing from HOLLAND for some time, are now reported by the Russians to be in action on the Eastern front.

It is too early yet to say that the events on the Eastern front are affecting enemy policy in the West. The facts remains, however, that in the Northern half of the front RUNDSTEDT has not only lost the initiative, but is pulling back again to the shelter of his fixed defences. Only in ALSACE is the enemy now showing any real aggressiveness and the attack here is in the main political, designed to offer the German public something of a palliative in the form of STRASBOURG to cooperate for the disappointments which the New Year has brought in the West. It does not of itself constitute a serious threat to the Allied strategical position in Western Europe. The identifications reported by the Russians of divisions transferred from West to East are so far tentative and await confirmation, but it seems clear that on the main sectors of the Western front RUNDSTEDT is pulling in his horns, perhaps as a consequence of the claims which have been made on his Army Groups.

3. EASTERN FRONT

East PRUSSIA and POLAND

The Soviet winter offensive is developing on the grand scale all along the vast front in East PRUSSIA, POLAND and CZECHOSLOVAKIA, at speed greater even than that of the 1944 Summer offensive. In the fluid and fast changing situation, four main drives are now apparent. Coming into East PRUSSIA from the North and East, General CHERNIAKOWSKY's Third White Russian Armies have been advancing along the axes of the TILSIT - INSTERBURG and the KOVNO - INSTERBURG railways. They have penetrated deeply into East PRUSSIA and have captured INSTERBURG itself, 45 miles from KONIGSBERG. Meanwhile further penetrations into East PRUSSIA have been made from the South by the Second White Russian Army Group under the command of Marshal ROKOSSOVSKY who, following the capture of WARSAW, has been attacking North-Westwards along the WARSAW - DANZIG railway. This was the thrust which led to the fall of ALLENSTEIN and the less important but historically gratifying capture of TANNENBERG.

Meanwhile South of the VISTULA two major offensives are in progress. On the right, the First White Russian Army Group under Marshal ZHUKOV attacking along the WARSAW - BERLIN highway, captured LODZ on 19 January and has since driven on to within 30 miles of POZNAN. This drive has cut the main trunk railway from BERLIN via POZNAN to East PRUSSIA at INOWROCLAW, 25 miles S.E. of POSEN and has led to the capture of WOLOSZEZ. Further South

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There has been little news so far of enemy counter measures to meet the grave situation. When the attack started the enemy had at least half of the total armour on the Eastern front concentrated in HUNGARY. As a result there were few mobile reserves in the centre to meet the Russian blow when it fell.

....It is possible...

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It is possible that the long lull on the VISTULA front had tempted the enemy to appreciate that Soviet offensive efforts this winter were to be confined to HUNGARY, so that he took the chance of thinning out in the centre in order to counter the threat to AUSTRIA. It is just conceivable that in view of this a quick decision was made to pull back voluntarily from the VISTULA line, although the gloomy tone of the German communiques this week and the absence of any references to a voluntary withdrawal, lends no support to this theory. However, voluntary or not, it seems apparent that the withdrawal has got out of hand. Very incomplete Soviet claims covering only part of the front put the prisoner total in nine days at 60,000, while German broadcasts suggest that there are still large numbers of enemy forces operating isolated behind the Soviet forward troops. In any case it is difficult to see what the enemy could gain by voluntarily allowing the Russians to penetrate deeply into the REICH and threaten a vital industrial area. Among the divisions which the Soviets claim to have identified on the Central sector in the past week are two infantry divisions last located in HOLLAND and 11 Pz Division from the ARDENNES. The latter seems a very dubious identification. Other identifications reported from the Central sector are normal and do not show as yet any thickening up of this sector at the expense of other areas.

HUNGARY

Except in the Slovak border region the front in HUNGARY appears to have been so far unaffected by the impact of events further North. The enemy has been pulling back from the mountainous salient in CZECHOSLOVAKIA which had developed as a result of the Russian drive across Southern POLAND. KOSICE has been evacuated and the withdrawal continues through the snow-bound TATRA Mountains, probably without great interference from the Russians. In Central HUNGARY, however, Army Group South is in an aggressive mood. Despite the loss of PEST and the greater part of BUDA vigorous efforts are being made by the enemy to relieve the remnants of the garrison he left behind in the Hungarian capital. The Germans have attacked in the sector between Lake BALATON and SZEKES FEHERVAR, and according to their own claims have reached the DANUBE, captured SZEKES FEHERVAR and are driving Northwards between Lake VELENCE and the DANUBE. They now appear to be about 25 miles due South of BUDA. The relief of the beleaguered garrison coupled with the recapture of SZEKESFURC in the West, would paint one bright streak across the sombre picture of the present German situation, but the BUDAPEST effort is at any rate likely to be rather a sally in order to extricate encircled troops than a determined effort to recapture and hold the ruined Hungarian capital. In the past week the Rumanian General Staff has reported the presence of 3 and 6 Pz Divisions in HUNGARY. Both were previously in the Central sector and their arrival brings the total of Panzer Divisions in HUNGARY to ten.

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YUGOSLAVIA

The enemy has been in aggressive mood in the SREM. The long awaited operation to eliminate the Partisan-Soviet DRAVA bridgehead has started with attacks launched from both East and West. On the West the enemy has made little headway and the Partisans claim to be counter-attacking West of VIROVITICA. In contrast to operations earlier this month, which were handled by Croat forces, the present attack is being conducted by German troops. On the East side of the bridgehead the enemy has, however, succeeded in making a penetration of about seven miles, capturing the town of CADAVICA which is about 23 miles East of VIROVITICA. An offensive has also been launched Eastwards from the SREM conducted, according to Partisan reports, by elements of four German Divisions, possibly 11 C.A.P., 117 JG, 41 Fortress and 7 S.S. Mtn, all of which are in the area. The object of the attack is probably to regain the old German defence line which ran from VUKOVAR through SID to the confluence of the DRINA and the DRAVA.

....As the enemy...

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As the enemy is already reported to have recaptured SID, it seems that he is in a fair way to achieving this object.

Elsewhere in YUGOSLAVIA there has been little to report. Contact was lost with 21 Mtn Corps a week ago in the area North of PRIBOJ, owing to heavy snowstorms and nothing further has been heard of it. It is probable that there are now no German forces left South of the DRINA river. A withdrawal from the MOSTAR area would now seem reasonable, and reports received during the past week of Northward road movement from MOSTAR probably presage the beginning of this withdrawal.

In BOSNIA the enemy has renewed his attempts to capture TRAVNIK. An effort is now being made to capture the town from the North by means of an advance Westwards from ZENICA across the VLASIC Mountains. Last reports put German forces three miles from TRAVNIK.

From N.W. YUGOSLAVIA, several reports have been received of considerable Northward rail and road movement from ZAGREB. On 21 Jan ZAGREB Marshalling Yards which had been almost empty on the previous day, contained over 900 trucks. This movement represents the departure of 118 Jg Division which is said to be leaving for GERMANY. In view of what has happened in POLAND this week, the destination may after all be correct. There is need of more divisions in GERMANY.

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TO SEE { G.O.C. / I/C A / G I / G S I }

SECRET

COPY NO 65

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 43

OF 16 JANUARY, 1945

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The week has been unusually quiet along the whole front, due largely to the rigours of the weather. The enemy has continued to make raids at various points, almost all with the object of taking prisoners for identifications, which indicates he is still rather nervous about our intentions. He has further strengthened his positions on his Eastern flank and this has involved a thinning out South of BOLOGNA.

The formation which had relieved the battered 114 Jaeger Div remained unconfirmed until the night of 14 Jan when a strong enemy raiding party lost a wounded prisoner who identified II Bn 40 Jaeger Regt. Next morning further evidence was provided by a long-range deserter from 1 Para Div who stated that 42 Jaeger Div was in the line from the RAVENNA-FERRARA railway to the North. 16 S.S. Div has therefore extended its sector Northwards. For this reason, probably, a further reinforcement has been brought up in the shape of 956 G.R. of 362 Division, both battalions of which have been identified in the area of the 40 and 41 Northings. More recently, I Bn 1060 G.R. has been identified further South at M 359341 which is well in 356 Div's area. It is possible that the intention is to relieve 356 Div although this cannot yet be considered as definite.

The departure of two adjacent divisions from the front East of route 65 has been compensated by bringing up a division from reserve. 305 Inf Div appears to have taken over the whole sector between the 89 Bastion, 65 Div's left boundary and the 97 Bastion, 1 Para Div's left boundary. This is a larger sector than has been customary in this area South of BOLOGNA, but it is not so important or accessible as the sectors on either flank, which include route 65 and MONTE GRANDE, and in any case the enemy appears still to be preoccupied by the threat from the West. It is perhaps a little surprising that the sector should be given to a division so recently relieved from the line as 305 Div, but the enemy has not much choice in the matter. 157 Mtn Div might have been considered as there are some indications that it is in the BOLOGNA area but possibly it is judged too inexperienced as yet.

The conclusion drawn last week from enemy dispositions was that he was aligned for a defensive on the Eastern flank and showed no sign of taking the offensive, for the present at least, in the Centre or West. This still remains true but as time goes on and the expected attack on the Eastern flank still does not materialise we must expect a change in the enemy's appreciation. He may even, with the force he has built up there, try to attack himself on the Eastern flank though it would be [illegible]

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2. WESTERN FRONT

The enemy is losing at least temporarily the initiative which he gained so dramatically and effectively in the middle of December. Except in the STRASBOURG area where gains of some consequence have been made in the past week, he has been unable to achieve any substantial success in the Southern part of the front, while up in the ARDENNES, RUNDSTEDT has abandoned his attempts to resume the attack towards the MEUSE. The German communiqué for 11 January reported that "the part of the front which protruded Westwards across the OURTHE has been taken back without being imperilled by the enemy", a confession that the long-range objectives of the ARDENNES drive had been abandoned, and indeed that the initiative in that area is no longer in German hands.

.....However, in the.....

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However, in the extreme South the German command, now reported to be in the ruthless if militarily inexperienced hands of HIMMLER is still forcing the Allies on to the defensive. The Northwards drive along both sides of the RHONE-RHINE Canal, carried out by two Infantry Divisions has made considerable progress bringing the enemy within 12 miles of STRASBOURG and cutting off a number of Allied troops. Pressure has been exerted Westwards as well as Northwards and the enemy has succeeded in cutting the COLMAR-STRASBOURG road. He is clearly trying to get the elbow room for manoeuvre in this area which the present narrow sector between the road and the RHINE does not give.

North of STRASBOURG there has been sharp fighting around the RHINE bridgeheads, where one enemy Infantry Division and an Armoured Brigade appear to be involved. The Bde, 106 Pz, is the only surviving independent Armoured Brigade in the West (apart from the sabotage formation 150 Pz Bde) and is reported to have about 40 tanks or SP guns. It appears to be dividing its efforts in the South between the COLMAR pocket and the RHINE bridgeheads.

Meanwhile on the SAAR-PALATINATE front the First German Army has been unable to maintain the successes of the early days of the offensive. Prisoners' statements suggest that this offensive did not in fact form part of the original plan and was only launched when it became apparent that the ARDENNES drive was not attaining its objectives. This seems quite probable, as all the armour now engaged in this sector was reliably reported to be moving Northwards at the height of the ARDENNES battle. During the past week a third mobile formation, 25 P.G. Division, together with 7 Para Div from HOLLAND, has appeared in the line to reinforce the efforts of the two mobile and eight Infantry Divisions previously involved. Both the new arrivals have come in on the extreme left of 1 Army in the area North of HABERNAU where 21 Pz Division was already operating. 17 S.S. P.G. Div which is in the line in the SAARBRUCK area has not however been moved West to reinforce the success achieved by the two other mobile formations in 1 Army, and it seems probable that the enemy has not yet given up hope of achieving a penetration in the SAAR region. The commander of 17 S.S. Div, Colonel LINDER, is now in our hands. However in a week of fierce attack and counter-attack, no substantial progress has been made by the enemy. The fiercest fighting has been in the region of WINGEN on the [redacted]-SARREGUEMINES railway. WINGEN has been cleared of the enemy and the railway is firmly in our hands.

The ARDENNES salient has been in a state of flux since the failure of MANTEUFFEL's second attempt to retake BASTOGNE. Despite the strong concentration of armoured and infantry forces which he had collected around the town, he at no time got nearer than 2 miles from BASTOGNE and by the middle of last week must have realised that his efforts were in vain. Failure there meant more than local failure, for the Allied hold in BASTOGNE was a threat to his whole position in the salient. The decision to pull back was made about 10 days ago and the withdrawal

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.....North of the.....

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North of the salient, the week has been quiet. The likelihood of a German offensive in HUNGARY has receded with the final departure of 7th Infantry Division for the Eastern front and the withdrawal of 7 Para Div from the line. 6 Para is still there but there have been no further indications of enemy offensive plans other than possible limited operations to tie down Allied forces.

No assessment of the present position in the West can be complete which does not take into account the situation in the East. Until major operations occurred on the Eastern front, it seemed probable that the enemy would be in a position to devote most of his available reinforcements to the war in the West, and indeed the flow of Volksgrenadier Divisions has lately been exclusively westwards. Now however that the Russians have resumed the offensive on the grand scale, the problem of a three front war once again faces the enemy. Even before the Russian attack started, an Infantry Division had been transferred from HOLLAND to HUNGARY and now that "embittered fighting has started along the entire Eastern front" as the German communiqué puts it, the problem will assume an acuter form. Nevertheless the enemy may not yet have abandoned all offensive plans in the West. He has now one Parachute, two Panzer and four Infantry Divisions "floating" in the West and there are reports of a concentration in the TRIER area which might conceivably be intended for an attack in the direction of LUXEMBOURG. Much has been at stake in the west and much still is. We have for that the evidence of an Officer P.W. who has given details of a conference held at the Reichs Chancellery about 10 December. This was attended by various Army, Corps, Division and Brigade Commanders from the Western Front and was addressed by HITLER. HITLER told his audience that the ARDENNES offensive was to reach the MEUSE in two days and ANTWERP in three weeks. The objectives were

a) the encirclement of 40 Allied Divisions or the enforcing of a general Allied withdrawal,
b) to gain time for consolidation of the German War Industry especially synthetic oil,
c) by accentuating political differences on the continent and by propaganda to detach one of the Allies from the war.

5038

The enemy has failed in his first objective, and has little hope of success with his last. Whether the price in casualties which he has had to pay for the time he has gained was a fair one will be shown by future events, but in face of a major offensive in the East reinforcements are likely to be precious.

4. EASTERN FRONT

On 13 Jan, the Soviet winter offensive on the Central sector opened with an attack launched from the bridgehead over the VISTULA at BARANOW. Preliminary rumblings of the offensive had been heard four days earlier when the German communiqué spoke of lively fighting activity in the bridgehead area. Substantial gains were made first to the West of BARANOW, resulting in the capture of KIELCE and an approach to within 25 miles of CRACOW. These were followed by a break out from the Russian

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b) to gain time for consolidation of the German War Industry especially synthetic oil,
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In HUNGARY, the past week has seen also a flare-up of the fighting N.E. of BUDAPEST where the Soviets have captured the rail

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junction of LOSONC and have pushed on across the post-MUNICH SLOVAK border. Further West, however, fighting has been on a lesser scale and the Russian push along the North bank of the DANUBE has been halted on the WITR. river. South of the DANUBE, the heavy German counter-attacks of the previous week have come to a halt around BICSKE. 17 miles West of BUDAPEST, and unless they can be resumed shortly on a major scale, the position of the BUDAPEST garrison appears hopeless. In BUDA, the Russians have already captured the Parliament buildings which stand on the East bank of the DANUBE and it appears that the greater part of BUDA is now in their hands.

There has been little else of interest from HUNGARY apart from the startling identification by the Russians of 711 Infantry Division. This formation had been in HOLLAND near ARNHEM until the middle of December when it was pulled out of the line and left, according to one report, for GERMANY. It was presumed that this meant the usual rest and refit, and its unexpected reappearance on the Eastern front is significant in that it implies that the enemy has few, if any, surplus divisions ready in GERMANY to meet the needs of the moment. 711 Div's arrival raises the total strength of Army Group South to some twenty-four divisions, about eleven of which are mobile.

It has been a quiet week in YUGOSLAVIA with cold and snowy weather impeding any important operations. In the North, the Russian SAROS bridgehead has been quiet after the flare-up of the previous week. The enemy build-up in the SREM, East of the bridgehead, continues, but 118 Jg Division is reported to be moving to the ZAGREB area, where it may well be joined by 73 Jg Regt which it left behind at MOSTAR last October and which is reported to be moving Northwards.

In the South, H.Q. 5 S.S. Corps, for long in the SARAJEVO area, is reported moving Northwards towards BROD. This seems reasonable as 21 Mtn Corps from MONTENEGRO has now reached SARAJEVO and may well have taken over command of 5 Corps' area. 21 Corps rearguards are now North of PRIJEDOLJE and there should soon be no enemy left South of the SARAJEVO-BROD road.

Total enemy forces on the Eastern front are now estimated at 150 Divisions of which rather less than one third are in HUNGARY and YUGOSLAVIA.

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In the South, H.Q. 5 S.S. Corps, for long in the SARAJEVO area, is reported moving Northwards towards BROD. This seems reasonable as 21 Mtn Corps from MONTENEGRO has now reached SARAJEVO and may well have taken over command of 5 Corps' area. 21 Corps rearguards are now North of PRIJEDOR and there should soon be no enemy left South of the SARAJEVO-BANJA road.

Total enemy forces on the Western front are now estimated at 150 Divisions of which rather less than one third are in HUNGARY and YUGOSLAVIA.

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COPY NO 81

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 42

OF 2 JANUARY, 1945

1. ITALIAN SITUATION

The attack on our Western flank came to nothing in a rather unexplained way and part at least of the forces which were expected to take part in it have been shifted over to the extreme Eastern flank. In the latter area the enemy has had to pay for his policy of staying forward of the SENIO, and disproportionately highly. A new division has been identified in ITALY and KESSELRING, after a three month absence, has returned to reassure his troops in a New Year message that "I am leading you in the battles of 1945".

8 Army front was quiet over the last days of December but the Germans took the opportunity of pulling out 98 Div, a badly battered formation, and substituting the relatively fresh and up to strength 16 S.S. Division, extending the latter's sector to include some 2,000 yards of front previously held by 114 Jaeger Div. When our attack did start on 2 Jan it mainly hit the latter division and took 200 prisoners from it in the first two days. On 4 Jan the Wehrmacht communiqué claimed that a large scale attack had begun and we were able to clear our Northern flank right up to the South shore of the VALLI DI COMACCHIO, beating off with heavy losses a counter-attack by 16 S.S., supported by 26 Recce Unit, and clearing up the enemy Southern bridgehead between the SENIO and the RAVICCIO Canal. The day's bag was over 500 prisoners and the enemy may well have feared that worse was to come, in particular to doubt an attack across the SENIO. At that point the weather closed down but as far as the enemy knows this may only be a temporary and fortuitous check on our programme. He must, indeed, so consider it if he still holds to the appreciation which was in the mind of the Intelligence Officer of 278 Division when he wrote his Intelligence Summary for 22 Dec. In this interesting document, which shows incidentally that propaganda is apparently allowed more weight in the assessment of enemy capabilities than a scientific approach to the subject should demand, it is stated that the Allies must at all costs break through to BOLOGNA as quickly as possible in order to free troops from ITALY to meet the German offensive in the West. The writer, who over-estimates the reserves available to 8 Army, considers that the main thrust will be up route 9, using 1 Cdn Corps and 2 N.Z. Division. To meet this threat the enemy is clearly still concerned to reinforce his Eastern flank yet further. 114 Jaeger Division, which put up a very

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In the latter area the enemy has had to pay for his policy of keeping forward of the SENIO, and disproportionately highly. A new division has been identified in ITALY and KESSELRING, after a three month absence, has returned to reassure his troops in a New Year message that "I am leading you in the battles of 1945".

8 Army front was quiet over the last days of December but the Germans took the opportunity of pulling out 90 Div, a badly battered formation, and substituting the relatively fresh and up to strength 16 S.S. Division, extending the latter's sector to include some 2,000 yards of front previously held by 114 Jaeger Div. When our attack did start on 2 Jan it mainly hit the latter division and took 200 prisoners from it in the first two days. On 4 Jan the Wehrmacht communiqué claimed that a large scale attack had begun and we were able to clear our Northern flank right up to the South shore of the VALLI DI COMACCHIO, beating off with heavy losses a counter-attack by 16 S.S., supported by 26 Recce Unit, and clearing up the enemy Southern bridgehead between the SENIO and the NAVIGLIO Canal. The day's bag was over 500 prisoners and the enemy may well have feared that worse was to come, in particular no doubt an attack across the SENIO. At that point the weather closed down but as far as the enemy knows this may only be a temporary and fortuitous check on our programme. He must, indeed, so consider it if he still holds to the appreciation which was in the mind of the Intelligence Officer of 278 Division when he wrote his Intelligence Summary for 22 Dec. In this interesting document, which shows incidentally that propaganda is apparently allowed more weight in the assessment of enemy capabilities than a scientific approach to the subject should demand, it is stated that the Allies must at all costs break through to BOLOGNA as quickly as possible in order to free troops from ITALY to meet the German offensive in the West. The writer, who over-estimates the reserves available to 8 Army, considers that the main threat will be up route 9, using 1 Cdn Corps and 2 N.Z. Division. To meet this threat the enemy is clearly still concerned to reinforce his Eastern flank yet further. 114 Jaeger Division, which put up a very mediocre performance and must now be in a very weak state indeed, especially 741 Jg Regt, has been pulled out and it is not yet known what formation has relieved it; there may well be other changes: 356 Div, for instance, is in a bad way and 278 Div even more so.

An interesting identification on the extreme Eastern flank is of III Bn 740 G.R. of 710 Inf Div. The division has been in Southern FRANCE for the last three and a half years, and has never fought before. It left early in December and as far as is known only 740 G.R., plus some of the divisional artillery, is South of the PO. III Bn appears to be responsible for the defence of the isthmus between the sea and the lake and the other two battalions are dispersed between the lake and the PO.

.....On the Western....

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On the Western flank the enemy attack in the SERCHIO Valley which started on 26 Dec soon petered out and by the end of the month we had regained all the ground abandoned. The motives for this operation are a little mysterious; reinforcements had been brought up to the SERCHIO Valley in the form of 285 G.R., the regiment of 148 Div which had previously been in the SENIO area, the MITTENWALD Alpine Training Bn and 4 Alpine Bn, and either the whole or a greater part of the [redacted] Division. It is possible that the offensive was meant to have a more remote objective - LUCCA and LEGHORN, the troops had been told - but that it was cancelled when it became clear that surprise had been lost and the Allies had taken timely counter-measures. 157 Mtn Div was never definitely identified in the area; the two Alpine Bns might well account for reports of its presence and later evidence suggests that it was somewhere not far North of BOLOGNA at any rate by the end of December. [redacted] Division was certainly somewhere between the CISA Pass and SPEZIA and since it has not been used for a relief of MONTEROSA it might well have been intended for an offensive. 16 S.S. Division, at the time of the attack still unlocated in reserve, has turned up on 8 Army front; to their surprise, apparently, as when they were relieved by 4 Para Div they told the paratroopers that they were going West to attack. 305 Div, another reserve formation, was on 31 Dec in the area of [redacted], 15 miles east of BOLOGNA. 26 Pz Div is stated to be in the area FERRARA - GENTO - S. NICOLO FERRARESE (M 195715). Enemy dispositions are in fact, aligned for a defensive on the Eastern flank and give no hint of offensive intentions, for the present at least, on either the Central or Western sectors.

In North ITALY the only change has been the shifting of the 10 MAS Flotilla or the BORGHESE Division, as it is sometimes called from the name of its commander, to the [redacted] area. The spirit of the division, which is very much a private army belonging to Prince BORGHESE, is said to be as much anti-German as anti-Allied and its move to the TRIESTE area is said to be intended to guard against a Jugoslav occupation in the event of a German collapse or withdrawal. One of its units, the LEPC Bn, is under command of 16 S.S. Div. On the French frontier, 5 Mtn Div, about whose movements there was some doubt, lost prisoners just North of the MARGARITA Pass on 7 Jan, and is undoubtedly still in the same general area.

2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND CO MUNICATIONS

(a) RAILWAYS

From 26 Dec up to 4 Jan excellent weather permitted us again to step up our air attacks against enemy communications after a period of about 10 days during which weather severely restricted operations. Since the 4th the weather has again closed in and total sorties by M.A.T.A.F. since then have averaged only about 200 a day as opposed to an average of about 1,200 for the period 26 Dec - 4 Jan. During this

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[illegible] in reserve, has turned up on 8 Army front; to their surprise, apparently, as when they were relieved by 4 Para Div they told the paratroopers that they were going West to attack. 305 Div, another reserve formation, was on 31 Dec in the area of [illegible], 25 miles east of BOLOGNA. 26 Pz Div is stated to be in the area FERRARA - CENTO - S. NICOLO FERRARESE (M 195715). Enemy dispositions are in fact, aligned for a defensive on the Eastern flank and give no hint of offensive intentions, for the present at least, on either the Central or Western sectors.

In North ITALY the only change has been the shifting of the 10 Mas Flotilla or the BRIGATA Division, as it is sometimes called from the name of its commander, to the [illegible] area. The spirit of the division, which is very much a private army belonging to Prince BORGHESE, is said to be as much anti-German as anti-Allied and its move to the [illegible] area is said to be intended to guard against a Jugoslav coup-de-main in the event of a German collapse or withdrawal. One of its units, the LUPO Bn, is under command of 16 S.S. Div. On the French frontier, 5 Mtn Div, about whose movements there was some doubt, lost prisoners just North of the MONDINI Pass on 7 Jan, and is undoubtedly still in the same general area.

2. ENEMY SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

(a) RAILWAYS

From 26 Dec up to 4 Jan excellent weather permitted us again to step up our air attacks against enemy communications after a period of about 10 days during which weather severely restricted operations. Since the 4th the weather has again closed in and total sorties by M.A.T.A.F. since then have averaged only about 200 a day as opposed to an average of about 1,200 for the period 26 Dec - 4 Jan. During this latter period railways in enemy-occupied territory were heavily disrupted. Whereas on 25 Dec the BRENNER railway and one rail route through N.E. ITALY were probably open to through traffic, on 4 Jan there were five cuts on the BRENNER railway and each of the three rail routes in N.E. ITALY were blocked at at least four points. (A sketch of the rail state as of 4 Jan appears on the following page). No through traffic in N.E. ITALY was possible between 26 Dec and 4 Jan and over the same period the BRENNER was continuously blocked with the possible exception of 1 or 2 days. Since 4 Jan no PR has been available but as of 8 Jan no through traffic is likely to have been possible in the N.E. and, on the basis of fighter-bomber claims, the BRENNER may perhaps have been still blocked. Aside from the high degree of rail interdiction achieved a development of major interest is the appreciable deepening of the zone of rail interdiction. The BRENNER line has been cut almost as far North as the BRENNER Pass and heavy attacks have been made on INNSBRUCK, the Northern terminus; in the N.E. the zone has been extended out to something over 150 kilometres from the ITALY area.

....Further South one.....

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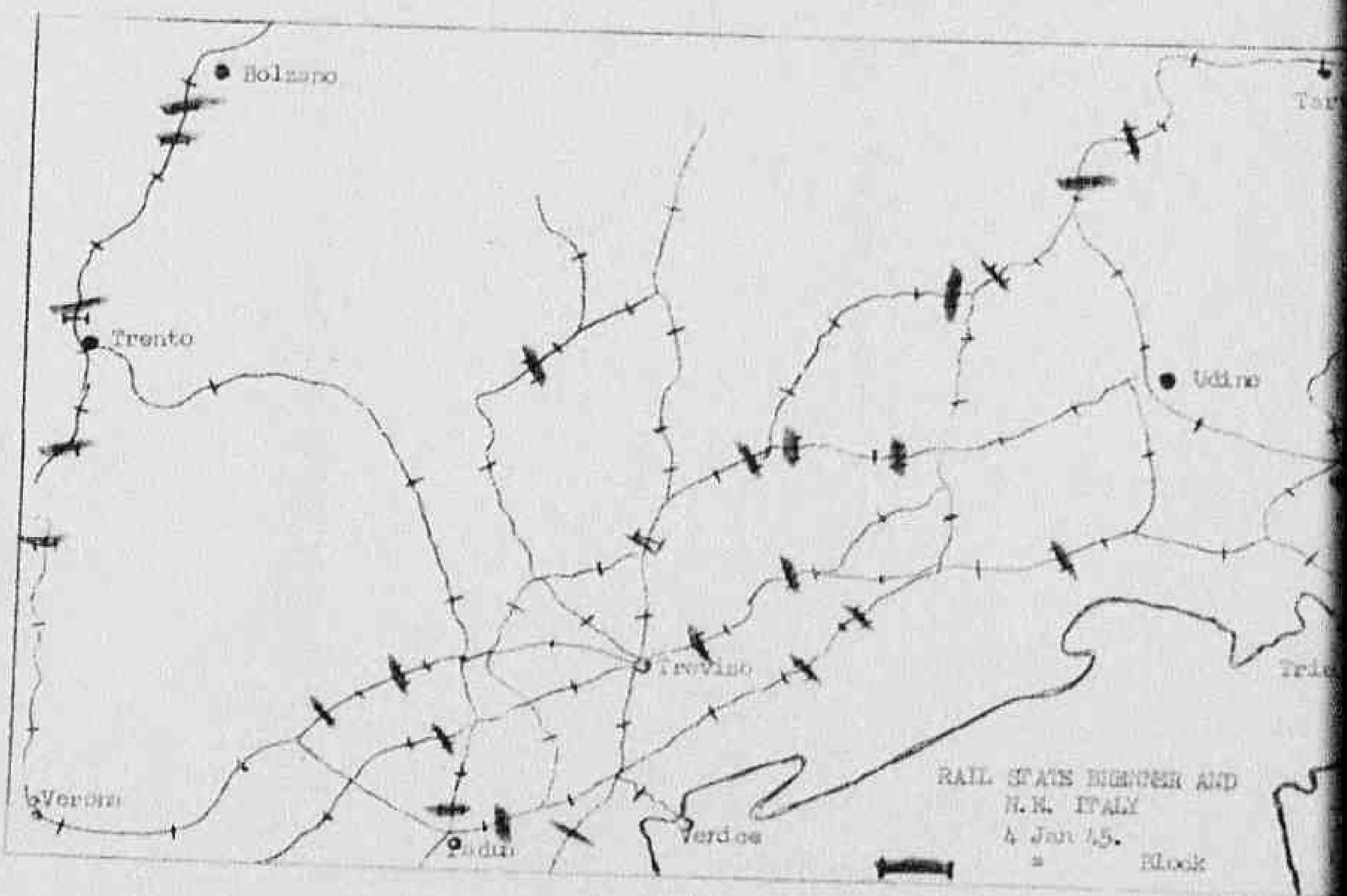

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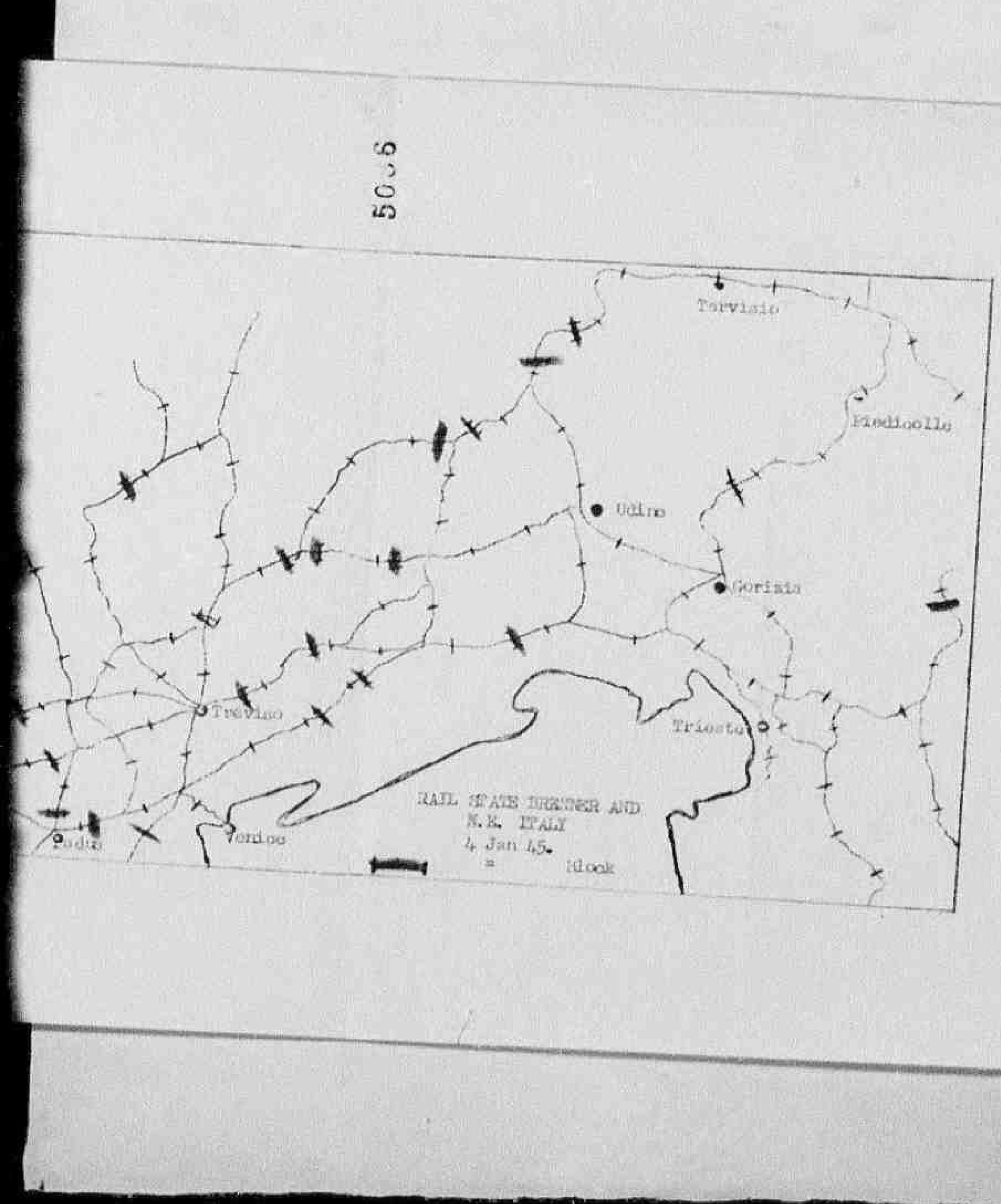

Further South one or more of the many rail lines running South to the PO river have probably been open at all times up to or within 15 kilometres of the river, but all permanent bridges, both road and rail, over the PO East of P.VIL. remain out.

(b) RAILWAY REPAIRS

The difficulties inherent under the circumstances of constant interruptions of the railways and shortage of petrol are obvious. The enemy has at least partially met the petrol shortage by strict economy measures and by use of substitute fuels. In the face of our air effort against railways, he has, abetted by adverse weather, only been able to move trains by virtue of a highly organised and efficient repair system. In one instance recently a bridge on the [redacted] was repaired in 48 hours.

In view of the enemy's lack of petrol and the relative inefficiency of substitute AF fuels, and further his none-too-adequate number of IF, the importance of his ability to keep the railways in operation cannot be over-emphasised. In this connection recent information from PW is of interest. They state that there is a railway air raid warning service which works in conjunction with the civilian and Luftwaffe service. When enemy planes are reported mobile "Trouble-Shooter" railway repair crews in the area are immediately alerted. The message originates at the regular control warning stations and goes from there on to sub-stations to the "Trouble-Shooter" units. In the event that rail damage occurs, the exact information as to location and extent of damage is phoned or radioed to the railway station. From here necessary instructions are radioed directly to receivers aboard the repair train. Complete instructions are given as to necessary repair while the train is in transit. It is claimed that the entire German railway net-work has been carefully allotted to various of these units for the repair of all possible damage. These crews are briefed on the most important rail sections so that in the event these are destroyed, all the planning and preliminary preparations for repairs have been previously accomplished. The crews' headquarters are located at various large rail centres, from where they are dispersed to "waiting stations". These "Trouble-Shooter" crews are described as consisting of the following: one car for files on possible repairs with from 5 to 9 expert technicians, two to four "workshop" cars for welding equipment, cranes, tools, spare parts, ties, switches etc., one to two cars for quarters and kitchen facilities, one to two cars for spare rails and large replacement parts, one to two cars for cement, gravel, stone blocks, etc. for road-bed construction. Ground sources report, and PR tends to confirm, that essentially similar special railway repair trains are currently operating in [redacted].

Another item of interest in enemy railway repair effort is the practice of using a short temporary bridge span at night only, the span being removed during the hours of daylight to give the impression that

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of substitute MT fuels, and further his none-too-adequate number of MT, the importance of his ability to keep the railways in operation cannot be over-emphasised. In this connection recent information from Italy is of interest. They state that there is a railway air raid warning service which works in conjunction with the civilian and the Axis service. When enemy planes are reported mobile "Trouble-Shooter" railway repair crews in the area are immediately alerted. The message originates at the regular control warning stations and goes from there on to sub-stations to the "Trouble-Shooter" units. In the event that rail damage occurs, the exact information as to location and extent of damage is phoned or radioed to the railway station. From here necessary instructions are radioed directly to receivers aboard the repair train. Complete instructions are given as to necessary repair while the train is in transit. It is claimed that the entire German railway net-work has been carefully piloted to various of these units for the repair of all possible damage. These crews are briefed on the most important rail sections so that in the event these are destroyed, all the planning and preliminary preparations for repairs have been previously accomplished. The crews' headquarters are located at various large rail centres, from where they are dispersed to "waiting stations". These "Trouble-Shooter" crews are described as consisting of the following: one car for files on possible repairs with from 3 to 9 expert technicians, two to four "workshop" cars for welding equipment, cranes, tools, spare parts, ties, switches etc., one to two cars for quarters and kitchen facilities, one to two cars for spare rails and large replacement parts, one to two cars for cement, gravel, stone blocks, etc. for road-bed construction. Ground sources report, and PR tends to confirm, that essentially similar special railway repair trains are currently operating in ITALY.

Another item of interest in enemy railway repair effort is the practice of using a short temporary bridge span at night only, the span being removed during the hours of daylight to give the impression that the bridge is impassable. Ground sources report that this stratagem is used at six bridges, namely those near CALCINATO (F 1056) and PESCHIERA (F 4255) on the main MILAN-VERONA line, VOGHERA (K 0813) and RIBELLA (L 4667) on the main TURIN-PIACENZA-BOLOGNA line, LODIGIO (L 8825) on a secondary line running N.E. to the PADUA area, and MERVESSA (G 6295) on the main VERONA-UDINE line. The use of such a span has been confirmed at CALCINATO bridge by night PR, but here the practice is currently no longer possible in as much as recent attacks have further damaged the bridge.

(c) SUPPLIES

While on the basis of the present scale of fighting the rail interdiction achieved has probably not resulted in any acute shortage of supplies, no build-up is likely to have been possible over the past two weeks, troop trains will have been delayed, and such movement tends

.....by MT with.....

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by AF with a consequent increase in motor fuel consumption which the enemy can ill afford. PR has shown road traffic in the BOLZANO area as far North as BOLZANO and a ground source reports that 300 AF with trailers loaded with ammunition for the front passed through TREVISO during 1 and 2 Jan. Other ground sources again report a shortage of fuel in North ITALY. The Germans are reportedly buying petrol on the black market (presumably for unofficial purposes) and one source goes so far as to indicate serious inroads into the stocks of spirituous liquors in North ITALY in reporting that the enemy is using GR.PR. a "special high grade GR.PR.", as motor fuel. Other reports state that in ITALY the Germans continue to convert their AF to Gasogene burners and according to a PW a general order affecting all German AF has been issued directing the conversion of all vehicles to gasogene with the exception of tanks, SPs and heavy prime movers.

(d) SHIPPING

There has been little PR of the Ligurian ports since 26 December. However, it is known that one MT ship and a coaster reached GENOA from GENOA on 7 January and 4 F-boats were at active berths in the latter harbour on the same date. It is possible that two other MT ships and 11 F-boats which were seen at active berths in GENOA are also plying between these two ports. At least six F-boats are under repair at ANSALDO FORNITI ship yards.

East of GENOA there appears to have been some increase in activity at SAVONA, at least three coasters besides schooners and other small shipping are now operating between these two ports.

On the Adriatic traffic in coastal craft continues between VENICE, TRIESTE, POLA and FIUME on a somewhat reduced scale, whilst ANCONA and other small ports show little or no activity since 28 December. However, the traffic in river barges from VENICE to CHIOGGIA and the inland canal system continues to be lively. Twenty-four barges were seen at CHIOGGIA on 27 December and 22 on 3 January, and activity has also been noted on the CHIOGGIA-CAVANELLA D'ADIGE-ROVIGO DI PO canal system.

There has been some increase in air activity against shipping along the Ligurian coast in the past week.

(e) ENEMY INSTALLATIONS, UPPER ADIGE VALLEY

All along the Upper ADIGE Valley, between MERANO (A 8291) and RIVA at the Northern end of Lake GARDA, the enemy has built up a considerable number of installations of all kinds. Twenty-nine have so far been identified from air photos including three fuel dumps, seven ammunition dumps, two MT spare-parts depots, three vehicle parks and fourteen general stores dumps, whilst a further fuel dump, six ammunition dumps and two workshops have been reported by ground sources but not yet confirmed by photo cover.

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(d) SHIPPING

There has been little PR of the Ligurian ports since 26 December. However, it is known that one KT ship and a coaster reached GENOA from GRAO on 7 January and 4 F-boats were at native berths in the latter harbour on the same date. It is possible that two other KT ships and 11 F-boats which were seen at native berths in GRAO are also plying between these two ports. At least six F-boats are under repair at ARSENALE PONENTE ship yards.

East of GENOA there appears to have been some increase in activity at RAPALLO, at least three coasters besides schooners and other small shipping are now operating between these two ports.

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There has been some increase in air activity against shipping along the Ligurian coast in the past week.

(e) ARMY INSTALLATIONS, UPPER ADIGE VALLEY

All along the Upper ADIGE Valley, between MERANO (A 8291) and RIVA at the Northern end of Lake GARDA, the enemy has built up a considerable number of installations of all kinds. Twenty-nine have so far been identified from air photos including three fuel dumps, seven ammunition dumps, two MT spare-parts depots, three vehicle parks and fourteen general stores dumps, whilst a further fuel dump, six ammunition dumps and two workshops have been reported by ground sources but not yet confirmed by photo recce.

The majority of these installations, which hug the main BRENNER railway and subsidiary lines, have shown every appearance of activity of late, and it is probable that, whilst in the first place many of them were built up as a strategical reserve, they are now being used for the reception of stores unloaded from supply trains held up on this frequently-bombed stretch of line, thus preventing a pile-up of loaded rolling stock in the marshalling yards and along the tracks. These stores will be carried on to the PO Valley by MT, or by train when the line is cleared, according to the urgency with which they are required. Stores from those dumps in the vicinity of RIVA and ROVERETO are reported to be transported down Lake GARDA by ship.

Description and layout of installations in this area are given at Appendix 'A'.

.....3. CENTRAL FRONT.....

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3. CRISIS FROM

Captured documents and prisoners' statements leave little doubt that Field Marshal von RUNDSTEDT, having failed to reach the MEUSE in his pre-Christmas drive, decided to turn his main effort Northward in the direction of LIEGE. By the end of 1944, an extremely powerful concentration of German armour had become apparent along the Northern flank of the salient where five armoured divisions were contacted along a 10 mile front between HOTTON and GRANDMENIL, to be joined, according to PW, by two further mobile divisions from the SAAR and AACHEN sectors. The attack was to be launched as soon as unfavourable weather prevented the operation of the Allied air forces, and LIEGE was the objective.

It was not lack of determination on the enemy's part, but strong Allied pressure from the South which frustrated the German plan. The relief of BASTOGNE on 27 Dec caused a radical change in the situation on the enemy's Southern flank. From being an encircled garrison well behind the front line, BASTOGNE became a dangerous salient itself pointing deep into the flank of the German salient. Even prior to its relief very determined efforts had been made by 15 P.G. Div to capture the town, and after the relief, the enemy more than redoubled his efforts, clearly appreciating that the drive on LIEGE was impracticable so long as heavy pressure was being exerted against his left flank. Even before the end of the year 3 P.G. Div of 6 Pz Army had been transferred to the BASTOGNE sector and was followed soon after by 1 S.S. Pz Div. Since then we have seen a steady transfer of the enemy armour from the North flank of the salient down to the South. All of 6 Pz Army with the exception of 2 S.S. Pz Div has moved South; this, coupled with the arrival of two Volksgrenadier divisions from GERMANY has led to a concentration of fourteen enemy divisions in the area of BASTOGNE, half of which are mobile divisions. Heavy enemy pressure continues against BASTOGNE, so far with comparatively little success. West of the town, we have cut the BASTOGNE - ST. HUBERT road, while to the East limited Allied progress has been made in clearing the ground overlooking the ARLON - BASTOGNE road.

As a result of these moves the enemy's Northern flank has 50 No. 4
left relatively thinly held, and such reinforcements as have so far appeared to make good the departures have been from other sectors rather than new Volksgrenadier divisions from the REICH. An infantry division from the area South of AACHEN has appeared and there has been a general tendency for the infantry to shift its weight eastwards. The strenuous opposition encountered by the Allied attack between MARCHE and VIELSALM has however tended to decrease latterly, and the advance is being slowed as much by mines and appalling weather conditions as by enemy opposition. The loss of the VIELSALM - LAROCHE road represents a serious setback to the enemy who has now only one road running Westwards from ST. VITH to the tip of his salient near ROCHEFORT, but there is as yet no sign of any counter-attack in this area. His infantry divisions in this offensive must have been a considerable disappointment to HITLER HQ. It is clear that the Volksgrenadier Division makes a better showing on paper to the accompaniment of GOEBBELS' trumpets than on the inexpitable slopes of the ARDENNES. The failure of 6 Pz Army in the early days of the offensive was largely due

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flank of the German salient. Even prior to its relief very determined efforts had been made by 15 P.G. Div to capture the town, and after the relief, the enemy more than redoubled his efforts, clearly appreciating that the drive on LILLE was impracticable so long as heavy pressure was being exerted against his left flank. Even before the end of the year 3 P.G. Div of 6 Pz Army had been transferred to the B.STOGNE sector and was followed soon after by 1 S.S. Pz Div. Since then we have seen a steady transfer of the enemy armour from the North flank of the salient down to the South. All of 6 Pz Army with the exception of 2 S.S. Pz Div has moved South; this, coupled with the arrival of two Volksgrenadier divisions from GERMANY has led to a concentration of fourteen enemy divisions in the area of B.STOGNE, half of which are mobile divisions. Heavy enemy pressure continues against B.STOGNE, so far with comparatively little success. West of the town, we have cut the B.STOGNE - ST. HUBERT road, while to the East limited Allied progress has been made in clearing the ground overlooking the ARLON - B.STOGNE road.

As a result of these moves the enemy's Northern flank has been left relatively thinly held, and such reinforcements as have so far appeared to make good the departures have been from other sectors rather than new Volksgrenadier divisions from the REICH. An infantry division from the area South of ..ACHEN has appeared and there has been a general tendency for the infantry to shift its weight Westwards. The strenuous opposition encountered by the Allied attack between MARCHE and VIELSALM has however tended to decrease latterly, and the advance is being slowed as much by mines and appalling weather conditions as by enemy opposition. The loss of the VIELSALM - LAROCHE road represents a serious setback to the enemy who has now only one road running Westwards from ST. VITH to the tip of his salient near ROCHEFORT, but there is as yet no sign of any counter-attack in this area. His infantry divisions in this offensive must have been a considerable disappointment to RUNDSTEDT. It is clear that the Volksgrenadier division makes a better showing on paper to the accompaniment of GOEBBELS' trumpets than on the inhospitable slopes of the ..RDENNES. The failure of 6 Pz Army in the early days of the offensive was largely due to the inability of the supporting infantry to achieve their objectives, and now again in the present Allied attack the results have not been promising.

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The enemy's position in the salient has thus undergone a substantial change in the past fortnight. An unforeseen and certainly unwelcome change in his plan has had to be made as a result of Allied pressure. From preparations for the offensive, he has been forced suddenly on to the defensive and has had to reshuffle and divide up his armoured force with some haste. He has now in the area of the salient some twenty-seven divisions of which one (11 Pz) is a doubtful starter having been missing since its fleeting appearance in the first days of the battle. There is so far no evidence of further immediate reinforcement for the ..RDENNES battle, but 10 S.S. Pz Div may be in the offing and two parachute divisions from

.....REFUSED are also.....

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HOLLAND are also possible candidates.

Meanwhile the German winter offensive was carried a stage further on 1 January by the opening of a new attack in the SAAR sector between SARREGUEMINES and ZWEIBRUCKEN. This was launched initially by five infantry divisions and one mobile division, which have since been joined by one further mobile division - the Panzer 21 Pz - two further infantry divisions and one mountain division. The latter is 6 S.S. Mtn Division which left NORWAY at the same time as 710 Inf Division, now arrived in N.W.F.V. 2 Mtn Div from NORWAY is reliably reported to be following; 6 S.S. Mtn Div The SAAR attack has made considerable progress. All the ground which we held in GERMANY between the SAAR river and the RHINE has been lost and in its deepest penetration the enemy drive reached a point 12 miles from the important rail centre of KAISERSLAUTERN at the head of the so-called SAVERNE Gap. The BISCHWEILER - KAISERSLAUTERN railway has been cut at WINNWEILER and enemy pressure is still heavy. Apart from the push in the direction of SAVERNE, no particular Schwerpunkt is yet discernible in this attack and pressure seems to be general along the whole of the 55 mile front. A recent PW statement that the French S.S. Div [illegible] is in the vicinity is however of some significance. The 2 Division is believed to be a quasi-political formation on the lines of the [illegible] units in [illegible] and is likely to be present in any area where the enemy may hope to achieve a substantial incursion into FRANCE.

At the same time the enemy has been active in ALSACE. On 7 January he succeeded in establishing two bridgeheads across the RHINE North of STRASBOURG. About two bns of infantry supported by tanks are [illegible] to be involved and have cut the KARLSRUHE - STRASBOURG railway. Simultaneously an attack has been launched South of STRASBOURG on both sides of the RHONE-RHINE canal near RHINAU. These moves may be the beginning of an encircling attack on STRASBOURG, or they may be diversionary and holding operations to be exploited more fully if any weakening of allied resistance becomes apparent. Certainly the reported presence of the notorious S.S. Reichsführer HIMMLER in this area is significant.

Elsewhere on the front there have been several interesting features. Prisoners taken in the COLMAR area have said that their tank is to launch holding attacks and continue active patrolling. If the elusive 20 S.S. Pz Division is not reliabl. reported at COLMAR could be located, some confirmation of this information might be provided. As it is, the COLMAR area still needs careful watching. Further North in HOLLAND, there have been no further indications of the suggested enemy offensive across the MAAS near MAASTRICK, but in Eastern HOLLAND the enemy remains in an aggressive mood. The enemy bridgehead over the LEK North of ROERMOND was short-lived, but active patrolling intended to pin down allied troops continues.

Nearly four weeks after his first attacks were launched the full

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situation has now arisen. [illegible] spearheads push northwards along the North bank of the DANUBE, German forces, separated from them only by the width of the river, have been attacking Eastwards along the South bank. They have captured KOMEROM and have reached BICSKE, 20 miles West of BUDAPEST. The enemy counter-attacks have been launched with a considerable weight of armour estimated at some 300 tanks and with a force which includes two armoured divisions transferred from the Central sector - 3 S.S. Pz Div TOTENKOPF and 5 S.S. Pz Div WIKING. The arrival of these two divisions now brings the estimated strength of Army Group South, which is believed to be responsible for the battle in HUNGARY North of Lake BALATON, up to twenty-three German divisions of which eight are Panzer and three P.G. Divs. How much of this force is now locked up in BUDAPEST is not clear, but according to an unconfirmed report elements of six or seven German divisions are involved.

South of BUDAPEST there has been no change in the front line. 6 Pz Div from the Central sector has been identified N.E. of the Lake and in the same area is the Fifth Cav Regt Feldmarschall von MACKENSEN 50 03 apparently an independent brigade which according to the German communique has covered itself with glory by its steadfastness in face of powerful Soviet attacks.

In YUGOSLAVIA, the enemy build up around the Soviet DRAVA bridgehead has continued. West of the bridgehead some 30,000 enemy troops including Croats and Cossacks are reported while to the West a large proportion of the troops formerly under Corps MUELLER in the DRAVA Valley are now concentrated. These include elements of 11 S.S.P.G., 117 Jg, 7 S.S. and 264 Inf Divisions. 118 Jg Div which is also in the area, has been reported as entraining in the VINKOVCI area for GREECE. The destination looks improbable, but there seems no reason why the division should not be withdrawn from the SREM for employment elsewhere in view of the considerable reinforcements which have recently arrived in the SREM. Meanwhile the enemy has been exerting pressure Eastwards against the Soviet DRAVA near VINKOVCI, and OSIJEK has been retaken. There are also indications that an attack on the Soviet DRAVA bridgehead is imminent. Already what appears to have been a reconnaissance in force has taken place. A force composed largely of Croats from 1 Croat Assault and 5 Croat Infantry Divisions captured PETROVCI, 12 miles N.E. of VIROVITICA and then advanced South 2 Kms. However a heavy counter-attack by Yugoslav Partisans in the area restored the situation and PETROVCI is again in our hands. It is unlikely now that an all-out enemy effort and a resumption of the attack is therefore to be expected. Meanwhile massive reinforcements are being ferried across the DRAVA into the bridgehead area.

2 Corps' withdrawal is proceeding rapidly despite extremely bad weather conditions, and the Corps rear units are now well North of SKOPLJE. Since leaving KUMANOVO

.....the Corps has.....

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the Corps has probably suffered comparatively light losses, but the troops must by now be in an extremely tired and dispirited mood, and there is ample evidence on the ground of the enormous AF losses suffered in their withdrawal from the SARAJEVO pocket. At least a thousand MT were lost in the 25 mile stretch between PODROMIC and MARTSEVO.

Further North the enemy attack on TRAVNIK is still bogged down some three miles from the town itself. Heavy snowstorms are reported to be hindering operations in this area. That the enemy is however prepared to make strenuous efforts to capture TRAVNIK and reopen the TRAVNIK - BIHAC road is shown by the presence of elements of 104 Jg Division in the area. This formation had been operating in the DRIN Valley early last month and had not since been satisfactorily located. Another new identification in the TRAVNIK area is 505 Recce Unit, presumably consisting of Army troops in view of its high number.

In SLOVENIA there has been considerable enemy activity during the past week. A series of mopping up operations in the CELJE area and to the East in which SS & S.A. Police Regt have been prominent, have seriously weakened the Partisan forces since large stores of food have been removed by the enemy and a number of farms burnt. At the same time a second drive has commenced in the area S.W. of the LJUBLJANA road. No details are available as yet as to the composition of the forces engaged in this operation. What is clear however, is that as the German withdrawal from YUGOSLAVIA gains momentum the enemy is making determined efforts to clear up the areas through which his L of C will eventually run to the final defence line in N.W. YUGOSLAVIA.

5. At Appendix 'A' is a description and layout of installations in the Upper ADIGE area.

BRIGADIER, G.S.
A.Q. GP 8, G-2.

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APPENDIX 'A' TO H.Q. 15 ARMY GROUP
INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 42 DATED
9 JANUARY, 1945.

ENEMY INSTALLATIONS UPPER ADIGE VALLEY

MERANO — Mt park on the western outskirts of the town at A 813902, contained at least 35 vehicles on 20 Dec 44. Two trenches and five buildings are possibly used for petrol storage. Barracks and stores depot 1 mile South of the town at A 825887, reported by ground sources to be ration and clothing depot. This depot was active on 25 Dec 44 when at least 25 vehicles were parked throughout the area.

LAAS — Ammunition dump reported by ground sources at A 823853 on 20 Jul 44; has not yet been confirmed by PR.

VILPIANO — Stores depot consisting of six buildings and piles of stores in the open reported by ground sources to be an Army Group clothing dump, situated at A 870775 and connected to BOLZANO road and railway was active on 25 Dec 44.

MAIA BASSA — General stores dump consisting of a warehouse and eleven storage type buildings hidden in woods at A 854771 and connected to BOLZANO-MERANO road. Was active on 25 Dec 44.

TERLANO — A dangerous stores dump reported by ground sources to contain fuel and ammunition is situated west of the road between TERLANO and SETTEQUERCE stretching from A 890740 to A 900725. Has shown no signs of activity since the latter half of November.

BOLZANO — Barracks, general stores and MT park at A 950716, appears constantly active, up to 50 vehicles normally present.
Small ammunition dump at A 962690.
Large open stores dump in a ravine close to a small station on the BRENNER line at A 999702. Appears active.

LAIVES — Many buildings hidden in woods at A 954643, reported by ground sources to be a TODT depot. Shows many signs of activity and includes some half buried stores which might be fuel.
MT spare-parts depot, reported by ground sources to be sub-depot of 406 Central Spare-Parts Depot, at A 953622. Appears to be continually active, and as many as 55 vehicles have been seen there.

ORA — Fuel dump at A 955970 about one mile North of ORA station. Is one mile long, and half a mile wide, and said by ground sources to

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VILPIANO — Stores depot consisting of six buildings and piles of stores in the open reported by ground sources to be an Army Group clothing dump, situated at A 870775 and connected to BOLZANO road and railway was active on 28 Dec 44.

MAIRS — General stores dump consisting of a warehouse and eleven storage type buildings hidden in woods at A 854771 and connected to BOLZANO-MERANO road. Was active on 20 Dec 44.

TERLANO — A dangerous stores dump reported by ground sources to contain fuel and ammunition is situated West of the road between TERLANO and [redacted] stretching from A 890740 to A 900729. Has shown no signs of activity since the latter half of November.

BOLZANO — Barracks, general stores and MT park at A 950716, appears constantly active, up to 50 vehicles normally present.
Small ammunition dump at A 962690.
Large open stores dump in a ravine close to a small station on the [redacted] line at A 999702. Appears active.

LAIVES — Many buildings hidden in woods at A 954643, reported by ground sources to be a TODT depot. Shows many signs of activity and includes some half buried stores which might be fuel.
MT spare-parts depot, reported by ground sources to be sub-depot of 406 Central Spare-Parts Depot, at A 953622. Appears to be continually active, and as many as 55 vehicles have been seen there.

ORA — Fuel dump at A 935570 about one mile North of ORA station. Is one mile long and half a mile wide, and said by ground sources to be largest fuel dump in ITALY. In October it was reported that tunnels were being constructed for the storing of this fuel, but the dump was still active on 20 Dec 44. Dangerous stores dump at A 899592 appears active.
Ammunition dump at A 904558. This dump was attacked during the first week in October, but was still active on 23 December.
Open stores dump at A 943538, was active on 23 December.
Ground source report of 22 November stated that all cellars in ORA had been requisitioned for the storage of supplies and that material is dumped in holes between the road and the railway lines.

PASSO ROLLE — Ground source reports an ammunition dump in this area (A 8849).

CORTINA — Ammunition dump at A 8[illegible]0, was active up to 28 November, but there have been no signs of activity since.

...[illegible]CONCLUDED.....

MEZZOCORONA

MT depot at .. 790409, was active and contained 155 vehicles on 28 December.
General stores depot at .. 785326 lying along the TRENTO-MEZZOCORONA railway line, consists of three areas located close together which include several buildings and a station. Shows considerable activity up to 30 December.
General stores dump consisting of stores piled in the open and several small buildings at .. 786391. North of the railway sidings at MEZZOCORONA/S. MICHELE station. This dump was active on 30 December, but at least some of the stores are believed to be lumber.

MEZZOLO

15 long low buildings at .. 739551 reported by ground sources to contain MT stores from the 'OM' MT factory at MEZZOLO.

S. GIACOMO

Ground sources report the existence of seven underground ammunition stores between S. GIACOMO (.. 940375) and .. 943374. No photo confirmation is available.

TRENTO

General stores dump consisting of seven buildings near the railway at .. 775253.

TRENTO

Stores dump at .. 803225, just S.E. of TRENTO station, consisting of two small buildings and unidentifiable stores stacked in the open.

CASTELLO

Large depot consisting of 20 buildings and stores stacked in the open, reported by ground sources to be fuel and Engineer depot, at .. 834155. Served by main TRENTO-UDINE line and active up to 1 December.

LEVICO

Small fuel dump on Western outskirts of LEVICO at .. 905170.

CASTELNO

Ground sources report on ammunition dump at CASTEL PIETRA (.. 746077). This has not as yet been confirmed by photo recce.

ROVERETO

Ground sources report that arms and ammunition are stored in a large house marked with the red cross at road fork .. 707063. Ammunition is also reported to be stored in the church at .. 707042. No photo confirmation of these reports is available. In ROVERETO marshalling yard (.. 700034) and several adjoining industrial areas, the whole covering an area one mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, are quantities of stores piled in the open and an indication of stores in buildings. At .. 707045 is a possible MT park.
A dangerous stores dump at .. 686001, believed to contain ammunition showed indications of activity on 1 January.
Supply dump at .. 679010, located at MORI station and including

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S. GIL.0080

Ground sources report the existence of seven underground ammunition stores between S. GIL.0080 (A 940375) and A 949374. NO photo confirmation is available.

TERNO

General stores dump consisting of seven buildings near the railway at A 775259.

[redacted]

Stores dump at A 863229, just S.E. of [redacted] station, consisting of two small buildings and unidentifiable stores stacked in the open.

GILDOR.220

Large depot consisting of 20 buildings and stores stacked in the open, reported by ground sources to be fuel and Engineer depot, at A 904155. Served by main TERNO-IEVLOO line and active up to 1 December.

IEVLOO

Small fuel dump on Western outskirts of IEVLOO at A 905170.

C.I.L.NO

Ground sources report an ammunition dump at C.ASTEL PIETRA (A 748077). This has not as yet been confirmed by photo recce.

ROVERETO

Ground sources report that arms and ammunition are stored in a large house marked with the red cross at road fork A 707063. Ammunition is also reported to be stored in the church at A 707042. No photo confirmation of these reports is available. In ROVERETO marshalling yard (A 700034) and several adjoining industrial areas, the whole covering an area one mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, are quantities of stores piled in the open and an indication of stores in buildings. At A 707045 is a possible MT park.

A dangerous stores dump at A 656001, believed to contain ammunition showed indications of activity on 1 January.

Supply dump at A 675010, located at [redacted] station and including the station buildings and adjoining industrial area where stores are piled in large quantities. This dump suffered slight bomb-damage in December, some of the stores being destroyed, but it was still quite active on 1 January.

RIV.

Photo recce shows a possible ammunition dump at A 582020. Ground sources report a fuel dump beside the road between [redacted] and [redacted] at A 567059. Photo confirmation is looking. A 2W reports the existence of MT and WT repair shops in road tunnels at A 547029 and A 544020, and states that other supplies are also stored in tunnels along this road.

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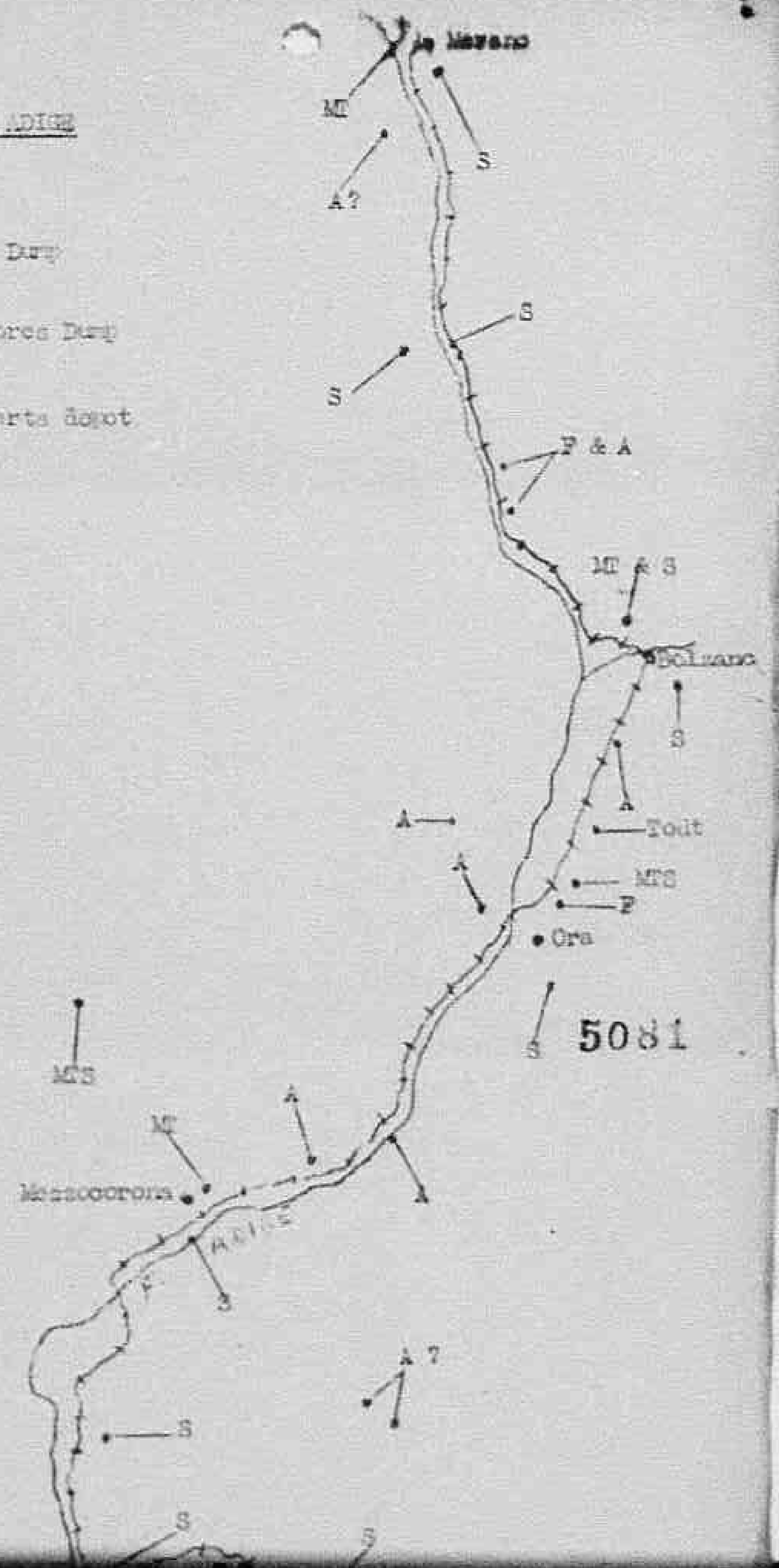
ENEMY INSTALLATIONS - UPPER ADIGE

LEGEND

A	=	Ammunition Dump
F	=	Fuel Dump
S	=	General Stores Dump
MT	=	MT Park
MTS	=	MT Spare parts depot
WS	=	Workshop



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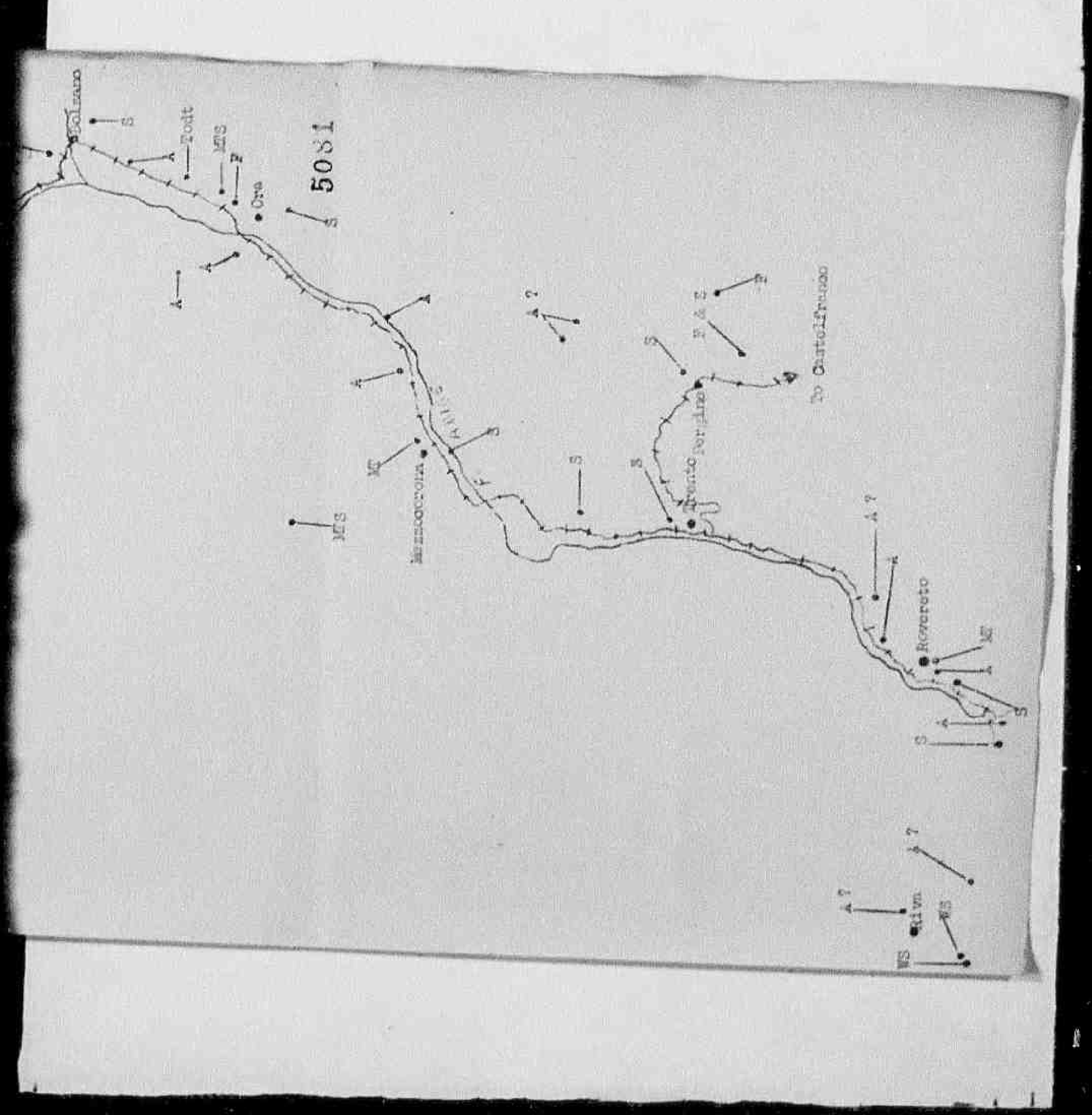

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15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 41

OF 27 DECEMBER, 1944

1. ENEMY SITUATION

Generally the enemy on the Adriatic is now back on the IRMGARD line (the SENIO river), though North of FAENZA 278 Div and 356 Div are still forward of the river and are at present holding the NAVIGLIO Canal between the 30 and 35 Northings. Both divisions only withdrew under strong pressure from the banks of the LAMONE and have been very reluctant to give up any ground in their bridgehead across the SENIO. Further North 98 Div held firm North and South of RAGNACAVALLO till the 21 Dec, but then following a day's heavy fighting withdrew overnight behind the SENIO and gave up the town. The decision seems to have been taken suddenly in contradiction to previous orders to hold on to the positions as long as possible. As a result the withdrawal was not as skilfully carried out as normally and several interesting documents fell into our hands. One of these identified a new Corps H.Q. - 73 Inf Corps - which was shown to be at CHIESA NUOVA M 2050, and apparently commands the Eastern flank of 10 Army with 114 Jaeger, 98 Inf and 356 Inf Divs under its command. In 76 Pz Corps, to the West of 73 Corps, apart from the fighting in which 278 Div has been involved, there has been only patrol activity along the banks of the SENIO and in the SANTERNO Valley. Some regrouping has however been carried out. 26 Pz Div, taking with it the remnants of 20 G...F. Div, has vanished from the front and is now carried in reserve - unlocated but probably in the rest and refit area North and N.E. of BOLOGNA previously visited by 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divs. On the SENIO 90 P.G. Div has gradually extended its front South West, by switching 200 P.G.R. from its left to its right wing, and now appears to have taken over the whole of the sector originally held by 305 Inf Div. 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divs now hold a front along the SENIO about 13-14 kms long with the CASTEL BOLOGNESE apparently inclusive to 29 P.G. Div. The only clue as to the whereabouts of 305 Inf Div was brought in on Christmas Day by a deserter who said that he left his Regt (576 G...) in IMOLA on the 22nd, and that it has just received orders to move to the BOLOGNA area. 305 Inf Div has therefore presumably joined 26 Pz Div in central reserve and is likewise resting and refitting.

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Regrouping has not been confined to the Adriatic sector. South of BOLOGNA it is now certain that 16 S.S. Div has been withdrawn into reserve. An agent's report of 20 Dec stated that it had arrived in the PARMA area and since then prisoners have been taken from 10 Para Regt (4 Para Div) on the 83 Easting, who said that they had relieved S.S. troops. 10 Para Regt was previously out of the line resting and it looks as if with its return, almost certainly up to strength, 4 Para Div has extended its front west to include a large part if not all of 16 S.S. Div's sector. An agent's report that an Italian battalion - The LUPO Bn - is also in the area is at present unconfirmed.

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a day's heavy fighting withdrew overnight behind the SENIO and gave up the town. The decision seems to have been taken suddenly in contradiction to previous orders to hold on to the positions as long as possible. As a result the withdrawal was not as skilfully carried out as normally and several interesting documents fell into our hands. One of these identified a new Corps H.Q. - 73 Inf Corps - which was shown to be at CASELLA NUOVA M 2080, and apperently commands the Eastern flank of 10 Army with 114 Jaeger, 98 Inf and 356 Inf Divs under its command. In 76 Pz Corps, to the west of 73 Corps, apart from the fighting in which 278 Div has been involved, there has been only patrol activity along the banks of the SENIO and in the SANTERNO Valley. Some regrouping has however been carried out. 26 Pz Div, taking with it the remnants of 20 G.N.F. Div, has vanished from the front and is now carried in reserve - unlocated but probably in the rest and refit area North and N.E. of BOLOGNA previously visited by 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divs. On the SENIO 90 P.G. Div has gradually extended its front South West, by switching 200 P.G.R. from its left to its right wing, and now appears to have taken over the whole of the sector originally held by 305 Inf Div. 29 P.G. and 90 P.G. Divs now hold a front along the SENIO about 13-14 Kms long with the CASTEL BOLOGNESE apparently inclusive to 29 P.G. Div. The only clue as to the whereabouts of 305 Inf Div was brought in on Christmas Day by a deserter who said that he left his Regt (578 G.R.) in IMOLA on the 22nd, and that it has just received orders to move to the BOLOGNA area. 305 Inf Div has therefore presumably joined 26 Pz Div in central reserve and is likewise resting and refitting.

Regrouping has not been confined to the Adriatic sector. South of BOLOGNA it is now certain that 16 S.S. Div has been withdrawn into reserve. An agent's report of 20 Dec stated that it had arrived in the PARMA area and since then prisoners have been taken from 10 Para Regt (4 Para Div) on the 83 Easting, who said that they had relieved S.S. troops. 10 Para Regt was previously out of the line resting and it looks as if with its return, almost certainly up to strength, 4 Para Div has extended its front West to include a large part if not all of 16 S.S. Div's sector. An agent's report that an Italian battalion - The LUPO Bn - is also in the area is at present unconfirmed.

The decision to withdraw 16 S.S. Div from the line when two other divisions (26 Pz and 305 Inf Divs) were already moving into reserve, is difficult to explain: either 26 Pz or 305 Divs were so weak that the enemy did not feel that they could be regarded as immediate reserve, or else, encouraged by the preliminary success of the offensive in the West, the enemy decided to try his luck with an attack here in ITALY as well. It may be that HITLER has decided that the moment has arrived to make the supreme effort and by inflicting defeats on the Anglo-American Armies both in the West and in ITALY hopes to sow discord between the Western Powers and RUSSIA. If he decides to attack in ITALY the most likely part of the front is undoubtedly the Western Appennines, where he probably appreciates that the line is only thinly held by the Allies and where a quick success might enable him to seize the port of LEGHORN and also turn the whole of the Fifth Army's positions in the mountains North of FLORENCE. It is undoubtedly

.....significant therefore.....

significant therefore that 157 Mountain Div which started to leave N.W. ITALY in mid-November and which was apparently moving into N.E. ITALY (elements of a Mountain Div were reported arriving in the UDINE Plain in the first fortnight of December), was stated by a normally reliable source to have been ordered on 15 Dec to move to the SPEZIA area. Since then troops of the division have been seen moving South through PIACENZA, while concentrations of German mountain troops were also reported on 24 Dec at SARZANA R 7710 and also PONTREMOLI. Assuming that most of the division moved down from N.E. ITALY while the tail of it was diverted Southwards in MILAN, the division could by now be very nearly complete in its concentration area. Another division may also be moving South into the Western Appenines - the ITALIA Div - which has been concentrating in the FANO area and S.W. of the town astride Route 62. Two battalions (the Rocco and the Eng Bn) have been reported by deserters and by agents to be already in the SPEZIA area, while several reports have been received that the division is to move into the line. Heavy traffic was reported South through the CISA Pass between 17-21 Dec, connected, one source states, with the move of the ITALIA Div. On two occasions the morale of the division has been described as high (unusual for Republican formations) and one interesting report states that the division is not to be used in a defensive role but for counter-attack and that each infantry regt will be attached to a German div.

The arrival of two more divisions in the SPEZIA area would be out of all proportion to the defensive requirements of the sector. If the statement about the role of ITALIA is accurate, relief of MONTE ROSA is not envisaged. And there seems little reason why LI8 Div (which has been engaged in nothing more strenuous than patrol clashes) should be relieved, especially by a division which was in process of moving to N.E. ITALY at the time. The decision to send 157 Mtn Div down to the SPEZIA area clearly indicates a change of plan on the part of the Higher Command and the fact that it happened in the middle of December just when the attack was going in on the Western Front may or may not be a coincidence.

From several civilians who have crossed the lines come reports that the enemy is planning a counter-offensive on the West coast. According to two sources the Germans are feverishly rebuilding the bridges which they had previously blown on a stretch of the road North of CAST LNUOVO L 1209: this is confirmed by photographs. PR also showed a new bivouac area with fresh tracks and dated some 12 kms N.E. of SPEZIA on 25 December. Otherwise there are no visible signs of a build up for an offensive, and there appears to have been no great increase yet in the gun strength, though artillery fire has been heavier than for some time. The evidence for a German offensive is based therefore largely on various agents and Partisan reports of considerable increase in the numbers of troops in the area.

Early on the morning of the 26th an attack was launched against our positions in the SERCHIO Valley. Some 4 or 5 German battalions have been reported engaged, together with some Italian troops. The enemy succeeded in capturing three villages in the hills East of the river (1,000 fresh troops are reported to have arrived recently in this area and to have taken part in the attack), while a battle raged all day for the village of CALOMINI L 1202. These enemy attacks necessitated a slight withdrawal on our part. The only identification so far obtained is from a corpse of II Bn 285 G.R. (148 Div).

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each infantry regt will be [illegible]

The arrival of two more divisions in the SPEZIA area would be out of all proportion to the defensive requirements of the sector. If the statement about the role of FIFTH is accurate, relief of MONTE ROSA is not envisaged. And there seems little reason why 148 Div (which has been engaged in nothing more strenuous than patrol clashes) should be relieved, especially by a division which was in process of moving to N.W. FIFTH at the time. The decision to send 157 Mtn Div down to the SPEZIA area clearly indicates a change of plan on the part of the Higher Command and the fact that it happened in the middle of December just when the attack was going in on the Western Front may or may not be a coincidence.

From several civilians who have crossed the lines some reports that the enemy is planning a counter-offensive on the West coast. According to two sources the Germans are feverishly rebuilding the bridges which they had previously blown on a stretch of the road North of CAST LNUOVO L 1209; this is confirmed by photographs. PR also showed a new bivouac area with fresh tracks and dumps some 12 kms N.E. of SPEZIA on 25 December. Otherwise there are no visible signs of a build up for an offensive, and there appears to have been no great increase yet in the gun strength, though artillery fire has been heavier than for some time. The evidence for a German offensive is based therefore largely on various agents and Partisan reports of considerable increase in the numbers of troops in the area.

Early on the morning of the 26th an attack was launched against our positions in the SERCHIO Valley. Some 4 or 5 German battalions have been reported engaged, together with some Italian troops. The enemy succeeded in capturing three villages in the hills East of the river (1,000 fresh troops are reported to have arrived recently in this area and to have taken part in the attack), while a battle raged all day for the village of CALOMINI L 1202. These enemy attacks necessitated a slight withdrawal on our part. The only identification so far obtained is from a corpse of II Bn 285 G.R. (148 Div). This is the first identification of this Regt which has until recently been reported in the GARDA area. The following day started quietly and it is too early yet to say whether these attacks in the SERCHIO Valley were an isolated action or a diversion designed to draw off reserves, prior to a larger scale attack down the coast. The timing of the attack depends probably on the enemy's appreciation as to how imminent he considers a renewal of the attack on BOLOGNA. He may decide either to strike first hoping to throw the Allies off their balance or else fight a protracted battle of attrition for BOLOGNA, and having worn the Allies down strike on the rebound. At the moment the first alternative seems the more likely. To some extent timing will also depend on the weather. Experience on the Western Front shows that he waited for a spell of cloud and fog in order to ground our air force. The force available to the enemy at present would appear to be 148 Div, 157 Mtn Div, FIFTH Div and the four bns of MONTE ROSA Div which have been in the SERCHIO Valley for some weeks; in addition, 16 S.S. Div may be made available from the P.B. area if the enemy

...considers 305 Div.....

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considers 305 Div and 26 Pz Div sufficient reserve for the main part of the front. The prisoners from 10 Para Regt stated that the S.S. troops they relieved said they were moving West to attack.

In Western ITALY dispositions appear to be on the whole unchanged, though several reports suggest moves by 5 Mtn Div: but these are probably connected with the readjustment of sectors consequent on the withdrawal of 157 Mtn Div. From the coast between VENTIMIGLIA and CHIAVARI comes a report of thinning out by the Germans about 20 Dec: this was presumably 285 G.R. leaving the GENOA area and moving South to the SERCHIO Valley. 162 Division continues to be reported between PIACENZA and VOGHERA with one battalion as far West as CVADA 0 75 .

There is no more news of 155 Field Training Division though a report from a ground source mentions the fact that equipment was being collected in the TURIN area to form a new division. From N.W. ITALY there is an unconfirmed report that 188 Res Mtn Div is being upgraded to a Mountain Div.

2. WESTERN FRONT

Maps captured during the past week have given us the picture of the German plan at the start of the present battle, and have enabled us to assess the developments of the situation after one week of fighting. The attack was launched on a two Army front, 6 S.S. Pz Army to the North, 5 Pz Army to the South. The former was to advance along the axis MALMEDY - LIEGE with II S.S. Pz Corps (2 and 9 S.S. Divs) right and I S.S. Pz Corps (1, 12 S.S. and possibly one other division) left, the intention being to reach the MEUSE from North of LIEGE down to HUY and establish bridges over the river. 5 Pz Army was to attack on the main axis MARCHE - NAMUR thrusting on to the MEUSE all the way between HUY and GIVET. On 5 Pz Army's left, 7 Army was to hold and protect the Southern flank of RUNDSTEDT's drive.

Viewing the situation after a week's fighting it is evident that the enemy has had to make considerable modifications in his plan - evident too that he was always prepared to adapt it to exploit any success achieved. 6 S.S. Pz Army's performance has doubtless been disappointing to the Germans. The stubborn Allied defence from STAVELOT to MALMEDY prevented either of the Army's two Corps from achieving any decisive breakthrough. Indeed it may be said that II S.S. Corps on the right never really made any progress. Certainly MANTEUFFEL by the fourth day of the attack seems to have decided to abandon the Northerly thrust of 6 S.S. Pz Army in the MALMEDY area and to concentrate the armour in the STAVELOT sector where all four S.S. Pz Divs of the Army have been identified. Even so its drive made only slow headway - thanks in large part to the magnificent defence of an American armoured formation in the ST. VITH sector. By the end of the first week there was evidence that RUNDSTEDT had decided, in view of the meagre success of 6 S.S. Pz Army, to concentrate his main effort further South.

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Here 5 Pz Army attacking on the MARCHE - NAMUR axis has made considerable headway. With a spearhead of 2 Pz and 116 Pz Divisions, probably the best two armoured formations in the West, General MANTEUFFEL of Tunisian fame has driven across Northern LUXEMBOURG and is within striking distance of the MEUSE itself. The general line VIELSALM - BASTOGNE, a front of some 25-30 miles, was reached very rapidly, but from then on the enemy advance was compressed into an ever narrowing front. VIELSALM held, and BASTOGNE, although surrounded, remained in Allied hands. The enemy pushed on to the line ST. HUBERT - HOTTON, this time a front of only 18 miles and here again the shoulders of the drive have held: ST. HUBERT is in our hands and we are holding firm at HOTTON. West of here the situation is still very fluid and no front line as such exists. As in 1940, the spearhead has pushed on, for the moment at any rate ignoring its flanks in the speed of its rapid advance Westwards. Further back, however, RUNDSTEDT is now trying to push out his flanks to North and South. Northwards heavy pressure is being exerted against the American positions between MARCHE and STAVELOT while

....to the South.....

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to the South the 2a Lehr Div, after a successful initial drive West and S.W. of BASTOGNE, has received some reinforcements in the form of two infantry divisions t meet the Allied counter-attack against the German Southern flank. This is mainly an armoured battle, however, and the chief interest is centred on the employment and disposition of the enemy's armour. In addition to 2, 116 Pz and Pz Lehr Divs, the enemy has brought up 15 S.S. and 9 Pz Divs from reserve, and at least part of 11 Pz Div from the SAAR sector to reinforce 5 Pz Army, and there are indications that two further mobile divisions, also from the SAAR Valley are moving up Northwards. Meanwhile elements of 2 S.S. Pz Div of 6 Pz Army were identified on Christmas Eve in the middle of 5 Pz Army's sector, suggesting that RUNDSTEDT's plan is now to reinforce the latter's success with all the forces available. Still further armour may become available. 10 S.S. Pz Div is still in the EIFEL area uncommitted, and there are reports, so far unconfirmed, that the enemy has two more S.S. Pz Divisions somewhere South of TRIER which may have been resting in GERMANY from the Eastern front. Thus the position is that 5 Pz Army has got six, possibly seven, armoured divisions at present engaged in the battle while two more are believed coming up from the SAAR, and two others may possibly be available as a strategic reserve. 6 Pz Army has four or five armoured divs committed and may have one more available, although of course, any or all of these may be transferred South to exploit 5 Pz Army's success. The infantry has so far not been prominent in this battle, but there are by now at least thirteen infantry or parachute divisions committed and more may become available.

The attack has been carried out with a ruthlessness which is an indication of the importance attached to it by the enemy. The tactics and the rumours of 1940 have been well to the fore. The most interesting of the units so far encountered in the battle is 150 Pz Bde, a formation dressed entirely in American uniform with American equipment and Sherman tanks. In addition special saboteur units wearing American uniform are known to be operating in the battle area, one of which is thought to have been entrusted with the mission of assassinating the Supreme Allied Commander. The familiar rumours are also being spread with singular lack of originality, for were reports coming of parachutists being dropped disguised as nuns and priests. None of these has so far any confirmation and they appear to rest only on a sense of what is historically fitting.

There is little to report from elsewhere on the front. In the South the French took a 3,000 ft hill North of MUNSTER, but lost it again to a violent counter-attack. German resistance on the COLMAR bridgehead remains fierce, and the reported recent visit of HIMMLER to this sector suggests that it needs watching carefully, although so far there has been no indication of any enemy thickening up. Further North the departure of 11 Pz Div from the SAAR has been compensated for by the arrival of a new Volksgren Div set up in GERMANY. In HOLLAND enemy patrols have been active across the MAAS on several occasions obviously with the intention of discouraging any thinning out from the British Army Group sector.

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Thus far, RUNDSTEDT need not feel dissatisfied with the results he has achieved. A deep breakthrough has been effected in the Allied line and the situation is still not stabilised. Already German patrols may be on the MEUSE. On the other hand he must pay some attention to the strong resistance being offered to the flanks of his salient, and it is to be expected that in the coming week we shall see determined enemy efforts to widen the breakthrough to North and South. But the most significant item of the week's news and the map which showed intended bridging points over the MEUSE. This is no limited offensive to drive us back to the line of the MEUSE or to clear us from the SAAR and RUHR areas of GERMANY. As RUNDSTEDT stakes all, so he must hope to gain all. By this stage the possibility of repeating the victories of 1940 must be very present in his mind.

3. BALKAN FRONT

This week has seen important developments in the battle for HUNGARY.

....While Soviet.....

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While Soviet pressure has been maintained in the [illegible] and [illegible] sectors, forcing the enemy to abandon his salient to the N.E. and NORTH mountains, the thrust to BUDAPEST has developed with dramatic suddenness. The Germans had for some time been reporting Russian attacks in the sector LAKE BALATON - BUDAPEST, and when last week the Soviet drive was resumed along the DANUBE North of the Hungarian capital, it was clear that a pincer attack on BUDAPEST was developing. This has made very considerable headway. North of the city the Russians advancing through very difficult country have forced a crossing of the IPOLY river and are now less than 100 miles from VIENNA itself, while to the South the ring around BUDAPEST has been closed and the DANUBE reached 25 miles N.W. of BUDAPEST. Further South the rail centres of SZEKESFEHERVAR and SIOFOK have both been captured by the Russians. Thus a situation of some seriousness has arisen for the enemy. North of the DANUBE the Russians are emerging from close and wooded country into the flatter and more open terrain of the HUNGARIAN plain while South of the capital the capture of SZEKESFEHERVAR gives the Red Army control of the road and rail communications leading into Western HUNGARY. The stage is however not yet set for a Soviet advance on VIENNA, for while BUDAPEST is still in enemy hands the Russians may be reluctant to push ahead. For that reason we may expect the enemy to cling on stubbornly to the city itself in order to deny to the Russians its communications network. In Southern HUNGARY the Germans have reported Soviet attacks in the area between Lake BALATON and the DRAVA, but these have apparently made little headway.

In YUGOSLAVIA it has been a fairly quiet week. There have been three main sectors of interest. In the North East the enemy appears to be abandoning the DRINA Valley altogether. The need for additional forces in the SAVA to establish a firm front and to deal with the situation around the Russian bridgehead South of the DRAVA has probably forced this decision upon the enemy. 11 C.A.F. Div which was down in the DRINA Valley appears to be moving Northwards to the VINKOVCI (X 08) area, in which sector elements of 118 Jg and 264 Inf Divisions are also reported. The UZICE-ZVORNIK road has been completely abandoned and a Partisan attack is developing against BIJELJINA (X 22), the only large town now left to the Germans in the DRINA Valley. The enemy's main concern must now be to establish a firm front East of UZICE (C 61) in order to prevent Bulgar-Partisan exploitation Westwards along the UZICE-ZVORNIK road. The loss of VISEGRAD on this road, 30 miles West of UZICE would force the three divisions now in MONTENEGRO to withdraw along one difficult mountain road running Northwest from PLEVLJA (R 16) to ROGATICA (D 91). Control of the enemy formations in Eastern and S.E. YUGOSLAVIA appears now to have devolved on 91 Corps as H.Q. 22 Corps which was last identified in the VISEGRAD area is reported to have left Command YUGOSLAVIA via SARAJEVO and NEUM bound for GREECE. Thus, apart from 21 Mtn Corps still engaged with Partisans in MONTENEGRO, Army Group E has only 91 Corps to cope with developments on its Western flank South of the SAVA river. Thus, now that 21 Corps' relief has been effected, 91 Corps will be free to concentrate entirely on the East, but the commitment is now the less considerable.

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In MONTENEGRO, now that the relief of 21 Mtn Corps by 22 Division has been effected we must expect the enemy's withdrawal to be effected relatively rapidly, although the Partisans are continuing to harass and attack the enemy's retreating columns. Latest information on the withdrawal is that LIUBOVA KLISK. (N 28), 25 miles N.E. of PODGORICA, has been evacuated. Shortage of fuel appears to be causing the Germans some concern, and several reports speak of MT having to be destroyed owing to the lack of petrol to remove them.

In ALBANIA there has been fierce fighting in the sector N.W. of KUKS. For some time a Partisan offensive has been in progress here and last week the town of SSO, 35 miles S.E. of MILAC, fell to them. The enemy's reaction to this was to start a counter-offensive Southwards on

.....both sides....

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both sides of the BIHAC-KNIN road which has made some headway in the areas N.W. and N.E. of SRB. This development was not altogether surprising. The enemy cannot afford to let a serious Partisan threat develop against BIHAC, the loss of which would deny to him the important network of main and subsidiary roads which centre on this town. There is indeed some evidence that the enemy is seriously concerned about the paucity of his forces in N.W. YUGOSLAVIA, and a certain amount of thickening up is apparent. 42 Fortress Div last week was reported to be moving through SARAJEVO en route for BROD and may be intended for this area, although of course it may equally well be following 22 Mtn Corps' footsteps towards HUNGARY. In any case further reinforcements for the North West should become available in a not too distant future when 21 Corps is once more safely back into Army Group E's fold.

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

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B/F for G.O.C.

SECRET

COPY NO 85

15 ARMY GROUP INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 40

of 19 DEC 44

1. ENEMY SITUATION

The defence of the HERMANN Line, based on the LAMONE, has now called in three fresh divisions from elsewhere. Last week 90 P.G. Division, under its new commander Graf von SCHWERIN, was unable to do more than arrest our advance West of FAENZA and this week it has been joined by 98 Inf Div from the SILLARO Valley and by 29 P.G. Div from reserve. In spite of this the enemy has been cleared from the line of the lower LAMONE and out of FAENZA and for all his reluctance to lose ground except under pressure he can scarcely stay much longer on the small strip of the river which he still holds North of FAENZA. In the meantime he has no reserve at all for the rest of the front apart from 26 Pz Div, which may now be available in the role, albeit severely reduced in infantry strength.

After successfully crossing the LAMONE in the area between the 42 and the 37 Northings on the night of 10/11 Dec, we were able to advance across the FOSSO VECCHIO to the NAVIGLIO canal taking some 250 PW from 114 and 356 Divs and successfully resisting a counter-attack by 190 Recce Unit which was rushed up with some Tigers in support as the only immediate available reinforcement. However on the night of 12/13 Dec 98 Div started to move off from the area of CASTEL SAN PIETRO, where it was holding a narrow front in the SILLARO Valley, and by 13 Dec both bns of 289 G.R. and II Bn 147 G.R. were already in action against a bridgehead over the NAVIGLIO which we had formed that night. At the time of the crossing we were opposed only by the "H.G. Bn Field Marshal Kesselring", not quite such a picked unit as it appears from the title, but of high morale. Subsequently the third regiment of 98 Div was identified and it appears that all six infantry bns and the recce bn are in the line. In the meantime we had resumed the attack South of route 9. Heavy fighting continued on the night of 14 Dec and all day 15 Dec, especially around the villages of CELLE, M 272A, but by the night of 15 Dec the enemy had pulled back to the line of route 9 after 90 P.G. Div had lost some 200 PW out of a total of 450 for the whole of 8 Army front. By the morning of 16 Dec FAENZA had been evacuated, though 26 Pz Div still had 9 P.G.R. in the area in a very weak state, and 305 Div was back behind the SENIO.

By now the situation West of FAENZA was causing the enemy even more alarm than the Northern bridgehead over the NAVIGLIO. 90 P.G. Div, rather shaken by its losses, was on a wide front in a peculiar salient, facing S.W. 305 Div on its right had the SENIO to protect it but was very weak and exhausted and 26 Pz Div on its left, though still fairly strong in tanks as German armoured divisions go, was so reduced in infantry that 9 P.G.R. could scarcely muster 100 men. It was necessary to bring up the last available reserve: 29 P.G. Div. 71 G.R. was brought in on the SENIO in the neighbourhood of the route 9 crossing, and by 17 Dec 15 G.R. was disposed along the line of the railway down almost as far as FAENZA. 992 G.R. had come in in the area of FAENZA itself, facing

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West of the SENIO there has been little activity. 334 Div lived

.... up to its .....

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up to its reputation for aggressiveness in the spirited action which led to the recapture of TOSSICCIA and a special mention for I Bn 755 in the Wehrmacht communiqué. To its North the former sector of 98 Div, a very narrow one, has apparently been taken over by 1 Para Div and II Bn 4 Para Regt had moved its H.Q. to FORNACE, M 027290, by 11 Dec. Most of 1 Para Div is now probably in the line and on 13 Dec they tried another unsuccessful attack on M. CERERE. Moving still further West various identifications have shown that 65 Div retains its sector and apparently elements of all three regiments are forward. On the extreme West we have had our first deserter from ITALIA division, an engineer who says that his bn, together with the recce bn and some artillery, have arrived at ALBA, P 7621. Presumably these units are to represent the division, under command of Monte Rosa, just as a selection from the troops of San Marco div have also been brought forward to gain a little battle experience before passing on to diversify our PW cages.

There have been some changes in command. A captured document shows that 14 Pz Corps now controls the area formerly under command 51 Mtn Corps, i.e. between 76 Corps and 1 Para Corps. Presumably 51 Mountain Corps has moved to the coastal sector in a straight exchange, and the area is certainly sufficiently mountainous to provide a spurious excuse for substituting a more experienced and efficient Corps H.Q. at the point of greater importance. From other documents it appears that Gen LEMELSEN is at present commanding 10 Army. This may be a temporary arrangement while VIETINGHOFF is commanding the Army Group in Kesselring's absence. Gen SMITH, G.O.C. 90 P.G. Div, has left for GERMANY where he is to be Inspector General of the Volkssturm and has been succeeded by Lt.Gen Graf von SCHWERIN, descendant of the victor of MORGARTEN, and one of the earliest members of the Africa Corps, but a failure as commander of 116 Pz Div in the West.

162 Division is reported to be moving away from the PIACENZA area in the direction of CREMONA. Another report, from a usually very reliable source, states that the division's anti-Partisan operation in the hills South of PIACENZA is considered as completed and it is to return to "the RAVENNA front". It is not very likely that 162 Div would be put in on an active front, particularly after the drastic purge of last month which removed so many of its German personnel, but it might be considered suitable for coastwatching North of the VALLI di COMACCHIO and perhaps for the defence of the PORTO GARIBALDI isthmus. The Partisans South of PIACENZA though they have suffered losses and been driven from many positions can scarcely be said to have been mopped up by 162 Div's feeble operation but with ITALIA division arriving in the area the enemy may prefer to spare German blood by encouraging the fratricidal strife which is all the Republican divisions are suited for. A further problem on order of battle in the enemy's rear has been posed by pay-books of the Kesselring M.G. Bn which showed a recent alteration to 1227 Field Training Grenadier Regt of 155 Field Training division. This is the first we have heard either of the Regt or the div, and both appear to be newly created. It is clear that ITALY would be a very suitable place for a new Field Training division, as being one of the few bits of occupied territory still left to the

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that 14 Pz Corps now controls the area formerly under command 51 Mtn Corps, i.e. between 76 Corps and 1 Para Corps. Presumably 51 Mountain Corps has moved to the coastal sector in a straight exchange, and the area is certainly sufficiently mountainous to provide a spurious excuse for substituting a more experienced and efficient Corps H.Q. at the point of greater importance. From other documents it appears that Gen LEMELSEN is at present commanding 10 Army. This may be a temporary arrangement while VIETINGHOFF is commanding the Army Group in Kesselring's absence. Gen BAADE, G.O.C. 90 P.G. Div, has left for GERMANY where he is to be Inspector General of the Volkssturm and has been succeeded by Lt.Gen Graf von SCHWERIN, descendant of the victor of MORGENSTIERNBERG, and one of the earliest members of the Afrika Corps, but a failure as commander of 116 Pz Div in the West.

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.....2. WESTERN FRONT.....

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2. WESTERN FRONT

To the accompaniment of a barrage of guns and words, von RUNDSTEDT on 17 Dec launched a major counter-offensive on the Western Front. Supported by the strongest G.A.F. effort since D Day, the assault was launched on a 55 mile front between MALMEDY and TRIER. At least [redacted] German divisions are at present involved in the attack and there are reports that more formations are waiting ready to take part in the battle, and may by now be involved. The spearhead of the attack was initially formed by 116 Pz Div brought down from the AACHEN sector and 2 Pz Div which had been missing from the line for some time. Since then three armoured divisions of 6 Pz Army including the battered Pz Lehr Div have been committed. Two further Pz Divs of 6 Pz Army still remain to be committed, and there are reports that at least two armoured divisions of 5 Pz Army are on their way to the battle area. Supporting the armour is the strong and reformed 5 Para Div plus nine infantry or Volksgrenadier divisions including two completely new formations formed in the REICH which have been identified for the first time since the attack started. The attack was preceded on the night of 16/17 Dec by the dropping of small parties of sabotage parachutists behind our lines, some of whom have now been liquidated, while most of the remainder have established contact with the German ground forces. Official reports so far available indicate that the enemy with an appreciable local superiority in men and material has succeeded in making penetrations of up to seven miles on a 25 mile front, while there are unconfirmed reports that the Germans have reached the Belgian town of ST.VITH, 5 miles S.W. of MALMEDY, an advance of about 15 miles. It is clear from captured documents that this attack represents the beginning of an all out enemy effort, and that it has been planned by the enemy for some time. It is probable that when RUNDSTEDT saw that he could hold the Allied November attack without committing the Sixth Pz Army, his strategic reserve, he took the decision to launch a counter-offensive as soon as the Allied assault began to lose its momentum. The withdrawal of the bulk of the German armour from the line (except in the SAAR-KARLSRUHE sector) which has been taking place over the past fortnight was an indication that the offensive would not long be delayed. Whether the German main effort is to be concentrated in the present sector or whether this is a large diversionary attack is not yet clear. RUNDSTEDT may hope to achieve a major breakthrough into BELGIUM; in any case he will attempt to draw Allied forces away from the AACHEN and SAAR sectors, and then launch subsidiary attacks to clear the Allies from those areas of GERMANY. The key to the situation is the commitment of 6 Pz Army. The fact that it has now been committed in the MALMEDY - TRIER sector is a good indication that this is the main sector of the battle.

On the remainder of the Western Front, there have been few startling developments. In ALSACE the enemy still resists strongly in the areas of MULHOUSE and COLMAR. 19 Army has in fact been showing some aggressiveness in the southern part of the ALSACE pocket and limited enemy infiltration into MULHOUSE itself is reported. A captured order of 708 Volksgrenadier division, one of 19 Army's formations, dated 20 November is of interest. It draws attention to the unduly high percentage of personnel reported in casualty returns as missing in action. The order

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North of STRASBOURG the First German Army has been falling back under pressure to the German frontier, and at one point near WISSEMBOURG we have crossed into GERMANY and captured six villages. German opposition has been at its stiffest around BITCHE which has been entered by Allied patrols who later withdrew. Further West however, resistance to our advance into the SAAR Valley has to some extent lessened and better progress has been made.

In the AACHEN sector the withdrawal of the German armour from the line has led to some decrease in German resistance. The retirement to the ROER river has continued in this past week and we have closed up to

.....the ROER.....

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the ZONS South of DUREN against fairly light resistance. North of AACHEN the British Army Group front has remained very quiet all week. The floods in the JULICH sector have to some extent receded, but there is no indication of any change in the present enemy policy of holding firmly to his extended front in HOLLAND. There, as along the whole of the Western Front, eyes are centred on the EIFEL sector where in the coming week we may expect to see the shape of the present German strategy. It will certainly be a week of decisive importance. RUNDSTEDT is not playing for small stakes. Victory or death is what he promises his men. He does not exaggerate.

3. BALKAN FRONT

During the past week the most active sectors on the Hungarian front have again been to the North of MISKOLCZ and of BUDAPEST. The BALATON - DRAVA front appears to have been stabilised except for the area South of KANIZSA, where a Russian crossing of the DRAVA has met with some success.

The MISKOLCZ offensive, aimed primarily up the valleys of the SAJO and HERNAD rivers, met considerable opposition, especially along the railways. The Russian advance retained its impetus and the capture of BOLDVA (J 9191) and SAJO SZENT PETER to the West enabled Soviet forces to fan out on a wider front. To the East, along the BODROG river, good progress was made. Latest reports show that the Russians have reached and in places crossed the pre-MUNICH Czechoslovakian frontier on a 70 mile front, bringing them to within 15 miles of KOSICE (KASSA). This frontier lies in this area about 15-20 miles South of the German made 1938 frontier. The enemy is likely to defend KOSICE bitterly; not only is it the key to communications over the entire area but also a rich industrial centre with a modern, fully equipped airport adjoining its Southern suburbs.

In the battle for BUDAPEST, the Russians, while keeping up frontal pressure, are attempting to outflank the city from the North and South. Slight progress was made, however, south to the N.E. where, after fierce fighting, the enemy were cleared out of POT and MOHYOROD. Some Russian armour is reported to have reached UJPEST but here the enemy is holding firm and it is thought that the Russian effort was a reconnaissance in force rather than an all-out attempt to capture the suburb. Due North of BUDAPEST Soviet troops penetrated some miles into Czechoslovakian territory to capture SLANY, while progress was made to the West at the DANUBE bend North of VACZ. Our allies have maintained silence about progress towards SZEKES-FEHERVAR between the Lakes BALATON and VELENCE, an example the enemy has also followed. It is known, however, that the threat of a left hook at BUDAPEST caused some regrouping of the enemy forces and considerable forces including armour are facing each other in this vital sector.

The enemy has succeeded in stabilising the front between BALATON and the DRAVA along a line running South from incl KERASZTUR, through MIHE A 74 to west of BARCS. A more consecutive line for 2 Pz Army would appear to run from BALATON near 10 to 20 Kms East of NAGYKANIZSA and thence down to the river. [illegible] in the South have no doubt dictated the choice

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The enemy has succeeded in stabilising the front between BALATON and the DRAVA along a line running South from incl KERASZTUR, through MIKE A 74 to East of BARCS. A more economical line for 2 Pz Army would appear to run from BALATON some 15 to 20 Kms East of NAGYKANIZSA and thence down to the DRAVA. However, events in the South have no doubt dictated the choice of ground to Gen [illegible].

In JUGOSLAVIA Army Group E's painful withdrawal from SERBIA and BOSNIA has been further endangered by the Russian bridgehead extending from BARCS to MOHACVIN, across the DRAV. If, as appears probable, the Red Army extends its drive to BROD, it will force Gen LÖHR's Army Group (E) to fight its way out to the N.W. through Central BOSNIA, a country strongly held by the Partisans and now in the grip of winter. The whole withdrawal movement hinges on the speed of 21 Mtn Corps' extrication from its precarious situation in [illegible]. Only slight progress has been made by this Corps during the past week. Splitting forces at MATESEVO, the column taking the Northern route is stated to have reached KOLASIN (a mile or two further North), while progress along the Eastern loop was held up just short of ANDRIJEVICA. One column from 22 Inf Div, pushing down from BIJELO POLJE has arrived at

....FURTHER where fighting.....

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KNIN where fighting is taking place; the other, the main relief column, using the more direct MOJKOVAC road, is held up just South of that town. The speed of this withdrawal is, it appears, dependant on the amount of bridging equipment at the disposal of the enemy. Partisan activity, inclement weather and R.A.F. strafing have all taken toll of the tired enemy whose losses are believed to be considerable. The Partisans are following up the enemy withdrawal and causing considerable rearguards to become involved in costly fighting. SPUZ M 97 and TUZI M 05 have been evacuated by the enemy and an unconfirmed report says that TITO's forces have entered PODGORICA. In the meantime the eventual escape corridor of 21 Corps is being whittled down to a long narrow salient. UZICE C 61 and LJUBOVIJA C 55 are now in Partisan hands and ZVORNIK is stated to be under Partisan attacks. The only Northward routes available therefore are that to SARAJEVO via VISEGRAD or failing that via GORAZDE B 90. Both roads are flanked by strong Partisan forces and each has a number of river crossings, which may at this stage present greater difficulties than the Partisans.

In DALMATIA the Partisans have scored further successes following the fall of KNIN. SUKOVICI P 62, R.C.C P 42 and the road through MEDAK to exclusive GOSPIC have been captured and Partisan sources report the fall of SPB P 63 as imminent. 15 Mtn Corps, responsible for this sector, has to cope with extended supply lines running back to the ZAGREB-BRCD railway, a task accordingly beyond its capabilities and manpower, and it is reported that 188 Res Mtn Div with constituents astride the neck of the Istrian peninsula has been called upon to aid the depleted forces at the disposal of the Corps. The despatch of the Bde of 188 Res Mtn Regt from FIUME to SENJ J 70 will enable a like force of 392 Legion Div or SENJ to be switched against the Partisans to the Southeast. However, even with 188 Res Mtn Div extending its sphere of responsibility so far South as SENJ, the forces of 15 Mtn Corps would still appear inadequate, as reports continue to arrive of Cossacks moving out of the Corps area from the SISAK-ZAGREB sector to the North.

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(A.E. Wrigley)

BRIGADIER,
G.S.(I).

G.S.I.
HQ. 15 Army Group,
19 Dec 44.

NOTE:- At Appendix "A" is the Daily Journal of a Partisan Leader.

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In DALMATIA the Partisans have scored further successes following the fall of KNIN. SUCEVICI P 62, [illegible] and the road through SENJ to exclusive GOSPIC have been captured and Partisan sources report the fall of SRB P 63 as imminent. 15 Mtn Corps, responsible for this sector, has to cope with extended supply lines running back to the ZAGREB-BROD railway, a task accordingly beyond its capabilities and manpower, and it is reported that 138 Res Mtn Div with commitments astride the neck of the Istrian peninsula has been called upon to aid the depleted forces at the disposal of the Corps. The despatch of the Bns of 138 Res Mtn Regt from FIUME to SENJ J 70 will enable a like force of 392 Legion Div at SENJ to be switched against the Partisans to the Southeast. However, even with 138 Res Mtn Div extending its sphere of responsibility as far South as SENJ, the forces of 15 Mtn Corps would still appear inadequate, as reports continue to arrive of Cossacks moving out of the Corps area from the SISAK-ZAGREB sector to the North.

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C.R.Morrison

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

G.S.I.
HQ. 15 Army Group,
19 Dec 44.

NOTE:- At Appendix "A" is the Diary/Journal of a German Gardsman.

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Append "A" to I. . 15 Army Group
Intelligence Bulletin No. 40 About
19 Dec 44.

DIARY-JOURNAL OF A GERMAN TANKMAN

It is not known whether HANS HAUCK, tankman of the 11th Panzer Division, is a soldier by nature or developed into one out of necessity; but in his diary-journal covering the 7½ years of his army life there is no spirit of rebellion, no references to what else he might have been doing. He is a member of the German Army, a private, a corporal, and then a serjeant. He is a tankman and his horizon is bounded by what he sees or can hit from his tank. Tank warfare is a professional specialty which he is proud to master.

In this diary, as remarkable for what it doesn't say as for what it does, is reflected neither a HITLER fanatic nor a HITLER critic; the author stands rather as a matter-of-fact, unsentimental, hard-fighting German, out to do his duty whatever that may cost him. In the short description of 7½ years of Army life, years fraught with combat, hardships and dangers, there is not one word of complaint or a single expression of weariness.

The diary begins with mention of his labour service which HAUCK passed through from April to October, 1937. "Then right into the Army. After a tough training period the first expansion, entrance into the SUDETENLAND. Christmas 38 I was made a Corporal and on 30 September 39 our service time was up. But by that time the war had started."

In June 1940 HAUCK "finally" was sent to FRANCE where he saw but little action. His unit returned to GERMANY and HAUCK was promoted to Sergeant and made an instructor of weapons.

In January 1943 HAUCK was transferred to the 3rd Company of the 15th Panzer Regiment and after training in FRANCE with the newest German tank, the Panther, and a talk to the men by GUDERIAN, HAUCK's battalion, "GERMANY's first Panther battalion", makes a blitz move to RUSSIA. "On 5 July 43 the battle at and around BJELGOROD. We are in support of the division GROSSDEUTSCHLAND... I experienced the first Russian bombing attack. The bombs are not particularly well aimed. They fall 200 metres away. Artillery firing at us falls a few hundred metres short. Also for the first time I experience the fire of the so-called Russian "STALINORGEL" — It is similar to our NEBELWERFER. We receive reports that our first wave has destroyed 8 American tanks (Type Pilot) out of a total of 8. [illegible] the next day HAUCK's tank was put out of action by a direct artillery hit but he was unhurt. "Even the oldest tankfox said that the days at BJELGOROD we e not cosy. We lost many good comrades. We gained ground slowly, but lost tank after tank. Therefore we started to retreat after . weeks. "

Twice during action on some 10 Russian battlefields HAUCK's unit was trapped by the Russians for 3 days but managed each time to escape. During the time HAUCK destroyed 2 enemy tanks when his semi-disabled vehicle was attacked by 10 of the enemy, rammed the Russ One [illegible] and [illegible]

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Twice during action on some 10 Russian battlefields HAUCK's unit was trapped by the Russians for 3 days but managed each time to escape. During the time HAUCK destroyed 2 enemy tanks when his semi-disabled vehicle was attacked by 10 of the enemy, received the Iron Cross, did not abandon his tank when it got stuck in No-Man's Land but stayed with it for a whole night until he was pulled out.

"In January 44 -- I had just received the silver tank medal -- I get into a tank, and right away we are trapped by the Russians again. 3 days without food, ammunition or gas. In one day I finished off 3 tanks, my highest score so far. Finally we succeed in breaking through, my tank has to be hauled ..."

During a furlough taken at this time HAUCK records nothing except that fact although he takes note of almost everything he sees and experiences on the field of battle. He rejoins his unit as his battalion CO was leading it out of the Russian lines, and notes in his diary that "on the day when the troops were free again, Major v. L. found the hero's death as a result of a direct bombing hit. "

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During the middle of June 1944 his Division, the 11th Panzer Division, is moved to FRANCE, and the diarist recorded "a wonderful trip through the Balkans ... GERMANY ... FRANCE to BORDEAUX. " When the Americans landed in South of FRANCE his division, which had been stationed in the TOULOUSE - CARCASSONE area, was shipped to NIMES, but HAUCK had to go by road through villages occupied by "terrorists" and crossed the Rhone by ferry in the fire of American planes. But though his tank was damaged and had to be blown up for lack of spare parts the emotional balance of Sgt HAUCK appeared unaffected. "The next day terrific artillery and mortar fire begins behind MONTPELLIER... Broken vehicles and dead everywhere. Our vehicles were sent singly through the fire. Those who were lucky got through. We were lucky. "

At BELFORT, HAUCK is delighted to hear people say that his division, the Ghost Division, has destroyed 3 American divisions and has enabled a whole army to withdraw to the Reich. "In an American order of the day it says that the 11 Pz Div is an Elite Div which will fight very hard."

Concerning the German Army in the South of FRANCE Sgt HAUCK then records, "The Southern Army has not covered itself with glory. They had become soft in FRANCE...Those airforce and marine soldiers only wanted to live well and to go home when the first shots were fired..."

Concerning American tanks (mostly Shermans) he writes that they fear the Panther and evade it. Otherwise, the Sherman is a sneaky car with rubber treads, a so-called road tank of 28 tons and a rather quiet engine. But he shows great respect for American guns.

On 10 October 1944 HAUCK, who has been in reserve near [illegible]BURG for lack of tanks "finally...can get into a Panther again". The next day he is in action, defending a village the Americans are trying to take. The fire he encounters is so heavy that he cannot get out of his vehicle. "This morning I occupied a new position. Lt S. was killed by a shot in his head. Today we have also received a good deal of lead. The Americans have sent thousands of shells into the village, not a single house is intact."

The last entry was made on 15 October, when HAUCK says, "Yesterday we had another interesting day and an exciting night. During the night our artillery and mortars did quite a bit of shooting too, so the Americans asked for a truce to take care of the dead and wounded. This truce was of some advantage for us also because we could get out of the tank. The crew had already assumed subterine habits, heavy beards, not washed for days, we looked like escaped convicts, dirty, torn, but we stand. The Americans have not gained an inch of ground during the last days despite their material superiority."

(Extracted from Twelfth Army Group Weekly Intelligence Summary No 14, dated 15 November, 44.)

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The last entry was made on 13 October, when HAUCK says, "Yesterday we had another interesting day and an exciting night. During the night our artillery and mortars did quite a bit of shooting too, so the Americans asked for a truce to take care of the dead and wounded. This truce was of some advantage for us also because we could get out of the tank. The crew had already assumed submarine habits, heavy beards, not washed for days, we looked like escaped convicts, dirty, torn, but we stand. The Americans have not gained an inch of ground during the last days despite their material superiority."

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H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO.39

OF 12 DEC, 1944.

1. ENEMY SITUATION

On the 8 Army front the enemy is at the moment in process of being thrown back off yet another river line. After an unsuccessful attempt to establish a bridgehead across the LAMONE on the 5th in the area N.W. of RUSSI (the enemy counter-attacked strongly with S.P. guns and drove us back East of the river) two attacks were launched on the night 10/11 Dec and by the following morning we were firmly on the West bank of the LAMONE. One of these attacks went in N.W. of RUSSI where the previous attempt had failed and by first light had pushed 114 Recce Unit back behind the FOSSO VECCHIO, a canal some 2,000 yards East of RAGNACAVALLO. The other bridgehead was made about 5,000 yards to the North and quickly captured VILLANOVA M 4541 from 741 Jaeger Regt and seized the bridge at 428398 intact. Counter-attacks later in the day by 190 Recce Unit, assisted by some 5-6 Tigers, against the right wing of this bridgehead in the area M 4542 were repulsed and by nightfall the enemy was West of the FOSSO VECCHIO between the 37 and 42 Northings. The day's fighting brought us in some 300 prisoners from 114 and 356 Divs.

Whereas the enemy appeared to be expecting the first attack over the LAMONE on 5 Dec, the crossing on the right of the 10th seems to have taken him unawares as is evidenced by the large number of prisoners and the capture intact of the bridge. The only reserves the enemy apparently had in this area, apart from internal battalion ones, were 190 Recce Unit and some Tigers. On the other hand, between the 8 - 10 Dec 90 P.G. Div (less its Recce Unit) moved from general reserve North and East of BOLOGNA into the line S.W. of FAENZA, thus indicating that the enemy was expecting a renewal of attacks in this area where the whole of the West bank of the LAMONE was already in Allied hands.

90 P.G. Div started getting ready to intervene on the 5th, but for the next few days it was content to play a watching role, during which time 305 Div was engaged in fairly heavy fighting S.W. of FAENZA. The enemy evidently decided that 305 Div was getting worn down in a battle of attrition and with 26 Pz Div on Route 9 still weak after its defeat on the GEMMANO Line, he brought 90 P.G. Div down hurriedly and committed it between the two tired divisions. 90 P.G. Div's entry into the battle was as dramatic as on the two previous occasions on which it has been rushed into the line - on the GEMMANO ridge S.W. of RIMINI and at M. GRANDE. Using about four battalions supported by tanks and S.P. guns, 90 P.G. launched a series of violent counter-attacks on the 9th, designed probably to knock the Allies off their balance just as they were building up for a renewal of the offensive and if possible hoping to gain a spectacular victory by throwing them back across the LAMONE. The attack progressed some 400 yards South of CASA 2724 but elsewhere failed to gain any important ground

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90 P.G. Div has therefore taken over most of 305 Div's front, and the latter has 577 G.R. and probably 576 G.R. as well in reserve. At the same time 715 Div, now back on the GESSO ridge, has shifted part of its weight further East and II Bn 725 G.R. is now on M. INCISA M 1718 with both bns of 1028 G.R. on its left stretching at least as far as the 21 Easting. It is too early to say whether the intention is to take 305 Div out of the line completely, but the fact that it was mentioned in the German Communiqué of the 8th Dec suggests, if previous experience is any pointer, that it has had fairly heavy casualties and may be earmarked for a rest. At the moment,

....however, such.....

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however, such units as it has out of the line are the only immediate reserves available to be switched North to the BACNACAVALLO area, should 114 and 356 Divs find themselves in trouble.

On the rest of the front apart from active patrolling, in which 1 Para Div was to the fore, and the usual flow of Italian deserters which reached a peak with 91 in the 24 hours ending 1500 hours 8 Dec, there was little ground activity of note. The relief of 29 P.G. Div, forecast for the first week of December by an intelligent prisoner captured late in November, has however been effected. On the 6th a prisoner was taken from 1059 G.R. who said that the rest of 362 Div had moved into the area South of BOLOGNA preparatory to taking over a sector in the line. Since then 1060 G.R. has been identified well inside 29 P.G. Div sector on the 92 Easting. There has been no contact at all with 29 P.G. since the 6th and it can be assumed that it is resting North of BOLOGNA. A prisoner statement that the third regt of 362 Div - 956 G.R. - had come in to the West of 1059 G.R. is interesting, and taken in conjunction with the finding of two bodies from 362 Fusilier Bn as far West as L 8632 would imply that some units of 362 Div have also moved into 65 Div sector. It would be surprising if the enemy were to take 65 Div as well as 29 P.G. out of the line and hand over the vital route 65 sector to a single Div - and a division which though recently reformed has not a very high fighting reputation - but such a possibility cannot be altogether ignored: III Bn 4 Para Regt lost prisoners at L 9732, which is further East than we have previously had parachutists, and as a result 42 Jaeger Div may also have sidestepped slightly West into the old 29 P.G. Div sector, reducing the area to be taken over by 362 Div. In addition 4 Para Div with only one regt in the line has for long been on a narrow front, but now both 11 and 12 Para Regts are forward it may have extended slightly Eastwards into 65 Div sector. This reshuffle, if it has in fact taken place, might enable both 29 and 65 Divs to go out of the line and at the same time leave 362 Div with a sector of reasonable width. Even then the withdrawal of two divisions from the line South of BOLOGNA would imply that the enemy regarded an attack by 5 Army as unlikely for the moment: there is no evidence that such is his appreciation and pending further information it is wiser to carry 65 Div still in the line though on a narrow front with probably only one regiment forward.

In North West ITALY most of 157 Mtn Div is now believed to have left, and its place along the frontier has been taken by LITTORIO and 5 Mtn, with an Alpine Regt of the former in the AOSTA Valley and 100 Mtn Regt in the area of Mt CENIS pass. In the old 5 Mtn Div sector 85 Mtn Regt is in the M.S. GENEVRE area South to the PELLICE River while the rest of LITTORIO appears to have moved into the CUNEO area with responsibilities on the Col de la MADELEINE. 34 Div remains unchanged in the Southern part of the Alps. In N.E. ITALY Mountain troops have been reported arriving - on 24 Nov a detachment had reached the area South of UDINE from PIEDMONT and more troops were reported arriving in the UDINE area in early December. This must be 157 Mtn Div, and from these reports it appears to be taking over the sector vacated by 71 Div bounded roughly by UDINE - GORIZIA - exclusive TRIESTE - MONFALCONE - LATISANA. 71 Div has now been identified by the Russians near Lake BALATON and is struck off the strength of Army Group C. This reduces the strength of Kesselring's command to 26 German divisions plus Cossacks in N.E. ITALY in strength of about a division. It is unlikely that the departure of the 71st [illegible]
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.....2. WESTERN FRONT.....

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2. WESTERN FRONT

The pattern of the fighting has not changed materially since last week and resistance continues stubborn in the critical sectors of AACHEN, the SAAR Valley and the KARLSRUHE gap. In the South 19 Army has been further compressed on COLMAR in spite of spirited opposition and frequent counter-attacks especially in the SELESTAT and THANN areas. The loss of SELESTAT, however, threatens to release the Northern jaw of the trap and endanger the Army's whole position West of the RHINE. It is not surprising therefore that, in spite of an order by HITLER demanding valour rather than discretion, there are already many indications pointing to a general withdrawal to the safer side of the river. Nevertheless we may expect to see the retreat marked by the skilful obstinacy characteristic of the Germans in such situations, with every Allied advance within the pocket stiffly contested and every threat to the COLMAR- BREISACH escape route fiercely counter-attacked.

North of STRASBOURG, in the HAGENAU area, the enemy has shown considerable sensitivity in face of our advance which holds the double threat of turning his whole position in the SAAR Valley and of forcing the KARLSRUHE gap. But, though sensitive, he has not proved strong enough to halt us. BISCHWILLER, NIEDERSCHOEN and REICHSHOFFEN have fallen and finally, after a week's hard fighting, the capture of HAGENAU has opened the last approaches to the Siegfried Line in this area. In the SAARBRUCKEN sector the loss of SARREUNION led to a substantial advance which has brought us to a line from ROHRBACH to SAARGEMUND. Here, as at SAARLAUTERN and DILLINGEN, the enemy has made repeated attempts to drive us from our bridgeheads East of the SAAR river, but has nothing to show for his pains.

The EIFEL sector has had another peaceful week while further North in the COLOGNE sector the rate of our advance has been slowed down - but by no means stopped - by increasingly bitter opposition as we close up to the ROER River. Our attacks in the HURTGEN forest area continue to threaten the enemy's flank and wear down his strength. In the AACHEN sector the area of flooding between the WAAL and the Lower RHINE has grown during the past week. Whether the enemy's immediate intentions here are aggressive or purely defensive, is not yet clear, but certainly the flooding reflects his continued fear of an attempt to turn his right flank and encircle the RUHR from the North.

The problem facing the enemy has not changed, nor is it nearer to its solution. The rate of his casualties is still much higher than he can afford. And though he has been able to reduce the rate of our progress in the North, it is only at the expense of the Centre and South. He cannot simultaneously make up his current casualties and build up trained reserves strong enough to hold us all along the front. He is living on capital and sooner or later bankruptcy is inevitable.

3. HUNGARY AND THE BALKANS

In Northern HUNGARY fierce fighting has taken place throughout the week in the MISKOLC sector. Little progress has been made, but the

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In Northern HUNGARY fierce fighting has taken place throughout the week in the MISKOLC sector. Little progress has been made, but the Russians consolidated their previous gains by advancing some 5 miles along the railway leading North from the city.

Events to the North of the Hungarian capital have taken a new and dramatic turn and threaten to outshine the victories reported elsewhere by Marshal TOLBUKHIN. Marshal MALINOVSKY in a drive from the direction of HATVAN reached and captured VACS on the DANUBE, and striking North is reported to have reached the Slovakian frontier on a 15 mile front beyond HALASZGYARMAT H 78. BUDAPEST, now surrounded from North, South and East, is facing the final phase of its period of German domination. Russian spearheads were 3 miles away to the North on the 10th while to the Northwest our Allies have reached to within 10 miles of the city. Roumanian troops are reported to be in the fore - and no better incentive could be offered to them than the capture of the Hungarian capital.

.....The Russian.....

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The Russian breakthrough in Southern HUNGARY has been further explicited. By 8 Dec the whole of the Southern shore of Lake BALATON was reported clear of enemy and a further crossing of the DANUBE South of BUDAPEST had been effected. Advancing N.E. from BALATON our Allies linked up in the area of Lake VELENCEI and are now threatening the important communications centre of SZEKES-FEHERVAR. The capture of this latter town would open up for the Russians one of the best routes to VIENNA. There is evidence that the enemy has hastily strengthened this sector, and our report states that the HUNYADI Armd S.S. Div is being hastily organised in the VARPALOTA D 89 area. This Div is composed of young Hungarian evacuees from TRANSYLVANIA.

Meanwhile, the enemy on the DRAVA flank has been given no respite. The Russians crossed the river Southeast of BARCS on the 9th and claim to hold a substantial bridgehead. BARCS is firmly in Russian hands and unconfirmed reports state that VIROVITICA F 69 and SLATINA F 88 have fallen to our Allies thereby still further increasing the quandary of Army Group E.

To the Southeast fierce fighting is taking place in the SREM, centred on the Russian bridgehead at VUKOVAR X 18. German communiqués claim they have virtually eliminated the Russian forces to the N.E. of the city but the Russians and Partisans are advancing N.W. along the railway on VINKOVCI X 18 which they claim to be threatening. The capture of VINKOVCI by our Allies would render the German positions in VUKOVAR, and indeed the whole pocket from OSIJEK down the DANUBE to SOTIN, untenable.

The withdrawal of the tired forces of Army Group E is indeed a fighting one. 21 Mtn Corps in MONTENEGRO, is suffering afflictions in the shape of Partisan pressure and inclement weather. SALONIKA H 75 was evacuated by Army Group E and promptly occupied by the Partisans and Bulgars. The tail, composed of forces from 91 Corps, appears to still have some sting as the evacuation was carried out almost without hindrance from the Partisans. However, each strongpoint given up by this force increases the threat to the forces trapped in MONTENEGRO. It remains somewhat problematical if the drive initiated by 21 Mtn Corps up the LIM Valley and the relief column of 91 Corps pushing down the MOJKOVAC - MATESEVO road can effect a junction in time to rescue the former force. Whatever the fate of troops concerned, they are unlikely to get out all their heavy equipment and AT, much of which will have been blocked by the destruction of bridges over the swollen rivers. A gap of some 10 miles is stated to still separate the two forces, between which lie the Partisans, subject to the fire of both.

Lt.Gen MUELLER, former C.C.O. GREECE, is reported to be commanding a Corps in the ZVORNIK area composed of 7 S.S. Prinz Eugen Mtn Div, 104 Jg Div and elements of another Div, presumably 11 C.A.F. Div.

4. At AppendIx 'A' is a report on "Allied Air Attack on German Oil Resources.

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4. At Appendix 'A' is a report on "Allied Air Attack on German Oil Resources.

C E R Mirick

GSI(a).
HQ A.A.I.
12 Dec 44.

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

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Appendix 'A' to HQ AAF
Intelligence Notes No. 39
dated 12 Dec 44.

ALLIED AIR ATTACK ON GERMAN OIL RESOURCES

The overall German shortage of petroleum products is well known. In ITALY the enemy has been able to "get by" only by the strictest economy measures and the maximum use of rail facilities. A captured order from Headquarters 10 Army dated 27 August, 1944, directed a 60 per cent cut in fuel consumption and presumably a similar reduction applies to all other formations in ITALY. There have been many reports of various economy measures, a recent example being a Tac/R report on 10 Dec of a number of MT moving in groups of three, the lead vehicle towing the other two in each case; a similar practice has been reported in FRANCE.

The current enemy overall position is briefly set forth in the following extract from A.F.H.Q. Weekly Intelligence Summary of 20 November:

" The enemy European oil situation at the end of September may be summarised as follows (the 'normal output' (100%) represents production figures prior to the comprehensive Allied bombing of oil targets in enemy Europe which started in April):

	Metric Tons per Month	
Pre-raid normal output of finished products	1,344,000	(100%)
Estimated production in August	526,000	(39%)
September	314,000	(23.5%)
October	436,000	(32%)
November	616,000	(46.1%).

" Revised estimates of the output of principal refined products in October and November are summarised below:

	Per cent of Pre-raid Normal Output	
	October	November
Gasoline	31.5	50
Kerosine	18	25
Gas/Diesel oils	38.5	60
Fuel oils	38	41.5
Lube oils	24	32
	32.5%	46% "

The above figures speak for themselves, but what they imply in terms of Allied strategic air effort is perhaps not quite so well known. Thus the following [illegible]

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	32.5%	46% "

The above figures speak for themselves, but what they imply in terms of Allied strategic air effort is perhaps not quite so well known. Thus the following unclassified report (extracted from RAF Air Intelligence Weekly Summary of 4 December) by an R.A.F. Squadron Leader, recently broadcast by B.B.C., on how this reduction of German petroleum-products production has been accomplished is of interest:

" I want to say something tonight about the building by the Germans of an important oil industry in Europe and about our present campaign to destroy that industry again from the air.

" You'll remember that in the first year of the war many an optimistic article was written proving, with many a fact and figure, that Germany couldn't really be a serious menace because she simply didn't command the necessary oil to sustain a modern war. The facts and figures were all very impressive and nobody seemed to be able to contradict them. How then has Germany in fact been able to sustain five years of world war? Where has she found the oil to do it?

" She has done it in three ways. First, she has built about two dozen enormous synthetic oil plants. These plants turn a part of Germany's ample coal supplies into fuel oil and petrol. At the beginning of this year they were turning out enough

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oil to meet about forty per cent of Germany's needs; but that wasn't enough; where did the other sixty per cent come from: It came from two sources: first from the conquered Roumanian oil fields, and second - and this is the thing which I don't think many people have realised - from several new oil fields which the Germans had discovered in their own territory.

" The fact is that just before the war the Germans had struck oil on a considerable scale in the Reich itself. Then they found impressive oil deposits in both Austria and in Hungary. When we re-discover Central Europe we shall find that it has become a considerable new oil producing area. That's a new fact in the economic geography of the world.

" These three sources of oil, the great synthetics, the Roumanian oil field and the newly discovered wells of Central Europe were between them giving the Nazis over a million-and-a-quarter tons of oil a month at the beginning of this year. That was probably just about enough for their needs. But it wasn't by any means ample; the Germans were still after more oil; for instance, the strategy of their 1942 campaign in Russia was probably distorted by the need to break through to the huge oil sources of the Caucasus. Without them the Nazis can never have felt really happy and secure about their oil position. All the same, an output of a million-and-a-quarter tons a month was a most remarkable achievement. It was the fuel basis for the Nazis drive for world empire.

" Why did we let all this happen? Why did we let the Nazis build their huge synthetic plants, sink their new oil wells and build their refineries? It's true that you can't effectively bomb oil wells themselves; but you can bomb the refineries without which the output of the wells themselves is useless. Why then didn't we switch our air attack on to oil four years ago, as many people were always saying that we should?

" The answer is perfectly simple; we tried to do so and found we couldn't. In 1940 and 1941 R.A.F. Bomber Command, which was then the only bombing force in the field, made experimental attacks on several of the big synthetic oil plants such as the two Gelsenkirchen plants in the Ruhr for instance. But we soon found that we had neither the forces nor the operational technique to do them serious harm. In those days small precise targets such as oil plants were difficult to find. When they were found they couldn't be hit hard enough to get them out of action for long enough to matter; it wasn't the lack of will but the lack of means, which stopped us bombing oil in 1941.

" In the years that followed, two major developments in air warfare took place. First and foremost the American day heavies, the Fortresses and Liberators, with their attendant long-distance fighters, appeared in the skies of Europe; and, second, R.A.F. Bomber Command acquired the new scientific instruments, and learned the operational technique, needed to attack precise targets at night. Both these things had to happen before the two bomber forces could go for oil.

" Even then we couldn't start out on oil straight away. All this time the Nazis were not idle either. When, two years ago, the Forts and Liberators first cost their shadows on German soil, the Nazi leaders saw the red light; they began building defensive fighters on an altogether new scale. The leaders of the American Air Forces weren't unaware of this; they saw that if the Germans were allowed to carry through their huge program for mass producing single-engine fighters - literally on a scale such as the world had never known it [illegible]

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happy and secure about their oil position. All the same, an output of a million-and-a-quarter tons a month was a most remarkable achievement. It was the fuel basis for the Nazis drive for world empire.

" Why did we let all this happen? Why did we let the Nazis build their huge synthetic plants, sink their new oil wells and build their refineries? It's true that you can't effectively bomb oil wells themselves; but you can bomb the refineries without which the output of the wells themselves is useless. Why then didn't we switch our air attack on to oil four years ago, as many people were always saying that we should?

" The answer is perfectly simple; we tried to do so and found we couldn't. In 1940 and 1941 R...F. Bomber Command, which was then the only bombing force in the field, made experimental attacks on several of the big synthetic oil plants such as the two Goldenkirchen plants in the Ruhr for instance. But we soon found that we had neither the forces nor the operational technique to do them serious harm. In those days small precise targets such as oil plants were difficult to find. When they were found they couldn't be hit hard enough to put them out of action for long enough to matter; it wasn't the lack of will but the lack of means, which stopped us bombing oil in 1941.

" In the years that followed, two major developments in air warfare took place. First and foremost the American day heavies, the Fortresses and Liberators, with their attendant long-distance fighters, appeared in the skies of Europe; and, second, R...F. Bomber Command acquired the new scientific instruments, and learned the operational technique, needed to attack precise targets at night. Both these things had to happen before the two bomber forces could go for oil.

" Even then we couldn't start out on oil straight away. All this time the Nazis were not idle either. When, two years ago, the Forts and Liberators first cast their shadow on German soil, the Nazi leaders saw the red light; they began building defensive fighters on an altogether new scale. The leaders of the American Air Forces weren't unaware of this; they saw that if the Germans were allowed to carry through their huge program for mass producing single-engine fighters - literally on a scale such as the world had never seen - it might never be possible to strike at the vitals of Germany by daylight. And so the first task of the Forts and Liberators, before they could go for oil or anything else, was to strike down the rising defensive power of the German Air Force itself. For nine grim months, from about July 1943 to March 1944, the 8th and 15th American Air Forces went for the German fighter assembly plants, and the American escort fighters fought huge battles over the Reich. At all costs they had to nip the menace of the Germans' vast new fighter program in the bud.

" That struggle culminated in a spell of exceptionally clear weather in the final week of last February. In that week the Americans bombed almost every one of the basic German fighter assembly plants. The work of that week, and of all the other attacks on their aircraft industry, didn't prevent the Germans from turning out fighters. On the contrary, by a remarkable effort of dispersion they have managed

to maintain ...../

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to maintain a very considerable output. But what those attacks did do was to decide the balance of air power. They were decisive in the sense that never again has there been any doubt that the American day heavies could penetrate into every part of Central Europe. Those attacks meant that for the past six months American air power has been decisively ahead of the German defence.

" No sooner was that issue decided than it became essential to choose the next objective for attack. Air superiority had been won; the great question was how to use it? It's been used in two ways. In the first place air superiority has made possible the invasion of Europe by our land and sea forces; second, and hardly less important, it has made possible, at last, a sustained and concerted attack on Germany's oil resources. In April of this year that attack began.

" The two great American air forces of day, precision bombers - the 8th and the 15th - have played the predominant part in the campaign against oil. In the case of the 15th, based in Italy, we now know exactly what they achieved, for when the Russian troops captured Ploesti and so captured the Roumanian refineries they found that the output of Roumanian oil had been reduced to under a quarter of what it had been four months before. Thus the magnificent work of the 15th had meant that the Germans suffered the crippling loss of the bulk of their Roumanian oil as early as April and May.

" The Eighth U.S. Air Force, from this country, has taken as its specialty the synthetic plants of Central Germany - such as Louna, Brux and Pölitz. Each of these plants is an industrial monster, several square miles in extent. Many hundreds of tons of bombs must strike such a monster, not once but again and again, before it's finally put out of action. And many hundreds of tons are striking them.

"But the Americans have been the first to recognise that Bomber Command of the R.A.F. has proved able to play surprisingly large part in the attack on oil. In the early months of this year, Bomber Command proved that they had developed a new capacity to hit precise targets such as oil plants at night. Bomber Command can now find them with their instruments, light them with their flares, mark them with their target indicators, and hit them with their bombs. The most important synthetic oil plants of the Ruhr, were first put out of action in a series of successful night precision attacks during the early months of this summer. But with the advance of our Armies a new development has occurred. We can now give fighter cover to Bomber Command over the Ruhr, and in recent weeks the Ruhr plants have been attacked by R.A.F. Lancasters and Halifaxes in the middle of the day. Such day precision bombing of German targets is an entirely new development for Bomber Command, and it is a remarkable tribute to the versatility of the crews that they have been able to make a success of it.

"What have been the results of going for oil this summer? First a word of warning. We must not imagine that a particular day will dawn on which every German tank and lorry and car will stop dead in its tracks because its petrol tank has run dry, and every German aircraft will fall out of the sky! In real life things don't happen like that. I repeat that one of the greatest errors that we can make is to look at any one attack which we are making on the enemy by itself, because no one attack will [illegible]

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"What have been the results of going for oil this summer? First a word of warning. We must not imagine that a particular day will dawn on which every German tank and lorry and car will stop dead in its tracks because its petrol tank has run dry, and every German aircraft will fall out of the sky. In real life things don't happen like that. I repeat that one of the greatest errors that we can make is to look at any one attack which we are making on the enemy by itself, because no one attack will win this war. What will win it is the air attack on oil, plus the ground attack on the German armies, plus the bombing of the German cities, plus the naval blockade, plus every other form of attack which all the Allies are making on the enemy. But having said that we can already state some very positive and definite results from our attack on oil.

"Last month the enemy managed to produce only a small proportion of the oil fuel which he produced in March, before our attacks began. I mustn't tell you how small that proportion was: but I can assure you that it was so small that it will cripple the enemy's whole war effort, if only his oil output can be kept down for a few months more. Already, hardly a drop of oil is being used in German war industry. Every industrial lorry and truck runs on one of those clumsy producer gas gadgets, with all the loss of efficiency which that entails. But we also know from captured documents that actual German military operations at the fronts, both on the ground and in the air, are already being gravely handicapped for lack of oil.

.... "Unquestionably, if...../

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"Unquestionably, if only we can prevent the recovery of his oil industry, there will come a point when the work of the German Panzer Divisions and the German Air Fleets will be so crippled for lack of fuel that they won't be able to withstand the pressure of the Allied Forces. I say "if we can prevent a recovery", because you mustn't for a moment suppose that the German oil production which we had destroyed by last month will stay destroyed, if we leave it alone. On the contrary, the Nazis are making the most extreme efforts to repair and rebuild their plants. They have now gone to the lengths of building permanent "repair camps" alongside the major synthetic oil plants, so that each time they are bombed the repair squads can rush into the plants almost before the smoke has cleared. Therefore the job ahead of the Allied Air Forces, the job of keeping down the Nazi oil industry, will be almost as big and difficult as the job of crippling that industry, the job they have done this summer. The struggle goes on! Much has still to be done, but more and more in the air, as on the ground, the balance tilts our way.

"After the war, the 1944 attack on German oil supplies will be studied as the first major air attack, with adequate resources, upon the economic vitals of an enemy power."

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SECRET

COPY NO 83

G.H.Q. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 38

OF 5 DEC. 1944

1. ENEMY SITUATION

On the Adriatic sector the week has seen a steady but stubbornly opposed advance Northwards between the MONTONE and LAMONE rivers which ended on 4 Dec when the enemy evacuated RAVENNA. Just in time to avoid being cut off there. For the early part of the week we were opposed by 356 Div which had all its three regiments strung out between the rivers on a front running East and West. On the night 2/3 Dec however, 356 Div pulled back behind the LAMONE, the HEINRICH line as it appears to be named, leaving 741 Regt of 114 Jaeger Div, together with the Div Recce Bn, to oppose our Northward advance. They fought stubbornly for RUSSI and S. PANCRAZIO (M 4631) but by the night of 2 Dec they were back on the canal LI CANALI. At this point it became too dangerous to hold RAVENNA and 721 Jaeger Regt pulled out, leaving the city clear by morning of 4 Dec. Where 721 Regt has gone to is not exactly known but 741 Regt, according to a captured map, should be back behind the LAMONE by now, between route 16 and the railway, and presumably 721 Regt will also have swung into position, prolonging 76 Corps flank to the VALLI DI COMACCHIO.

In the meantime an Allied bridgehead has been formed across the LAMONE South of FAENZA in 305 Div's area. The West bank of the LAMONE is now clear as far North as the 21 Northing, though the country is difficult and our advance fast is being strongly opposed. This advance does much to nullify the effect of the other main enemy modification of the front, a withdrawal of 715 Div and the right flank of 305 Div to the VIA EMILIA, a steep escarpment facing South which runs in a continuous line from FOSSOLUNGO, M 0825, to join the high ground above BRISIGHELLA, M 2117. This enemy withdrawal was voluntary, contrary to his usual custom, and was accompanied by thorough demolition of roads South of the escarpment. The shortening of the line thus achieved has enabled the enemy to carry out some readjustments. 305 Div has shifted its weight slightly North, to just South of FAENZA, enabling 26 Pz Div, which is still possibly suffering from its defeat on the GOTHIC line, to concentrate on route 9. 715 Div has extended its front as shown by the identification of II Bn 1028 G.R. on Monte RINALDO, M 4023. An interesting point is that, according to an intelligent prisoner from 305 Div, 577 G.R. has again been withdrawn into Corps reserve, which seems to point to a decision not to reinforce 76 Corps at present but leave it to manage as best it can with its present resources.

On the rest of the front the enemy showed some aggressiveness at the beginning of the week and by strong attacks succeeded in recapturing CASERINO M 3933 and Monte BELVEDERE. After this spurt of

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On the rest of the front the enemy showed some aggressiveness at the beginning of the week end by strong attacks succeeded in recapturing C.STELLANO, M 9933 and Monte RELVEDERE. After this spurt of energy he has reverted quiet and contented himself with what look like routine reliefs in 42 Jaeger, 29 P.G. and 1 Para Divs. The last named now has all three regiments represented in the line. 29 P.G. Div, according to a deserter, is expecting to be relieved between 4 and 10 Dec and, after a three weeks rest in the CERRO area (L 8574) to move to 76 Corps to relieve 26 Pz Div.

From Northern ITALY there is little to report though 162 Div's drive against the Partisans has started. On the French frontier the VARESE Bn of LITTORIO has relieved troops of 157 Div in the VAL D'AOSTA and 100 Mtn Regt has taken over the MONT CENIS pass. The destination of 157 Mtn Div is still unknown but it is more likely now that it will be Northeastern ITALY. The additional reason is provided by the departure of 71 Div. The reports of the latter's movements have not all agreed as to destination but most of them point to the Northeast. 44 Div has already been thrown into the battle against TOLBUKHIN's forces advancing from the historic battlefield of MORAVA and it is highly likely that 71 Div has also been drawn in to the same scene of continuing disaster.

.....2. WESTERN FRONT....

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2. WESTERN FRONT

As the threat to the REICH increases on every sector of the front, so does enemy resistance stiffen. This week in the South and in the Centre RUNDSTEDT's armies have been giving ground much more reluctantly and fighting much more fiercely than in the first fortnight of the present offensive, while in the AACHEN sector, the enemy is resisting as stubbornly as ever. In the South 19 Army has been gradually contracting its REICH bridgehead South of STRASBOURG. Offering stubborn resistance, particularly around SELESTAT, it has so far made no attempt to escape to the safety of the East bank of the RHINE. Indeed according to one report, the Germans consider 19 Army to be "expendable". Its casualties in prisoners alone have been proportionately higher than on any other part of the front, and a continuance of the present policy may see 19 Army written off altogether as an organised fighting formation.

North of STRASBOURG the approaches to the SAAR have been the scene of satisfactory Allied progress against tenacious enemy resistance. The enemy has appreciated that the advance represents a threat potentially as serious as that in the AACHEN area, and has reinforced the sector with two infantry divisions in the past week. These have been taken from General STUDENT's Army Group in HOLLAND which is being steadily denuded to meet the more urgent needs of the other sectors. In addition the Pz Lehr division of 6 Pz Army has now been fully committed, so fully indeed that prisoners are already talking of an early relief for further recuperation. This division prior to its commitment had had a longer period of rest and refit than any other Panzer division in the West, and even so there is ample evidence that it suffers from inadequate training and equipment trouble. Despite its reinforcements the German First Army in this area has been pressed back all along its front. Perhaps the most important event of the week in this sector has been the capture intact of a bridge over the SAAR South of SAARLAUTERN, which has enabled us to establish a firm bridgehead on the East bank of the river. The Siegfried line has yet to be breached in this sector, where, as at AACHEN, there are two lines of defences, and even a third line may exist behind KAISERSLAUTERN.

The METZ front has remained quiet all the week, but at AACHEN the intensity of the fighting has shown no diminution. STUDENT has been called upon to provide another infantry division for this sector, while out of RUNDSTEDT's reserve has come 3 Parachute Division into the area NE of AACHEN. The Recce Unit of 12 SS Pz Division (one of the four in 6 Pz Army) has also appeared, but apart from this there have been no fresh identifications of 6 Pz Army. If, as seemed probable, RUNDSTEDT last week felt that the time had come to commit his armoured reserve, this week he seems to have stayed his hand. Although elements may have been committed, the bulk of 6 Pz Army still sits intact West of the RHINE, waiting either to join in the defensive battle, or, if the enemy gauges that we are becoming exhausted, to counter-attack and regain lost ground. Meanwhile the gigantic battle continues and every day a mile or two of German soil is lost to the Germans.

North of AACHEN, appalling weather and floods have given

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North of AACHEN, appalling weather and floods have given the fighting an amphibious character. There have been two important developments. The last German bridgehead on the West bank of the MAAS has been eliminated by the British attack on VENLO, while at ARNHEM the Germans have added to the floods by blowing the dykes. The enemy claims that this action has already caused a local Allied withdrawal.

Reviewing the present situation, RUNDSTEDT has three major considerations to bear in mind. The first is the enormous German casualty rate. In the first fortnight of this offensive, it is estimated that RUNDSTEDT lost 100,000 men in total casualties, of which figure prisoners represented over 60,000. Since then he has been losing along the whole front something in the nature of 9,000 men per day. Against this, RUNDSTEDT has to weigh the availability of his reserves and reinforcements, actual and potential. Sixth Panzer Army is still largely intact. Three Parachute divisions are still available (2 Para Div, destroyed at ARNHEM, is now reported reforming in HOLLAND), and STUDENT may be able to give up still more

....infantry divisions.....

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infantry divisions from his Army Group. Thus there is not yet a shortage of immediate reserves. Moreover, with the beginning of a new month, a fresh wave of Volksgrenadier divisions should soon become available. Finally, the enemy has to consider the state of weariness and casualties among his opponents. His assessment of the former is unknown, but even in its public announcements OKW is surprisingly conservative in its estimates of the latter. For the whole of November the official German communiqué claimed only 5,200 Allied prisoners, an extraordinarily low figure in comparison with the enemy's own losses in prisoners in the same period.

RUNDSTEDT's situation is thus serious, but in no sense catastrophic. So far he has staved off an Allied breakthrough into any vital area of GERMANY, and while he still has reserves left he may yet hope to stem the Allied assault before irreparable damage is done. Stem it he must, for defeat on the West Bank of the RHINE might be final.

3. BALKAN FRONT

The German situation in S.E. EUROPE has deteriorated still further in this past week. Along the whole front from the Czechoslovak border to Northern ALBANIA the official communiqués have had one setback after another to record. N.E. of BUDAPEST the slow enemy withdrawal has continued. MISKOLCZ and DEBR have both been lost, and the railway from KATVAN to MISKOLCZ is now entirely in Soviet hands. The German line in CZECHOSLOVAKIA has been falling back in conformity, and there can be little doubt that a withdrawal at least as far as the HIGH TATRAS is envisaged.

However, the Soviet gains in North East HUNGARY have been overshadowed by the spectacular events in Southern HUNGARY. Attacking from their bridgeheads over the DANUBE at APATIN and BAJINA, Soviet forces have achieved an important breakthrough into S.W. HUNGARY which has to date brought them within nine miles of Lake BALATON. PECS fell on 30 Nov; KAPOSVAR, 30 miles beyond, two days later and the Russian bridgehead is now 60 miles deep and 75 miles wide. Thus the whole German position in S.E. EUROPE has been changed in the course of a few days, and unless the momentum of the Russian drive is halted, and halted soon, the position of Army Groups F and E in the Balkans will become grave in the extreme. The German 68 Corps took the brunt of the Soviet attack. (Its Commander, General FELMY, must be looking back with nostalgic regret to the days, not long distant, when he led the life of an epicure, in the comparative quiet of ATHENS organising ineffective sabotage). The Corps' resources proved quite incapable of coping with the Russian pressure. 44 Inf Div, brought over hastily from the UDINE area where it was recuperating from its Italian battles, was identified earlier in the week in the MOHACS sector, and there is further evidence that the enemy is now making hasty and belated efforts to stem the Russian flood. A new division, 31 S.S., has been identified in the past week in North YUGOSLAVIA and it too may be drawn into the KAPOSVAR battle if it is not already there. Little is known of this formation which is believed to be a 3 regt LS Div of six bns but it presumably contains a large percentage of Volksdeutsche. Yet another

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Under the influence of events further North, Army Group E's withdrawal from YUGOSLAVIA has been accelerated in the past week and about half of the Army Group is now back in the SARAJEVO area. KRALJEVO (J 31) has been evacuated and there are unconfirmed reports that CACAK (D 01) is in Bulgarian hands. NOVI PAZAR (J 13) on the Army Group's main escape road was abandoned last week and only rearguards are in contact at SJENICA (H 75), 30 miles N.W. of NOVI PAZAR. This force is unlikely to linger long at SARAJEVO, and we should soon expect to see it continuing its advance along the roads running Northward from the SARAJEVO - CACAK lateral.

Meanwhile, down in MONTENEGRO, 21 Mtn Corps has been able to do little to improve its position. The drive on MINSIC (G 70) has now been finally abandoned and the enemy has been withdrawing stores and grain back

....to PODGORICA....

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to PODGORICA (N 01). 21 Corps paid heavily in the attempt to break out to the North. It is estimated that casualties in the period 13 to 25 Nov amounted to 880 killed and 1,300 wounded, the bulk of which came from 181 Inf Div, which bore the brunt of the fighting. Moreover, 21 Mtn Corps has enjoyed little more success in its attempt to drive Eastwards from PODGORICA (N 06). SPUZ (N 07) has been captured but there has been heavy fighting to the N.W. and advanced elements of 21 Mtn Corps seem to be no further forward than VILUC (N 07, 12 miles N.W. of PODGORICA. H.Q. Army Group E, despairing of ever seeing 21 Mtn Corps get back under its own steam has apparently decided to send it some much-needed help, and in the course of the past week a column of all arms has been making its way down the RIEVLJA (H 15) - ZERJAV (H 50) road obviously with the intention of making contact with 21 Mtn Corps. Until it reached BIJELO POLJE (H 42) this column's progress was relatively smooth but South of BIJELO POLJE it has run into Partisan country and has been halted at least temporarily.

Elsewhere it has been a fairly quiet week in the Balkans except for the KNIN sector where after fierce fighting the Partisans have once more recaptured this important town. From SLOVENIA has come an interesting report regarding the setting up of a Cossack Cavalry Corps. According to Partisan sources a 2 Cossack Div will be formed - presumably in N.W. ITALY and SLOVENIA, where an increase in the number of Cossacks has been reported. This, together with the existing 1 Cossack Div, will form the Corps. Lt.Gen HELMUTH v. PANNWITZ, the present commander of 1 Cossack Div, will command the Corps, while Col BOSSE, a regimental commander, will be promoted to a divisional command.

for BRIGADIER,
D.G.S.(I).

G.S.I.
A.A.I.
5 Dec 44.

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SECRET G.O.C. to see COPY NO 83

H.Q. 1 A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 57

OF 28 NOV 1944

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this HQ. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

On 22Nov we attacked again on the axis of Route 9 and succeeded in getting over the river COSINA to the South of the road. Very heavy fighting ensued with 26 Pz Division but by the afternoon of 23 Nov the enemy had had enough. The German communiqué for 24 Nov described the action as follows: "The Eighth Army, with the concentrated mass of its forces and with the strongest employment of material threw itself against one single German division. In exemplary steadfastness the 26th Pz Division, under command Colonel GRASEMANN defended the cohesion of the front". (Incidentally, Colonel GRASEMANN commanded 8 Tank Regt in Nov 41, during Eighth Army's first offensive). In fact the evening before this announcement the division, which had lost 400 prisoners, made a rapid withdrawal across the LAMONE, leaving no rearguards behind apart from a few men in the houses of BORGO DURBECCO. The situation was in fact regarded as sufficiently serious to call for the employment of 577 G.R. which has been out of contact in reserve for some two months; it came in to the South of Route 9, on the left flank of its parent division and had some casualties apparently due to lack of contact with 26 Pz Div to its North. 278 Div also withdrew to conform. However, the divisions' left hand regiment, 993 G.R., still stayed forward between the rivers and a prisoner from I Bn taken in the area M 392265 on 27 Nov stated his orders were to withdraw only if pressed. Similarly, 871 G.R., the next adjoining regiment, stubbornly defended ALBERETO, M 3927, and a general line along 28 Northing and prisoners on 27 Nov said they had no orders about a withdrawal. 114 Jg Div also appears to be still in its old positions behind the FIUMI UNITI although the Partisans in this area have consistently reported a thinning out here and say the main body of the division is back behind the LAMONE. It certainly appears, that although the enemy line has now been extended by the withdrawal to FAENZA he is not yet prepared to give up any ground to the North. Such a withdrawal would involve abandoning RAVENNA and FORLI CORSINI and although the enemy has probably already carried out all the demolitions he wants, he still will not give them up without some sort of a struggle. South of FAENZA, on the other hand, he has withdrawn wholly behind the LAMONE though there may be still some enemy forward of the river in the mountainous Southern sector of 305 Div.

On the remainder of the front there have been minor changes in enemy dispositions only. A second regiment of 148 Div, 286 G.R., has turned up and is apparently in the SENIO Valley. 4 Alpine Bn, which has not been encountered for many months, announced its arrival by a deserter and

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the strongest employment of material that itself against the enemy division. In exemplary steadfastness the 26th Pz Division, under command Colonel CRASEMANN defended the cohesion of the Front". (Incidentally, Colonel CRASEMANN commanded 8 Tank Regt in Nov 41, during Eighth Army's first offensive). In fact the evening before this announcement the division, which had lost 400 prisoners, made a rapid withdrawal across the LAMONE, leaving no rearguards behind apart from a few men in the houses of BORGO DURBECCO. The situation was in fact regarded as sufficiently serious to call for the employment of 577 G.R. which has been out of contact in reserve for some two months; it came in to the South of Route 9, on the left flank of its parent division and had some casualties apparently due to lack of contact with 26 Pz Div to its North. 278 Div also withdrew to conform. However, the divisions' left hand regiment, 993 G.R., still stayed forward between the rivers and a prisoner from I Bn taken in the area M 392265 on 27 Nov stated his orders were to withdraw only if pressed. Similarly, 971 G.R., the next adjoining regiment, stubbornly defended ALBERETO, M 3927, and a general line along 28 Northing and prisoners on 27 Nov said they had no orders about a withdrawal. 114 Jg Div also appears to be still in its old positions behind the TIGNE UNITI although the Partisans in this area have consistently reported a thinning out here and say the main body of the division is back behind the LAMONE. It certainly appears, that although the enemy line has now been extended by the withdrawal to FAENZA he is not yet prepared to give up any ground to the North. Such a withdrawal would involve abandoning RAVENNA and PORTO CORSINI and although the enemy has probably already carried out all the demolitions he wants, he still will not give them up without some sort of a struggle. South of FAENZA, on the other hand, he has withdrawn wholly behind the LAMONE though there may be still some enemy forward of the river in the mountainous Southern sector of 305 Div.

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On the remainder of the front there have been minor changes in enemy dispositions only. A second regiment of 148 Div, 286 G.R., has turned up and is apparently in the SERCHIO Valley. 4 Alpino Bn, which has not been encountered for many months, announced its arrival by a deserter and its H.Q., from a civilian report, is at ABETONE, L 3311. It is possible, though a little difficult, to suppose that this Bn is alone responsible for the many reports of the arrival of Mountain troops in this sector, which have run to as high as six battalions, but they would be well within the normal Italian range of exaggeration if we could assume that 3 Alpino Bn had also arrived, possibly in a different sector. The supposition would not be unreasonable, as the two Bns have previously normally operated together.

There has been a steady flow of deserters on this front, reaching the record figure of 108 on 24 Nov, and a few statistics may be of interest. The figures available cover the period 8 - 22 Nov, and show that on 8 Army front there were 851 prisoners taken of whom 80 deserted and on 5 Army front 455 of whom 409 deserted. The difference is striking - 10% deserters

....in one case.....

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in one case and 90% in the other - and requires a little explanation. The figures for 5 Army are heavily weighted by 136 Russians and 153 Italians, all deserters, who make up about two-thirds of the whole; however, of a total of 83 Germans, 46 or 56% and of 22 Austrians 17 or 77% were deserters. The main explanation must lie in the difference between a static and an active front. On 8 Army front opportunities for actually crossing the lines were much fewer than on the more thinly held and mountainous Western sector of 5 Army front; on the other hand on an active front with the Allies advancing many a would-be deserter can take the easier option of remaining behind when his comrades withdraw. In the latter case he is usually classed as an ordinary prisoner and not a deserter, an additional advantage for him but confusing for our statistics. It is dangerous therefore to build theories on enemy morale on these figures but the high proportion of pure German deserters on 5 Army front is certainly encouraging.

We have further news this week of changes in Northern ITALY. 162 division, whose withdrawal from the line in the RAVENNA sector was reported on 15 Nov, has been definitely identified at FLORENZA. It is apparently to take part in an anti-Partisan drive in the mountains to the S.W. which is about all it is fit for. It was originally employed on this task in N.W. ITALY before the June crisis made it necessary to put it into the line, an experiment which has not been successful. In N.W. ITALY a usually reliable source states that 157 Mtn Division is being withdrawn from the Alps and the troops say they are going to the BOLOGNA front. Their destination may not necessarily be correct - it would be a natural assumption for the average man to make - but the move of the division seems to be confirmed. It makes much more unlikely the move away of 5 Mtn Div as this would leave the defence of the Franco-Italian frontier to only 34 Div and LITTORIO; in any case units apparently of 5 Mtn Div were reported moving up towards the frontier on 13 Nov in the VAL DI SUSA. It seems more likely that 5 Mtn and LITTORIO together will take over the Central and Northern part of the frontier, probably interdingled so as to avoid entrusting one large sector to LITTORIO. The various past reports which have suggested a move of 5 Mtn Div may have been based on a mistaken identity of 157 Mtn Div or of 3 and 4 Alpine Bns. In North-Eastern ITALY two further reports from good sources mention the departure of 4A Div, one by its number and the other by the name of the Divisional Commander, Gen von ROST. In both cases its destination is given as HUNGARY.

2. WESTERN FRONT

The rapid drive of French forces on to the RHINE North of BASLE last week did not go unchallenged. Although MULHOUSE and BELFORT soon fell to the French, 19 Army rallied sufficiently to launch a limited counter-attack with the object of cutting through to the Swiss frontier South of BELFORT. The spirit was there but the flesh was weak and the armour non-existent. Doubtless Gen WIESE of 19 Army had hoped to do at BELFORT what ROMMEL failed to do at AVRANCHES, but all he achieved was a certain limited infiltration into our positions which has now been mopped up. Nevertheless the tactics were sound, for 19 Army's situation in the VOSGES is serious and would be desperate if the Allies succeeded in driving Northwards towards COLMAR combined with a Southward push from STRASBOURG. Thus enemy resistance to our drive on the RHINE has been

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part in an anti-Partisan drive in the mountains to the N.W. which is about all it is fit for. It was originally employed on this task in N.W. ITALY before the June crisis made it necessary to put it into the line, an experiment which has not been successful. In N.W. ITALY a usually reliable source states that 157 Mtn Division is being withdrawn from the Alps and the troops say they are going to the BELGIAN front. Their destination may not necessarily be correct - it would be a natural assumption for the average man to make - but the move of the division seems to be confirmed. It makes much more unlikely the move away of 5 Mtn Div as this would leave the defence of the Franco-Italian frontier to only 34 Div and LITTORIO; in any case units apparently of 5 Mtn Div were reported moving up towards the frontier on 15 Nov in the VAL DI SUSA. It seems more likely that 5 Mtn and LITTORIO together will take over the Central and Northern part of the frontier, probably intermingled so as to avoid entrusting one large sector to LITTORIO. The various past reports which have suggested a move of 5 Mtn Div may have been based on a mistaken identity of 157 Mtn Div or of 3 and 4 Alpine Bns. In North-Eastern ITALY two further reports from good sources mention the departure of 44 Div, one by its number and the other by the name of the Divisional Commander, Gen von ROST. In both cases its destination is given as HUNGARY.

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At the Northern end of the great German bridgehead over the RHINE, General LECLERC's division ended another phase of its long trek from CHAD by the capture of STRASBOURG. Here the French have now completed mopping up. The situation with regard to the RHINE bridges is not altogether clear. Early reports suggested that the French had found one of the RHINE bridges intact and succeeded in passing armour across to KEHL on the German side of the RHINE, where some civilian sniping was encountered. South of the city, between STRASBOURG and KEHL, the enemy had at least seven pontoon bridges ready for installation on 19 November and may by now have more ready to deal with a possible hurried withdrawal of 19 Army across the RHINE.

.....N.W. of STRASBOURG....

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N.W. of STRASBOURG 1 Army has been giving ground fairly rapidly before SAARBRÜCKEN. An interesting identification in this sector has been the Pz Lehr Division of 6 Pz Army. So far there has been only one identification of this formation, but its appearance away from the bulk of 6 Pz Army is less surprising than would have been that of one of 6 Pz Army's other four armoured divisions. Whereas prisoners had reported the presence of the four other formations of 6 Pz Army in the AACHEN sector, there had been no mention of Pz Lehr division, which was obviously making its way down to 1 Army's sector. Between STRASBOURG and SIERCK the enemy has what appears to be on paper a fairly strong armoured force. In addition to the Pz Lehr division, 11 Pz, 21 Pz, 17 S.S. P.G. and 25 P.G. Divisions are all represented. What they account to on the ground is a different matter. Their inability to stop the Allies crossing the German frontier on a 20 mile front West of SAARBRÜCKEN can hardly be encouraging to the enemy. Nevertheless their presence in this sector is an indication that it enjoys a priority second only to that of the AACHEN area.

East of AACHEN German resistance has shown no sign of slackening in the course of the past week. Impeded by thick minefields and difficult going Allied progress has been slow. Some advances have been made in the HÜRTGEN Forest, but the most important advance of the week has been along the ESCHWEILER - DÜREN road where WEISWEILER and FRENZ to the North-East have been captured, an advance of about 5 miles in all. Progress has also been made in the direction of JÜLICH, and we hold the high ground about a mile West of the town. Although nothing in the way of an Allied breakthrough has been achieved in this area, there are indications that RUNDSTEDT is uneasy about the situation. 5 Pz Army has been reinforced by 10 S.S. Pz Div from the AACHEN area, and more important still, one regiment of 1 S.S. Pz Div of 6 Pz Army has been identified North-East of EUSKIRCHEN. This may presage the commitment of the whole of 6 Pz Army - the enemy's last armoured reserve. It certainly implies a lack of confidence regarding the ability of his present forces to check the Allied assault unassisted.

North of AACHEN heavy rain and extensive flooding have made operations in the British sector difficult. South of VENLO the enemy has abandoned the whole of the West bank of the MAAS, although clinging to a bridgehead at VENLO itself. Further North, advancing through mined and water-logged country, we have reached the MAAS 15 miles North of VENLO against light resistance. The enemy now has only light screening forces on the West bank of the MAAS here and the elimination of this bridgehead is only a matter of time.

The enemy's prospects have thus deteriorated still further in the past week. In the South, the best 19 Army can now hope for is to get itself back into or across the RHINE. In the Central sector the Allied threat in the SAAR may soon be even more serious than that from AACHEN. Only in the AACHEN area has RUNDSTEDT come near to exacting the price which German propaganda has assured us we shall have to pay for every yard of German soil. And he too has had to pay in costly currency - armour. Tanks are more precious to him than bodies at this moment. GOEBBELS' mobilisation may turn out a Volksgrenadier division of sorts in three weeks. It cannot produce an armoured division at that speed. Already RUNDSTEDT's losses have forced him to draw on his armoured reserve

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Allied progress has been slow. Some advances have been made in the HURTGEN Forest, but the most important advance of the week has been along the BERGHEILER - DUREN road where WEISWEILER and FRENZ to the North-East have been captured, an advance of about 5 miles in all. Progress has also been made in the direction of JULICH, and we hold the high ground about a mile West of the town. Although nothing in the way of an Allied breakthrough has been achieved in this area, there are indications that RUNDSTEDT is uneasy about the situation. 5 Pz Army has been reinforced by 10 S.S. Pz Div from the ARNHEM area, and more important still, one regiment of 1 S.S. Pz Div of 6 Pz Army has been identified North-East of GEILENKIRCHEN. This may presage the commitment of the whole of 6 Pz Army - the enemy's last armoured reserve. It certainly implies a lack of confidence regarding the ability of his present forces to check the Allied assault unassisted.

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The enemy's prospects have thus deteriorated still further in the past week. In the South, the best 19 Army can now hope for is to get itself back intact across the RHINE. In the Central sector the Allied threat in the RUHR may soon be even more serious than that from AACHEN. Only in the AACHEN area has RUNDSTEDT come near to exacting the price which German propaganda has assured us we shall have to pay for every yard of German soil. And he too has had to pay in costly currency - armour. Tanks are more precious to him than bodies at this moment. GOEBBELS' mobilisation may turn out a Volksgrenadier division of sorts in three weeks. It cannot produce an armoured division at that speed. Already RUNDSTEDT's losses have forced him to draw on his armoured reserve and it may be that after all the situation will force him to fritter away piecemeal that precious reserve. Last week he had five armoured divisions completely uncommitted. This week he has three. His hope must be to wear out the Allied assault before the last verse of this ominous little nigger-boy song is reached.

3. BALKAN FRONT

North East of BUDAPEST, Russian progress has been slower in the past week. The Hungarian plain now lies behind the Red Army and in the mountainous country rising in places to over 3,000 feet the enemy has been able to offer stiffer resistance. The rail junction of HATVAN has been captured by the Russians but both MISKOLC and EGER are still in enemy hands. There has been no change in the BUDAPEST sector nor along the DANUBE front as far South as ERTING. A German Panzer Corps is reported operating in the BUDAPEST area under Lt.Gen KLEEMAN, one time commander of 90 Light Division in the desert, and later of Assault Division HERMES.

....In Northern YUGOSLAVIA..

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In Northern YUGOSLAVIA the Germans have reported throughout the week Soviet attacks from the DANUBE bridgeheads at RUMA and APATIN. MOSCOW has remained silent about these, but it seems very probable that an attempt is being made to link up these two bridgeheads with the object of establishing a firm base on the West bank of the DANUBE preparatory to a drive North of the DRAVA into South West HUNGARY.

In N.E. YUGOSLAVIA the enemy is still trying to open up the UZICE (C 61) - ZVORNIK (C 12) road. A bridging column is at work repairing the bridge at LJUBOVIJA (C 35) the intention doubtless being to withdraw some of Army Group E together with 7 S.S. Mtn Div and the other forces in the KRALJEVO (J 39) area back along this road. It is too early to say yet whether this is in fact being done. P.R. of 22 Nov saw no movement on the road and reported at least three bridges still down.

In Central and Southern YUGOSLAVIA the varying fortunes of Army Group E's withdrawal have led to a split of the Army Group forces. On the East the bulk of the Army Group is pulling up along the NOVI PAZAR (J 13) - VISEGRAD (C 21) road, with some elements possibly using the alternative routes via RUDO (H 29) and GORAZDE (B 90). The RASKA (J 24) - KRALJEVO road is no longer in use and Partisans claim to control a large portion of it. The fact that the enemy allows the Partisans to operate so near to KRALJEVO suggests that Army Group E is now for the most part North of a line NOVI PAZAR - RASKA and the day may not be far distant when the whole front will start pivoting back on KRALJEVO. H.Q. Army Group E is now reported at SARAJEVO with 22 Mtn Corps and 91 z.b.V. Corps coming up from the South. Between them these formations have under command four fairly weak divisions with battle groups of two others.

The withdrawal of Army Group E from MITROVICA (J 30) last week left 21 Mtn Corps isolated in MONTENEGRO and Northern ALBANIA. This formation has during the past week continued its efforts to break through from DANILOVGRAD (K 97) to NIKSIC (G 70). By dint of great effort it eventually reached DUROVICI 8 miles South of NIKSIC, and got no further. There has been no sign of 5 S.S. Mtn Corps sending a relief force down from MOSTAR to join up with 21 Mtn Corps, and it looks as if the latter has decided to seek less thorny paths of escape. Reports of Eastward movement from PODGORICA suggest that the enemy is now trying to open up the alternative escape routes via KOLASIN (H 20) and BERANE (H 50). The former is little better than a track, the latter a tolerably good road. Both are blocked by Partisans.

Meanwhile the garrison at KOTOR, despairing of ever seeing 21 Mtn Corps break out to the North has had to withdraw in a Southward direction down the coast road via BUDVA (K 60) and BAR (A 85) to SCUTARI, as the KOTOR - PODGORICA road was blocked by Partisan action. BAR has been evacuated by those forces who should by now have joined up with the rest of 21 Mtn Corps.

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C.R. Wilson

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

G.S.I.
H.Q. A.A.I.
28 Nov 44.

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SECRET

COPY NO 83

H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 36

OF 22 NOV, 44

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this HQ. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

There has been but little change in enemy forward dispositions this week and that all at the extreme Eastern end of his line. He is still determined to hold his positions in this sector until they are seriously endangered and to make us mount a large-scale offensive for each river obstacle; but he is fully prepared to withdraw at least back to a position covering BOLOGNA on the right and resting the left on the VALLI DI COMACCHIO. In the meantime there is evidence, though of uncertain value, of important moves in his rear areas.

At the beginning of the week 76 Corps was back on its MONTONE line except in the coastal sector where we have pushed forward gradually in no great strength against equally weak German outposts to the river RONCO and the FIUME UNITI. 721 Jaeger Regt and 114 Rocco Unit are holding this flank among the marshes. 992 A.R. pulled back in the area of the railway and reinforced strongly and successfully our attempts to secure a bridgehead in this area on the night of 21 Nov. 67 P.G.R., now responsible for the axis of Route 9, also defended its sector with great stubbornness and prevented any progress across the consolidated river BUBANO. Further South, however, in the sector of 9 P.G.R. and 39 G.A.P. we were able to make better progress in an area where the enemy has not the same advantage of water obstacles, capturing CASTELLICCHIO, M 3416 and he stubbornly defended Monte FORTINO, M 3214, and advancing some two kilometres further North at both points. It seems likely that in this area the enemy will next try to hold a line shown on a captured map (called GERHILD, probably a switch-line from the original GERHILD) which follows the upper reaches of the river COSINA to MONTE RICCI M 3218, and then presumably bases itself on the river MARZENO. Monte RICCI is particularly important as it affords dominating observation over the low ground below the present enemy line and over FAENZA and any further advance in this sector must make the MONTONE line, at least in the neighbourhood of route 9, untenable for the enemy.

On the whole of the rest of the front there have been only minor operations. Prisoners from 98 Division confirm that 362 Div and that is borne out by PW from III Bn 40 Jaeger Regt

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On the whole of the rest of the front there have been only minor operations. Prisoners from 98 Division confirm that 4 Jaeger Div has relieved 362 Div and that is borne out by PW from III Bn 40 Jaeger Regt, captured at L 9632. In general in the Central part of the front most divisions have a regiment out and resting; 4 Para Div may have two of its three regts out of the line and a report from a usually reliable source states that 2,500 troops from the division are training at AVESA, F 6457, just North of VERONA. These men are presumably replacements and we know that both the Parachute divisions in ITALY have always insisted on a long and thorough period of training for their recruits even at the risk of allowing strengths of units in action to fall very low. The fact that fairly copious replacements have been made available is shown by the increased strength in which 12 Para Regt returned to the line, and we must expect 1 Para Div also to have been made up on much the same scale.

There has been considerably more daylight movement seen by the air in rear of the Eastern part of the front than has been usual for some time. Part of this may be explained by the move away of 162 Div, but not the movement reported between 18 and 22 Nov in the area BOLOGNA - MEDICINA - LUGO - FAENZA, which has been so frequent as to suggest the arrival of new troops in

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this area It may possibly be connected with a report from Partisan sources that new troops have arrived along the river SERIO in the area of LUGO and ALFONSINE where they are erecting defences on the river bank. These troops are reported to bear a sign which might be that of Mountain troops. There has been no further news since that reported last week of the move of 5 Mtn Div or any confirmation that such a move is taking place and it is too early to say what credence is to be given to the Partisan report. However the hypothesis that 5 Mtn Div may be coming to reinforce 7th Corps is to be borne in mind. If there is no further news of departures from N.W. ITALY there are reports of arrivals. Between 13 and 16 November troop trains were seen moving South through TURIN carrying troops of the LITTORIO Division. They were said to be bound for the CUNEO area though this information is naturally less reliable. It may be, therefore, that LITTORIO is destined for the Franco-Italian frontier, to relieve 5 Mtn Div, rather than for the GENOA area. In the meantime a report, confirmed and unconfirmed, from N.E. ITALY may throw some light on the move of 44 Division. It has been noteworthy that, although all other formations known to be in N.E. ITALY are frequently reported on, there has been no hint of the whereabouts of 44 Div since a prisoner on 29 Oct said it had left for TRIESTE. The latest report, the date of which is not known, does not specifically mention 44 Div but says that "a VIENNA division which fought at STALINGRAD" was moving through N.E. ITALY to AUSTRIA and HUNGARY. This description will fit 44 Div, and no other in ITALY, and it has always been considered likely that the time would come when reinforcements from ITALY would be required for the South-Eastern front. This may be the first contribution, and it is unlikely to be the last.

2. WESTERN FRONT

All along the front from VENLO to the Swiss frontier the enemy has been forced back during the past week. In the Southern sector of the front striking progress has been made by French and American forces. In the Centre METZ has been freed, and the MOSELLE crossed in strength, while at AACHEN and to the North British and American forces have made slow but steady progress over terrain vital to the enemy against stubborn German resistance.

In the South 19 Army, with a collection of formations presenting an army more formidable on paper than on the ground, was unable to resist for long before the BELFORT Gap and by 19 November its left wing had completely collapsed enabling French forces by a double thrust to occupy BELFORT and push along the Swiss frontier to the RHINE on a ten mile stretch North of BASLE. The enemy is now trying to prevent fresh exploitation down the RHINE Valley towards STRASBOURG and appears to be making a stand on the RHONE-RHINE Canal in the Southern outskirts of MULHOUSE. However, a threat to STRASBOURG is also developing further North where 19 Army, after conducting a long and stubborn withdrawal along the LUNEVILLE - SARREBOURG railway suddenly broke under the pressure of American armour and fell back 35 miles in one day to behind SARREBOURG. Reports so far to hand speak of considerable enemy disorganisation in this area and American forces are now within 20 miles of STRASBOURG.

While Army Group G's Southern flank has had a disastrous week, the German withdrawal further North has been more orderly. [illegible]

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N.E. ITALY to AUSTRIA and HUNGARY. This description will fit 4 Div, and no other in ITALY, and it has always been considered likely that the time would come when reinforcements from ITALY would be required for the South-Eastern front. This may be the first contribution, and it is unlikely to be the last.

2. WESTERN FRONT

All along the front from VENLO to the Swiss frontier the enemy has been forced back during the past week. In the Southern sector of the front striking progress has been made by French and American forces. In the Centre METZ has been freed, and the MOSELLE crossed in strength, while at AACHEN and to the North British and American forces have made slow but steady progress over terrain vital to the enemy against stubborn German resistance.

In the South 19 Army, with a collection of formations presenting an array more formidable on paper than on the ground, was unable to resist for long before the BELFORT Gap and by 19 November its left wing had completely collapsed enabling French forces by a double thrust to occupy BELFORT and push along the Swiss frontier to the RHINE on a ten mile stretch North of BASLE. The enemy is now trying to prevent fresh exploitation down the RHINE Valley towards STRASBOURG and appears to be making a stand on the RHONE-RHINE Canal in the Southern outskirts of MULHOUSE. However, a threat to STRASBOURG is also developing further North where 19 Army, after conducting a long and stubborn withdrawal along the LUNEVILLE - SARREBOURG railway suddenly broke under the pressure of American armour and fell back 15 miles in one day to behind SARREBOURG. Reports so far to hand speak of considerable enemy disorganisation in this area and American forces are now within 20 miles of STRASBOURG.

While Army Group G's Southern flank has had a disastrous week, the German withdrawal further North has been more orderly. Reinforced by 25 P.G. Div, a new arrival, and 21 Pz Div from the RACCARAT sector, the enemy forces in the METZ area were able to offer stubborn resistance before the fortress eventually fell and even now isolated forts are still holding out on the perimeter of the city. With the loss of the fortress German resistance has been less fierce and Allied forces have pushed across the German frontier North East of METZ.

From TRIER up to the AACHEN sector the front has been fairly quiet and main interest has centred on the arrival of a number of newly formed infantry divisions. Three Volksgrenadier divisions have put in their appearance, one South and two North of TRIER. It is clear, as suggested in last week's Summary, that the enemy is following a policy of putting in his new untried formations in quiet sectors while battle experienced formations are released for employment in other sectors. It is of particular interest that 212 Volksgrenadier

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Division which has been identified just North of TRIER was set up in POLAND some six weeks ago and has only just arrived in FRANCE. Of from this formation say that they were accompanied to the West by yet another Volksgrenadier division, this time from CZECHOSLOVAKIA. The fact that the enemy considers it necessary to bring formations all across EUROPE from the East at the present time is a clear indication of the priority which the Western front enjoys in his eyes.

In the AACHEN sector the fiercest fighting of the week has taken place. In the face of savage enemy resistance and across very extensive minefields, our advance has been slow. This is the vital sector of the front for the enemy and he must cling to every yard of German soil in order to keep the Allies from the RHINE. Nevertheless progress has been made in the past week. We are only six miles from DUREN, ESCHWEILER has been entered, and GEILENKIRCHEN is entirely in our hands. An assortment of infantry divisions beefed up by armour in the form of 9 and 116 Pz and 3 and 15 P.G. Divisions form the enemy's force in this sector. There have been indications however that some of the five missing Panzer divisions getting up under 6 Pz Army are getting ready to participate in the battle. Prisoners have reported the presence of four of them in the area immediately East and S.E. of AACHEN and although none has been committed yet, it looks as though RUNDSTEDT is now ready to commit them as soon as he feels that his present forces at AACHEN can no longer take the strain.

In HOLLAND the British advance on the MAAS has made good headway against moderate to stiff opposition. The enemy seems to be reconciled to abandoning the West bank of the river and no new formations have been identified. The whole of 7 Parachute Division appears to be West of VENLO but that is all the Parachute representation in the area. 3, 5 and 6 Para Divs are still out of the line.

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The winter offensive is now in full swing and the enemy is faced with a situation in which he is most vulnerable - a simultaneous attack on several widely separated sectors of the front. Already events in the South have shown that he is unable to meet his commitments in one sector without having to give ground elsewhere. Nevertheless RUNDSTEDT's is an old and cool hand, and has so far played with the measured caution of a chess player rather than the abandoned recklessness of a gambler. He may have been taken by surprise by the French thrust in the South, but his eyes are still firmly fixed on the AACHEN area where he knows full well what is at stake. The temptation to transfer his armoured reserve to the less crucial sectors further South has been resisted. The armour is still in the North and when it is committed, will probably be committed as a whole. MARIANNE taught a bitter lesson about piecemeal commitment of armour. The COLOGNE plain may show that it has been learnt.

Some points from a SHAEF Intelligence Summary on shortages in equipment of German formations in the West are of interest. In spite of the continued evidence of the acute shortage of fuel for vehicles of the armed forces, and, in spite of repeated accounts of immobilised vehicles and low

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that some of the five missing Panzer divisions are there. There have been indications however getting ready to participate in the battle. Prisoners have reported the presence of four of them in the area immediately East and S.E. of AACHEN and although none has been committed yet, it looks as though RUNDSTEDT is now ready to commit them as soon as he feels that his present forces at AACHEN can no longer take the strain.

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Some points from a SHAEF Intelligence Summary on shortages in equipment of German formations in the West are of interest. In spite of the continued evidence of the acute shortage of fuel for vehicles of the armed forces, and, in spite of repeated accounts of immobilised vehicles and low unit motor transport strengths as a result of this shortage, the greater part of information received in recent weeks points in another direction, namely to a shortage of equipment, especially small arms, automatic weapons and motor transport.

Information from a senior officer prisoner of war to the effect that the usual tank strength for Panzer divisions is now between 20 and 50 tanks is a fair indication of the production problems encountered by the Germans under the strain of strategic bombing and heavy operational loss. That this applies to other production as well, is shown by the report of one unfortunate from a Landesschutzen battalion who stated that there were 3 coach lifts in the whole unit. Other reports indicate that stores of arms confiscated at the time of occupation of CZECHOSLOVAKIA are now being issued to infantry units in default of German models. This practice particularly applies to non-German troops who receive outmoded weapons of Czech, French and Russian origin. Of course it may be that, as one prisoner of war glibly states, care had to be taken NOT to produce up-to-date German equipment, otherwise the Bulgarians would have promptly asked for it. The capture of a secret diary recently mentions

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the first use in ground fighting by units of armoured Panzer Grenadier battalions of a heavy machine gun (Drilling M. 151/15 and 151/20), formerly used only as aircraft armament.

Most revealing is one prisoner of war report which gives in detail the composition of an infantry division supply column. In a total of 15 lorries, two thirds of which were confiscated from civilian sources, 5 different manufacturers were represented. Moreover the 15 lorries were of 5 classes ranging from 1½ tons to a lone Renault ½ ton vehicle. The maintenance problem for this motley caravan is revealed by information obtained from an NCO formerly employed in the motor transport repair depot at [illegible], SILESIA. He stated that of 6 truck and tractor types commonly used by the Wehrmacht, spare parts for two are virtually unobtainable, parts for two others very scarce, and only for the remaining two is a fairly adequate supply available. These shortages he attributed directly to the bombing of industry and stated further that all German divisions have now but an average of one-third of their authorised motor transport strength. Using as an example the 3-ton Borgward truck, prisoner of war remarked that since the bombing of the [illegible]-LLOYD plant in BREMEN there have been almost no replacement parts for this model and that when the gears are damaged, the vehicle has to be abandoned.

3. BALKAN FRONT

Russian progress during the past week has been confined to the sector N.E. of BUDAPEST where Army Group South USTRITS supported by Hungarian forces has been pushed back to the general line of the BUDAPEST-MISKOLCZ railway. The Russians have cut this railway at several points between BUDAPEST and [illegible], and control it completely from exclusive [illegible] to exclusive MISKOLC. Both the latter towns are now closely threatened by Soviet forces.

South of BUDAPEST the front line has shown little change. Russian troops still hold their bridgehead at [illegible] but are not across the river in sufficient strength to constitute a serious penetration of the [illegible] line. There is certainly no sign of any early German retirement to a defensive line further West; indeed, until Army Group E's withdrawal from Southern YUGOSLAVIA is considerably more advanced than at present, the enemy has every reason to hold on to his [illegible] position.

In Southern YUGOSLAVIA, the German withdrawal is meeting with varying success. From MACEDONIA Army Group 2 is succeeding in withdrawing its troops relatively rapidly. PRISTINA, 50 miles N.W. of SKOPLJE, is clear and enemy rearguards are falling back to the road junction of [illegible]. The main, and indeed the only useable, route at present being used by those forces is that via NOVI PAZAR - [illegible]. 91 Corps at NOVI PAZAR is retiring along this road leaving 22 Mtn Corps to conduct the rearguard. A bridging column has arrived at VISEGRAD to repair the bridge destroyed by Partisans earlier this month, and all the evidence suggests that the enemy intends at present to use the NOVI PAZAR - VISEGRAD road in preference to the alternative route via [illegible] - ROGATICA. It is significant that no attempt has so far been made to clear the Partisans from the road centre of PJEVLJA on the latter route.

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South of BUDAPEST the front line has shown little change. Russian troops still hold their bridgehead at ERCSIN but are not across the river in sufficient strength to constitute a serious penetration of the DANUBE line. There is certainly no sign of any early German retirement to a defensive line further West; indeed, until Army Group E's withdrawal from Southern YUGOSLAVIA is considerably more advanced than at present, the enemy has every reason to hold on to his DANUBE position.

In Southern YUGOSLAVIA, the German withdrawal is meeting with varying success. From MACEDONIA Army Group E is succeeding in withdrawing its troops relatively rapidly. PRISTINA, 50 miles N.W. of SKOPLJE, is clear and enemy rearguards are falling back to the road junction of KRUSEVAC. The main, and indeed the only escape route at present being used by those forces is that via NOVI PAZAR - VISEGRAD. 91 Corps at NOVI PAZAR is retiring along this road leaving 22 Mtn Corps to conduct the rearguard. A bridging column has arrived at VISEGRAD to repair the bridge destroyed by Partisans earlier this month, and all the evidence suggests that the enemy intends at present to use the NOVI PAZAR - VISEGRAD road in preference to the alternative route via ANDRIJEVICA - ROGATICA. It is significant that no attempt has so far been made to clear the Partisans from the road centre of PLJEVLJA on the latter route.

In MONTENEGRO the enemy withdrawal as might have been expected is proving a much more hazardous affair. Here 21 Mtn Corps has been attempting to open up the route from PODGORICA to NIKSIC where it would have the choice of taking either the NIKSIC - VISEGRAD, or the NIKSIC - NOVI PAZAR road. Considerable troop concentrations have been reported at PODGORICA, and the enemy has succeeded in advancing as far as NIKOLOVGRAD. Here he has stuck. Partisans reinforced with Allied units have offered stubborn opposition to all attempts at pushing through to NIKSIC and 21 Corps' position is becoming serious. The only alternative route it can use is the ANDRIJEVICA - PLJEVLJA road which is also blocked by Partisans. A determined attempt to open up the NIKSIC road is therefore to be expected when the withdrawal from ALBANIA is more advanced. Demolitions between PERAST and SOUTARI are at present holding up this withdrawal.

.....On the Dalmatian....

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On the Dalmatian coast the town of RISAN on KOTOR Bay has been taken by the Partisans who are also operating on the TIVAT peninsula. The enemy situation in the KOTOR area is becoming difficult in the extreme and the Partisans speak of a general German withdrawal. In ALBANIA the German forces despite road demolitions have now reached ARGYRO, and the whole of ALBANIA should be clear of the enemy very shortly. The Germans will then have the task of getting Army Group E out of the long salient in YUGOSLAVIA back in a staged withdrawal to the defensive positions now being built in N.W. YUGOSLAVIA.

C.E. Armitage

GSI.
AAI.
23.11.44.

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

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COPY NO 83

H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 35

OF 16 NOV 44.

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this H.Q. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

The enemy has been steadily pushed back all last week on the Adriatic, and his main line now runs along the FIUMI UNITI just South of RAVENNA, up the MONTONE to within 2,000 yards of Route 9 where it follows the COSINA Canal into the hills to the S. ., joining up with positions given on a captured map from 354178 to M. PORTINO M 3214. MODIGLIANA M 2309 was reported clear yesterday and 305 Div appears to have taken up a line running from CASTELLACCIO M 2912 to M. PRUNETTA M 2212, though rearguards are still forward and the report from civilians that M. del TESORO 1808 is clear is not yet confirmed. The enemy resisted our attack N.W. from FORLI up the corridor between the MONTONE river and the RAVALDINO Canal stubbornly in the first place, and 278 Div lost a good many prisoners, but by the 12th we had advanced to SAN THOME M 4221 and the enemy was pulling back to the MONTONE.

Our attack caught the enemy in process of carrying out a relief, the intention of which was to move 356 Div North of Route 9 into the comparatively quiet sector between 114 and 278 Divs and to replace it South of the main highway by 26 Pz Div and 20 G.F. Div. It was, in fact, a direct exchange of sectors, and was clearly designed to bring the better division into the line opposite the main weight of 8 Army attack. 26 Pz Div has had a comparatively easy time recently and although it has not been possible to take it out for a rest and refit, it has absorbed a fair number of reinforcements while still in the line. The units of 20 G.F. Div on the other hand are all pretty weak by now - I Bn 40 G.F. Regt has only two companies - and they are still under command of 26 Pz Div. Since 20 G.F. Div has not controlled its own units in battle for the past two months, it looks as if it may eventually be completely absorbed into 26 Pz Div and cease to function as a separate formation. The interchange of sectors which started on the 9th is by now finished, and 67 P.G.R. yesterday had one Bn acting as rearguard on Route 9, while 9 P.G.R. is on the division's right flank. G.A.F. units are sandwiched in between the Panzer Grenadiers, and are normally placed in the front line while the Panzer Grenadiers are used for counter-attacking. 671 G.R., the last regiment of 356 Div to be relieved, appears to have come in either to reinforce or replace the left wing of 278 Div. The latter div has taken the brunt of our attack

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MONTONE to within 2,000 yards of Route 9 where it follows the CESENA Canal into the hills to the S. ., joining up with positions given on a captured map from 354178 to M. FORETNO M 3214. MODIGLIANA M 2309 was reported clear yesterday and 305 Div appears to have taken up a line running from CASTELLACCIO M 2912 to M. PRENESTA M 2212, though rearguards are still forward and the report from civilians that M. del TESORO 1508 is clear is not yet confirmed. The enemy resisted our attack N.W. from FORLI up the corridor between the MONTONE river and the RAVALDINO Canal stubbornly in the first place, and 278 Div lost a good many prisoners, but by the 12th we had advanced to S.AN THOME M 4221 and the enemy was pulling back to the MONTONE.

Our attack caught the enemy in process of carrying out a relief, the intention of which was to move 356 Div North of Route 9 into the comparatively quiet sector between 114 and 278 Divs and to replace it South of the main highway by 26 Pz Div and 20 G&P Div. It was, in fact, a direct exchange of sectors, and was clearly designed to bring the better division into the line opposite the main weight of 8 Army attack. 26 Pz Div has had a comparatively easy time recently and although it has not been possible to take it out for a rest and refit, it has absorbed a fair number of reinforcements while still in the line. The units of 20 G&P Div on the other hand are all pretty weak by now - I Bn 40 G&P Regt has only two companies - and they are still under command of 26 Pz Div. Since 20 G&P Div has not controlled its own units in battle for the past two months, it looks as if it may eventually be completely absorbed into 26 Pz Div and cease to function as a separate formation. The interchange of sectors which started on the 9th is by now finished, and 67 P.G.R. yesterday had one Bn acting as rearguard on Route 9, while 9 P.G.R. is on the division's right flank. G.A.P. units are sandwiched in between the Panzer Grenadiers, and are normally placed in the front line while the Panzer Grenadiers are used for counter-attacking. 871 G.R., the last regiment of 356 Div to be relieved, appears to have come in either to reinforce or replace the left wing of 278 Div. The latter div has taken the brunt of our attack and has had fairly heavy casualties.

In the RAVENNA sector another relief has been carried out, 162 Div having according to prisoners moved out of the line and disappeared North to some unknown destination. In view of the unreliability of the Turcoman and the fact that the div recently surrendered a fair proportion of its German personnel to 114 Div as replacements, this is hardly surprising. 114 Jaeger Div now extends from the coast inland for about 20,000 - 25,000 yards.

In the Central and Western parts of the Appennine front activity continues to be limited to patrolling and a plentiful flow of desertions from the MONTE ROSA Div. Prisoners from 4 Para Div show that 12 Para Regt has returned to the line, with companies in II Bn averaging 100 men each. This Regt

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was the hardest hit of the three in the division and fairly substantial parachutist replacements must have arrived. (Prisoners say that 1,000 arrived last month in the BOLOGNA area). Internal reliefs have also taken place in 65 Inf Div and it must be assumed that replacements are also reaching that division. There continues to be no contact with either 362 Inf or 90 P.G. Divs and both are definitely considered to be out of the line, presumably refitting in the BOLOGNA area.

So far 76 Pz Corps has conducted the battle on the Adriatic without reinforcements - in fact the departure of 162 Division represents the loss of about a regimental group - and there is no sign at the moment of any formation coming up to help. If it is the enemy's intention to try and stand on one of the river lines, either the present one of the MONTONE or else on the LAMONE, he will probably need reinforcements and in that case 362 Inf and 90 P.G. Divs would be available. On the other hand evidence at present suggests that the MONTONE is certainly a temporary line, as it is apparently called GERHILD ONE which presupposes further delaying positions. It is reasonable to suppose then that the enemy is pulling back to a shorter line, and that the speed of his withdrawal will be governed as suggested last week by the weather and Allied pressure. In this case the forces at present at his disposal should be sufficient to carry out the withdrawal to a general line from M. GRANDE to VALLE DI COMACCHIO, and the enemy will obviously try to avoid committing reserve formations in order to give 90 P.G. Div and 362 Div ample time to rest and refit.

Meantime reports from ground sources suggest that the transfer of part at least of 5 Mtn Div from Western ITALY to the Appennine front is in progress. Alpine troops with the divisional sign on their vehicles were observed on the 7th moving East from TURIN towards ASTI, and reports of the same date that large numbers of troops were expected shortly in the PIACENZA area were soon followed up by a flash that 500 Alpine troops on route for BOLOGNA spent the night of 9/10 Nov in the public gardens of PIACENZA while at the same time large bodies of troops had reached the PIACENZA area (between PIACENZA and PARMA.) The transfer of 5 Mtn Div to the main battle front though requiring further confirmation seems a reasonable step. It remains to be seen how long the move will take, for interdiction of railway lines are numerous and frequent transhipments will be necessary, and whether its place on the Franco-Italian frontier will be taken by another formation.

The arrival of the two Italian Republican divisions has been interfered with by the successful dislocation of the BRENNER line and ground sources have reported that many of the troops had to march from BOLZANO to VERONA, while PR has picked up heavy vehicle movement South from the BRENNER. By now the bulk of LITTORIO is believed to have arrived and to have taken over MONTE ROSA's old sector between GENOA and SPEZIA with commitments against Partisans S.W. of PIACENZA. The troops are said to be in good heart at being back in their own country but to have little intention of actually fighting. The ITALIA div is now believed to be on the way South and some BERSAGLIERI troops of the division were reported across the BRENNER on the 6 Nov. Its ultimate destination is unknown but as it will almost

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From N.E. ITALY there is little news. 71 Inf Division has been reported in the Plain South of UDINE, in the sector originally held by 94 Div. 237 Div is still in ISTRIA and elements of 188 Res Mtn Div are reported at various places with some 4 battalions apparently guarding the TRIESTE-FIUME railway. North of UDINE in the TOLMEZZO area Cossack troops provide the garrison and are engaged with the Partisans: as many as 20,000 of these Cossacks have been reported in this area and also in the plain itself, and it seems that they are in strength of at least a division. Conspicuous by its absence in all these reports is 44 Inf Division, and its location remains uncertain.

....2. WESTERN FRONT.....

2. WESTERN FRONT

This week has seen the final clearing of the enemy positions commanding the entrance to the SCHELDT and the launching of two offensives, by 21 and 12 Army Groups. The former is against the enemy bridgehead West of the MAAS river in Eastern HOLLAND; the latter is developing as a pincer movement encircling the great fortress city of METZ from North and South. In the VOSGES we have been exploiting the salient caused by our surprise capture of BACCARAT in the direction of ST. DIE and have reached the outskirts of the latter town.

The attack in LORRAINE began on 9 Nov with two thrusts North East and South East of METZ. The former early succeeded in establishing a bridgehead over the NIEDELLE at KONIGSMACHER and advanced to within two miles of the 1939 German border. Violent German counter-attacks were encountered and progress subsequently was slow but we were able to capture the important town of THIONVILLE (DIEDENHOFEN) where all resistance was reported to have ceased on 14 Nov. South East of METZ, DELME fell on the first day of the offensive and CHATEAU SALINS on 10 Nov. The attack then took a more North Easterly direction, aiming at the railway from SAARBRÜCKEN to METZ and this has now been cut in three places. The important junction of BENESTROFF is closely threatened and a bridgehead has been secured over the river NIED, between there and METZ, which has been subsequently widened and extended. We now hold five of the ring of forts which have been so stoutly defended for so long and it begins to appear as though the enemy were restricting his defences in this area to the immediate vicinity of the city itself. There is no sign of any intentions to evacuate but neither is there any sign of reinforcements for this sector and it is presumed that the enemy is prepared, while resisting as long as possible, to risk losing METZ rather than weaken a more vital sector of the front to reinforce it.

In HOLLAND resistance ceased on WALCHEREN on 9 Nov, and the whole Southern bank of the MAAS and the HOLLANDSCH DIEP is now clear. On 14 Nov offensive was started in the 21 Army Group sector in the direction of VENLO. Good progress was made on the first day and the village of MEIJEL captured; enemy opposition is reported to be moderate but the going is very bad. At latest reports our advanced troops are about five kilometres from VENLO.

On the enemy side reorganisation continues. A new division, 272 Inf Div, has been identified in the area South of TRIER. This appears to be the harbinger of a new series of low-grade infantry divisions. It is clear that the enemy, reckoning on a development and intensification of the Allied offensive, will very shortly bring up all his available reserves in a determined attempt to defeat that offensive and effect a stabilisation which will last out the winter. It is believed that four reformed Parachute divisions are by now ready for 1 Parachute Army and there are five reformed Panzer Divisions in SEPP DIETRICH's 6 Panzer Army which must be primarily intended for the DÜSSELDORF-COLOGNE sector. It scarcely lies in the capabilities of these forces to mount a counter-offensive, especially in view of the enemy oil situation; it is much more likely that 6 Pz Army will be held as a mobile reserve to counter-attack Allied thrusts towards the RUHR and those counter-attacks are likely to be fierce and determined. The Parachute Divisions, which lack mobility, are likely

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and [illegible] clashes on 10 Nov. The latter thrust took a more North Easterly direction, aiming at the railway from SAARBRUCKEN to METZ and this has now been cut in three places. The important junction of RENESTROFF is closely threatened and a bridgehead has been secured over the river NIED, between there and METZ, which has been subsequently widened and extended. We now hold five of the ring of forts which have been so stoutly defended for so long and it begins to appear as though the enemy were restricting his defences in this area to the immediate vicinity of the city itself. There is no sign of any intentions to evacuate but neither is there any sign of reinforcements for this sector and it is presumed that the enemy is prepared, while resisting as long as possible, to risk losing METZ rather than weaken a more vital sector of the front to reinforce it.

In HOLLAND resistance ceased on WALCHEREN on 9 Nov, and the whole Southern bank of the MAAS and the HOLLANDSCH DIEP is now clear. On 14 Nov 5061 offensive was started in the 21 Army Group sector in the direction of VENLO. Good progress was made on the first day and the village of MEIJEL captured; enemy opposition is reported to be moderate but the going is very bad. At latest reports our advanced troops are about five kilometres from VENLO.

On the enemy side reorganisation continues. A new division, 272 Inf Div, has been identified in the area South of TRIER. This appears to be the harbinger of a new series of low-grade infantry divisions. It is clear that the enemy, reckoning on a development and intensification of the Allied offensive, will very shortly bring up all his available reserves in a determined attempt to defeat that offensive and effect a stabilisation which will last out the winter. It is believed that four reformed Parachute divisions are by now ready for 1 Parachute Army and there are five reformed Panzer Divisions in SEPP DIETRICH's 6 Panzer Army which must be primarily intended for the DUSSELDORF-COLOGNE sector. It scarcely lies in the capabilities of these forces to mount a counter-offensive, especially in view of the enemy oil situation; it is much more likely that 6 Pz Army will be held as a mobile reserve to counter-attack Allied thrusts towards the RUHR and those counter-attacks are likely to be fierce and determined. The Parachute Divisions, which lack mobility, are likely to be sent into the line straight away and should prove a great source of strength to the defensive; it is believed that some are already in line in 1 Parachute Army's sector. The newly-arriving infantry which lacks battle experience is likely to be used for preference in quieter areas, relieving better divisions for use in more critical sectors. As always hitherto the relief of threatened portions of the front will have to be effected by accepting weakness elsewhere; it is the same flexible strategy as has been practised with such skill on the Russian front and for the same reason, lack of reserves.

C R Allen

BRIGADIER,
B.G.S.(I).

G.S.I.
A.A.I.
16 Nov 44

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

SECRET

COPY NO 83

H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 34.

OF 10 NOV 44

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this HQ. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

The improvement in the weather in the last few days has enabled operations to be resumed on the Adriatic sector. Developing the bridge-head established over the RONCO at MELDOLA at the end of the last month we had by the 3rd Nov reached CRISTOFANO M 4211 and had also crossed the river just South of Route 9 where we seized positions both sides of the airfield. This did not however appear to worry the enemy further to the North where he remained in occupation of RONCO village, and continued to hold his positions along the West bank of the RONCO with outposts across it at BORGO SISA 4822. On the night of 7 Nov we attacked South of FORLI and by the morning had cleared all the buildings on the Northern perimeter of the airfield and were driving towards S. MARTINO in SIRARA 4215 which was captured in the evening. Heavy fighting continued all day and cost 278 Div and 356 Div some 200 prisoners. Earlier evidence had indicated that the enemy did not intend to hold for long forward of FORLI - prisoners in fact stated that the withdrawal behind the MONTONE had only been postponed owing to the deterioration of the weather at the end of last month - and by night 8/9 Nov the enemy had had enough and decided to pull back to CERRA TWO, the code-name given on a captured map to the FORLI - CASTROCARO M 3510 road running just West of the R. MONTONE. On the morning of 9 Nov our patrols entered FORLI and to the South crossed the RABBI unopposed. North of Route 9 a deserter from 67 F.G.R. stated that on the 8th a runner arrived with orders for his unit to pack up and move off; BORGO SISA was clear by 9 Nov and it is probable that the enemy has pulled back to the RAVALDINO CANAL, which runs Northeast from FORLI to COCCIOLA M 4926. The latter village was still strongly defended today and it is likely that the new enemy delaying position will run as indicated along the R. MONTONE and the RAVALDINO CANAL and hinge at COCCIOLA on to the line he has been holding South of RAVENNA through CASTELLARA 5128 and along the FOSSO GHIAIA.

On the Polcorps front 305 Div and the right wing of 356 Div have been driven further North. On the 6th M. CASALUDA was captured and held against repeated counter-attacks by II Bn 3/4 G.R. that night and the following day. Further West I Bn 576 G.R. was forced to give up DOVADOLA M 3005 on the night of 7 Nov and took up a position 1,500 yards to the North in the area of PIANCERA M 3005. The following day M. LECHIA M 2606 was captured but it

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From the Central and Western parts of the line there is little to relate. Following their unsuccessful attempt to capture VERGOLO M 0033 on 31st Oct little has been seen of the parachutists. The capture of PALAZZO L 6322 provoked severe counter-attacks by 94 Div, but all were repulsed, and similar raids in the SERCHIO Valley by Italians and Germans met with no more success. On the coastal plain we have improved our positions and occupied M. CAVALLO U 9899.

There can be little doubt that the enemy is taking advantage of the present lull South of BOLOGNA and the comparative inactivity on the Western part of the line to carry out some regrouping. Both flanks of the MONTE ROSA Alpine Division have now been identified and this Italian division appears to have taken over a sector between the SERCHIO Valley and the sea,

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though the coastal plain itself is held by a Regt (281 G.R.) of 148 Inf Div. In addition several companies of the SAN MARCO Div have lost prisoners in the MONTE ROSA sector; these companies are presumably attached to gain battle experience since the div is still placed coastwatching West of GENOA. The Italians' return to the line, despite the bouquet handed out by the German communique of 1 Nov, has hardly been a propitious one. The daily rate of desertion has been high, not surprising since most of the personnel of the division were recruited from internment camps in South GERMANY. Two independent reports of the arrival of about a Regt of Germans in the SERCHIO Valley about 4/5 Nov are therefore probably true, and it is likely that the Germans will institute a more vigorous control of the Italians and that they will have to resort to the familiar practice of sandwiching Italian units between German ones. The identity of these German arrivals is unknown. 42 Jg Division used to hold this Western sector, but since it has already been relieved of most of its commitments by 281 G.R. and MONTE ROSA it is probably required for some other task and is unlikely therefore to return. A more probable candidate is another Regt of 148 Div. This would involve a further thinning out of the Ligurian coast which would suggest that the enemy is no longer seriously worried about a possible Allied landing in the Gulf of GENOA. Northwest ITALY has until recently been liberally garrisoned, considering that the only hostile activity has been by Partisans, and the heavy casualties he has suffered on the main front make it inevitable that this luxury be cut down. A report from a ground source dated 6 Nov even suggests that 5 Mtn Div might be preparing to leave: SALUZZO, the H.Q. of the Div, was said to be packed on that day with soldiers preparing to move, so it was rumoured, to the Appennine front. This is completely unconfirmed, but not by any means improbable, especially if its place were to be taken by a battle-weary division from the main front.

Meantime the two new Republican Divisions trained in GERMANY have arrived as reinforcements for GRAZIANI's Army of LIGURIA. ITALIA is still unplaced, but several reports which there is no reason to discredit, refer to the relief of MONTE ROSA by LITTORIO and on the 6th the latter's H.Q. was said to be at BONASCO (3528 near PIACENZA), where some troops of MONTE ROSA were previously engaged on anti-Partisan hunts.

South of BOLOGNA the enemy is clearly resting some of his divisions. Parachutists of 4 Para Div have been reported back in the BOLOGNA area though this does not necessarily discount the possibility that they are still holding a narrow sector. 362 Div is probably in an even more sorry state, and its relief by a new division, rumoured amongst prisoners in the first days of November, may by now have been effected. Certainly it has produced no very recent identifications. It is difficult to see what division is available to relieve it, unless it be 42 Jg Div which has had its Recce Unit and III Bn 25 Regt committed in this sector for some time and has also handed over its commitments on the West coast. Of the other divisions South of BOLOGNA 16 SS, 65 Inf, 29 P.G., 1 Para, 98 Inf, 334 Inf and 715 Inf Divs have all been identified recently. 90 P.G. Div however has been particularly quiet and there has been no contact with it since parachutist prisoners said they believed that 1 Para Division had relieved it. 90 P.G. Div may therefore

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Whereas there is no evidence to suggest any large scale withdrawal, the enemy on the Adriatic has not shown any inclination to hold ground since he pulled back from the SAVIO River. It is quite likely therefore that 76 Corps is conducting a limited fighting withdrawal, the speed of which will depend on the weather and Allied pressure, to a shorter line joining up with the present positions South of BOLOGNA and resting its Eastern flank on the VALLI DI COMACCHIO. Such a line would enable Kesselring to economise on his divisions and draw others out to refit. If this policy of a limited withdrawal is in fact in progress, it is very probable that 76 Corps has been instructed to carry it out with the divisions at present at its disposal, exchanging a tired division with a more healthy one within the Corps if the occasion demands. This would avoid having to commit one of the divisions resting in the BOLOGNA area before it had had time to refit and give those divisions a badly needed respite for reorganisation.

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RESISTEN CONSIDERED GERMAN FORMATION

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2. STANDARD OF EQUIPMENT OF RECENTLY COMMITTED GERMAN FORMATIONS

Prisoners taken in the fighting around HERRNOVEN towards the end of last month have made illuminating statements on the equipment of some of the enemy's recently committed Panzer Brigades. Lorried infantry from one of these formations went into action with armoured TCV's and dual-purpose weapons of inferior design which had arrived less than a week before the formation moved up to the front. The armoured TCV's although brand-new from BERLIN arrived poorly fitted with axles out of alignment and necessitated the crews working in 24-hour shifts to get them ready to move. The dual-purpose BRILLEN anti-aircraft guns (calibre believed 1.5 cm), in which the men had no training prior to using them operationally, had frequent stoppages involving the use of a barrow and lasting up to fifteen minutes.

Sabotage in the case of the vehicles and faulty ammunition in the case of the weapons were the causes to which prisoners ascribed these difficulties. This may in part be true, and the employment in large numbers by the Germans of foreign workers upon whom the present course of the war must be having its effect would tend to lend credence to it as an explanation. But the significant fact which emerges is that the enemy is being forced by the demands for equipment on all fronts to abandon his normal method of carrying out tests and adjustments over a period of seven weeks before AFV's, etc., are despatched for operational use. This is one more piece of evidence of the short "pipe" between German factory and fighting line, a situation which will undoubtedly be aggravated by any increase in operational activity and by the continuance of Allied air attacks on Ordnance depots and AFV and MT assembly plants.

(Source: SHAEF W.I.S. No. 31 of 22 Oct 44.)

3. WESTERN FRONT

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In the Southern sector of the front Allied pressure in the BACCARAT area during the past week has caused the enemy some concern, and a thickening up of 19 Army's forces in this area has taken place. A Panzer Brigade has been transferred Northwards from the BELFORT sector, a Volksgrenadier Division has come down from the North and there have been several local moves on 19 Army's front all tending to reinforce the Northern part of the Army front at the expense of the BELFORT area which is now relatively thinly held.

From BACCARAT to HOELLEN the past week was quiet until Nov 8 apart from sharp fighting around the small German village of SCHMIDT. A new division, 18 Volksgrenadier, has been identified South of METZ in which area on 8 Nov the lull was broken by what the enemy has described as a large scale Allied offensive between PONT A MOUSSON and CHATEAU SALINS. This attack has been launched in what was formerly the sector of 5 Pz Army, which now seems to have gone out of the line altogether. There is as yet no evidence as to how the enemy intends to employ 5 Pz Army. Such armour as the Germans still have in the line is all in the Northern half of the front and it is possible that 5 Pz Army is destined for employment further North, reinforced perhaps with some of the armour now out of the line refitting. Most of this armour however is likely to be incorporated

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In HOLLAND there has been no resumption of the counter-attacks West of VENLO by 9 Pz and 15 P.G. Divs and all the ground so lost in the previous week has been regained after stiff fighting. On the West of the salient, 15 Army, fighting a fierce rearguard action has now withdrawn to the North bank of the MAAS. Elements of 10 SS Pz Division were brought down to the HERTOGENBOSCH area from NIJMEGEN at the start of the week in an attempt to stem the Allied advance, and the enemy has succeeded in getting most of his forces back across the MAAS, at the same time abandoning all the Islands South of the HOLLANDSCH DIEP except WALCHEREN where a small pocket still holds out on the North coast. South of the SCHELDT estuary, 64 Inf Div has ceased all resistance and its commander is in our hands.

....Now that the.....

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Now that the battle for Southern HOLLAND is at an end, it appears that the enemy is engaged in a reorganisation of his chain of command in the West in time to meet the coming battles for the REICH. An accumulation of evidence suggests that a new Army Group - Army Group North - is being formed to take over 15 and 1 Para Armies and charged with the defence of HOLLAND and North West GERMANY. This will leave Army Group B, presumably renamed MITTE, free to concentrate on the RUHR front, with 7 Army and perhaps 5 and 6 Pz Armies under command, while Army Group G, which might logically be called Army Group Süd, holds the front from the VOSGES down to the Swiss frontier. It is not quite clear who will have command of the new Army Group. General RAINER, a cavalryman in the early fifties is now believed to be commanding Army Group G in succession to BLASKOWITZ. However the German radio recently reported to a conference between MODEL, RAINER and BLASKOWITZ which suggests that BLASKOWITZ still hold a command of some sort. We might therefore see him take over the new Army Group in the North. RUNDSTEDT remains the supreme commander in the West.

4. EASTERN FRONT

Interest this week has centred almost entirely on the Southern sector of the front. Apart from German counter-attacks in EAST PRUSSIA which the Germans claim recaptured for them GOLDAP, there has been little change in the Northern and Central sectors.

In HUNGARY, the Russian armour has penetrated into the outskirts of BUDAPEST, where the offensive has come to a temporary halt due in part to bad weather. East of BUDAPEST however, Soviet forces have established a substantial bridgehead over a 35 mile stretch of the TISZA river between KISKORE and POLGAR. South of the Hungarian capital they have extended their hold on the East bank of the DANUBE North of BAJA, and the Germans say that the Russians have effected a crossing of the DANUBE at APATIN.

In YUGOSLAVIA, the enemy's concern is now to gain time, firstly to prepare his defence line West of BELGRADE between the DANUBE and the DRINA South, and secondly to keep open escape roads while his forces withdraw from North ALBANIA and Southern YUGOSLAVIA. West of BELGRADE 13 SS Division is hard at work preparing defences while further East 117 Jg, 1 Mtn and elements of 118 Jg and 264 Inf Divisions are staving off the Russians whose pressure in this area has temporarily abated. Further South, the Russians have been able to capture VALJEVO thereby denying the Northward road from KRALJEVO to BROD to the Germans and forcing them to use the KRALJEVO-SARAJEVO road. Even this route stands now in grave danger for 7 SS Prinz Eugen Mtn Division has been unable to stop the Russians reaching PRIBOJ/DA from which town the Soviet artillery should be able to shell the KRALJEVO-SARAJEVO road.

Meanwhile South of KRALJEVO the weary procession of forces from GREECE and ALBANIA fights its way Northward through the difficult mountain roads of Southern YUGOSLAVIA. A thin screen of German divisions, including probably 11 G.A.F. and 22 P.G. is now protecting these routes against the pressure of combined Russo-Bulgar forces. Elements of at least three divisions (297 Infantry, 104 Jg, 41 Fortress) together with some independent Fortress Units are in the area of Southern YUGOSLAVIA and Northern ALBANIA proceeding North-

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Under circumstances in which the Germans may propose but the Red Army dispose, it is not yet clear what will be the enemy's eventual intentions in South East EUROPE. The general shaping of the vast battlefield suggests that the enemy's present hope is a stand on the line BUDAPEST-DANUBE-across SLOVENIA - and along the DRAVA river while three German-Croat divisions protect his right flank in the Dalmatian hinterland. Once safely behind that

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line Army Group F might hope to reorganise and prepare a delaying zone on the Italian model which would permit a phased withdrawal Northwestwards. The enemy's ability to hold such a line for any length of time will be largely governed by his success in stemming the Russian drive through South East EUROPE towards VIENNA.

C.R. Wilson

CSI(a)
W.O.
10 Nov 44

BRIGADIER,
D.C.S.(I).

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SECRET

COPY NO 83

H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 32.

ON 1 NOV 44.

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this H.Q. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

The weather has played the principal role in operations this week and torrential rain with winds of gale force prevented any major change in the situation. The enemy in the meantime has been carrying out reliefs and readjusting his forces; he has brought over still another division from the Adriatic flank to the sector South of BOLOGNA and on his Tyrrhenian flank he has started to bring in an Italian division and a German regimental group.

On 8 Army front we have advanced to the line of the river RONCO from a point North of MELDOLA (M 4405) to as near to its lower reaches as is practicable or desirable by reason of the marshy nature of the ground. On the Northern flank we have been in contact with 721 Jaeger Regt across the SAVIO on route 16. 26 Panzer Unit continued to patrol East of the RONCO in the area S. PIETRO IN VINCOLI, M 521203 up till 29 Oct but has now probably been pushed back across the RONCO. Astride Route 9 we seized two small bridgeheads across the river on 25 Oct, but heavy rain and a rise in the water level meant that they could not be reinforced and 278 Div, supported by 16 VI tanks, was able to eliminate them next day. Further South we were able to establish a bridgehead South of MELDOLA and are advancing Northwards. MELDOLA itself is clear and we are up to the 10 Northing as far East as the 44 Easting. Further South we have captured CARLINATI (M 4005) and are as far North on the West bank of the river RASEI.

76 Corps has been reduced as far as can be considered safe to reinforce the submerpoint South of BOLOGNA. In the last two weeks its best three divisions, probably the best three still remaining to the Germans in ITALY, have been removed one by one and hastily recommitted on the Central front where they have succeeded in stabilising the position; an

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

The weather has played the principal role in operations this week and torrential rain with winds of gale force prevented any major change in the situation. The enemy in the meantime has been carrying out reliefs and readjusting his forces; he has brought over still another division from the Adriatic flank to the sector South of BOLOGNA and on his Tyrrhenian flank he has started to bring in an Italian division and a German regimental group.

On 8 Army Front we have advanced to the line of the river RENCO from a point North of MELDOLA (M 4405) to as near to its lower reaches as is practicable or desirable by reason of the marshy nature of the ground. On the Northern flank we have been in contact with 721 Jaeger Regt across the MONTANO on route 16. 26 Recce Unit continued to patrol East of the RENCO in the area S. PIETRO IN VINCOLI, M 5212?) up till 29 Oct but has now probably been pushed back across the RENCO. Astride Route 9 we seized two small bridgeheads across the river on 25 Oct, but heavy rain and a rise in the water level meant that they could not be reinforced and 278 Div, supported by Mk VI tanks, was able to eliminate them next day. Further South we were able to establish a bridgehead South of MELDOLA and are advancing Northwards. MELDOLA itself is clear and we are up to the 10 Northing as far East as the 44 Easting. Further South we have captured CARNATE (M 4006) and are as far North on the West bank of the river RANDI.

76 Corps has been reduced as far as can be considered safe to reinforce the schwerpunkt South of BOLOGNA. In the last two weeks its best three divisions, probably the best three still remaining to the Germans in ITALY, have been removed one by one and hastily recommitted on the Central front where they have succeeded in stabilising the position; an excellent example of the advantages Kesselring derives from his good internal lines. The last to go was 1 Parachute Division which began to move off on 26 Oct. It had just completed taking over the sector astride Route 9 from 114 Jaeger Division. The latter went to the coast where it now stretches as far South as the 27 Northing. It is not certain whether 162 Div still has a sector on its left, though it may still be at least entrusted with the counterattacking in this area. If a report is true that it has recently surrendered 2,500 German O.Rs to 114 Jaeger Div - and the PW who gave the information had certainly himself been transferred - its fighting value must be lower than ever and it could scarcely be expected to take a serious part in operations. On the right of 114 Jaeger is 26 Pz Div whose sector extends to within two miles of Route 9. Astride the road is 278 Div with all three regts now up. From North of MELDOLA to CARNATE and on the West bank of the RANDI is 356 Div which has been falling back fairly steadily under pressure throughout the week. 305 and 715 Divs adjoin to the West in the mountainous salient which still protrudes to some thirteen miles South of BOLOGNA. It is not likely that the enemy intends

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to stand on his present positions indefinitely. The RONCO line has already been turned by our crossing at MELDOLA and we know he has already reconnoitred another line in rear. This appears to be in the nature of a switch line to swing back his Southern flank while still covering RAVENNA with his left; the line will presumably run along the FIUMI UNITI and then up the RONCO as far as M 4934 where it runs down a curving ditch to join the MONTONE at FORLI. The central portion of this line was called GOTHIC on a captured map. There is no sign as yet that the enemy is going back to it, and while the RONCO continues to present such an obstacle there is no pressing need, but preparations have already been made in the shape of destroying all the small bridges and culverts between this river and FORLI. Furthermore prisoners from 569 G.R. had heard that it was intended to withdraw behind FORLI and believed that the withdrawal had only been delayed owing to the weather.

On the Central front we have been mainly engaged in consolidating the positions won in the area of MONTE GRANDE though we were able to improve them in the direction of MELDOLA, L 9934. 1 Para Div has now come into the line between 90 P.G. and 98 Div, having relieved 117 G.R. of the latter which was previously isolated from the rest of the Div.

On the West coast the enemy appears to be at last bringing up some Italian troops into the fighting. Deserters who arrived in our lines on 27 Oct report the presence in the area L 1507 of the whole of 2 Alpine Regt of the MONTEROSA Division. This division has been in LIGURIA for some time now, mainly in the area East of GENOA, and it is said to have suffered heavily from desertions. The deserters stated that the whole division was coming into the line and this may be confirmed by a report from another source that it was being relieved in its previous sector by the newly arrived LITTORIA Division. Prisoners were also taken from II Bn 6 San Marco Regt of the LUFT HERMANN Div in the area L 1390½. They say their Bn is attached to 2 Alpine Regt and possibly this is merely a detachment sent down to gain battle experience. Apart from this the Germans have also been reinforced by 2Bn G.R. of 148 Division (previously mentioned 8 Bde Green Regt), prisoners from which were taken on 29 Oct in the area U 9496. It seems possible that when LITTORIA Division arrives it may take over the whole coastal sector with the help of the stiffening provided by the regt of 148 Div and thus release 42 Jaeger Div for employment elsewhere. This sector is perhaps the least important on the front and the most mountainous, and may be regarded as appropriate for Italians, especially a Mountain Division.

In Northern ITALY it seems certain that 148 Division, as suggested last week, moved East from the French frontier to take up the previous position of 356 Division; 2Bn Regt at least came from the area of CAIRO, North of SAVONA. This division has now apparently been upgraded from a Reserve Division and its Regts have been renumbered. Further East LITTORIA Division, which apparently entered ITALY this month

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the positions [illegible] in the area of MONTEMAGNE though we were able to improve them in the direction of MENTANO, L 9934. 1 Para Div has now come into the line between 90 P.G. and 98 Divs, having relieved 117 G.R. of the latter which was previously isolated from the rest of the Div.

On the West coast the enemy appears to be at last bringing up some Italian troops into the fighting. Deserters who arrived in our lines on 27 Oct report the presence in the area L 1507 of the whole of 2 Alpine Regt of the HOHENBOGL Division. This division has been in LIGURIA for some time now, mainly in the area East of GENOA, and it is said to have suffered heavily from desertions. The deserters stated that the whole division was coming into the line and this may be confirmed by a report from another source that it was being relieved in its previous sector by the newly arrived LEPPOSIA Division. Prisoners were also taken from II Bn 6 Gen Above Regt of the 5/87 NANDO Div in the area L 139055. They say their Bn is attached to 2 Alpine Regt and possibly this is merely a detached Bn sent down to gain battle experience. Apart from this the Germans have also been reinforced by 282 G.R. of 148 Division (previously anchored 8 Rec Gren Regt), prisoners from which were taken on 29 Oct in the area U 9496. It seems possible that when HOHENBOGL Division arrives it may take over the whole coastal sector with the help of the stiffening provided by the regt of 148 Div and then release 42 Jaeger Div for employment elsewhere. This sector is perhaps the least important on the front and the most mountainous, and may be regarded as appropriate for Italians, especially a Mountain Division.

In Northern ITALY it seems certain that 148 Division, as suggested last week, moved East from the French frontier to take up the previous position of 232 Division; 231 Regt at least came from the area of CARRO, North of SARZANA. This division has now apparently been upgraded from a Reserve Division and its Regts have been renumbered. Further East LEPPOSIA Division, which apparently entered ITALY this month together with ITALIA Division, is said to be taking over positions near GENOA from MONTEROSA Division. ITALIA has not yet been located though its arrival in ITALY is essential. In the North East 71 Div has now apparently been joined by 4 Div. This is reported by a prisoner from the Divisional Alarm Coy, captured in the Central front. He states that the division had left for the TRIESTE area and the majority had already crossed the Po when the serious situation South of BOLOGNA made reinforcements urgently necessary and the Alarm Coy, formed mainly from the three 'I' Coys of the three infantry regiments, was rushed back into the line. 4 Division, though it has had fairly heavy losses, is nothing like so battered as 71 Division; possibly the enemy was anxious not to let it sink too low in strength for the sake of its reputation and to avoid creating a bad impression in AUSTRIA, the country of origin of most of the troops. Northeastern ITALY is now apparently the standard area for divisions to refit, though there have never been as many as two there at one time before. Possibly GAF may think that, when reformed, these divisions would be well placed there should it be necessary to switch them to meet an increased Russian threat to the Eastern frontiers of AUSTRIA.

.....2. WESTERN FRONT....

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2. [illegible]

Once again the Southern half of the front has shown few major changes. The reinforcement of the German 19 Army has continued with the arrival of an Infantry division from NORWAY in the area North of BEIPOORT, and the Southward shift of an Infantry division from METZ to the area West of SARREGUEMS. It is in this area - on 19 Army's right wing - that the enemy has had to give most ground in the past week, and he has been showing considerable concern at his apparent inability to halt our progress. With the additional reinforcements, 19 Army's resistance has been steadily stiffer in the past few days, and such progress as we have made has been immediately challenged by enemy counter attacks.

From SAARBRUECK to LAUTER the front has been very quiet with only [illegible] attempts to break the lull. LAUTERN itself now has its first non-[illegible] Mayor for 5 years. It is reported that the few civilians remaining feel considerable bitterness towards the German Army and SS Units who indulged in widespread looting before their departure.

On the British Army sector in BELGIUM there has been lively activity on both sides of the salient. The enemy seems at last to have decided on withdrawal from Western HOLLAND, and to facilitate the extrication of his forces has been launching sharp counter attacks against the Western flank of the salient in the WAALHEM area. 9 Pz and 15 S.S. Divs have been the chief objects of Army's front for some [illegible] was already in the area, but 15 S.S. had been standing there [illegible] a fortnight. Between them the two formations succeeded [illegible] in driving us about three miles on an eight mile front. However, having done that, their attacks seem to have petered out and some of the lost ground has been regained. It is, of course, possible that the attacks may yet be renewed in order to draw off Allied forces from the West of the salient. 116 Pz Div is out of the line [illegible] appearance. It is more likely, however, that this formation will join the three other Panzer divs which are believed to be resting and refitting somewhere in HOLLAND. If so it has in fact done duty, the enemy beginning of a strong armoured reserve which should be of considerable [illegible] when [illegible] brigade battles are resumed.

On the West of the salient 15 Army had been for some time showing signs of distress, but found it hard to keep open the BEVELAND isthmus. With the loss and the enemy's hopes of re-establishing land contact with its forces in ZUID BEVELAND had failed, it seems to have realised that there was little to be gained by holding an uneconomic and potentially dangerous front. The withdrawal of the depleted and exhausted divisions of 15 Army has on the whole been orderly and it is unlikely that we shall succeed in cutting off any large number of the enemy. The withdrawal in ZUID BEVELAND has been less stubborn and the action has been [illegible] disposal of the enemy in a surprisingly short space of time. Extensive minefields rather than enemy resistance have been the main worry. Some 2,500 PW have been taken on BEVELAND to date but a large number of Germans is reported to have crossed the causeway into WALCHEREN.

[illegible] When this has surrendered [illegible] clear of

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On the British Army sector in HOLLAND there has been little activity on both sides of the salient. The enemy seems at last to have decided on withdrawal from Western HOLLAND, and to facilitate the extrication of his forces has been launching sharp counter attacks against the eastern flank of the salient in the VENLO area. 9 Pz and 15 P.G. Divs have been the chief of the trouble. 9 Pz Div was already in the area, but 15 P.G. had been missing from 15 Army's front for nearly a fortnight. Between them the two formations succeeded initially in driving us back to about three miles on an eight mile front. However, having done that, their attacks seem to have petered out and some of the lost ground has been regained. It is, of course, possible that the attacks may yet be resumed in order to draw off Allied forces from the west of the salient. 116 Pz Div is out of the line and may put in an appearance. It is more likely, however, that this formation has been withdrawn to join the three other Panzer divs which are believed to be resting and refitting somewhere in GERMANY. If it has in fact done this, the enemy will be building up a strong armoured reserve which should be of considerable 5056 him when large scale battles are resumed.

On the west of the salient 15 Army had been thrown back in some disorder, but found the hard to keep open the ZEVENALD to VENLO. When this was lost and the enemy's hopes of re-establishing land contact with the forces in NORD BEVELAND had failed, he seems to have realised that there was little to be gained by holding on uneconomic and potentially dangerous front. The withdrawal of the depleted and exhausted divisions of 15 Army has on the whole been orderly and it is unlikely that we shall succeed in cutting off any large number of the enemy. His withdrawal in NORD BEVELAND has been less stubborn and the position has been cleared of the enemy in a surprisingly short space of time. Extensive minefields rather than enemy resistance have been the main worry. Some 2,500 PW have been taken on BEVELAND to date but a large number of Germans is reported to have crossed the causeway into WALCHEREN.

Core remains WALCHEREN. When this half submerged island is clear of the enemy ANTWERP can be put into use by the Allies and the long enemy resistance in Southern HOLLAND will be over. The Germans may yet stand on the WAAL or the LEK, but with ANTWERP open they will doubtless appreciate that the Allies are now in a much stronger position to resume the offensive. In anticipation of this the enemy must find more troops to hold his front, and any shortening of the line which will release even a small number of divisions for a quick rest and refit will be very acceptable. At the present withdrawal to the SCHEL - MAAS line (referred in Summary No 66) looks about the best course of action.

5. CENTRE FRONT

The 2nd Army has continued to make good progress in NORTH where the enemy has put up comparatively little opposition. ARNHEM, 17 miles East of NIJMEGEN, is now in the hands of the Canadians who are trying to get control of ZUIDER ZEE fjord. There is as yet no indication of the line on which the Germans propose to stand. It is hardly likely that they would voluntarily give up the iron ore deposits at GELLIVARA, and a stand somewhere to the East of that town is to be expected.

.....Page 3 Table.....

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From the Baltic to the Czechoslovak frontier the front has been fairly quiet in the past week. In LATVIA the Germans have spoken of Russian attacks from AUCE against the bridgehead they still hold in the Western end of LATVIA. There has been no confirmation of this from the Russians. Fighting in East PRUSSIA though sharp has been only local in character, but further South the Germans have been forced to give ground N.W. of PRAG where the Red Army has extended its hold on the Eastern bank of the VISTULA.

In the southern sector, the Germans have now withdrawn completely from the Transylvanian salient. Their fierce resistance at DEBRECEN a fortnight ago won for them time to extricate intact most of the 8 Army forces in the salient while after the loss of DEBRECEN the Russian drive from the South of the salient was frustrated by a counter-attack which continued for the enemy temporary possession of NYIREGYHAZA. In the Hungarian plain, however, the Russians have made considerable progress. KECSKEMET, 45 miles South East of BUDAPEST has been reached, and the Russian forces hold a twenty mile stretch of the DANUBE North of BAJA, at which point they are within 160 miles of VIENNA.

In YUGOSLAVIA the Red Army now has a firm grip on the DANUBE from NOVI SAD to BELGRADE. The enemy is still falling back in this area and is reported to be constructing defences between the DANUBE at VUKOVAR and SID, thence Southwards to the junction of the SAVA and DRINA rivers. 118 Jg Div (from the Dalmation coast) and the unreliable 13 SS Division, are reported to be preparing this defence line and they will no doubt eventually be joined by the tattered remnants of 1 Mountain, 7 SS, and 117 Jaeger Divs, now falling back from GREECE.

Further South, the Russian advance now directly threatens the enemy's withdrawal route via SKOPLJE - KRALJEVO - SARAJEVO. This is one of the two all-weather highways for German forces withdrawing from GREECE. In anticipation of the loss of this road, the enemy is taking steps to open up two alternative escape roads in YUGOSLAVIA. Elements of 297 Div are now clearing the subsidiary fair-weather road from NOVI PAZAR to VISEGRAD, where it joins the main KRALJEVO - SARAJEVO road. Other forces from GREECE including elements of 104 Jaeger and 21 SS Skanderbeg divisions are reported to be concentrating at PRIZREN and PRIBOJ in order to keep open the approaches to the all-weather highway running parallel to the coast from PODGORICA to MOSTAR. The Partisans are challenging the enemy's hold on this road and hold PRIBOJ, a key point on it.

Meanwhile in GREECE final demolitions were reported to have been carried out at SALONIK, harbour on 30 Oct and the town is now clear of the enemy. Enemy rear guards have been contacted at ARNISSA, 60 miles West of SALONIK and 10 miles from the YUGOSLAV frontier, and it is probable that it is the isolated

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[illegible] has been reached, and the Russian forces hold a twenty mile stretch of the DANUBE North of BAJA, at which point they are within 160 miles of VIENNA.

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Meanwhile in GREECE final demolitions were reported to have been carried out at SALONIKA harbour on 30 Oct and the area is now clear of the enemy. Stray rear words have been contacted at ARVISSA, 60 miles West of SALONIKA and 20 miles from the YUGOSLAV frontier, and it is probable that apart from isolated small bodies cut off by guerillas, the last German soldier will have left GREECE in the course of this present week.

for BRIGADIER,
G.S.O.1 (I).

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APPENDIX 'A' TO G.S.I. INTELLIGENCE
NOTES NO 33 DATED 1 NOV 44

LINES OF DEFENCES ON THE RIVER RENO

Air photos taken on 20 and 24 October show the beginnings of minor defences along the River RENO from ARGENTA (M 2960) to CENTO (L 9574). A delaying position along the RENO in this area has some topographical advantages. Firstly, the River RENO is a ready-made anti-tank obstacle, the difficulty of which will increase if rainy weather continues in the Appennines. Secondly, there are two large areas South of the RENO, one between ARGENTA and MOLINELLA (M 1961) and the other South of MALALBERGO (M 0472), which consist of water-meadows, mine-fields and wet ground liable to become waterlogged after appreciable rain. Thirdly, by bringing his line on the impassable VALLI DI COMACCHIO, which is no doubt his intention, the enemy shortens his front, the distance from CENTO to the VALLI DI COMACCHIO being about 35 miles. Northeast of CENTO, however, the RENO turns Southwest, and this western end of the line is uncertain, loose and vulnerable, and can be outflanked. For any protracted stand the enemy would have to lengthen and continue his defences westwards, but of this there is as yet no indication, nor is there any outstanding natural feature like the RENO of which he can make use. The RENO line thus appears rather as a holding line on the enemy's Eastern flank, an intermediate position while the remainder of the forces in the Northwest are extricated.

The RENO line so far consists of minor defences only, chiefly machine-gun positions, and by no means continuous. There is no comparison with the fairly well-developed VENETIAN line. ARGENTA on Route 16 (RIMINI - RAVENNA - FERRARA) will probably be a keypoint in the defensive organisation. However of the town there is an intricate system of defences under construction covering the map square M 2663 (near BOCCALEONE M 2563), with extensions to M 2764. In the area East of BOCCALEONE there are some machine-gun positions North of the RENO. Southeast of MALALBERGO there are twelve machine-gun positions in the area M 1160. MALALBERGO itself on Route 64 (BOLOGNA - FERRARA) will probably be another keypoint in the line. There are minor defences at L 9478 and L 9078. In the area of CENTO minor defences have appeared both West and East of the river. In all, these defences do not add up to much, but they are the first signs of a line as usually found. Ground sources have so far provided only very little information on this new line of defences. According to one source, whose report goes back to the summer, there are minefields along the RENO between ARGENTA and CENTO and also Southwards to LAVEZZOLO (M 3155), Southeast of ARGENTA. The same source states that the bridges along the RENO are mined and that there are anti-tank barriers on the North bank of bridgeheads.

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doubt his intention, the [illegible] northeast of Gothic Line, the VALLI di COMACCHIO being about 35 miles. [illegible] the RENO turns Southwest, and this western end of the line is uncertain, loose and vulnerable, and can be outflanked. For any protracted stand the enemy would have to lengthen and continue his defences westwards, but of this there is as yet no indication, nor is there any outstanding natural feature like the RENO of which he can make use. The RENO line thus appears rather as a holding line on the enemy's Eastern flank, an intermediate position while the remainder of the forces in the Northwest are extricated.

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(Source: 8 Army Intsum No.853
29 Oct 44.)

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COPY NO 82

H.Q. A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 32

OF 27 OCT 44.

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this H.Q. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

(a) General

Since the battle for the Appennines started Kesselring has managed by a skilful policy of robbing Peter to pay Paul to avoid losing control of the situation. Whenever it looked as if we might break through as for instance on the PORRETTA ridge S.W. of RIMINI and at LIVERGNAGO on Route 65, he has always been able to produce reinforcements from another part of the front just in time to seal off the break-in and bring the Allied attack to a halt. In the first place 14 Army was drawn upon to provide one division after another for the Adriatic. Then when Fifth Army attack got under way 14 Army had to thin out on the Western part of the Gothic Line to produce troops for the Centre; and latterly it has been the turn of the Adriatic front which has had to honour the loan it made in late August and early September. The arrival of 29 P.G. Div just East of Route 65 and 90 P.G. Div North and N.E. of M. GRANDE L 9932, has enabled the enemy temporarily at least to slow down our advance on BOLOGNA. This policy of switching divisions from one threatened sector to another is one that has been forced on Kesselring by lack of a central reserve and by the certainty that he will receive no fresh formations and probably only a proportion of the replacements he needs. It is a makeshift method which, in view of heavy casualties cannot be continued indefinitely, but one which Kesselring had hoped would enable him to wear down the Allied attacks and finally halt them. It is in fact a question of physical and mental endurance. Up to about a week ago Kesselring seem to have remained quite confident that it was only a question of time before the Allies would give up the struggle which was gaining them ground but slowly and at considerable cost. Despite the ever-growing threat which had brought Fifth Army to within 10 miles of BOLOGNA, he showed no sign of anxiety about his forces on the Adriatic. Now, however, with the Allies still making progress from M. GRANDE towards Route 9, despite the arrival in that sector of 90 P.G. Division, and with his forces on the left wing of 10 Army considerably weakened, there are signs that even if he is not yet losing his nerve he is at any rate beginning to pull back voluntarily in the plain in order to straighten his line and avoid any unnecessary risk of an Allied breakthrough.

(b) Eighth Army

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Since the battle for the Appennines started Kesselring has managed by a skilful policy of robbing Peter to pay Paul to avoid losing control of the situation. Whenever it looked as if we might break through as for instance on the FORMIATO ridge S.W. of RIMINI and at LIVERGNANO on Route 65, he has always been able to produce reinforcements from another part of the front just in time to seal off the break-in and bring the Allied attack to a halt. In the first place 14 Army was drawn upon to provide one division after another for the Adriatic. Then when Fifth Army attack got under way 14 Army had to thin out on the Western part of the Gothic Line to produce troops for the Centre; and latterly it has been the turn of the Adriatic front which has had to honour the loan it made in late August and early September. The arrival of 29 P.G. Div just East of Route 65 and 90 P.G. Div North and N.E. of M. GRANDE I 9932, has enabled the enemy temporarily at least to slow down our advance on BOLOGNA. This policy of switching divisions from one threatened sector to another is one that has been forced on Kesselring by lack of a central reserve and by the certainty that he will receive no fresh formations and probably only a proportion of the replacements he needs. It is a makeshift method which in terms of heavy casualties cannot be continued indefinitely, but one which Kesselring had hoped would enable him to wear down the Allied attacks and finally halt them. It is in fact a question of physical and mental endurance. Up to about a week ago Kesselring seems to have remained quite confident that it was only a question of time before the Allies would give up the struggle which was gaining them ground but slowly and at considerable cost. Despite the ever-growing threat which had brought Fifth Army to within 10 miles of BOLOGNA, he showed no sign of anxiety about his forces on the Adriatic. Now, however, with the Allies still making progress from M. GRANDE towards Route 9, despite the arrival in that sector of 90 P.G. Division, and with his forces on the left wing of 10 Army considerably weakened, there are signs that even if he is not yet losing his nerve he is at any rate beginning to pull back voluntarily in the plain in order to straighten his line and avoid any unnecessary risk of an Allied breakthrough.

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(b) Eighth Army.

On the Eighth Army front by the 18th we had advanced to within 1,000 yards of CESENA on the South, and the enemy was back on Heinz Two, the perimeter defence of the town continued N.E. along the road to CESENATICO and the line of the CANALA del MONTALETTO ditch. South of the town however, we had already reached the banks of the SAVIO just East of BORELLO and it was apparent that the enemy had no intention of staying long on HEINZ TWO. The paratroops were moving back on the 19th and on the same day CESENA was cleared except for a few snipers. That night a bridgehead was seized across the river in the area of Route 9. Although this bridgehead came in for heavy shelling the enemy made no concerted effort to counter-attack it, 1LL Div being content to carry out several sharp raids. Meantime the enemy was carrying out a relief; the departure of 90 P.G. Div left the Emilian Highway in the care of 1LL Jaeger Div, and feeling that this task should be extended to a more dependable division the enemy decided to switch 1 Para Division, by now reformed, from the relatively quiet sector on the road to RAVENNA to take over from 1LL Div and come in on the right of 26 Pz Div. The exchange was effected by 25 Oct, and the enemy started to pull back from the SAVIO, which a captured map shows to be called

.....ERIKA.....

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ERNA, but not before we had forced another bridgehead at PIEVE SESTINA M 5911 on 26 Pz Div front. 2 o Panthers were knocked out and one captured intact, and the latter came in useful in beating off an armoured counter-attack on the 25rd; fighting in this area cost the enemy 150 PW, mostly from 9 P.G.R. That night the parachutists were pulling back to the next delaying position on the BEVANO river (called FRANCESCA) and events of the following day showed that 26 Pz Div, 278 Div and 356 Div had made withdrawals to conform. It now appears that FRANCESCA was also nothing more than a delaying position.

These withdrawals must cause 356 Div, holding S of FORLI, and 305 Div on its Western flank to pull back. On the boundary of these two divs we captured CALBATA 3291 from II Bn 756 G.R. on the 20th Oct, and occupied M. GROSSO R 3495 against very bitter opposition. Every resistance then stiffened still further and though we have crossed the River RANDI stiff fighting has been going on for two days round M. dell MARINA R 2996. On the rest of 305 Div front and to the N.W. the enemy started pulling back on the 23rd and we made local advances through the hills. M. SPADARO M 0426 which we captured on the night 19/20 Oct (only to be driven off again the next day in a violent counter-attack by 334 Div assisted by I Bn 956 G.R.) was also found abandoned on the 23rd.

(c) Fifth Army

In the Centre most of the fighting has been in the area of M. GRANDE L 9932 and M. CERERE M 0021 which were captured on the 20th. Only half of 90 P.G. Div had arrived when we seized these heights, and though II and III Bns 361 G.R. tried to counter-attack our positions on the 20th they were pinned down by heavy fire and suffered considerable casualties; only one weak counter-attack eventually developed. Our positions have been steadily improved in this area and due to the arrival of the remainder of the div we are now some thousand yards beyond M. GRANDE, held MASSERONI M 0131 and have beaten off strong counter-attacks on M. CASTELLANO L 9835. On the 24th our swift advance to VERGATO M 0234 surprised the enemy and put us within four miles of Route 9.

West of 90 P.G. Div the line is held by a jumble of units - the remnants of 356 Div, formed into small battle-groups and supported by the arrival in the Lehr Brigade sector of III Bn 29 Jaeger Regt (42 Div) with old units of 42 Div and 96 Div interspersed. 29 P.G. Div holds from exclusive Route 65 East to about the 95 grid; on the 24th a strong counter-attack by 73 G.R. on SKIMMER E 9052 temporarily regained the hill but by nightfall we were again in possession. 26 SS Div's left boundary now extends to approximately the 84 Easting, so that 4 Para and 65 Divs are reduced to a front of only some 3,000 yards between them. Both have suffered heavy casualties and the paratroops in particular have long been without a rest; the chances are that they later may have been withdrawn into reserve. Similar fortune may have come the way of 44 Div with whom there has been very little contact, and 98 Div, which has lost a further 700 prisoners since it was reformed last month, will soon be qualifying for a further refit.

On the Western part of the Gothic Line 232 Div has now settled into the sector South of PISTOIA and its arrival has allowed 94 Div to follow the

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[illegible] (attacked by 1 Pz Div C.R.) was also found abandoned on the 23rd.

(c) Fifth Army

In the Centre most of the fighting has been in the area of M. GRAINE L 9932 and M. CERRERE M 0021 which were captured on the 20th. Only half of 90 P.G. Div had arrived when we seized these heights, and though II and III Bns 361 G.R. tried to counter-attack our positions on the 20th they were pinned down by heavy fire and suffered considerable casualties; only one weak counter-attack eventually developed. Our positions have been steadily improved in this area and due to the arrival of the remainder of the div we are now some thousand yards beyond M. GRAINE, hold PRASSINETTO M 0121 and have beaten off strong counter-attacks on M. CASTELLARO L 9035. On the 24th our swift advance to VERRUNO M 0234 surprised the enemy and put us within four miles of Route 9.

West of 90 P.G. Div the line is held by a jumble of units - the remnants of 362 Div, formed into small battlegroups and supported by the arrival in the Lake Brigata sector of III Bn 25 Jaeger Regt (42 Div) with odd units of 44 Div and 98 Div interspersed. 29 P.G. Div holds from exclusive Route 65 West to about the 93 grid; on the 24th a strong counter-attack by 71 G.R. on BELMONTE E 9032 temporarily regained the hill but by nightfall we were again in possession. 16 SS Div's left boundary now extends to approximately the 84 Easting, so that 4 Para and 65 Divs are reduced to a front of only some 3,000 yards between them. Both have suffered heavy casualties and the parachutists in particular have long been without a rest; the chances are that they later may have been withdrawn into reserve. Similar fortune may have come the way of 44 Div with whom there has been very little contact, and 98 Div, which has lost a further 700 prisoners since it was reformed last month, will soon be qualifying for a further refit.

On the Western part of the Gothic Line 232 Div has now settled into the sector North of PISTOIA and its arrival has allowed 94 Div to follow the normal practice in this area of gradually side-stepping Eastwards. In the fighting which led to the capture of pt 826 L 7325 prisoners were taken from 276 G.R. and the boundary of 94 Div with 16 SS Div appears to be just East of here. First impressions of the new 94 Div are that it has been reformed mainly with veterans wounded on other fronts and young recruits: their fighting morale appears to be high. 42 Jaeger Div, less the Recce Unit and one Bn both committed in the Central sector, still holds the coast and may have to extend its responsibilities to CARRARA where, according to prisoners taken South of BOLOGNA from three different Fortress Bns, 135 Fortress Brigade was disbanded on the 17th Oct and is now being used to provide reinforcements for divisions on the main front.

(d) Western ITALY

In Western ITALY the departure of 232 Div has left the GENOA area bare of a German formation. Reports have been received however of the move of a German division Eastwards along the coast from the MARITIME Alps. The enemy has probably therefore denuded the frontier of a division, either 34 or 148 Div

....since 5 Mtn Div....

since 5 Mtn Div was still reported S.W. of TURIN on 19 Oct. 148 Div seems the most likely choice as a move to the GENOA area will give this division a chance to reform in a quiet area after its losses in S. FRANCE. 157 Div - North East of TURIN - has already been reformed according to a prisoner who states that on the 1st Oct it was upgraded to a Mtn Jaeger Division. Reinforcements to the extent of one Regt arrived for it from 188 Reserve Mountain Division.

2. WESTERN FRONT

The lull on the Western front has been broken during the past week by renewed British pressure on the West bank of the salient in HOLLAND and on the Southern bank of the SCHELDT estuary. Apart from this, now that AACHEN has fallen, the front seems to have entered a static period of which the enemy is taking advantage to give some of his divisions a badly needed refit. Down in the South the reshuffling on 19 Army's front during the past two or three weeks has met anything stiffened enemy resistance, and the stubborn withdrawal has been characterised by enemy counter-attacks and attempts at infiltration. To the North 5 Pz Army, its armour heavily drawn upon to meet the needs of the AACHEN area, has had a quiet week, and in the ARDENNES too the calm of the past month has been uninterrupted. At AACHEN, the garrison commander finally surrendered on Oct 21st after the troops under his command had given proof of their loyalty to the Fuehrer by sending (via the radio) 20,000 Marks for the Winterhilf. The enemy attitude here has been less aggressive than might have been expected in view of the concentration of armour in the area. Resistance has of course been fierce in the extreme but there has as yet been no sign of any major counter-attack developing.

North of AACHEN there has been no important change in the front line. Elements of 5 Para Div, which together with 3 and 6 Para Divs had been missing from the line, have been identified near VENLO. How much of the division is actually there is problematical. Allied pressure in this area has not been such as to warrant fresh reinforcement, especially as the enemy is probably training 5053 a reserve of refitted parachute formations out of the remnants of the three parachute divisions which have escaped destruction in the East.

In the AACHEN area the general thinning out of enemy armour continues and the elements of 9 SS Pz Div which were there last week have now been withdrawn. There has been an appreciable reduction too in the artillery in the WILDENBURG-AACHEN sector - the number of guns having dropped in the course of a fortnight from 200 to 130. An undated captured map has given some fuller details of the line which the enemy has been constructing North of AACHEN and which appears to be a Northwards extension of the Siegfried Line. This defensive position runs from DENSTEL to ERKELE thence along the ISSEL and then down the Dutch-German frontier as far as VENLO. It appears from the map that this line is to be held by seven divisions. Another line is reported forward of this, running from the ROER NEW South Eastwards to the WILDEN West of AACHEN.

However, despite these preparations for an event al withdrawal from Western HOLLAND, there is no evidence yet to show that the enemy is trying to withdraw his forces from the large pocket on the West of the SCHELDT. He still has a nominal twelve divisions here estimated at some 105,000 strong and they have

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has had a quiet week, and in the ARNHEM too the calm of the past month has been uninterrupted. At AACHEN, the garrison commander finally surrendered on Oct 21st after the troops under his command had given proof of their loyalty to the Fuehrer by sending (via the radio) 10,000 Marks for the Winterhilf. The enemy attitude here has been less aggressive than might have been expected in view of the concentration of armour in the area. Resistance has of course been fierce in the actual but there has as yet been no sign of any major counter-attack developing.

North of AACHEN there has been no important change in the front line. Elements of 5 Para Div, which together with 3 and 6 Para Divs had been missing from the line, have been identified near VENLO. The rest of the division is actually there is problematical. Allied pressure in this area has not been such as to warrant fresh reinforcement, especially as the enemy is probably trying to form a reserve of refitted parachute formations out of the remnants of the three parachute divisions which have escaped destruction in the West.

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In the AACHEN area the general thinning out of enemy armour continues and the elements of 9 SS Pz Div which were there last week have now been withdrawn. There has been an appreciable reduction too in the artillery in the NIJMEGEN-ARNHEM sector - the number of guns having dropped in the course of a fortnight from 200 to 150. An undated captured map has given more fuller details of the line which the enemy has been constructing North of ARNHEM and which appears to be a Northwards extension of the Siegfried Line. This defensive position runs from DEVENTER to ZWOLLE thence along the IJSSEL and then down the Dutch-German frontier as far as VENLO. It appears from the map that this line is to be held by some seven divisions. Another line is reported forward of this, running from the ZUIDER ZEE South Eastwards to the RHINE West of ARNHEM.

However, despite these preparations for an eventual withdrawal from Western HOLLAND, there is no evidence yet to show that the enemy is trying to withdraw his forces from the large pocket on the West of the SCHELDT. He still has a residual twelve divisions here estimated at some 200,000 strong and they have been offering very determined resistance to all our efforts at expanding the salient to the West. On the face of it prudence would dictate the abandonment of all HOLLAND, except for the WALCHEREN and BEVELAND fortresses, especially as the enemy has evidently abandoned all his offensive plans East of NIJMEGEN. But prudence has not always been a characteristic of the German High Command and stronger evidence will be needed before a withdrawal from HOLLAND can be described as imminent or even probable.

For the time being the enemy must be mainly concerned with building up some reserves both of infantry and of armour to bolster up his inadequate resources. He certainly has need of them. The withdrawal of three parachute formations from the line has been referred to above. Two Panzer Divisions are also resting and presumably refitting. This leaves the enemy, according to SHAEF's calculations, with some 300,000 personnel actually in the line. Even taking into account the troops now out of the line and those tied up in the coastal fortresses, it is doubtful on this calculation whether his strength in the West exceeds an equivalent thirty-five plus about five-five in the form of Fortress

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APPENDIX '...' TO A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE
[illegible] DATED 25 OCTOBER 1944.

The following is a translation from the Croatian of a German docum... captured by the Partisans, place and date of capture unstated.

2nd Panzer Army,
Section Ia/14 No.4173 Secret.

SECRET

HQ, 30th June 1944.

SUBJECT: Experience derived from recent defensive fighting in ITALY.
(situation on 17th May 1944.)

1. Cooperation between the different arms achieved by the enemy forces has proved to be our greatest threat, particularly with the armoured forces, where ever ACC tanks have sometimes been employed.

2. The French have renounced their former methodic manner of waging war and their example has been followed by the British and the Americans. Recently our enemies, particularly with their armoured forces, have attempted to exploit immediately any local breakthroughs or wedges, and convert them into a strategic breakthrough. Following the Russian example, they can hold occupied territory with such strong forces that counter-attacks by local reserves are unable to regain lost ground. Consequently it is necessary for the counter-attack to follow immediately after the breakthrough, as any delay threatens the success of the counter-attack.

3. Cooperation between arms. If the enemy tanks fail to breakthrough, they generally withdraw about 300 metres and signal by rockets. This is the signal for the artillery to open fire.

Measures should be taken to ensure cover. Where ground offers the possibility units should be thinned out. Defensive measures against enemy tanks should be continued from defended positions.

4. Sighting points for enemy artillery. The enemy makes use of prominent ground objectives (church towers etc.) behind our lines as sighting points for his artillery. These objectives should be removed after consultation with the local authorities, and upon orders issued by the commanding officer. The local authorities should be informed beforehand in order that their objections may be taken into consideration.

5. Shrapnel fire. High casualties have been caused by low bursting shells. Niches should be built in trenches to protect personnel.

6. Panzerfaust. The range of this weapon is known to the enemy and his tanks do not approach our infantry nearer than 40-50 metres.

Attack should be made from a well cashed position and not before the enemy has reached the favourable range. Attacks against enemy tanks outside this range are useless.

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7. It should be borne in mind that French Moroccan troops are capable of passing anywhere where mules can pass and there is always a possibility of deep outflanking moves by them over terrain normally regarded as impassable.

8. The enemy, by making use of his amphibious vehicles, has rapidly crossed streams and water obstacles. There have been as yet unconfirmed reports of amphibious tanks. Therefore all water obstacles should at any rate be observed, if they cannot be properly occupied by troops. In this connection it is useful to mine beaches along their edges which are nearest to our positions.

9. The enemy is making ever more use of his Air Force on a scale as yet unprecedented. This is one of the general problems which we have to face.

After a successful breakthrough on the main front, the enemy takes every opportunity, by day and by night, to ensure that his fighter aircraft make it impossible for us to bring up reinforcements and supplies to our troops. Attacks

....are directed.....

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are directed against individual vehicles and mainly take place against those sections of the road from which dispersal is impossible (bridges, dams, etc.).

There has been a case where 100 attacks against one important bridge have been made in less than 24 hours. These attacks are apt to cause a delay of from 2 to 3 days in the movement of reserves and regrouping. The enemy has such superiority in the air that it is difficult for our own and to calculate this with any reasonable accuracy. The following counter-measures are recommended :-

a) The employment of adequate "Provost" forces by officers in charge of road traffic;

b) A definite allocation as to which roads are to be used by which type of transport.

c) Labour to be held in readiness at vital points in order that repairs may be put in hand forthwith.

d) A sufficiency of light mobile Flak Units.

e) Engagement of low flying planes by all fire every possible point. (See this Army Group Order Ia/Id No. 1685/44 Secr. of 9/6/44).

(sgd). Fritz Von Varnbueler, Colonel,
for Chief of General Staff.

11 Pz Jaeger Division,
Section Ia No. 8 F.
No. 4857/44 Secr.

19/7/44.

SUBJECT: Experiences derived from recent defensive fighting in ITALY.

NOTE FOR DIVISION: These recent experiences are particularly valuable. C.Os are responsible that all concerned are acquainted as soon as possible with such parts as refer to their particular activities.

(sgd) Goltzen, Lt.Col.,
GSO (1).

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APPENDIX 'B' TO A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE
NOTES NO. 32 OF OCT 27TH, 1944.

AVAILABILITY OF OFFICERS IN THE GERMAN ARMY

Two documents have been received which throw considerable light on the German problem of finding suitable officers to command units and formations in the field. The first of these is in the form of notes made by Dr. FREYTAG, IIa of LXXX Corps, at a conference held in PARIS on 4 and 5 February 44 for Adjutants-General, which give a comprehensive picture of losses of officers and anticipated requirements.

a) Officer casualties up to 20 January 44

Killed	23,776
Wounded	67,469
Missing	16,805
(Exclusive of	5,000 officers lost at STALINGRAD)

b) Losses by ranks up to 1 January 44

	Generals	Cols	Lt-Cols	Majs	Capts	1st Lts	2nd Lts
Killed	35	104	135	576	2000	6563	17346
Wounded	89	200	281	1084	4742	15561	44526
Missing	25	76	110	357	960	2866	4194

c) Relative losses by Arm of Service

The highest losses of officers were among Panzer Grenadier units, followed by Panzer, Inft. Div, Engineers, Artillery, Signal and Supply troops in that order.

d) Future Requirements

14,000 were needed for new formations.

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e) General Staff Officers

The 1,900 General Staff appointments were filled by 964 General Staff officers, 233 officers assigned to the General Staff, 90 former General Staff officers and 500 reserve officers.

f) Divisional Commanders

Command of a division can only be gained by front-line service. Regimental commanders not fit to command a division to be promoted only in the normal way. Command of a training division to be given only to former commanders of active divisions who have been wounded or fallen sick.

g) Regimental Commanders

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b) Losses by ranks up to 1 January 44

	Generals	Cols	Lt-Cols	Majs	Capts	1st Lts	2nd Lts
Killed	33	124	135	576	2070	6565	17546
Wounded	19	200	281	1084	4752	15561	44326
Missing	25	76	110	257	960	2866	4134

c) Relative losses by arm of Service

The highest losses of officers were among Panzer Grenadier units, followed by Panzer, Infantry, Engineers, Artillery, Signal and Supply troops in that order.

d) Future Requirements

10,000 were needed for new formations.

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e) General Staff Officers

The 1,900 General Staff appointments were filled by 964 General Staff officers, 335 officers assigned to the General Staff, 90 Panzer General Staff officers and 500 reserve officers.

f) Divisional Commanders

Command of a division can only be gained by front-line service. Regimental commanders not fit to command a division to be promoted only in the normal way. Command of a training division to be given only to former commanders of active divisions who have been wounded or fallen sick.

g) Regimental Commanders

Were urgently needed. 240 Regimental commanders were casualties in 1943.

h) Intelligence Officers (Ic)

Intelligence officers to be given accelerated promotion only if they have held an active command previously. The N.S.F.O. is not subordinate to the Ic.

The second document contains the conclusions of a conference for Adjutant-Generals held by the O.K.H. on 16 and 17 June 44 and forwarded by the Adjutant-General of Panzer Army to the Adjutant-Generals at Corps with the express proviso that it was not to be transmitted in writing below Corps. The following are the main points of interest:

a) Difficulties have arisen in the general personnel situation, mainly in the filling of vacancies of company commanders and higher ranks, especially regimental commanders.

.....b).....

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b) Young officers may not be discharged or employed under the conditions. They must be sent to the front as soon as possible, even if the period of service is less than 6 months at the front.

A better training of young officers beyond the present standard is not possible. Quality of officers depends upon the amount of training and experience they have had before commissioning. It is, therefore, necessary to commission to the front as soon as possible those officers who have had a minimum of training and experience.

c) All efforts must be made with a view to determining the Fuehrer's confidence in officers. Only such officers can hold staff positions and be promoted. Report to headquarters by 15 July 44.

d) Anyone who is recommended for promotion to the rank of General must have commanded at the present time or in the past a division in battle. Officers will be made to make the age to 52 years. Officers below 29 years of age are at present not considered for promotion to command.

e) There is an urgent need for army commanders. The officers who have not yet been employed as army commanders are to be sent to the front as soon as possible. The age limit for the command of an army is 45.

f) Medical officers who have not been properly employed as officers who have not yet been employed as Major HITLER is to be sent to the front. Medical officers who have not had the chance to prove themselves as commanders at the front are to be sent to the front as soon as possible. Officers who have been in charge of divisions at the latest within two months.

g) Officials who have been in charge of divisions at the latest within two months. Officers who have not been employed as commanders may be promoted to the rank of General provided they have proved themselves as commanders at the front. All officers who become generals must have commanded a division in battle for a period of at least 6 months at the front. Officers who become generals must have commanded a division in battle for a period of at least 6 months at the front. Officers who become generals must have commanded a division in battle for a period of at least 6 months at the front.

h) Particular caution is to be exercised in the selection of officers for the Eastern front. Particular caution is to be exercised in the selection of officers for the Eastern front. Particular caution is to be exercised in the selection of officers for the Eastern front.

i) The number of officers at present in ZEO, 200 (1,200 General officers).

e) [illegible] (universities) must be considered for officers' careers. A degree is in preparation which will exclude from admission to the universities all those graduates who failed to become officers.

f) There is an urgent need for Army commanders. The Führer has requested the names of ten generals who are fit for the command of an Army to be submitted to him. Ang 45.

g) Medical officers who have not been properly employed as well as finance officers who have not yet been employed at all will be reported to Gen. Major FICHENSCHER to be sent to the front.

h) Colonels who have been in charge of divisions at the battle front as actin commanders may be promoted to the rank of General within two months.

i) Employment of Staff officers at the Front.

Troops over and over again request that older Staff Officers be offered an opportunity of commanding troops. All officers before being posted to Staff appointments should have commanded a company for 6 months at the front, before promotion to Lt.Col a battalion for 3 to 6 months and before promotion to Gen.Major a regiment, and before promotion to Gen Lt. a division.

j) No exchange between the Eastern and Western fronts will take place in the future.

k) The number of officers at present is 240,000 (1,200 general officers).

l) Particular concern is at present felt over cases of corruption on the largest scale, extending into the highest ranks. Such cases are apt to influence attitude and morale of the people and may have decisive consequences for the outcome of the war.

According to a decision of Fieldmarshal KEITEL all cases of corruption will be brought before the Central Court in BERLIN even for members of the forces in the field.

Cases of corruption should not be covered up or presented in a less damaging light. Caution when pleading for officers charged with corruption.

m) The Chief of the Army Personnel Office urgently requests that all officers down to the lowest rank become familiar with the order concerning Conflicts.

n) Extremely strained conditions in the replacement of officers require a constant examination of all officers, regimental, battalion and company commanders, who are qualified to be promoted to the next higher rank. They must be transferred.

.....o).....

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c) Ersatz to revert to the Personnel Office in the event of a son of a General being killed in action.

p) NSFO (National Socialist Political Commissar)

Of 740 existing positions only 450 have been filled.

q) Youngest Officers in the Various Ranks:

1st Lt	20	years of age
Captain	21	" "
Major	24	" "
Lt Colonel	25	" "
Colonel	32	" "
Gen.Major	38	" "
Gen.Lt	42	" "
General	47	" "
Col.General	48	" "

(SOURCE: AFHQ WIB No.28 of 30 Sep 44)

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SECRET

COPY NO 103

H.Q., A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO 31

OF 20 OCT 44

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this H.Q. Their purpose is to keep such units in the general battle picture.

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

HITLER's orders are being obeyed and Army Group 'C' remains committed to a desperate defensive. This week KESSELRING has clearly recognised that the most dangerous part of his line lies astride route 65; he has thrown in there again elements of an exhausted division which was due for a rest (44 Inf), a battle group of another division whose main body is further West (94 Inf), a mobile div from the 8 Army sector (26 P.G.) and parts of another (90 P.G.) and by bringing into the line for the first time a newly-formed division previously in N.W. ITALY (232 Inf) he has enabled 94 and 16 SS Divs to extend to the East and thicken up their sectors. This has meant a certain weakening on the East coast, and ground has been abandoned there. And it has not prevented Fifth Army from advancing to within 10 miles of BOLOGNA.

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On the Adriatic the enemy at the beginning of the week was defending the SCOLO RICCHI ditch, the position known as CHRISTA TWO, though 1 Para Div was still forward of this. On 15 Oct we crossed this obstacle astride route 9 without much opposition and by next day the enemy in the plain was definitely withdrawing to the PISCIATELLO, known as HEDWIG ONE. On 17 Oct we had obtained a small bridge-head at 634065. There is still one more delaying position laid down, HEDWIG TWO, which runs just in front of CESENA, before the river S.VIO, the enemy's main defence line on his present scheme, is reached. It seems that the enemy does not intend any serious stand on the lines forward of the S.VIO which he has laid down but rather that they are regarded as phase lines in what looks almost like a timed programme of withdrawal. A minor, controlled withdrawal on the extreme left was probably forced on him by the necessity to detach troops for the vital central sector; moreover, if the danger of a breakthrough in the centre is as great as these measures seem to indicate it will be safer for him to have his left back on the S.VIO rather than on the RUBICON.

In the Mountain sector of 8 Army's front the enemy made no attempt to hold the upper S.VIO and by 14 Oct 570 GR was back behind the BORELLO. The rest does

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1. ENEMY SITUATION

HITLER's orders are being obeyed and Army Group 'C' remains committed to a desperate defensive. This week KESSELRING has clearly recognised that the most dangerous part of his line lies astride route 65; he has thrown in there again elements of an exhausted division which was due for a rest (44 Inf), a battle group of another division whose main body is further West (94 Inf), a mobile div from the 8 Army sector (29 P.G.) and parts of another (90 P.G.) and by bringing into the line for the first time a newly-formed division previously in N.W. ITALY (232 Inf) he has enabled 94 and 16 SS Divs to extend to the East and thicken up their sectors. This has meant a certain weakening on the East coast, and ground has been abandoned there. And it has not prevented Fifth Army from advancing to within 10 miles of BOLOGNA.

On the Adriatic the enemy at the beginning of the week was defending the SCOLO RICCO... ditch, the position known as CHRISTA TWO, though 1 Para Div was still forward of this. On 13 Oct we crossed this obstacle astride route 9 without much opposition and by next day the enemy in the plain was definitely withdrawing to the FISCIATELLO, known as HEDWIG ONE. On 17 Oct we had obtained a small bridgehead at 634065. There is still one more delaying position laid down, HEDWIG TWO, which runs just in front of CESENA, before the river S.VIO, the enemy's main defence line on his present scheme, is reached. It seems that the enemy does not intend any serious stand on the lines forward of the S.VIO which he has laid down but rather that they are regarded as phase lines in what looks almost like a timed programme of withdrawal. A minor, controlled withdrawal on the extreme left was probably forced on him by the necessity to detach troops for the vital central sector; moreover, if the danger of a breakthrough in the centre is as great as these measures seem to indicate it will be safer for him to have his left back on the S.VIO rather than on the RUBICON.

In the mountain sector of 8 Army's front the enemy made no attempt to hold the upper S.VIO and by 14 Oct 870 GR was back behind the BORELLO. The regt does not, however, appear to have intended seriously to hold the line as we were able on 17 Oct to push patrols as far as R 5299. The fact is that 356 Div has much too long a front for its present strength; its sector extends from the 10 to the 50 Eastings and covers the whole of the great bulge running South down to the 90 Northing. Here again the enemy has weakened his positions and accepted the necessity of withdrawal by removing troops from the central sector: 29 P.G. Div which was to the East of 356 has moved hastily to 5 Army front and has been inadequately replaced by 993 GR of 278 Div.

In the centre the most important fighting has been due South of BOLOGNA, on and in the neighbourhood of route 65. At the beginning of this week the main weight of the defence was taken by 4 Para, 65 and 362 Divs from left to right. Elements of 44 Div were being put in on 13 Oct and parts of all three regts have now been identified between the 93 and 97 Eastings. A further stiffening was seen on 14 Oct when prisoners were taken both from bns of 267 GR on the 901 Easting; they seem however, to be separate from the rest of 94 Div which is still apparently between VERGATO and PORRETTA TERME. On 14 Oct also a prisoner was taken from III Bn 71 P.G.R. in the area L 909307; since then all three bns of the regt have been

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ident fied in this sector. There is no news of 1[illegible] R but it looks as if 29 PG Div will probably take over the sector East of route 65. Finally on 18 Oct prisoners were taken at L 9430 from III Bn 361 of 90 PG Div; II Bn is also in the neighbourhood though I Bn is still back on the Adriatic and lost PW, also on 18 Oct, at M 638062. 90 PG Div is for the moment therefore split between the two fronts. In the mountains 65 Div, which has had very heavy losses, has been restricted to a very narrow sector actually astride route 65. On its West 4 Para Div is also on a very narrow sector since PW have been taken from 36 SS on the 83 Easting. 16 SS Div sector appears to stretch as far as the 73 Easting, where PW have been taken from 274 GR, and 94 Div, in turn to have a boundary with the newly arrived (and newly formed) 232 Div somewhere in the area of the 58 Easting. The result has been a pronounced thickening up in the area immediately South of BOLOGNA. In spite of this we have succeeded in advancing some two miles beyond LIVERGNANO (L 8729) which was captured on 15 Oct and in fierce fighting have inflicted very heavy casualties on the enemy.

There has been no evidence of any important change in the enemy's rear areas but the arrival in the line of 232 Inf Div, which is believed to be the division previously carried unidentified in the area North of GENOA, must imply some reshuffling in N.W. ITALY. In fact KESSELRING must realise that, especially with winter coming on, he has not much to fear from the Allied formations East of the Alps and that he can if he wishes detach forces from 75 Corps to strengthen his position on the Ligurian coast. 232 Div's replacement round GENOA will almost certainly have come from there and there have in fact been reports of movement into the area from the West. In any case if the Appenine position is pierced both 75 Corps and Graziani's Army of LIGURIA will have to carry out a fairly rapid withdrawal to the East to avoid being trapped between the advancing Allies and the Swiss frontier. There is some evidence already that the Germans are stripping the area South of the Po of everything useful which can be removed; large herds of livestock are reported going North, for instance, and it is believed that useful industrial installations are also being dismantled. In view of the probable difficulties of the food situation in the REICH this winter one of the reasons for KESSELRING's stubborn defence of the Apennines may be to enable the harvests of EMILIA and PIEDMONT to be gathered and sent back across the Alps. At any rate he is clearly making some preparations against the time when it may no longer be possible to obey HITLER's orders.

2. WESTERN FRONT

Although with the exception of the AACHEN area and the SCHELDT estuary the front has been comparatively quiet during the past week, there has been considerable activity behind the enemy lines. In the South, the reinforcement of 19 Army's right wing last week by a Southward shift of 11 Pz Div proved inadequate to effect complete stabilisation of the front. Slow though our advance in the VOSGES has been, every day has forced 19 Army to give more useful ground. Conscious of this, and of the general weakness of 19 Army, the enemy has given a little more support to his Southern flank by the transfer of a Pz Bde from the METZ sector to the Southern [illegible]

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2. EASTERN FRONT

Although with the exception of the AACHEN area and the SCHELDT estuary the front has been comparatively quiet during the past week, there has been considerable activity behind the enemy lines. In the South, the reinforcement of 19 Army's right wing last week by a Southward shift of 11 Pz Div proved inadequate to effect complete stabilisation of the front. Slow though our advance in the VOSGES has been, every day has forced 19 Army to give more useful ground. Conscious of this, and of the general weakness of 19 Army, the enemy has given a little more support to his Southern flank by the transfer of a Pz Bde from the METZ sector to the Southern VOSGES. However so far this added reinforcement has failed to produce the desired effect and the slow withdrawal of 19 Army has continued.

Further North in the METZ-NANCY area the armoured concentration which had proved so troublesome in the latter half of September has now finally dispersed with the departure of 106 Pz Bde to 19 Army and of 3 PG Div which has been sent North to stiffen up the AACHEN sector. 17 SS PG Div still remains and there is a fair amount of infantry in the METZ-NANCY sector but the enemy's offensive plans seem finally to have been abandoned and the PARROY Forest which at one time held a considerable concentration of enemy armour is almost entirely in our hands.

Armour both from this sector and from the British Army Group sector has been transferred with some haste to the AACHEN area where the American attack has caused the enemy to abandon all offensive plans elsewhere in order to reinforce the newly threatened area with all the armour available. There are now four armoured divs, one PG Div, a Panzer Brigade, and a heavy Tank Bn as well as considerable infantry forces at AACHEN. The town itself has been completely cut off with the link-up of Allied forces at WURSELEN three miles to the N.E. but constant enemy counter-attacks continue, and our progress is of necessity slow. The interesting thing about the German reinforcement of the AACHEN area is that it has for the most part been secured ...../

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been secured at the cost of his offensive intentions at NIJMEGEN. A fortnight ago he had five Pz divisions East of NIJMEGEN and from their dispositions it was very clear that he hoped to launch a counter-attack which would eliminate our bridgehead over the WAAL and regain him NIJMEGEN. Today there remain, it is true, elements of 9 and 10 SS Pz Divs in the area NE of NIJMEGEN, but 9 Pz, 116 Pz and 1 SS Pz Divs and 501 Heavy Tank Bn have all been shifted back to AACHEN. The counter-offensive at ARNHEM has been thrown to the winds, and the enemy's prospects of holding a firm line on the Eastern flank of the salient in face of Allied air and artillery superiority have appreciably diminished. South of NIJMEGEN the enemy has in fact had to give ground, albeit slowly and stubbornly in the OVERLOON area, while his bridgeheads over the lower RHINE West of ARNHEM have been withdrawn.

There has been little to report on the West of the salient where activity on both sides has been confined to patrols. In the area of the SCHELDT estuary however there has been fierce fighting. 6 Para Regt and 70 Inf Div have been battling hard to keep open the causeway to ZUID BEVELAND and WALCHEREN. Control of the road and railway has passed from one side to another several times, but throughout the week we have at all times been able to keep the road under observation and small arms fire. On WALCHEREN itself flooding has made a large portion of the island uninhabitable. On the South bank of the SCHELDT estuary contact has been established between the Canadian bridgehead over the SAVOJAARDS PLAAT and that over the LEOPOLD Canal.

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The events of the past week have given striking illustration of the assertion made in last week's summary that the enemy is able to reinforce one threatened area only at the expense of another. In particular his shortage of armoured reserves has become all too apparent. Twice in the past six weeks the enemy has attempted to effect a concentration of armour with the object of launching counter-attacks at some crucial sector. On both occasions, at LUNEVILLE and at NIJMEGEN, he has had to abandon the attempt because his armour at the last minute was called away to meet a new threat developing elsewhere. This is a bankrupt situation which must spell disaster for him when eventually an improved supply position enables the Allies to launch the offensive on the grand scale again. In preparation for that day it is to be expected that he will try to build up an adequate armoured reserve possibly by the formation of new armoured divs, more probably by routing and refitting existing formations. In the meantime he has a round total of about 60 divisions in the West equivalent to roughly half that number of full strength divisions. So long as the threat develops only in one sector at a time these are adequate to meet the situation. The test will come when he has to meet a crisis at several points simultaneously.

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G.S.I.
A.A.I.

20 Oct 44.

BRIGADIER,
S.G.S.(I).

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SECRET

COPY NO 103

H. Qr. A.A.I. INTELLIGENCE NOTES NO. 50

OF 13 OCT 44

These Notes have been introduced to meet the requirements of certain units not normally in receipt of the ordinary Intelligence Summary issued by this H.Q. Their purpose is to keep such units in the General battle picture.

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NOTE: No Intelligence Notes were issued on 5 Oct 44.

1. ENEMY SITUATION.

Whatever the enemy's intentions may have been at the critical stage of the battle in the middle of last month - and our main precautions against a possible withdrawal over the Po were undoubtedly taken - there can be little doubt that KESSELRING is now determined to hold the Apennines and fight in the RENO Plain as long as he can. In the stubborn battle of attrition he has fought he has clearly been playing for time, hoping to wear down the attacks of 5 and 8 Armies till the weather broke and came to his assistance. In part it must be confessed that KESSELRING has succeeded in his object, for though the Gothic Line has now been shattered south of its Eastern extremity, where in any case our attempts have not been serious, he has been able to slow down our advance and on the Eastern coast to bring it to a halt in the Plain itself. For this he is much indebted to the weather which in the past ten days has reduced the RENO Plain to a morass and has greatly hampered operations in the mountains. A gambler's luck and an apparently planned destruction of Allied strength and resources enabled him to hold out, albeit at cost of heavy casualties, till the weather broke and restored the power of Allied air and armoured superiority.

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Since 1 Oct progress on the Adriatic has been limited to the mountains South of SAVIGNANO where 278 Div, 114 Div and 356 Div were unable to prevent our crossing of the PISCIATELLO RUBICONE. Our advance has no immediate ramifications further North where 90 PG Div, now complete on Route 9, 26 Pz Div with elements of 20 G.F Div under command, 29 PG Div and 1 Para Div, in that order from South to North, retained their hold on the Eastern bank of the stream. By the 10th however, the right wing of 76 Corps had been driven back to a line running approximately from LONGIANO - [illegible] to [illegible] and 90 PG and 26 Pz Divs' positions [illegible]

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1. ENEMY SITUATION.

Whatever the enemy's intentions may have been at the critical stage of the battle in the middle of last month - and certain precautions against a possible withdrawal over the Po were undoubtedly taken - there can be little doubt that KESSELRING is now determined to hold the Apennines and fight in the RIMINI Plain as long as he can. In the stubborn battle of attrition he has fought he has clearly been playing for time, hoping to wear down the attacks of 5 and 8 Armies till the weather broke and came to his assistance. In part it must be confessed that KESSELRING has succeeded in his object, for though the Gothic Line has now been shattered once and for all its far-western extremity, where in any case our attacks have not been serious, he has been able to slow down our advance and on the Adriatic coast to bring it to a halt in the Plain itself. For this he is much indebted to the weather which in the past ten days has reduced the RIMINI Plain to a morass and has greatly hampered operations in the mountains. A gambler's luck and an apparently abroad appreciation of Allied strength and resources enabled him to hold out, albeit at cost of heavy casualties, till the weather broke and reduced the power of Allied air and armoured superiority.

Since 1 Oct progress on the Adriatic has been limited to the mountains South of SAVIGNANO where 278 Div, 114 Div and 356 Div were unable to prevent our crossing of the FIUMICINO RUBICONE. Our advance had no immediate repercussions further North where 90 PG Div, now complete on Route 9, 26 Pz Div with elements of 29 G.P Div under command, 29 PG Div and 1 Para Div, in that order from South to North, retained their hold on the Western bank of the stream. By the 10th however, the right wing of 76 Corps had been swung back to a line running approximately from LONGIANO - T. PISCIATO to MONTE CODRUZZO and 90 PG and 26 Pz Divs' positions opposite SAVIGNANO began to be threatened from the flank. By the 11th our patrols were able to cross the FIUMICINO against negligible opposition and advance 2,000 yds up Route 9. There are many watercourses and canals nearly all equally suitable for delaying positions and probably the enemy will choose to hinge his line near CASTROCARO (8660), from where the line could follow either the SCOLO RIDOSSA or SCOLO RICONCHILLO and join up with the canal which runs along 095 Northing, where air observation has shown certain defensive preparation in progress. Alternatively he may decide to go right back to the line of the R. Savio. Meanwhile the enemy had taken certain precautions to meet our thrust through the mountains. Four of the best Divisions in Italy were sitting in the Plain ostensibly our progress in the mountains and unable to prevent it. 29 PG Div was therefore taken out of the line, its sector being presumably taken over by 1 Para stretching Southwards and 26 Pz Div Northwards, for no new formation had arrived, and placed initially in reserve. On the night 8/9 Oct III Bn 71 GR was moved in transport to MONTE CODRUZZO and went straight into the line and since then deserters from I Bn have also reached us and prisoners from 15 GR have been taken. The most likely role for 71 PG Div is on the right ...../

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the right of 114 Div, still a strong Division, between it and 356 Div which despite the arrival of a March Bn in October is still in a very poor state. 356 Div will therefore probably be pushed away to the West behind the Savio River.

South of BOLOGNA despite bitter resistance and continuous reinforcing the enemy has been gradually forced further and further back. Desperate attempts to regain M. BATTAGLIA 10617 ceased about 4 Oct, when the enemy was forced to switch his efforts Westwards where 4 Para Div was in difficulties on Route 65. The enemy had apparently expected our main thrust to develope up the road to IMOLA and it was here that he brought in 334 Div (relieved on Route 64 by 16 SS Div) to take over part of the heavy responsibility shouldered by 4 Div. The latter at one time stretched from M. BATTAGLIA across to about the 95 Easting, but latterly it seems to have vanished from the line altogether, leaving the Eastern part of its sector to 334 Div and the Western part to 98 Div. The latter, replenished from a regiment of the SILESIA Reinforcement Div, has now all regiments in the line again: it has already had casualties since its return, losing 150 PW on one day.

It is on the main FLORENCE-BOLOGNA road that the enemy has had most cause to worry. Astride this road were two very battered divisions, 362 and 4 Para Div; the latter took the brunt of our attack on the Gothic Line, and the former has been driven back through the mountains East of the road with heavy casualties. The identification of 147 G.R. - 65 Div - brought in in an unsuccessful attempt to hold M BIBELE L 9125, was the first evidence of a move across by 65 Div, though there had been indications for some time that moves were in progress in 65 Div sector North of PISTOIA. It is now known that 94 Div, which was very badly cut up in May and June and retired to North East ITALY to reform, has come back into the line and taken over 65 Div's sector. The latter has therefore been released for a more active role and is now astride Route 65 engaged in desperate fighting round LIVERGNANO 8729; and 4 Para Div which has suffered heavy casualties, including 1,400 prisoners alone since 10 Sep, is now reduced to a narrow sector between 65 Div and 26 SS Div. There are signs in fact that 16 SS Div is encroaching into 4 Para Div's area - 33 prisoners were taken between the 81 and 82 Eastings - and though prisoners stories that they are about to be relieved may be no more than wishful rumours, a short rest and refit for those parachutists who have been in continuous action since ANZIO is very likely.

KESSELRING now has some twenty-eight divisions under his command, of which eighteen are committed in the front line and two (44 and 362 Divs) are in immediate reserve reforming with old battalions probably still forward or returning to the line after a short period of rest; five are in N.W. ITALY - 148 and 157 Res Mtn Divs, 34 Inf Div, 5 Mtn Div (less one regt involved in the Adriatic fighting and since identified on one day N.E. of BATTAGLIA) and an unidentified division reported North of ZENO.; in LIGURIA and N.W. ITALY are 188 Res Mtn Div, 237 Div and 71 Div which is reliably reported to have reached the GENOA area where presumably it will combine garrison duties with reorganisation in the same way as its predecessor - 94 Div. With this force - equivalent to some 15 full strength divs - and GRAZIANI's Republican Forces which now number some 3 trained divisions, of doubtful fighting quality but useful for occupational duties, the Italian front is now by comparison more strongly held than any other German front. It is therefore surprising that KESSELRING has not been called upon to give up any divisions for the Western Front, especially in as much as all the divisions which have been involved in the fighting in ITALY are trained and seasoned troops while many of the divisions recently committed in the West

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.....WESTERN FRONT....

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2. WESTERN FRONT

Although there has been no spectacular change in the front line since the last Notes, the period has not been unsatisfactory for the Allies. In the South, 19 Army has been forced to give ground every day. In the NANCY area, all enemy counter-attacks have come to nothing, while North of METZ and on both flanks of our salient in HOLLAND, small but useful advances have been made. In the rear of the present front line, the fortress of CALAIS has been taken, and the CAP GRIS NEZ guns have fired their last rounds on to English soil.

At the end of September, 19 Army was weakened by the transfer of 11 Pz Div from the BELFORT area to the NANCY sector where 5 Pz Army was making strenuous efforts. Even with its departure the depleted forces of 19 Army have continued to offer vigorous resistance, but have been unable to prevent the Allies from making steady gains, particularly on 19 Army's right flank where LUNEVILLE has been taken by American forces. To the North of 19 Army in the LUNEVILLE-NANCY-METZ sector, 5 Pz Army, reinforced by 11 Pz Div and a Panzer Brigade, has been utilising its armour with vigour. It was in this sector that an armoured concentration was reported at the end of Sep. Since then, the enemy has employed as many as 200 tanks in action here in a series of violent counter-attacks. The object of these attacks has probably been to blunt the nose of our advance across the MOSELLE in the direction of the VOSGES. In this area it is clear that the enemy prefers to make full use of the natural advantages for defence of the terrain rather than fall back to the Siegfried Line in a sector where it suffers the double disadvantage of the kink at SAARBRUCK, and of being on the RHINE itself South of KARLSRUHE. Having temporarily halted our advance in this area, it looks as if the enemy is abandoning his offensive activity and a Southward shift of his armour from the NANCY area to reinforce 19 Army's right wing is becoming apparent. Both 11 Pz and 21 Pz Divs have shifted South and it is probable that 15 P.G. Div has followed suit.

Between METZ and AACHEN the German Seventh Army's front has been quiet. There has been a considerable thinning out of enemy armour in the ARDENNES recently, leaving this the most weakly held sector of the whole front, particularly in front of LUXEMBOURG where Fortress Troops are now believed to be in position on the West Wall. One well tried 2 SS Pz Div is still in the line, but four of the armoured Divs formerly in this area have been withdrawn. The disappearance of these forces is reminiscent of the departure of 5 Pz Army at the beginning of last month, and like 5 Pz Army, they may reappear, after a refit, in a new sector. One at least has already made its appearance S.E. of ARNHEM.

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The AACHEN area has been lively in the past week, although here too the bulk of the enemy armour has been withdrawn from the line. The only new identification since the last Notes has been in this sector - 246 Gren Division, a rehashed version of the infantry div which was destroyed in the East in June. The enemy has been counter-attacking with vigour but with little success South of AACHEN, while North of the town our attack has encountered desperate enemy resistance from pillboxes, artillery and mortars around GEILENKIRCHEN.

The withdrawal of 9 and 116 Pz Divs and 105 Pz Brigade from the AACHEN area

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reported at the end of Sep. Since then, the enemy has employed as many as 200 tanks in action here in a series of violent counter-attacks. The object of these attacks has probably been to blunt the nose of our advance across the ROERMOND in the direction of the VOSSEN. In this area it is clear that the enemy prefers to make full use of the natural advantages for defence of the terrain rather than fall back to the Siegfried Line in a sector where it suffers the double disadvantage of the kink at STRASBOURG, and of being on the RHINE itself South of KAMERBURG. Having temporarily halted our advance in this area, it looks as if the enemy is abandoning his offensive activity and a Southward shift of his armour from the NIJMEGEN area to reinforce 19 Army's right wing is becoming apparent. Both 11 Pz and 21 Pz Divs have shifted South and it is probable that 15 P.G. Div has followed suit.

Between MAAS and AACHEN the German Seventh Army's front has been quiet. There has been a considerable thinning out of enemy armour in the ARNHEM 5046 recently, leaving this the most weakly held sector of the whole front, particularly in front of LUXEMBOURG where Fortress Troops are now believed to be in position on the West Wall. The well tried 2 SS Pz Div is still in the line, but four of the armoured Divs formerly in this area have been withdrawn. The disappearance of these forces is reminiscent of the departure of 5 Pz Army at the beginning of last month, and like 5 Pz Army, they may reappear, after a refit, in a new sector. One at least has already made its appearance S.E. of ARNHEM.

The AACHEN area has been lively in the past week, although more too the bulk of the enemy armour has been withdrawn from the line. The only new identification since the last Notes has been in this sector - 246 Grun Division, a reformed version of the infantry div which was destroyed in the East in June. The enemy has been counter-attacking with vigour but with little success South of AACHEN, while North of the town our attack has encountered desperate enemy resistance from pillboxes, artillery and mortars around GEILENKIRCHEN.

The withdrawal of 9 and 116 Pz Divs and 105 Pz Brigade from the AACHEN area suggested that the enemy was preparing a mobile force for use in another sector - probably in the British salient in HOLLAND. It was not surprising therefore to find all three formations together with 1 SS Pz Div reappearing on the East of the salient. The enemy has now the elements of five armoured divisions in this area. The new arrivals provided timely reinforcement for the weak and poor quality infantry divisions of 1 Para Army and their appearance in this sector has enabled the enemy to launch a series of vigorous, though up to now unsuccessful, counter-attacks against the right flank of the salient. These attacks have been launched from the REICHSWALD, S.E. of NIJMEGEN, and from the area N.E. of NIJMEGEN, suggesting that the enemy's intention is to eliminate our bridgehead over the WAAL. So far, however, the enemy attacks have not been in very great strength, partly because of the hammering his armour has received from our artillery and air force, partly because of his supply difficulties over the waterways. On the West of the salient, 15 Army with its forces fully committed has been fighting hard, but has been unable to prevent us advancing North and South of the WAAL, nor from

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progressing into HOLLAND North of the TURNHOUT-ANTWERP Canal. Some Eastward movement has been observed North of ARNHEM but this does not as yet seem to be on a scale to suggest that a major withdrawal of 15 Army is in progress. The enemy has probably over 100,000 men to the West of our salient including the large number who escaped to WALCHEREN island last month and it is to be expected that superfluous bodies are now being removed before Allied pressure compels the withdrawal of the entire 15 Army.

Although only one new division has appeared in the West during the past week, there seems no reason to believe that we have seen the end of what has been called the Götterdämmerung wave of new divisions. Despite reinforcements, the enemy's forces in the West are still inadequate to hold the present line against a large scale Allied attack. Nowhere has he anything to spare, and the reinforcement of one threatened area is only achieved at the expense of another. The arrival of further reinforcements for the West is therefore to be expected. All Goebbel's words about the total mobilisation with which he has been entrusted may not be empty boasts, and we shall undoubtedly see more Grenadier divisions putting in their appearance. On the other hand the Panzer Brigades of which at least seven have been in action in the West, do not seem to have been very successful and it is doubtful whether any more will be formed. They had been formed for the most part from battered Pz Divs, and although of good fighting morale, were too small to recuperate after heavy losses. The first priority for reinforcements, particularly in infantry, must still be in HOLLAND where the enemy may yet hope to get through to EINDHOVEN from the East in conjunction with 15 Army in the West. Holding only second place to this, the enemy strategy must call for the destruction of our foothold across the Siegfried Line in the AACHEN sector. Here the line has already been pierced and the threat of an Allied breakthrough must be ever present. The reappearance in that sector of some of the armour now refitting seems very probable. For the rest, the West must take its chance for reinforcements in competition with the sagging front in the East where the threat to Germany's frontiers is now developing from yet another direction.

C.E.R. Sharpe

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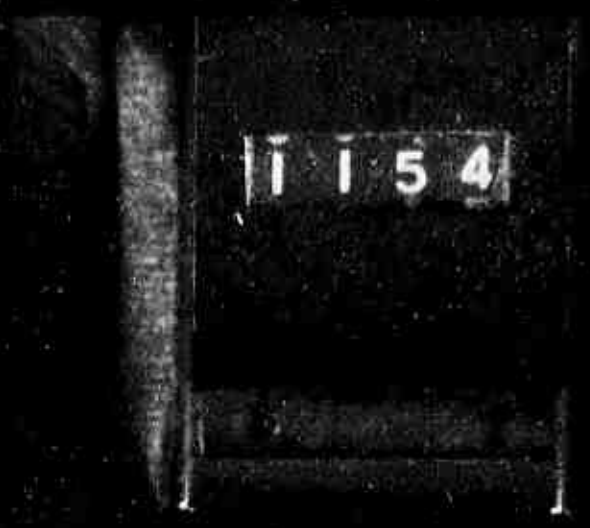
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