

FIRST U.S.
ARMY

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FIRST U. S. ARMY

SUMMARY

This was the senior UNITED STATES Army in the European Theater, having assumed command on the army level in October 1943, and was the D-Day army on 6 June 1944. It continued its NORMANDY invasion operations throughout June and July, executing a beachhead breakout during the latter month called Operation COBRA, then exploited the achievement during August and early September, pursuing the enemy through northern France and Belgium, to the Belgium-GERMANY border, where the FUSA was situated on 13 September. This arrival on the enemy's WEST WALL -- The SIEGFRIED Line, inaugurated the Battle of German, which continued until interrupted by the enemy's Ardennes Counteroffensive on 16 December.

Resurgence of the Northern Local Concept.

On 29 September, FUSA ordered a coordinated attack for about 1 October to reach the RHINE and to capture KOLN and BONN. This offensive operation in the north continued until 16 December, whereas the southern part was relatively inactive and defensive. During late October the enemy counterattack on the northern Allied front against the Second British Army in the MEUSEL, Holland area. He obtained a bridgehead over the MASS in the ROERMOND-VENLO area. The broad area of VENLO-GELLENKIRCHEN was attractive to the enemy, FUSA believed, because of Allied weakness at that point. This British force was north of the Ninth U.S. Army, which, in turn, was adjacent to the First U.S. Army. An expected continuation and expansion of the German attack during the first half of November did not materialize, which FUSA interpreted as a lost opportunity for a spoiling attack. The First Army launched its own ICEBERG offensive on 16 November. Enemy resistance in the HURTGEN Forest and SCHMIDT areas halted the FUSA attack, but it was renewed on 13 December by the V and VII Corps, in conjunction with the Ninth U.S. Army.

This attack on the northern FUSA front was progressing generally on the ROER line, when on 16 December, the enemy launched a large-scale counteroffensive against the FUSA's southern zone, occupied by the VIII Corps, which had been relative inactive and defending. The attack occurred approximately at the juncture of the V and VIII Corps and southward.

FUSA's own operations were conducted in the north, and a further emphasis upon this northern locale consisted of the fact that FUSA considered the enemy's potentialities as pertaining to the north. FUSA believed the enemy's strategy was based upon counterattacks rather than a planned offensive opened on his initiative, and FUSA expected a counterattack on the northern front. This northern locale counterattack concept was introduced on 31 October, in that FUSA designated the VENLO-GELLENKIRCHEN area as the probable locale. Then, on 10 December

FUSA determined that the attack area would be generally west to east between the ROER and the RHEIN Rivers, and, south to north, from approximately SCHLEIBEN to AACHEN. It would occur after the ROER had been crossed by major Allied forces.

Initially, FUSA believed there was a strong build-up of reserve forces in the north, between the ROER and the RHEIN, and generally ranged south to north on the approximate line of AACHEN-ROER-FUSSEN-THURN-THAL. These troops were bivouaced in towns and villages close to training points. The enemy was regarded as possessing a reserve force, identified as the Sixth Panzer Army, which was considered to be the key to the enemy's counterattack strategy, but, despite the enemy's desire to retain it as a unit, Allied pressure might force its piecemeal commitment. As of 10 December, this army was believed to be located between the ROER and RHEIN, the northern boundary probably running from UNTERDEN-GLADBACH to SPUY.

Further more, air reconnaissance indicated that the northern portion of the FUSA front, the V and VII Corps, south to north, was the locale of enemy activity during the several weeks preceding the Counteroffensive. Enemy defenses had been improved east of the ROER, particularly north of SIEGEN, and a considerable movement in the VII Corps zone between the ROER and RHEIN had been taking place.

Another demonstration of FUSA's dominating consideration of the north as the locale of a counterattack consisted in the First Army's evaluation of the assault's gravity on 16 December. The mentioned geographical locations were in the north. FUSA ascertained in its G-2 Periodic for the day that the German attack was an all-out one, that the enemy was staking all on this offensive, and that his current capability was a drive through FUSA's rear areas and seizure of bridgeheads over the ROER River. If the attack appeared to be slowing down, on the other hand, Von SEIST's Rundstedt might decide that the recapture of AACHEN would suffice as the Christmas present for Hitler. FE's had said that an attack was planned whose success would be a Xmas gift to the Fuhrer. AACHEN was mentioned by them.

Note is taken that on this first day of the assault, the First Army's Periodic on the day's operations, the Periodic, did not point out the purpose of the attack. Inasmuch as FUSA considered the Sixth Panzer Army as the key to the enemy's counterattack strategy, perhaps FUSA was undecided as to the intent of the attack, because, as the Periodic pointed out, this reserve force was not committed on the 16th. FUSA did not indicate if it thought the operation was independent, was on the enemy's initiative, or was a reaction to the First Army's current offensive.

Misinterpretation of Southern Locals.

Strong is laid upon the points that since arrival upon the SIEGEN line on 13 September, (1) FUSA's operations had been

offensive in the north, and (2) it expected enemy counterattacks in the northern zone. Equally significant, (1) FUSA's southern zone was quiet and defensive during this period, until the (2) the 16 December counteroffensive was launched in this sector, not in the northern area where FUSA anticipated an attack.

FUSA's attitude towards its southern sectors, occupied by the VIII Corps, was negative. FUSA recognized some build-up activity in this sector, but misconstrued the enemy's intentions for its use. This southern sector's mission was a contributory one, according to the last pre-counteroffensive G-2 Estimate, that of 10 December. It stated: "During the past month there has been a definite pattern for the repositioning of newly formed divisions in the comparatively quiet sector opposite VIII Corps prior to their dispatch to more active fronts." Other G-2 statements, in the daily G-2 Targets discussion of enemy activity, confirmed this conception. As of 5 December it was thought that the past week's reinforcements in the WITTLICH-BITBURG area confirmed the view "that the SIEGFRIED Line in the Eifel has been very lightly held and that first troops are arriving for reserve or relief." However, FUSA indicated on the 16th that it actually was unaware of the strength in the TRIER-PRUM sector. Three to four divisions with armor and some bridging equipment had moved in since 20 November, but bad weather had "prevented observation of large movements into or out of this sector" for as long as four consecutive days.

Influence and Forwarding of Data.

FUSA received official issuances, e.g., daily G-2 Periodics and Intelligence Summaries, from subordinate commands, adjacent armies and their corps, the British Second Army, and Twelfth Army Group with some slight variations from SWAF. There was no indication as to the particular influence exerted by these issuances, if any.

The First Army's receipt and reaction to certain data was of interest. Three VIII Corps divisions had acquired four data which appeared to be attack signs during 12-15 December, namely, an acceleration of enemy traffic, a woman's information about an enemy build-up in the general WITTLICH-BITBURG area, and a P-51 claim of an impending attack for about 17-25 December. While FUSA received reports on this data, mainly through the Corps G-2 Periodic, there was no expression that FUSA undertook protective measures as a reaction. In fact, FUSA did not seem to be impressed by the data, partly at least, because it already possessed virtually all critical evidence, and these VIII Corps data were merely additional.

Intelligence data was transmitted by FUSA through its G-2 Periodic and the very frequent G-2 Estimate. The Estimate was the medium of expression of the FUSA opinions on enemy capabilities.

FIRST U. S. ARMY

CRITIQUE

1. Preoccupation with Northern Operations Towards KOLN.

When the First Army reached the SIEGFIED Line in September, it described its projected operations for the immediate future which were to reach the ROER and to capture KOLN and BONN. This drive had reached the ROER River by 15 December in the northern sector of the Army's front, and operations were being executed to further the advance over the KOLN Plain.

A brief review of the FUSA's operations up to 16 December will indicate the Army's status. (1) The Command Post of FUSA opened in Bristol, England on 20 October 1943, and this Army became the command headquarters for the American forces in the British Isles. It was the 6 June 1944 Invasion Army, comprised of the V and VII Corps. By early July, the Army was being augmented by the VIIIth and XIX Corps, and a breakout drive from the NORMANDY beachhead was executed during late July, called Operation COBRA. This campaign was executed during August and early September. PARIS was captured on 25 August, and the enemy was pursued through northern France and Belgium, to the Belgium-Germany border, where the Army was located on 13 September. This arrival on the enemy's WEST WALL inaugurated the Battle of Germany, which continued until interrupted by the enemy's Ardennes Counteroffensive on 16 December.

FUSA's zone on 13 September ranged between the British Twenty-First Army Group on the north and Third U.S. Army on the south. As of this period, FUSA occupied the northern zone of the Twelfth U.S. Army Group. North to south were positioned the Army's three Corps, the XIX, VII, V, from northern HOLLAND, generally south along the German border of BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG, to the boundary of the First and Third Armies on the ROER River, slightly below GRESFELACHES, Luxembourg. During the remainder of the month the XIX Corps drove on to the Holland-Germany border, and slightly beyond portions of it, while the northern flank of the VII Corps fought beyond the Belgium-Germany border, swerving north to invest AACHEN, German, but only approximately half of the city was surrounded by the end of the month. The southern flank of the VII Corps, and the V Corps on its south(right) generally fought up to the border or slightly crossed it in some parts.

Intentions for the future were declared on 29 September, in a Letter of Instruction. (In HRS files, 101-3.11. (46300) Master.) FUSA was to launch a coordinated attack about 1 October "with the object of reaching the ROER and capturing KOLN and BONN." Letters of Instruction on 26 October, 28 November, and 6 December reiterated the objectives. That of 6 December stated: "First US Army continued its attack in the direction of DUREN-KELN to reach the Rhine River in the vicinity of KOLN. Advance beyond the ROER River will be on Army order." The Ninth Army on the left and the Third on the right(south)

were "continues to attack in their zones to reach the Rhine River."

Operations during the 1 October - 15 December period were in the northern zone of the First Army, while the southern part was relatively inactive and defensive. (I) LACHEN was captured on 21 October, and the advance to DUREN and beyond to the RHINE River involved the offensives of November and December on the HURTOEN Forest, SCHWIDT, and the ROER River dams. It was this ROER Dam area northward and east toward KOEN that constituted the northern zone of the FUSA, and as of 15 December, two of the three Army Corps were engaged in offensives in it. Although the VII Corps had generally reached the ROER River near DUREN in its sector, and, on the 15th was clearing west bank resistance, the Army's advance beyond the ROER was critically handicapped. As noted in the 1st Gen of Instruction of 26 November and 6 December, an advance beyond this river was to be made only on the Army's order. The enemy could flood American forces below the ROER's dams by destruction or opening their gates, thus the FUSA's advance was delayed until these four dams were removed from German control. An attack to capture the dams was launched by FUSA on 13 December, executed by the V Corps and the VII Corps, the two northern corps. They were continuing their offensive when the German Counteroffensive was launched against the inactive, defensive VIII Corps on 16 December. This southern Corps was ranged slightly north of LACHEN, southward generally along the Belgium-Germany border and the Luxembourg-Germany border to the VIII Corps juncture with the Third U.S. Army in the vicinity of the southeast corner of LUXEMBURG.

In a word, the First Army conducted an offensive during October, November and was continuing it on 16 December in its northern zone, whereas the southern zone was inactive and defensive during this period, but was the locale of the German attack of 16 December.

Specifically, according to the G-3 Sitrep #366, 151200A-152400A December, the operations of the First Army during the last 12 hours of 15 December were defensive activity on the VIII Corps front and offensive on the V and VII Corps. (VII)

"VIII Corps.

The 4th Div, 28th Div, 106th Div and 9th Armd Div less CCB defended present positions.

"V Corps.

The 59th Div continued attack against strong enemy fortified positions. ... The 78th Div less 311th Inf continued attack with slight advances. ... The 8th Div plus 311th Inf consolidated and improved positions as 'K' Co, 311th Inf cleared small enemy pockets. CCB, 9th Armd Div and OGR, 5th Armd Div remained in Corps reserves. ...

"VII Corps.

The 104th Div and 9th Div occupied and improved positions on the west bank of the ROER River. The 83d Div less 2nd Bn 330th Inf continued attack at 1200A with 331st Inf against generally light enemy resistance. ... The 5th Armd Div with 2nd Bn, 330th Inf attached consolidated positions secured during the morning. The 1st Div and 3rd Armd Div continued training and rehabilitation. ...

...

II. Trend of FUSA Opinion of Enemy Capabilities.

Summary.

From 10 July through 10 December, the FUSA G-2 Estimates expressed optimism ranging from collapse or surrender of the early period downward to counterattack possibilities of the latter period. But, an enemy counteroffensive on his own initiative was discounted, and FUSA's expectation of a counterattack placed the locale considerably north of the actual 16 December assault area.

Enemy potentialities were considered only in terms of the current, tactical operation prior to 10 July, on which date larger aspects, specifically collapse or surrender, were considered. A month later, on 13 August an alternative to the optimistic possibility was proposed, that of enemy retirement to the RHINE than to the WEST WALL, if necessary. But, on 25 August superior Allied mobility was expected to prevent the latter. For the first time, Allied limitations, e.g., autumn rains and poor flying weather, were mentioned on 31 August. High optimism was again expressed shortly afterward on 3 September, to the effect that a successful defense of the SIEGFRIED Line would be prevented by overwhelming air and ground abilities. Perhaps more as a military continuity consideration than as a worry, the RHINE River was named for the first time as a possible defense line on 11 September, but FUSA believed that its conquest of the SIEGFRIED Line would so deplete the enemy that the RHINE could not be adequately manned. Three days after FUSA's arrival on the SIEGFRIED Line, the 15 September Estimate claimed FUSA possessed the strategic opportunity of a swift advance to the RHINE. Following the 29 September FUSA order directing a coordinated attack on 1 October to reach the RHINE and to capture KOENIG and BOEN, the 9 October Estimate averred that the sustained defense of the WEST WALL capability was destroyed. After the capture of AACHEN on 21 October, the enemy was on the passive defensive, according to the 31 October Estimate. Nevertheless, this Estimate introduced the counterattack concept as a capability, but designated such a locale as the VENLO-DEILLENKIRCHEN area, which was well north of the actual 16 December assault zone. This counterattack capability was derived from the fact that the enemy was currently attacking the Second British Army in the north and that the enemy's defense doctrine called for counterattack action. The 12 November Estimate asserted that the enemy had to launch its expected offensive before FUSA unleashed its planned operation towards the ROER dams. FUSA's commenced on 16 November, but the enemy's did not, and the 20 November Estimate announced that the enemy had lost his opportunity. In fact, his strategy appeared to be based on counterattacks rather than a planned offensive opened on his own initiative. FUSA did not, as of 20 November, believe a defense west of the RHINE to be a reasonable expectation. Although the enemy, according to FUSA, required the development of soft spots or the breakdown of the Allied offensive before undertaking a counter-offensive, during the next twenty days FUSA observed counterattack indications and expected one. The 10 December Estimate expressed that expectation, but stated that the attack would occur after the ROER had been crossed by major Allied forces, and its locale would be between the ROER and RHEIN Rivers, and south to north, between SCHLEIDEN and ROERDAM.

Methodology.

Current opinions on the enemy capabilities were not expressed in the usual, prescribed section of ENEMY CAPABILITIES in the daily G-2 Periodic, but were declared in the frequently issued G-2 Estimate. (IV, B; III) That section of the Periodic consistently referred to the latest G-2 Estimate for an analysis of the subject. The Estimate tended to consider the whole potentiality of the enemy.

FUSA issued its G-2 Estimate prolifically, thus providing a frequent expression of the Army's views. The first one issued following the 6 June 1944 D-Day was #3, Special G-2 Estimate, 6 June. Then, 33 Estimates were issued during the next approximate 25 weeks period until 10 December, when #37 was issued, the last prior to the Counteroffensive. Arithmetically, at least one per week was issued. Note is taken, however, that half of them were issued during August and September, a total of 17, whereas the other 17 were distributed thus: June — 3, July — 5, October — 4, November — 2, December 1 — 1. Whatever the reason, after the Army reached the SIEGERLIN Line on 12 September, only 10 Estimates were issued through 10 December. Only two were issued in November, the 12th and 20th, then none until that of 10 December. Thus, although the summer issuance provided a very frequent expression of views, those of the later period were infrequent, and, in a sense, the more significant.

In addition to the significance inherent in the frequencies of the Estimates, their subject content traced the development of FUSA's G-2 consideration of enemy potentialities from those pertaining only to the immediate, current operations to the broader aspect of German intentions and capabilities, such as collapse or surrender, defense of the home country, or counteroffensive possibilities. An analysis of the individual Estimates from that of 6 June to 10 December delineates this history. One topic is excerpted from the subsequent scrutiny of the Estimates, that of comments relating to a reserve army and/or the Sixth SS Panzer Army, which was such a force. Another section in this CRITIQUE will discuss this subject.

Chronology.

1. FUSA's opinions of the enemy capabilities were restricted to and pertained only to the current action during June and until 10 July. On that date, however, FUSA's think was apparently in larger terms. Broader aspects were considered, namely collapse or surrender of the nation of Germany. From this date onward FUSA's views became gradually more comprehensive in their scope, thus expressing FUSA's opinions of the German potentialities.

2. By 1 August, military collapsed wholesale surrender were considered almost certain, preceded by either a governmental coup d'état or field defeat. Furthermore, FUSA disbelieved in the possibility of the enemy regrouping in northern France to prevent an advance toward Germany, because of Hitler's 'no retreat' policy and Allied military dominance.

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3. The collapse or surrender concept continued throughout August to and including the last Estimate, that of 10 December, to be an integral portion of FUSA's opinion of the enemy potentialities. Virtually each list of capabilities included it. Collapse or surrender, however, varied in prominence among the FUSA opinions. As will be noted, FUSA frequently regarded the enemy as capable of less drastic action and that more protective to Germany. The initial instance of FUSA defining an alternative to collapse or surrender appeared in the 13 August Estimate. Retirement could be attempted to the AISENE, then to the WEST WALL, if necessary.

4. On the 21st of August FUSA declared that the enemy tactics and reactions demonstrated the lack of a cohesive plan for the defense of the west as a whole. His situation was so serious that he was incapable of concerted action or movement on a large scale, and could only delay by piecemeal commitment of divisions.

5. Four days later on the 25th, surrender or collapse was thought increasingly probable, and, while retirement to the AISENE was believed highly probable, retirement to the WEST WALL was regarded as doubtful because superior Allied mobility would prevent movement of the First and Fifteenth Armies.

6. Enemy difficulties and Allied optimism had been the subject of FUSA's interest from 10 July, but Allied limitations were mentioned for the first time in the 31 August Estimate. Autumn rains and poor flying weather would confront the Allies with problems. The enemy would, therefore, likely delay upon favorable terrain of forests, mountains and rivers to permit the escape and retirement of its armies to the SIEFRID line.

7. As to this WEST WALL, the 3 September Estimate expressed the view that although the enemy's first capability was the standing of its for an all-out defense, FUSA did not believe the line could be successfully defended in face of overwhelming air and ground superiority.

8. The RHINE River as a defense line was injected into consideration for the first time, in the 11 September Estimate, probably not so much as a exhibition of worry as a contingency. FUSA believed that while the RHINE was the best natural defense line, German military pride would require a stand on the WEST WALL. However, FUSA believed that the SIEFRID line's conquest would so deplete the enemy forces as to force immediate crossing of the RHINE, unless troops were evacuated from Finland, Norway, and the Balkans.

9. FUSA's arrival on the WEST WALL on 12 September inaugurated a new period of operations, that of campaigning in Germany itself. The first Estimate during this new period was that of 15 September, which expressed the view that while the enemy's all-out defense of the WEST WALL was the current capability, FUSA possessed the strategic opportunity of advancing swiftly to the RHINE. Evacuation of the Rhineland would be forced, the I and II SS Pz Corps might be destroyed, possibly the RHINE bridges could be seized intact, and collapse or

arrangement would be forced.

10. During the remainder of September the First Army penetrated the SIGFRID line, and the Estimate of the 26th believed that the WEST WALL's determined defense would continue. Retirement to and defense of the SAAR demanded a successful defense of the WEST WALL.

11. Having reached the German border, FUSA issued its orders on 29 September for attack operations, which prevailed during the next 22 months until interrupted by the 16 December Counter-offensive. Commanded at first on about 1 October was directed, to reach the SAAR and to capture KERN and BOCK. The first Estimate relating to this offensive was issued on 9 October, and its lead sentence claimed: "The enemy's capability of sustained defensive battle along the WEST WALL in the sector of the First U.S. Army has been destroyed." The correct capability was retirement to the ROER River, then to the RUPP and to the SAAR, if necessary.

12. Eight days later, the 17 October Estimate optimistically dropped both the ROER and the RUPP as specific defense lines and capability #1 was described as the "defense of the army general zone between the German border and the SAAR." #2 was retirement behind the SAAR. This optimism was augmented by FUSA's belief in the lack of reserves. While the enemy's main reserves were at least the 9 Pz, and 2, 9, 16, 12 SS Divisions, troops in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Poland, Greece, and Italy were not generally available, being required in those countries.

13. Four days after the 17 October Estimate, LACHEN was captured, causing the 31 October Estimate to claim that the enemy was on "the defensive" on that part of FUSA's front, and elsewhere on its front the enemy appeared "content with the temporary stabilization of the situation."

Optimism, however, was markedly tempered by the 31 October Estimate in that it (1) introduced the concept of enemy counterattacks, and (2) designated the counterattack locale in a region very distant from that assaulted on 16 December.

The enemy's actual current operations aroused FUSA's concern over the counterattack capacity. He was currently attacking the Second British Army in NEIJFL, Holland, adjacent in the north to the Ninth U.S. Army, also in that country, and between the British and FUSA. In consequence of this enemy attack, the 31 October Estimate considered the counterattack concept for the first time since the early invasion days, and certainly for the first time since the FUSA pursuit of the enemy across France and Belgium, and the penetration of the SIGFRID line. The Estimate observed that the enemy's defense doctrine called for counterattacks, and passive defense was employed only when "speciously to do anything else." Inasmuch as his counterattack divisions had had four to six weeks rest, the enemy was then "capable of large-scale counterattacks or a minor offensive." His strategic objectives were to spoil the FUSA offensive, and secondly to clear the German soil.

FUSA listed five capabilities, and the first three priority (see) related to counterattacks:

1. To continue the Second British Army attacks.
2. To attack vigorously, especially the Second British and Ninth U.S. Armies, to retake AACHEN and to clear them from his soil.
3. To attack FUSA to retake AACHEN and drive FUSA over the border.
4. To continue stabilization of the situation and prevention of further advance.
5. To employ the V-1 and V-2 in tactical roles.

Sharing significance with the counterattack concept was the fact that FUSA considered the VIERL-OSTENRIEDEN sector as the locale for the enemy attack, a sector well north of the FUSA's own operations, yet the 15 December assault was launched against the FUSA's southern sectors.

14. The counterattack potentiality discussed in the 21 October Estimate was deemed a matter of urgency the 12 November Estimate. FUSA declared: "It is now a race against time. Can the enemy complete his dispositions for his offensive prior to the launching of our attack?" The enemy had halted his attack against the Second British Army, and he was "passive between ANNEBIEH and BILFORD, except for the vigorous patrols ... for identification." His current capabilities was a continued defense, but an offensive against the Second British and Ninth U.S. Armies was viewed as "of high probability." It was believed that "his entire front has been stiffened to hold against an allied offensive while he launches his blow in the north, probably between AACHEN and VERLO, with the possible scheme of maneuver of a penetration to the west and southwest on both banks of the MEUSE."

15. According to the next Estimate, that of 20 November, the expected German offensive in the north did not materialize. Rather, FUSA had launched its own offensive towards the ROER River on the 16th, "uninfluenced by enemy action." This Estimate claimed: "the enemy capability of a spoiling attack is now lost." The enemy's strategy was thought to be the "defense of the REICH west of the ROER." Due to the pressure by seven Allied armies, and the lack of "sufficient mobile reserves of counter-attacking quality, especially armor, to seal off penetration and prevent major breakthroughs," FUSA announced that it did not believe a defense west of the ROER was a reasonable expectation. In fact, FUSA expected a forced retirement behind the ROER. This Estimate stated: "With the giving up of his bridgehead over the MAAS and the launching of the AACHEN offensive, the enemy's strategic plan appears to be based on counterattack rather than a planned offensive, opened on his own initiative." FUSA believed that the whereabouts and activity of the Sixth Panzer Army forced the key to the enemy's strategy. The enemy would need to wait for the development of Allied soft spots or the breakdown of the Allied offensive before going over to the counteroffensive himself. If the enemy did not attempt the restoration of the WEST WALL in the Ninth and First Armies zones, his next defensive battle would be based on the ROER RIVER.

At Tientsin were passed after the 20 November estimate before FUSA
 in next one, on 10 December, and the last prior to the
 Counte offensive. During that 20 day period FUSA believed that it
 several counterattack indications, e.g., stubborn defense,
 approval of fortifications, buildup of both troops and
 supplies, preparation of certain V-1 fire so railroads could instead
 haul building material, training of English speaking personnel for
 pilots, increased morale among PW's., and above all, the apparent
 nature of defeats or defense in the south in the S. AR and ALSACE
 region, and concentration of reserves between DUISBURG and ROER, in
 order to achieve decisive success in the north. This 10 December
 estimate asserted: "It is plain that his strategy in defense of
 the ROER is based on the exhaustion of our offensive to be followed
 by an all-out counterattack with armor, between the ROER and the
 WEST, supported by every weapon he can bring to bear." FUSA claimed
 "it is apparent that Von Rundstedt" without the benefit of intuition
 was skillfully defending, husbanding his forces, and preparing "for
 his part in the all-out application of every weapon at the focal point
 and the correct time to achieve defense off the Reich west of the
 RHINE by inflicting as great a defeat on the Allies as possible.
 Indications to date point to the location of this focal point as
 being between ROER and SCHLELDEN, ..."

In a word, by 10 December, FUSA expected an all-out counter-
 attack, but, in an area well north of that actually launched on 16
 December. Furthermore, the attack was not expected until FUSA's
 and/or Allied major ground forces had crossed the ROER River.

Analysis of the Estimates, 6 June - 10 December.

Beginning with the first estimate issued after the 6 June D-Day,
 that of #3 on the 8th, through that of #9 June, the estimates expressed
 opinions only upon the current, immediate tactical operations. The
 July estimate, #9, inaugurated consideration of the broader aspects of
 the enemy's potentialities, and the following study of the FUSA #2
 estimate therefore begins with that issuance.

The 10 July estimate listed the Capability: "The enemy is capable
 of collapse or surrender." This was the first mention of such a
 possibility, and the initial declaration of an opinion relating to
 large considerations rather than only to the action of the moment.
 While this capability was described as of "low immediate probability,"
 it should not be overlooked. This collapse or surrender possibility
 continued to repeat and the FUSA's larger considerations during the
 remaining July estimates. According to the next one, on 18 July,
 collapse or surrender was "a growing possibility particularly in view
 of the our out British success at the eastern end of the bridgehead."
 No. 11, 24 July was inapplicable, in that it was titled, POLITICAL,
 and dealt with the consequences of Hitler's attempted assassination
 four days previously. No. 12, 28 July, asserted that the collapse or
 surrender was "of increasing probability in direct proportion to the

success of our operations. The reaction of LXXXIV Corps is believed at the moment to be uncertain, and the destruction of XI Para Corps is an immediate possibility.

According to the 1 August Estimate, a "military collapse and wholesale surrender" was "regarded as an almost certain eventuality either precipitated by 'a coup d'etat to replace Hitler with a high military personage who would sue for peace, or occurring successively as units are defeated in the field." Doubt was expressed that the NORMANDY forces could continue more than four to eight weeks as a fighting machine. Another heavy defeat such as the 25 July breakthrough battle would probably force collapse of the forces at the base of the GERBIGNY Peninsula. Surrender or disastrous retreat would be the alternative. In fact, "in the next four to eight weeks the current situation may change with drastic suddenness into a race to reach a chaotic Germany."

The 1 August Estimate marked the inauguration of a highly significant stage among the FUSA opinions of the enemy's potentialities. It introduced the added capability factor of the relationship of German resistance to the German homeland. Capability #2 stated: "The enemy is capable of giving up the 'no retreat' policy and by withdrawing from southern France endeavoring to regroup his forces in northern France to prevent an advance toward GERMANY." Adoption, however, of this capability was considered as "of low order of probability because of Hitler's 'no retreat' policy and the impracticality of performing any large-scale regrouping due to the present state of rail and highway communication and the dominance of our air forces."

By 8 August, the enemy was regarded as being forced to the defensive, his reinforcement rate and supply were considered limited due to impaired communications and constant air attacks. Those factors and the constant attrition of his divisions were expected to "lead first to a defensive role and second to surrender or collapse."

No discussion of enemy capabilities was contained in the Estimate of 13 August, but that of the 15th listed seven, most of which dealt with the current campaign. For the first time, mention was made of the enemy's retirement to specific locations. In case of necessity, he could attempt retirement to the heights of AISER then to the WEST WALL, unless a surrender or collapse was forced by Allied pressure or internal disorder. This was the initial reference to the WEST WALL.

The Estimate of 15 August reported no changes in capabilities; and the only differing view expressed by the next day's issuance was that current enemy dispositions continued to favor the enemy's withdrawal across the SEINE.

Optimism was expressed in the Conclusion section of the 21 August Estimate, to the effect that the enemy's tactics and reactions showed "plainly that there no longer exists a cohesive plan for the defense of the West as a whole." A large-scale delaying action and piecemeal commitment of divisions were the enemy's best capability. He was incapable of "any concerted action or movement on a large

the hope of receiving further reinforcements to "stem the tide, and consolidate his position, (was) almost nil."

The enemy's situation was considered even graver by the 25 August in that surrender or collapse were regarded as of "increasing probability in the field since army commanders fully appreciate the seriousness of the military situation in France." Retirement to the WEST was believed to be highly probable, but retirement to the EAST was thought to be doubtful due to the logistic difficulty of the First and Fifteenth Armies in the face of superior Allied mobility.

Fifteenth Army delaying actions between the RHINE and the WEST were the first capability described in the 27 August Estimate. Collapse or surrender were the second capability.

For the first time among the FUSA Estimates, that of 31 August mentioned factors advantageous to the enemy. "The enemy must appreciate that the largest factors operating in his favor are the logistic problems confronting the Allied armies in France, and the approach of autumn rains with its mud and poor flying weather. It is, therefore, probable that he will delay upon favorable terrain, such as the ARDENNES and ARGONNE Forests, the heights of the ROEURE, the VOSGES Mountains and on the MEUSE, to permit the escape of the Nineteenth German Army from the south and the retirement of the First, together with the Fifteenth and Nineteenth to the Siegfried Line."

Four days later, on 5 September, the view was expressed that while the first capability was the waning of the WEST WALL for an all-out defense, it was "not believed the West Wall can be successfully defended in the face of overwhelming air and ground superiority." A further interesting point was the view that the enemy was capable of revolution leaning towards Bolshevism or with a "government oriented with the East." Guerrilla warfare by women and children was the fourth capability.

The Estimate of 11 September referred to the RHINE River as a defense line. Up to this ESTIMATE, the SIEGFRIED Line was the consideration, but, with the First Army on the verge of reaching the SIEGFRIED Line --- on 12 September, the FUSA's appraisal of the enemy was projected beyond the WEST WALL geographically. This Estimate observed that although the RHINE was "the best natural line of defense for Germany, it is believed that a stand will be ordered on the West Wall for reasons of prestige." The loss of the territory west of the RHINE would be interpreted as constituting a staggering blow to national pride. Furthermore, the enemy needed and was using his airfields west of the RHINE. However, FUSA believed that the ALLIED over-running of the WEST WALL would so deplete the enemy's forces that he would lack the manpower to defend the RHINE, unless troops were evacuated from inland, Norway, and the Balkans. Actual capabilities were listed as:

1. An attempt for an all-out defense of the WEST WALL.
2. Retirement "to the RHINE after the overrunning of the West Wall."
3. Collapse or surrender.

FUSA's first Estimate issued after FUSA's arrival on the SIEGFRIED Line was dated 15 September, three days after that event. This Estimate was particularly significant because it expressed an opinion on the long-range potentiality of both FUSA and its enemy, indicating the dependence of the German action upon the American future operations, in FUSA's eyes. According to this 15-September Estimate, the reaching of the SIEGFRIED Line presented an "enormous" strategic opportunity to FUSA. A "swift advance to the RHINE" would be possible if the two northern FUSA Corps, the VII and V, broke through the WEST WALL. With the formidable river obstacle at his back, the enemy would be forced to evacuate the Rhineland. A rapid exploitation of the approaches to the RHINE bridges should destroy the I and II SS Pz Corps, and possibly the RHINE bridges could be seized intact. This Estimate reached the conclusion that while the enemy's all-out defense of the WEST WALL capability was still current for the moment, the execution of the above described strategic possibilities would eliminate the retirement to the RHINE capability and reduce the enemy to collapse or surrender.

During the remainder of September the Army penetrated the SIEGFRIED Line particularly with the object of capturing AACHEN. Four days before the month's end, on the 26th, the last Estimate of September was issued. It pointed out that "determined defense" of the WEST WALL was current and would continue as long as possible. Retirement to and defense of the RHINE depended upon unsuccessful defense of the WEST WALL. Collapse or surrender were unpredictable, but FUSA felt that war weariness and realization of hopelessness was "bound to decline" the uplift maintained in defending the homeland.

As noted in the section of this CRITIQUE dealing with the FUSA operations, following the First Army's arrival on the SIEGFRIED Line on 12 September, it penetrated against strong resistance during the remainder of the month, while plans were made and issued for long range operations from that strategic position. On the 29th the FUSA Letter of Instruction directed a coordinated attack about 1 October "with the object of reaching the RHINE and capturing KOLN and BONN." The FUSA operations during the next two and half months, until interrupted by the 16 December Counteroffensive, were directed to erode RHINE. This fact was significant, because of the tendency or lack of it of the FUSA G-2 to regard the enemy potentialities as reactions to FUSA's own offensive.

After several days of the new offensive, but about two weeks preceding the decisive 21 October capture of the first German city, AACHEN, a G-3 Estimate was issued on 9 October. Its opening sentence pronounced: "The enemy's capability of sustained defensive battle along the West Wall in the sector of the First U.S. Army has been destroyed. The West Wall is now breached in four places and passage through it have been established." Defense of the WEST WALL was declared inoperative, and the enemy's capabilities became retirement (1) to the east bank of

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the ROER and "defending hastily constructed field fortifications, (2) to the WEST, (3) behind the RHINE, or (4) collapsing or surrendering. This Estimate expressed the view that No. 1 was then current, and Nos. 2, and 3 would follow if necessary, although withdrawal behind the RHINE was thought to be of low probability. Continued military defeats and unsuccessful with secret weapons would increase the probability of collapse or surrender. The enemy, claimed this Estimate of 9 October, was "faced with problem of garrisoning a long line with insufficient troops and of necessity must determine priorities in the disposal of his few reserves. There is not evidence yet that he has recognized the threat of First U.S. Army's attack by committing reserves, especially of armor, to meet this threat."

Optimism continued. Four days before the fall of AACHEN, the Estimate of 17 October dropped the ROER as a defense line capability, and substituted the RHINE. Capability #1 was defense of the general area between the German border and the RHINE. No. 2 was retirement behind the RHINE, and #3 was collapse or surrender. This Estimate analyzed the enemy's reserves condition, and concluded that although four of his Panzer or Panzer Grenadier Divisions of "first quality" had appeared on the FUSA front, mainly piecemeal fashion, he had at least five more, the 9 Pz, and 2, 9, 10, 12 SS Divisions. Other reserves were the Doetterleassembling wave of the 500 series, the Furlough series, and a few constituted divisions from the Russian front. "Reserves left in GERMANY for the Western front are currently viewed as slim until the HUNGARIAN front on AUSTRIA's doorstep is stabilized. The garrisoning of a restive CZECHOSLOVAKIA will contain other reserves. Divisions from NORWAY, FINLAND, and GREECE are not currently available, nor mean anything substantial be further spared from ITALY."

According to the 31 October Estimate, following the fall of AACHEN on the 21st, the enemy was "on the passive defensive, improving positions and making local readjustments in troop dispositions, and eager to secure prisoners for intelligence purposes." In the north, however, in the 5th and British Army's sector, the enemy was attacking in a "limited offensive" in the WESTWALL (E7065) area with three panzer divisions. He purposed pressure upon the 21 Army Group to relieve the threat, and to threaten the Ninth U.S. Army at a time when he suspected the U.S. of mounting an offensive. "Elsewhere on the Western Front, the enemy appears content with the temporary stabilization of the situation." As to reserves, "once more, the priority of reserves within the Reich has gone to the east. The losses being suffered by the German Army Group South UNRAINE in Hungary are among the greatest of the war." The 2, 11 and 116 Pz Divisions had been withdrawn from the Western line and were "probably west of the RHINE, serving as mobile reserves while refitting."

Since the arrival of FUSA on the SIEGF RID Line on 12 September, the G-2 Estimates of 15, 26 September, and 9, 17 October, considered the enemy capabilities in terms of defense of the WEST WALL, of the ROER River line, and then of the RHINE River line, without reference to the enemy's counterattack possibilities. This 31 October Estimate, however, introduced the counterattack concept, marking a notable change

in FUSA's thinking. The reader is invited to scrutinize this counter-attack concept as to whether the action was (1) a reaction to the FUSA offensive, (2) a spoil or prevent a FUSA offensive, or (3) an independent one on the enemy's part, to achieve objectives of his own choosing, and having no apparent relationship to the FUSA operations, (4) was located in the northern where FUSA was conducting its operations, or in the relatively inactive and defensive central-southern sectors of the FUSA zone, or south of FUSA's zone, below GRENZBURG, in the Third U.S. Army's area.

In its section titled Conclusion, Para 31 October Estimate observed: "The German doctrine of defense calls for counterattack, and he assumes the passive defense only when he is powerless to do anything else. Having had four to six weeks rest for his counterattack divisions, he is now capable of large-scale counterattacks or a minor offensive. His strategic objectives are, first, to spoil our expected offensive against Germany, and second, to drive us from German soil." Inasmuch as AACHEN had fallen to the Allies, and the enemy had launched an attack against the Second British Army in the north, the following capabilities prevailed:

1. Continuance of attacks on the Second British Army, thus threatening the flank of the Ninth U.S. Army, which was situated between the FUSA and the Second British Army in the north.
2. Simultaneously attacking the Ninth U.S. Army and the Second British Army with any or all of his three former divisions in case of part of the MEUSE, to retake AACHEN and force an Allied withdrawal from German territory.
3. Attacking FUSA to retake AACHEN, and driving FUSA beyond Germany's border.
4. Continuing efforts to stabilize the situation and prevent a further advance into GRENZBURG.
5. Replaying the V-1 and V-2 in a tactical role.

Of these five capabilities No. 1 was current, and if it succeeded, No. 2 was to be expected, with No. 3 as a lesser probability. If, however, No. 1 failed, then No. 4 would be of the highest probability. No. 5 might be anticipated at any time.

It is important to note the geographical area which FUSA considered subject to German attack. "A breakthrough by his concentrations in the VENLO-GELLENKIRCHEN sector would enable him to turn south on both banks of the MAAS (MEUSE)." This VENLO-GELLENKIRCHEN sector was well north of the FUSA's own operations, not in the southern portion of the Allied front below AACHEN.

An air urgency was expressed in the next Estimate, that of 12 November, which was four days prior to the FUSA's 16 November offensive towards the ROER River. Preliminary to its discussion of the German potential FUSA pointed out that the limited German offensive of the SEJSEL-LIESEL area in progress when the 31 October Estimate was written, had since "halted" by the enemy on the arrival of additional

forces to strengthen this front. Since that offensive the enemy has been passive between ARNHEM and DILFORT, except for rigorous patrols all along the front for identification. West of ARNHEM he has been forced north of the MAAS.

Regarding the enemy's strategy, the 12 November Estimate stated: "The value to the enemy of his bridgehead over the MAAS at SITTARD-VALEN is apparent. His objectives are (a) to smash the coming Allied offensive, and (b) to drive our forces from German soil. A successful attack coming down the west bank of the MAAS in conjunction with the breakthrough in the SITTARD-MAASTRICHT sector would offer the enemy much booty in the way of desperately needed supplies. This might compel the withdrawal of the first and fifth U.S. Armies from Germany. An attack in the AACHEN area would be subsidiary to his main penetration and might possibly, if a penetration were achieved, form the lower hook of the 'Sieg' and 'Kell' strategy of the Germans. The enemy has obviously staked all on the defense of the West by defending on the west bank of the MEUSE. It is a hazardous position for an army to fight with an obstacle like the RHINE at its back, its crossing the lines of supply from its major bases, the only justification of such a strategy being that a successful counter-offensive can be launched from such a position. It is believed that the enemy was attracted to the SITTARD-VALEN area by our obvious weakness at that point."

Enemy dispositions were similar to those expressed in the 31 October Estimate. An offensive against the second British and Fifth U.S. Armies was viewed as "of high probability, and against the First Army only as a secondary probability. However, the enemy's continued defense was the current capability, being his armor as a counter-attack force to seal off Allied penetrations. Employment of the T-1 and T-2 tactically was expected at any time.

The following was asserted as the reasons for the above opinions: "It is now a race against time. Can the enemy complete his dispositions for his offensive prior to the launching of our attack? With the approach of winter in the EAST it is believed the enemy will stake all on an offensive in the West. It is a desperate gamble by a desperate foe. It remains to be seen if the attack by Third U.S. Army will influence his offensive plans. He has already reinforced this front with armor. The front line is taken in these areas report that the left flank on 10 November, arriving the next evening in the G-0233 area. It is believed that his entire front has been stiffened to hold against an allied offensive while he launches his blow to the north, probably between AACHEN and VALEN, with the possible subterfuge of maneuver of a penetration to the west and southwest on both banks of the MEUSE. Although his immediate stocks of fuel are probably ample, it may be difficult for him to sustain a prolonged offensive."

The expected German offensive in the north did not materialize, according to the next Estimate, issued on 20 November, only eight days

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after that of 12 November. In the meantime, FUSA had launched its own offensive on the 15th, "uninfluenced by enemy action." The lead sentence of this Estimate asserted "the enemy capability of a spoiling attack is now lost." While he had realized the FUSA's attack behind wire and minefields, he had not "been forced to throw in any reserves of armor or high quality infantry." He had "been content to remain on the passive defense" in the V and VII Corps zones.

This 23 November Estimate appraised the enemy strategy as the following:

"The enemy's overall strategy on the Western front can be summed up as the defense of the REICH west of the ROER. This effort is proving difficult under the synchronized attacks of seven Allied Armies exerting pressure on a 900-kilometer line. The enemy appears to lack sufficient mobile reserves of counterattacking quality, especially armor, to deal off penetrations and prevent major breakthroughs. It is not unreasonable to believe that his defense of the REICH west of the ROER will be unsuccessful and that he will soon be forced into retirement behind the ROER which, skillfully executed, may lead to another military disaster comparable to the Battle of France.

"With the giving up of his bridgehead over the MASSÉ BAS and the launching of the Allied offensive, the enemy's strategic plan appears to be based on counterattack rather than a planned offensive, opened on his own initiative. The key to his strategy probably will be found in the whereabouts and activity of his Sixth Panzer Army. He must either wait until a soft spot develops on the Allied front, or until the Allied offensive breaks down with heavy losses before going over to the all counteroffensive. Possibly he will be compelled to limit himself to defensive counterattacks. The restoration of the WEST WALL in the zones of Ninth and First U.S. Armies may yet be attempted, but if not, his next defensive battle will be based on the ROER River, the defense of which may be assisted by inundations caused by heavy rains on the upper ROER."

Principal reserves available to the Commander in Chief West were believed to consist of the Sixth Panzer Army in the Army Group B's zone, comprising the 1, 2, 9 and 12 SS and Pz Lehr Divisions, none of which had been committed. Of the First Para Army, the 2, 3, 5, 6 Para Divisions remained uncommitted. Army Group B's reserve situation appeared to be poor, and some divisions might be diverted from the front of the Sixth U.S. Army Group to that of the Third U.S. Army. The employment of the enemy's reserves, according to this Estimate, would "not be dictated by Allied penetrations through his field fortification and with this loss of initiative their employment en masse is dubious. In Army Group B it has to date been corps-wise, as the XLVII Pz Corps was employed first in the REIJEL-REIJEL area and not in the GELLENBACHEN sector. If this pattern be followed Sixth Panzer Army will not be employed as a unit. With increasing pressure from Second British Army

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further south, north, thus lengthening the threatened front, the enemy will probably be forced to employ these last reserves division-size. The only other assets are Volksgrenadier Divs and the intensive field fortifications which he has had two months to construct."

A dilemma faced the enemy concerning the use of his forces. His situation in front of the Third U.S. Army was described as deteriorated, and his loss of ground before the Seventh U.S. and First French Armies demonstrated the insufficiency of his reserves to meet the offensive of the southern Allied armies. In the north, he had only five Panzer or Panzer Grenadier division in Army Group B, to meet the Second British, Ninth and First U.S. Armies, having committed four or five such divisions. "If this armor be held in the north, his southern front will deteriorate further, whereas if they are sent south to patch up the WEST or BELFORT gaps, his northern flank will be seriously threatened, particularly if good weather continues."

The enemy's current capability was that of "defense of the Reich west of the RHINE, probably along the general line LUXEMBOURG-ROER and WEST WALL, and in the Third U.S. Army area MAGNOT LINE-WEST WALL and the FRIEDLAND. His retirement to a "defensive line behind the RHINE" was thought "at the present time." Collapse or surrender was "an increasing possibility in direct proportion to the success of the current Allied offensive. No surrender of the present government is believed possible, yet if the strategic opportunity of destroying the German Army west of the RHINE with an obstacle at its back is exploited, the surrender of large groups may be expected, possibly leading to collapse, particularly if the RHINE is crossed. However, resistance to the death from Nazi Freikorps and guerrilla bands should be expected, especially in THURINGIA and BRANDENBURG." Capability No. 1 was described as "an 'air blitz' to regain air supremacy in limited vital areas," and 2 "may well be attempted but will be of short duration and limited in scope."

10 DECEMBER G-2 ESTIMATE: -----

The last G-2 Estimate preceding the 16 December Counteroffensive was issued on 10 December. This expression of opinion was replete with references to an expected German counterattack, but they should not be accepted per se. Stress is therefore laid upon the following points:

1. This Estimate's views continued the trend of opinion expressed in its predecessor Estimate since FUSA's arrival on the SIEGFRIED Line on 12 September, and did not constitute a radical alteration of viewpoint.

2. FUSA expected a counterattack and unequivocally announced that opinion. Those facts, nevertheless, were not the more significant points of interest, which were:

1. The reader is invited to consider the locale of this

counterattack as the paramount, dominating point, and FUSA's main logic for considering this geographical area.

B. Also, the reader is invited to consider the question of whether FUSA regarded this counterattack as independent of the FUSA offensive, as an initiative of the enemy, or was the attack expected to occur in direct relationship to FUSA's offensive, when the enemy decided the timing to be advantageous to him.

Enemy Counterattack Intentions & Localities.

The keynotes of this 10 December Estimate were asserted in the following two statements:

"It is plain that his strategy in defense of the Reich is based on the exhaustion of our offensive to be followed by an all-out counterattack with armor, between the ROER and the ERFT, supported by every weapon he can bring to bear."

"It is apparent that Von Rundstedt, who obviously is conducting military operations without the benefit of intuition, has skillfully defended and husbanded his forces and is preparing for his part in the all-out application of every weapon at the focal point and the correct time to achieve defense of the Reich west of the RHINE by inflicting as great a defeat on the ALLIES as possible. Indications to date point to the location of this focal point as being between ROERMOND and SCHLESDEN, and within this bracket this concentrated force will be applied to the Allied force judged by the German High Command to be the greatest threat to successful defense of the Reich."

Stress is laid upon the fact that the FUSA G-2 announced in this Estimate his opinion of the location of the expected counter-attack, and that it was well north of the actual assault area of 16 December. The expected locality was in the northern portion of the Allied front. It was, west to east, between the ROER and the ERFT Rivers, and south to north, between SCHLESDEN and ROERMOND. The actual assault area began at a point somewhat below (south) of SCHLESDEN. Furthermore, according to the Twelfth Army Group's Situation Map 101200 December, only the approximate southern half of this expected locality was even within the First Army's zone, the balance being divided between the Ninth U.S. Army and the Second British Army, most in the latter's zone. In short, the anticipated locality for the enemy's counterblow was well north of the actual stricken region. Even the portion within the FUSA's zone between SCHLESDEN and ROERMOND was north of the 16 December assaulted area, which was at the junction of the V and VIII Corps sectors and concentrated southward in the VIII Corps.

Counterattack Evidence.

FUSA believed that there were several indications of the enemy counterattack intentions.

1. Since the publication of the last Estimate, on 20 November, "the enemy has stubbornly contested every foot of ground

in the zone of action of the First U.S. Army." He did so with 18 Infantry, one armored, one para, and one panzer grenadier divisions.

2. He had "intensified his defense zone by fortification in depth," behind the ROER converting each village into a strongpoint, and strengthening the SIEG fortifications on the ROER River line.

3. His armor force appeared "to be quartered in hotels and barns along the railroads generally in a semi-circle from DUESSELDORF to KOBLENZ, with KOBLENZ as a center point."

4. He continued to bring up Army and Corps artillery formations, and to build up fighter and fighter-bomber strength on the Western front.

5. "The suspension of V-1 fire from the BACHOLDER area and the ROER area is believed to be based on the use of his railroads for the bringing in of new Volksgrenadier divisions west of the Rhine and for the buildup of the necessary artillery and supplies to support an all-out ground counterattack."

6. It is thought probable that the enemy's current production of V-1's was being routed to new sites in the BLACK FOREST and elsewhere east of the RHINE to support the counterattack by interdiction and bombardment of supply installations and artillery areas.

7. Although Von Rundstedt had reluctantly "dispatched Pz Lehr from his carefully hoarded reserve" to the Third U.S. Army's penetration in the SAAR Basin, its commitment revealed that its two month WESTWALLA reforming and refitting had "failed to bring it up to the strength and standing of the 1943 first-class Pz Div."

8. Tac/Int and ground sources indicated a buildup in the BENTFORD-WITTLICH area.

9. A captured order for the comb-out of selected personnel who spoke "the American dialect" "obviously presages special operations for sabotage, attacks on CP's and other vital installations by infiltrated or parachuted specialists."

10. "An extremely intelligent FP whose other observations check exactly with established facts stated that every means possible is being gathered for the coming all-out counteroffensive."

11. The morale of freshly captured Pz's "recently achieved a new high."

Augmenting these evidences, the enemy's unfolding strategy indicated his intentions, according to this 10 December Estimate. The lead sentence of the section on strategy read: "The restoration of the West Wall is still a probable strategic objective." This was the only mention of that topic, and the section was devoted to consideration of the more immediate point summarized thus: "Von Rundstedt apparently is accepting defeats in the south rather than compromise his hope of a decisive success in the north. This would appear to be the keynote of his strategy in the defense of the REICH west of the RHINE." "The enemy is apparently reconciled to the loss of ALSACE and to defending behind the upper REINE. He is now fighting in the SAARLAUTERN area and along the SAAR River in defensive action similar to that in the AACHEN sector. There is no disposition to retire behind the REINE except where he has been forced to do so, and this occurred in a sector where his West Wall is east of the REINE." The Estimate pointed out

that the enemy has let his situation in both the upper RHINE and south of the MOSELLE deteriorate while still conserving reserves between BIELEFELD and KOBLI. He had accepted the defeat of the Nineteenth Army and its retreat across the upper RHINE "without a drain on the armored reserves of the Sixth Panzer Army." But, the "retreat to the SAAR has been met by the dispatch of Pz Lehr, three Fifteenth Army divisions, and will probably call for the commitment of one Inf Div and another Pz Div." As part of the strategy: "During the past month there has been a definite pattern for the seasoning of newly formed divisions in the comparatively quiet sector opposite VIII Corps prior to their dispatch to more active fronts." Furthermore, the enemy was "well aware of the tactical 'ace' which he holds in the ROER R ver dams." He had reacted to unsuccessful Allied bombardment of the dams by augmenting his forces on the "route of approach to the SCHWABENAUDEL and the UNTERBERG, the key dams," with reserves of the Sixth Panzer Army divisions and the 2d and 116 Panzer Divisions "conditionally available for local counterattacks in the defense of the dams."

Reserves.

The limit of reserves available to the C-in-C West appeared to be the Sixth Panzer Army, the 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 Para Divisions of the First Para Army, two or three VG Divisions from Germany, one or two divisions from Norway, and the possibility of one or two reconstituted panzer divisions from the East. "During the month of November the enemy suffered losses amounting to roughly four divisions a week. He has been replacing these losses from reserves east of the RHINE at the rate of about one and one-half per week, with the divisions being made up by the saving of five or more divisions from the land plus other reserves on hand west of the RHINE. There is reason to believe that he can continue to meet this heavy attrition for the next month or two by drawing next on divisions en route to Germany from Norway, in addition to the continuing flow of six divisions a month from Germany. When the Norwegian divisions are exhausted, he may still have other reserves made available by the shortening of his Italian front, and from the Balkans."

Enemy Capabilities.

In the opinion of this 10 December estimate, the current enemy capability was continuance of "his defense of the line of the ROER north of the BIELEFELD, his present front line west of the ROER covering the dams, and thence south along the West Wall." Capability No. 2 was described as a "concentrated counterattack with air, armor, infantry secret weapons at a selected focal point at the time of his own choosing." Implementation of No. 2 was "expected when our major ground forces have crossed and the ROER R ver, and if the dams are not controlled by us, maximum use will be made by the enemy of flooding of the ROER in conjunction with his counterattack." If his counterattacks were unsuccessful, then Capability #3 would become operative, that was defense "on the line of the MOET and subsequently retiring behind the RHINE." The fourth capability, that of collapse or surrender was still considered as a possibility. It might be produced by any of several events: popular revolt induced by the shock of military or psychological defeat; mutiny; strikes.

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III. Some Evidence Contributing to Appraisal of Enemy Potentialities.

A. Enemy Build-up.

According to the December 9-2 daily summary and conclusions about enemy operations titled TARGETS, there was a strong buildup of reserves in the north between the ROER and RHEIN Rivers and generally ranged south to north on the approximate line of ANNEVELLEN-BUSKINGEN-DUERN-JULICH. Troops were bivouacked in towns and villages close to detrainning points. In the south, the TAIER-PROZ sector, 3-4 divisions with armor and some bridging equipment had moved in since 29 November, but bad weather had prevented observation for as long as four days of large movements in and out of the sector. At least as of 5 December, reinforcement arriving in the WITTLICH-BITBURG area indicated that the SIEGFRIED line in the RIFEL was "very lightly held and that fresh troops (were) arriving for reserves or relief."

The 9-2 Section issued a daily document titled TARGETS which summarized enemy operations, and FUSA expressed its appraisal of the German activity in a section titled Conclusions. (V) FUSA records contained this document for the 2-3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15 December, but not those of the other days during the first half of December. The extant figures, however, particularly those 12-15 December suggested the extent of FUSA's recognition of the enemy buildup efforts.

On 2-3 December, "the build-up of SS, Armored, and other troops is continued along the lines (1) DUEREN-RIESEN-GRUNND-SCHLEIDER, with those named towns as centers of activity, and (2) ELSDORF-BLATHEIM-GADBACH-ZULPICH-NEUS INGEN."

According to the 4 December reports: "Detrainning of units to be held in reserve has taken place in previously reported towns and villages from NEUS to JULICH to DUEREN to ZULPICH to BUSKINGEN to ANNEVELLEN by many small trains and small units well dispersed. Marshaling yards are no longer of importance to the dispersion of small units in to and villages E of the ROER and of the RHEIN. There are indications that the enemy is utilizing more billets in towns, villages, and farms, and fewer wooded areas than was the case in the period 15 October to 15 November 1944."

On the next day, 5 December, "Further verification of reinforcements arriving during the past week in the WITTLICH-BITBURG area confirms the fact that the SIEGFRIED LINE in the Rifel has been very lightly held and that fresh troops are arriving for reserves or relief. The rail junctions and siding at ELSDORF(F1860) and LUDLAR(F3646), continue in their normal worked activity and are recommended for immediate priority targets. Heavy traffic continued on both sides of the RHEIN with yesterday's activity on the SIEGEL-KOMAGEN-LINE triangle, which presents a concentrated rail and bridge area."

No further issues were located among the records unto that of the 12th, which stated that the "enemy continued strengthening his positions both on the KHEIN plain and in the RIFEL with emphasis on securing cover for launching counterattacks." The 13 December issue reported no change in conclusions.

On 14 December, no rail movement of note was observed west of the RHEINE, except considerable activity in the marshalling yards at TRIER and KRANK. East of the RHEINE, four make-up trains of medium length were seen in the marshalling yard at GDFRIAR, and other scattered activity was observed farther eastward, "but no trend of movement was indicated. Sightings of vehicular activity were less than at any time previously. In general, the conclusion was the "troop concentrations in the BLODORF-ZULFICH Line continues."

The 13 December Target report offered the following Conclusions:

"a. Units previously reported have detained close to defensive positions between the ROER and the RHEIN Rivers. They have not been committed (except for artillery) and are held in reserve, bivouaced in towns and villages close to detrainng points. The same towns previously reported are still being used for evacuation and supply.

"b. In the TRIER-PREH sector, 3-4 divisions with armor and some bridging equipment have moved in since 28 November. Bad weather has prevented observation of large movements into or out of this sector for periods as long as four days at a time. There is no indication of change in the enemy's use of rail junctions, railheads and rear echelon establishments from the list previously submitted."

N.B. --- Two references to previously reported towns and lists were to a memorandum by the FUSA, G-2, Target Subsection, 6 December, apparently to G-3, listing rail and troop points indicating concentrations of reserves or dispositions of forces.

B. Attack Evidence Reported by Divisions.

As noted on the Division Level, certain VIII Corps divisions acquired during 12-15 December and reported four data that appeared to constitute attack evidence, and FUSA was aware of it through the Corps. Two described an acceleration of enemy traffic, a civilian woman described build-up instances, and a PW claimed a large-scale attack was impending. FUSA merely mentioned the first without interpretative comment, and noted that it already was aware of the last two, though through additional informational sources, thus indicating lack of relative interest in these new, divisions-reported specific incidents.

FUSA's Disposition and Evaluation:

First Army received these four data from VIII Corps, and reported them in its G-2 Periodics (IV, D, VI, A). The woman informer's data was also reported in an ISOM, and in an midnight description of incoming information. This 12-15 December data was thus mainly recorded in the G-2 Periodics, but not in the G-2 Estimates, perhaps because none

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was issued after the 10th. Whatever influence this attack evidence required by divisions exerted upon FUSA, there was no expression that FUSA undertook protective measures as a reaction.

In general, the specific incidents represented in this data did not appear to be of particular import to FUSA. But, the subjects of attack claims and of buildup were significant in that they were supported by other evidence to that effect, and FUSA's reaction was apparently more on the basis of being more concerned over the other already possessed evidence than with these new incidents. (1) Increasing traffic activity was merely described in a single sentence of the Periodic, without interpretative commentary, suggesting no special importance being attached to it. (2) Although the 106th Division and the VIII Corps had reported only one case of a PW claiming an impending attack, FUSA declared that many PW's made the claim. FUSA regarded the claim as propaganda to bolster German troops morale, but that a limited offensive might be launched as a Christmas morale 'victory' for civilian consumption. (3) As to the woman's build-up data, FUSA thought it "very interesting." T&R and PW's had indicated a build-up was being executed. FUSA felt that the mentioned engineers and bridging equipment suggested offensive rather defensive action.

Detailed Accounts of Four Incidents

Actually, three divisions of the VIII Corps acquired seven data between 12-15 December that ostensibly constituted evidence of an imminent large-scale attack. (Div. Level, p. 5-7; Corps Level, p. 2) Only four, however, were reported to the Corps; three PW claims of an impending attack were not reported.

Two Traffic Acceleration Data.

The 28th and 106th Divisions observed increasing enemy traffic activity during 12-15 December, and so reported it in their G-2 Periodics. Its significance was diminished because no pattern of action could be deduced from the several, separated instances. Without commentary, the VIII Corps reported it in its G-2 Periodic. FUSA mentioned it only once, in its G-2 Periodic for 15 December, in connection with VIII Corps operations, thus: "Considerable vehicular traffic was heard through the period opposite the southern flank of our SONNEX RIFEL salient." (L-496(1A))

One PW Attack Claim Data.

Although the 4th and 106th Divisions captured two PW's each on 15 December, who claimed a large-scale enemy attack was impending, only one by the 106th Division was reported to the VIII Corps, by message. Their information was obtained by hearsay or rumor, and apparently by unsupported by official orders or plans. The only PW whose claim was reported was incoherent, being under the influence of morphine.

The VIII Corps reported this PW's information in its G-2 Periodic for the day, 15 December.

FUSA made no direct reference to this incident. Instead, it

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discovers a day PW attack claims apparently unrelated to this report in the area (IV, 7). The section on reserves of the G-2 Periodic for 25 December asserts: "Although the enemy is resorting to his attack propaganda to bolster morale of the troops, it is possible that a limited scale offensive will be launched for the purpose of achieving a Christmas morale 'victory' for civilian consumption. Many PWs now speak of the coming attack between the 17th and 25th of December, while other relate promises of the 'recapture' of AACHEN as a Christmas present for the Führer!"

The source of information concerning these multiple PW claims as to an attack was not located among the records. There was no other allusion to the date. PW's own daily Prisoner of War Interrogation Reports for 19-25 December did not contain a single reference to this attack date. (L-555(20,21)) This would seem to be a logical location for such information, but no PW mentioned it.

One Data on Build-up by Fossan Civilian.

A Luxembourg woman gave herself up to the 28th Division on 14 December, and described some enemy build-up in the VIANDRE-REIMS area. She declared that she had noted nothing of military significance on her main travel route. Her comments were reported to the VIII Corps by both message and in the division's G-2 Periodic on the 14th.

The Corps forwarded it in its G-2 Periodic of the 14th, and in the Periodic issue Summary for L41970A-L42000A.

While FUSA received this Corp's ISIRI at 150210A December, it previously received a report on the woman from earlier sources than either the Corps Periodic and ISIRI. (VI, 2) FUSA reported the data prior to the time it merely received the two Corps documents. The description of the woman's Point de Roadway of Data at L42045A December, which described her data in detail. Another instance was the FUSA G-2 ISIRI 12-922 for 14 December, which was issued and filed in the FUSA G-2 Journal File by 142400 December. It also described the woman's information in detail. The description was likewise stated in the FUSA G-2 Periodic for 14 December, in the section dealing with reserves and activities capable of intervention. (IV, 1) FUSA commented: "A very interesting report. Build-up of troops has been confirmed by IAC/R and PW propaganda. However, presence of large numbers of engineers with freight equipment suggests preparation for offensive rather than defensive action. No division from IVAF has been reported on the move to the West front by Higher Headquarters but the possibility always exists that such a move has, in fact, taken place."

B. Reserve Force --- Sixth Panzer Army.

This reserve force was considered as the key to the enemy's strategy in respect to German counterattack possibilities, but Allied command's might force its piecemeal commitment, despite the enemy's desire to maintain it as a unit. As of 10 December, the army Sixth Panzer Army was believed to be located between the ROAR and the PRIME Rivers, the northern town was probably running from FOKICHEN-GRABACH to NAUC. Its components were believed to be the 1, 2, 9, 12 SS Panzer Divisions, and perhaps the 5 SS Pa and the 2 Panzer Div. as also. This reserve army, however, was not an initial and ult force on 16 December, in that it was not committed on that day.

8 FUSA's evaluation of this army was reflected in a single G-2 estimate, that of 20 November, and several daily G-2 Periodics. (FILED, 20 Nov; IV, C)

FUSA's appraisal of the mission and employment of the Sixth Panzer Army was expressed only in the G-2 estimate of 20 November. During a discussion of German counterattack possibilities, this assurance stated: "The key to his strategy will probably will be found in the whereabouts and activity of his Sixth Panzer Army." Inasmuch as the enemy had not launched his expected counterattack in the North Fifteenth AACHA and VIIIC against the Second British and the Ninth U.S. armor prior to the VIIIC's launching of its 13 November offensive towards the VIIIIC area, this 20 November estimate claimed that the enemy had lost his initiative for a spoiling attack. This loss of initiative and because the employment of reserves would be dictated by Allied penetrations, all prompted FUSA to express the view that the employment of reserves en masse was dubious. If the pattern of the past were followed, the Sixth Panzer Army would not be used as a unit, according to the estimate, but would be committed in parts.

Daily G-2 Periodics traced the development of FUSA's acquisition of information about this reserve army. The initial mention of a possible reserve force which FUSA became aware of was made on 22 October. The Periodic of that date stated that indications continued to be received of a build-up of enemy reserves in the SHASS (F7750) area. Furthermore, "Reports from Germany mention the possibility of the formation of a new Panzer Army under which will be grouped all the battered panzer divisions from WESTPHALIA, particularly the SS formations. At least five of these divisions have been in the Reich since early September."

On 24 October the Periodic quoted SHASS as the source of the information that Genl Gf Sapp Dietrich was probably the commander of a panzer army then forming in Northwest Germany, with headquarters at HORBOLD (F-59) on 19 October. However, on 3 November, FUSA listed the higher German units on the Western Front and their locations then known to FUSA, but omitted the Sixth Panzer Army. The First, Seventh, Fifteenth, Nineteenth and Third Para Armies were listed for the known areas.

Again citing another command as the source, a Twelfth Army Group Periodic Report, on 5 November FUSA G-2 Periodic stated that a deserter reported on 10 October that the Sixth Panzer Army was regrouping in the REINFELD area, commanded by Genl Sapp Dietrich, and including the 2, 10, 12 SS and Pz Lehr Divisions. The Twelfth Army Group commented, "The presence of such a Panzer Army, with DIETRICH in charge, has been suspected."

The first instance in which FUSA mentioned this reserve army by name, on its own initiative and without reference to another command as the source of information, occurred in the 6 November Periodic. During a description of the arrival of some enemy forces on its front, FUSA commented: "Whether these arrivals were new infantry divisions, a part of the newly identified Sixth Panzer Army from FAs of the REINFELD, or merely a part of the formations held behind the line in tactical reserve, such as 1 or 9 Panzer Divisions, is not yet clear."

From this date onward PW's received frequent data about this army, and reported it in the daily G-2 Periodic of 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 23, 27, 29, 30 November, and 1, 2, 3, 10, 13 December. Of the last several days preceding the 15th, no mention was made of this force in the Periodic of 11, 12, 14, 15 December. For the PW's comments on these days, the reader is invited to read them among the DOCUMENTATION (IV,C).

The most informative and significant of the November-December comments in the Periodic were those on 20 November and 10 December. The former expressed the opinion of at least part of the purpose of this Sixth Panzer Army. PW's observed that the 10 SS Pz Division might be moved to the WUSA front, and that this movement "to the ASCHERS-GRADACH corridor may be taken as an indication that the enemy intends to keep Six Panzer Army intact as long as possible and avoid committing his major reserve piecemeal as he did in WESTPHALIA."

On 10 December, PW's issued a four-page commentary on the Sixth Panzer Army in the G-2 Periodic for that day. This was a survey of PW's knowledge of the dispositions and whereabouts of the Army's units as of that period. PW's did not, however, discuss the location of this reserve army. Information about the army's location since its move from its referring and training area in WESTPHALIA came from PW's who had either recently passed the area in question or picked up information concerning the whereabouts of these units by hearsay. Interrogations of civilians provided some clues "in solving the puzzle of the Sixth Pz Army." On 10 December, PW's described the location of the Sixth Panzer Army thus:

"The Army as a whole occupies the area between the ROER and the RHEIN Rivers. The northern boundary of this sector probably runs from METTACH-GRADACH to NEURE. From this line south, SS troops are to be found in almost every town and village, and much of their armor and heavy equipment such as artillery is thought to be stored in buildings. While the rest is not doubt concealed in wooded areas. There concentrations of men and material continue south to a line extending from GRADACH (76520) to BLANKENHEIM (7675). The pattern of rail and road movement observed by TAC/A confirms the presence of at least four armored divisions in the area described above.

"At least four SS Panzer Divisions are accepted as part of Sixth SS Pz Army. They are probably grouped under I and II SS Pz Corps. It is thought likely that another Panzer Division, and possibly two, may well be added to this Army. 1 SS, 2 SS, 9 SS, and 12 SS Pz Divs are the divisions accepted under Sixth SS Pz Army, and it is thought that 3 SS Div and 5 SS Pz Div may yet appear."

For detailed divisional location, the reader is invited to refer to the DOCUMENTATION (IV,C). The 2 SS and 4 SS Pz Divisions were placed in the "area" to the front of Ninth U.S. and Second British Armies. 12 SS and 1 SS Pz Divs would come into the zone of action of VII and V Corps of First U.S. Army respectively. 5 SS Pz Div, if present, and 2 Pz Div are probably also in our zone of action."

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No mention was made of this army in the G-2 Periodics of 11, 12, 14, 15 December, but the 13 December Periodic discussed the 3 Para Division as being depleted, and that its relief would likely be another organization available on the Western Front, rather than "one of the divisions of the C-in-C West's counterattacking reserve, Six Panzer Army."

The next reference to the Sixth Panzer Army occurred in the G-2 Periodic, 160001A-162409A December. According to this issuance, the army was still uncommitted at the close of 16 December. It comprised the 1, 2, 9 SS Panzer, 5 Para and 8th Infantry Divisions. However, the Order of Battle Notes attached to this Periodic noted among its new identifications section that a Pz was taken from the 5/25 SS Pz Gr Regt of 12 SS Pz Div at F-017039, who stated that his regiment had participated in an attack in this area on the afternoon of 16 December. FUSA commented: "This would constitute the first identification of any elements of Sixth SS Pz Army in the battle area."

2. Importance of SIEGFRIED LINE to Germans.

As noted among the G-2 Periodics of September onward, the FUSA G-2 frequently referred to the significance of the WEST WALL to the enemy, that he would defend it strenuously, and that he might counterattack to force the Allies across that border fortification off of German soil. Perhaps one informational source which prompted FUSA to hold these views was the Hitler order to defend the line.

The FUSA G-2 cited this order in its Periodic for 5 October. (IV, 4) It was quoted from the Second British Army Intelligence Summary #120, 2 October, which reported that this order of 15 September was Hitler's, and had been described as not to be countermanded under any circumstances. It was a telephone message from the C-in-C West, stating:

"1. The SIEGFRIED Line is of decisive importance in the battle for Germany.

"2. I order:

The SIEGFRIED Line and each of its defensive positions will be held to the last round and until completely destroyed.

This order will be communicated forthwith to all HQs, military formations, better commands and troops."

3. Air Reconnaissance.

The northern portion of the front, the V and VII Corps zones, and north of them was the locale of enemy activity during the several weeks preceding the Counteroffensive, according to aerial reconnaissance. While FUSA noted and drew some conclusions about the activity, it did not announce the meaning and purpose.

The situation was summarized on 15 December. Enemy defenses had been improved east of the ROSS, particularly north of DUREN, during the past several weeks, by additional entrenching, shifting of artillery, etc.

Although its significance was not disclosed, FUSA stated: "Considerable movement in the VII Corps zone between the ROKA and ERPT Rivers has been taking place. Although long convoys or large concentrations of motor vehicles have not been evident, a few vehicles could be seen at one time or another in almost every small village in this area. Motor movements on the roads has likewise been limited to a few vehicles in any one locality with no definite trend in direction." Rail traffic had been heavy, and not confined to main lines, inasmuch as the network of secondary railroads was apparently kept operating. Out trackage was speedily repaired giving some indication of the importance attached to this form of transportation." 60 bridges had been prepared by the enemy for demolition, the majority being toward the north in the VII Corps path. High priorities were apparently given to rail road bridges on the ANCHUNG-RIKUM-KOLM line and those paralleling the ERPT River.

FUSA made the above 13 December summary in its G-2 Periodic for that day, in the G-2(Air) Summary of Movement. (IV,C) information for 13 was doubtless acquired largely through the IX Tactical Air Command A-2 Section, which forwarded its daily periodic to the FUSA G-2. (VI,C) Air reconnaissance was described by the FUSA G-2 in two daily issuances, (1) Summary of Operations for 13 days which reported air operations but lacked commentary, and (2) in the G-2(Air) Summary of Movement contained in the FUSA G-2 daily Periodic. This second issuance was the most informative as to both trends and facts. (IV,C) The more pertinent of these G-2(Air) Summary of Movement sections are noted below, to supplement the above recapitulation of the situation in the 13 December issuance. The following commentary is a resume only, and details may be found in the DOCUMENTATION section under IV,C.

According to the 13 December Periodic the enemy activity for the preceding week indicated three axes of movement. In order of density, they were: 1. KOLM-PPHEN. 2. KILM-RIKUM-RIKUM-KALL line. 3. BUREN-CHREVENRICH line and the KOLM-KOBIENZ line. There were 14 sightings on the KILM-RIKUM-RIKUM-KALL line, 17 trains on the KOLM-BICKIPHEN-KALL line, and the KILM-KOBIENZ lines on both sides of the RHINE showed regular expected daily usage.

The 9 December Periodic stated that there were two days during the preceding week in which no fighting was due to poor weather, but the rail lines within the FUSA zone were well covered during the remainder of the week. "The most significant fact which has been brought out is that on all rail lines in the V and VII Corps zone, to and including the RHINE Valley there has been train movement at some time during the week.

Following the 13 December summary, reports were made on daily basis for the last two days preceding the Counteroffensive.

On the 14th observations were made only between 1200 and 1600 hours, due to fog and ground haze over the river, although the skies were generally clear. No rail movement of note was observed east of the RHINE except in the TIGER area, where the marshalling yards showed considerable activity, as well as at EHRANG. East of the RHINE, the marshalling yards at OBERLASS (75,47) contained four made up trains of

medium length. Some other scattered activity was observed farther to the East, but no trend of movement was indicated. "Sightings of vehicular activity was less than of any time previously."

Observations covered only the 1030-1330 period on 15 December. Rail movements were practically negligible, except for trains facing east at METZBACH. The movement of 14 vehicles into and out of METZBACH (11127) might indicate a truckhead.

IV. FUSA's Opinion of Attack's Significance, 16 December

Methodology.

(1) Because of their high level strategic implications, the interviews with ranking FUSA officers possessed by Dr. Forrest C. Fogue are not discussed in this paper. On the official FUSA documents among the archives of the Historical Records Section, DHS, AGO, were examined.

(2) Furthermore, the FUSA After/Action Report for December 1944 is not discussed as a source of information. (L-496(1)) This document was not objective. It was submitted 7 April 1945, several months after the event, and partiality was injected into its pages. The Intelligence Section contained a six-page analysis titled, "Building for the Counteroffensive," p. 5255 50-55, listing attack signs. This data was, to be sure, individually contained in the current issuances of G-2 Periodics and G-2 Timats, but the data was not currently designated as attack symptoms by these pre-Counteroffensive documents. Yet, the retrospective After/Action Report labeled them as attack evidence, giving the erroneous impression that they were recognized as such BEFORE THE EVENT, by the G-2 Section, and applicable to the actual assault area. As noted elsewhere in this CRITIQUE, FUSA expected a counterattack, but in the north, not in the southern portion of its front where it occurred.

(3) FUSA's G-2 Periodic #190, 150001A-162400A and Intelligence Summary #B-929, 161800A-172400A December were the major sources of information concerning the assault on 16 December. (IV, E; VI, B)

Commentary.

Description of Attack:

According to the ISM of 1800A-2400A hours to FUSA's superior orders, a heavy enemy artillery fire fell along most of the Army's front, starting at about 0530, with sporadic fire falling in rear areas at ST. VITR, KALFEDT, VERVIERS, and EUPEN. Beginning at 0600A, counterattacks were launched at numerous points on the VIII Corps and the southern 7 Corps fronts, with two small attacks on the VII Corps front.

Summary:

FUSA asserted in its G-2 Periodic 150001A-162400A December that the German attack was an all-out one, that the enemy was staking all on this offensive, that his current capability was to drive through FUSA's rear areas and seize bridgeheads over the MAUSE River.

However, if the attack indicated signs of slowing down, Rundstedt might decide that the capture of AACHEN would suffice as a Christmas present for Hitler. Then German purpose in launching the attack was not pointed out. No mention was made if it was independent operation upon the enemy's initiative, or if it was a reaction to the FUSA current offensive. As noted in the G-2 Estimate, FUSA thought in terms of a northern attack, and the capability references to the WEUSE and to AACHEN paralleled that thought. (See the Enemy Capability Section of this CRITIQUE.) Too, the AACHEN allusion as a Christmas present to Hitler suggested that FUSA may have felt the attack's purpose pertained to a Yule gift concept only, inasmuch as some PW's had previously mentioned such an idea. (See Attack Evidence Reported by Divisions Section of this CRITIQUE.) Although the enemy had attacked with 22 divisions, five of which had not been previously identified by FUSA, he still possessed strong uncommitted, reserve forces, mainly the Sixth Panzer Army.

Explanation of the Attack

FUSA's opinion of the assault's gravity was expressed in the G-2 Periodic for the 14th. The discussion of reserves and intervention forces asserted:

"There was no doubt that the enemy was making an all-out effort to smash through our lines and achieve objectives deep in our rear areas. Therefore, the early commitment of a large portion of the remaining enemy reserves must be expected in both the V and VIII Corps sectors, with perhaps the greatest pressure being exerted along the boundary of the two Corps."

During the analysis of enemy capabilities, the G-2 expressed the view:

"Present indications are that this is the enemy's all-out bid for victory. It must be now or never. He has moved out of his bunker and permanent fortifications. Reserves are still available. The enemy has staked all on this offensive, he cannot afford to halt its present momentum now."

First Army's reasons for the above conclusions were not announced, but doubtless a major evidence on the assault's gravity consisted of certain captured documents acquired by FUSA during the day. At 1244 hours the G-2 received the translated text of Von Rundstedt's Order of the Day of 16 December, which announced the Counteroffensive and its importance to German troops. (FI,B) This document was captured during the morning by the V Corps and forwarded to the FUSA G-2. Furthermore, although the manner and time of receipt were indeterminable from the records, the FUSA G-2 acquired during the day a group of documents containing (1) the Orders of the Day about the Counteroffensive by the commanders of the Army Group B and the Sixth Panzer Army, (2) a document pertaining to the Operation GODEF, and (3) some miscellaneous papers. These were captured by the 106th Division and forwarded to the VIII Corps. (Corps Level), VIII Corps, p. 37. Neither the VIII Corps nor the FUSA records, however, indicated how and when FUSA acquired these three groups of documents, which, nevertheless were doubtless obtained from VIII Corps. Even so, FUSA possessed and attached them to its G-2 Periodic for 16 December. Also, FUSA described them in detail in its G-2 IEM 1800A-2400A hours, stating that "captured documents ... clearly indicates large scale

offensive launched today with 51. With as first major objective and subsequent drive to West and Northwest. ..."

Enemy Capabilities

These were stated in the ENEMY CAPABILITIES section of the 16 December G-2 Periodic. The current one "is the attempt to exploit initial gains by driving through FUSA's rear areas and seizing bridgeheads over the WEST RIVER." The second capability consisted of confining the attack to the limited objective of driving FUSA from the German soil and regaining the WEST WALL positions. Defense of the current gains was the third capability, but FUSA considered it unlikely at that time, because the gained ground was not so defensible as WEST WALL positions just departed. Moreover, the enemy's low supply required forward movement to live off captured supplies. FUSA also expressed the thought that "if the enemy attack shows signs of bogging down, then RUNDSTEDT may decide that AACHEN would suffice as the Fuehrer's Christmas present."

Strength and Composition of Enemy Forces

Comparison of the Units in Contact sections of the 15 and 16 December G-2 Periodics indicated that FUSA was aware of the presence of elements of 18 enemy divisions on its front, whereas, 22 actually struck on the 16th.

The following tabulation indicates the differences:

Elements of Divisions.

15 Dec.	16 Dec.
	2 Pz
3 Para	3 Para
	5 ParaF
6 Para	6 Para
12 SS Pz	12 VG SS Pz
12 VG	12 VG
18 VG	18 "
26 VG	26 "
47 "	47 "
	67 "
69 Inf	69 Inf
116 Pz	116 Pz
212 VG	212 VG
246 "	246 VG
272 "	272 "
276 "	276 "
277 "	277 "
326 "	
340 "	344 "
352 "	352 "
353 Inf	353 Inf
	362 VG
	560 "

According to the table, elements of five enemy divisions struck on the 16th which had not been previously identified. One of these,

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data early enough to include it in detail in its G-2 Midnight
edition of data at 1429454 December, also in its ISM #8-922,
14 December, which was issued and filed in the FUSA G-2 Journal
#118 by 1:2409.

The First Army reported its intelligence data through its daily
Periodics and its G-2 Estimate. As noted in the Enemy Capabilities
section of this CRITIQUE, FUSA issued 3/8-2 Estimates between 8 June,
the first one after D-Day, and 10 December, the last pre-Counteroffensive
G-2 Estimate issuance. The Estimate was more expressive of the FUSA
opinion on the enemy potentialities. In fact, the ENEMY CAPABILITY
section of the G-2 Periodics referred to the Estimates for that subject.

FIRST U. S. ARMY

DOCUMENTATION

I. FUSA's Official History.

A. First United States Army REPORT OF OPERATIONS, 20 OCTOBER 1943 - 1 AUGUST 1944.

(Source: In Historical Records Section.)

Advance increments of the FUSA staff arrived in the United Kingdom in late September 1943, and one day following its arrival on 19 October the Headquarters of FUSA opened its Command Post at Clifton College, Bristol, England. FUSA superseded the V Corps as the command headquarters of American forces in the British Isles. This was the invasion Army on D-Day, 6 June 1944, with the V Corps and the VII Corps landing on the OMAHA Beach of Normandy and on UTAH Beach of the Cotentin Peninsula, respectively. By early July the Army was augmented by the VIIIth and XII Corps, and a breakout drive from the Normandy beachhead was executed during late July, called Operation CORSA.

B. First United States Army REPORT OF OPERATIONS, 1 AUGUST 1944 - 22 FEBRUARY 1945.

(Source: Ibid.)

This breakthrough at ST. LO was exploited during August and early September. PARIS was captured on 25 August, and the enemy was pursued through northern France and Belgium, to the Belgium-Germany border, where the Army was located on 13 September. (Situation Map #5)

This date was the beginning of the Battle of Germany, which continued until interrupted by the enemy's Ardennes Counteroffensive on 16 December. The FUSA zone on that date ranged between the British Twenty-First Army Group on the north and Third U.S. Army on the south. North to south were positioned the Army's three Corps, the XIX, VII, V, from northern HOLLAND, generally along the Germany border of BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG, to the boundary of the First and Third Armies on the SURE RIVER, slightly below CEFERACHER, Luxembourg.

During the remainder of September the XII Corps drove on to the Holland-Germany border, and slightly beyond portions of it, while the northern flank of the VII Corps fought beyond the Belgium-Germany border, swerving north to invest AACHEN, but the north ended with only approximately half of the city surrounded. The southern flank of the VII Corps and the V Corps to its south, generally fought up to the border or crossed slightly in some parts.

52. FUSA. Presentation.

AACHEN was captured on 21 October, thus completing the first phase of the First Army's Letter of Instruction of 29 September, with the advance to DUREN and beyond to the RHINE River still to be made. This involved the offensives of November and December on HURTGEN Forest, SCHIEDT, and the ROER River dams.

As of 15 December, two of the three Army Corps were conducting offensive. The major effort of the Army was being made on the north flank towards KOLN on the RHINE River. However, although the VII Corps had generally reached the ROER River near DUREN in its sector, and, as of 15 December was clearing the resistance on the west bank, the First Army's advance beyond the ROER was critically handicapped. A large-scale crossing of the ROER below the river's four dams south of SCHIEDT is dangerous. If the German should destroy them or open their gates, the area in the DUREN region would be flooded, cutting off advancing units from support and supply or destroying men and equipment. Inasmuch as air attacks had not destroyed the dams prior to ground forces arrival, the First Army attacked the dams area. The V Corps began its attack on 13 December, and was continuing it on 15 December. FUSA's southern corps, the VIIIth, was ranged from slightly north of LUSSEMBURG southward generally along the Belgium-Germany border and the Luxembourg-German border to the VIII Corps juncture with the Third U.S. Army in the vicinity of the southeast corner of Luxembourg, approximately along the France-Germany-Luxembourg borders act. This zone was defensive, as it had been for approximately two months, and on 16 December was quiet and inactive.

Thus, during the two month period from the FUSA's arrival on the SIGFRIED Line on 12 September to the 16 December Counteroffensive, the northern portion of the front was engaged in an offensive towards KOLN, whereas the southern flank was defensive and relatively inactive. The two northern corps, the Vth and VIIth were attacking on 15 December towards and on the ROER River, respectively, while the VIIIth Corps was defending in the south on an inactive front.

II. After/Action Report, December 1944.

(Source: L-496(1))

FUSA After/Action Reports were quite retrospective, being written well after the close of the month. The December report was dated 7 April 1945, a substantial period intervening between the Counteroffensive's termination in January 1945 and the composition of this report. The point was true of the November 1944 and January 1945 reports, which were issued 27 February 1945 and 21 April 1945 respectively.

The writer has not extracted data from this December report as a contribution to the body of information denoting FUSA's knowledge and opinion of the enemy. He does not consider the 51-page Section "C. SUMMARY OF THE COUNTEROFFENSIVE" as historically objective. It listed evidence of the attack's buildup, but, this list was compiled after the event, not prior. The compilation was largely from the daily G-2 Periodic, but those documents did not currently specify the data as constituting attack indications. While the writer does not accept this data as historical evidence, because he regards it as unobjective,

3. FUSA Documentation.

The reader is invited to examine the FUSA After/Action Report, Intelligence Section, for December 1944, to form his own judgment.

Except for the interpolation of the G-2 Estimates of 20 November and 10 December, the compilation consisted of daily, applicable extracts from the G-2 Periodics. The section opened with the statement: "On 7 December the concept of the enemy capabilities was still as expressed in G-2 Estimate No. 36 dated 20 November 1944. Following the quoting of that enemy capabilities section the assertion was made: 'Evidence accumulated rapidly to alter this estimate. Outstanding items of intelligence must wait (from Daily Periodic Reports issued by AG of S, G-2, First U.S. Army.)' Extracts from the daily G-2 Periodics were then listed chronologically until after the 7 December entry, at which point the G-2 Estimate #37, 10 December was quoted verbatim, as a summary of the 'intelligence received during 1 and 10 December...' 'After the issue of this estimate, confirmatory evidence continued to accumulate.' Entries for the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th of December followed. That of 15 December is herein quoted as an example:

"15 December: 'Reinforcements for the West Wall between BREITEN and TRIER continue to arrive. The identification of at least three or four newly reformed divisions along the Army front must be reckoned with during the next few days. Although the enemy is resorting to his attack propaganda to bolster morale of the troops, it is possible that a limited scale offensive will be launched for the purpose of achieving a Christmas morale 'victory' for civilian consumption. Many PWs now speak of the coming attack between the 17th and 25th of December, while others relate promises of the 'recapture of SACKER as a Christmas present for the FUEHRER.'

"VIII US Corps reports that an abrupt change of routine of enemy personnel opposite 9th US Armored Div strongly suggests that new troops may have arrived in that area. (Comment: Very likely a recently arrived Volksgrenadier Division coming in to relieve 212 Volksgrenadier Div.)

"Enemy continued to restrict his activity to manning and improving defences, patrolling and one large patrol consisting of 34 men observed in the vicinity of L-0495. Considerable vehicular traffic was heard throughout the period opposite the southern flank of our SCHWARZ KIPPE salient."

III. G-2 Estimates.

(Source: L-348(9), 553(26), 554(16))

A. Explanation.

The object of this examination of the G-2 Estimates was to trace the development of the FUSA's opinion of the broadest aspects of the German intentions and capabilities. That is, those beyond an immediate current campaign. For instance, each Estimate up to #9, 10 July, was

A. Presentation.

concerned only with the action of the period. The issuance of that date, however, referred to the collapse or surrender capability of the enemy, indicating that the FUI's opinion was being projected to large considerations. In order to trace the progression of FUI's views leading up to the Counteroffensive, the following analysis of the G-2 Estimates was concerned with this 10 July issuance, although the Army's campaign was still prior to the breakout from the beachhead, which occurred later that month.

As noted below, the First Army prolifically issued G-2 Estimates. The first one after the 6 June D-Day was the Special G-2 Estimate #3, on 8 June, and there were 34 intervening ones until #37 was issued on 20 12 December, the last one prior to the Counteroffensive. There were approximately 25 weeks during that period, and 33 issuances, arithmetically one a week.

B. Chronological List, #1 May '44 - #39, 21 Dec. '44.

N.B.--The locations of the various Estimates are in parenthesis.

1. Not located in files.
2. 11 May. (L-348(9))
3. Special G-2 Est., 8 June. (L-348(9))
4. 15 June. (L-348(9))
5. 18 " "
6. 21 " (L-583(26))
7. 29 " "
8. 3 July. Counterintelligence. (L-348(9))
9. 10 July. (L-553(26))
10. 18 " "
11. 24 " "
12. 28 " "
13. 1 Aug.
14. 8 " "
15. 13 " "
16. 15 " "
17. 18 " "
18. 19 " "
19. 20 " "
20. 21 " "
21. 25 " "
22. 27 " (L-579(28))
23. 31 " (L-553(26))
24. 3 Sept.
25. 11 " "
26. 11 " "
27. 12 " "
28. 15 " "
29. 21 " "
30. 26 " "
31. 1 Oct.
32. 9 " "
33. 17 " "
34. 31 " "

35. 12 Nov. (1-354(16))
 36. 20 "
 37. 10 Dec.
 38. 20 "
 39. 22 "

C. Extracts from Texts.

#9. 10 July.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(6) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion.

...Implementation of 2a(6) is of low immediate probability but should not be overlooked.*

#10. 13 July.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(4) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion.

...The implementation of collapse or surrender capability 2a(4), is of growing possibility, particularly in view of the current British success at the eastern end of the bridgehead. ...*

#11. 24 July.

This estimate was titled as Political. It discussed the consequences of the attempted Hitler assassination on 20 July. It considered the overthrow of his government by internal revolution or revolts of field armies, or government would sustain itself in office by suppression of opposition.

#12. 28 July.

*2. Enemy Capabilities.

a. (1)...

(5) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion. ... The implementation of 2a(5) is of

increasing probability in direct proportion to the success of our operations. Destruction of LXXXV Corps is believed at hand, and the destruction of II Para Corps is an immediate possibility.*

#13. 1 Aug.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(2) The enemy is capable of giving up the 'no retreat' policy and by withdrawing from southern FRANCE endeavoring to regroup his forces in northern France to prevent an advance toward GERMANY.

(4) The enemy is capable of a coup d'etat which will replace Hitler by a high military party who will sue for peace with

the British and Americans, while asking safeguards against the Russians.

(5) The enemy is capable of a military collapse and wholesale surrender.

b. Discussion. ... The adoption of 2a(2) is believed of low order of probability because of Hitler's 'no retreat' policy and the impracticality of performing any large-scale regrouping due to the present state of rail and highway communication and the dominance of our air force. ... 2a(4) is of increasing possibility despite the Gestapo. 2a(5) is regarded as an almost certain eventuality either preceded by 2a(4) or occurring successively as units are defeated in the field. "

c. Reasons. Doubt was expressed that the NORMANDY Forces could continue more than four to eight weeks as a fighting machine. Only discipline and habit of obedience to orders kept the front lines fighting. Another heavy defeat such as the breakthrough battle begun on 25 July would probably force collapse of the forces at the base of the CHERBOURG Peninsula. Surrender or a disastrous retreat would be the alternative. "In the next four to eight weeks the current situation may change with dramatic suddenness into a race to reach a chaotic Germany."

#14. 8 Aug.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

""

(2) The enemy is capable of surrender or collapse.

b. The capabilities are in order of probability."

*3. Discussion. The enemy was being forced to the defensive. His reinforcement rate and his supply of forces was limited because of impaired communications and constant air attacks. "These factors, and the constant attrition of his divisions by our attacks lead first to a defensive role and second to surrender or collapse (Capability 2a(2)). ..."

#15. 13 Aug.

No discussion of enemy capabilities.

#16. 15 Aug.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) To continue to hold open the shoulders of the FALAISE-ARGENTAN gateway to extricate the almost encircled forces.

(2) To fight a series of delaying actions in rear guard while he retires to the SEINE and the MARNE.

(3) To attempt a stand on the SEINE and MARNE.

(4) To retire to the heights of the AISNE.

(5) To retire to the West Wall.

(6) To surrender or collapse.

(7) To employ new or secret weapons.

b. Discussion. 2a(1) is current. 2a(2) is believed of high probability. 2a(3) is next in sequence and in likelihood followed by an attempt to execute 2a(4) and (5), unless 2a(6) is forced upon

the enemy by Allied pressure or internal disorder. 2a(7) will probably be implemented if new devices are at hand and practical."

#17. 18 Aug.
Capabilities unchanged from #16.

#18. 19 Aug.
Enemy Capabilities: "No change since Estimate No. #17. Present enemy dispositions continue to favor the capability of an enemy withdrawal across the SEINE River."

#19. 20 Aug.
Titled: Counterintelligence.

#20. 21 Aug.
"CONCLUSIONS. Enemy tactics and reactions to our moves show plainly that there no longer exist a cohesive plan for the defense of the West as a whole. At best the enemy is capable of fighting only a large-scale delaying action, throwing his remaining divisions into battle piecemeal wherever the situation is most critical for the moment. He is incapable of any concerted action or maneuver on a large scale. His hope of receiving further reinforcements with which to stem the tide, regain control and consolidate his position, are almost nil."
No other remarks about capabilities.

#21. 25 Aug.
"2. Conclusions.

- a. Enemy Capabilities. of the capabilities listed in G-2 Estimate No. 16, this headquarters, the following remain
 - (1) To retire to the heights of the AISNE, probably using the historic SEINE-ALPINE-MARNE or MEUSE barrier.
 - (2) To retire to the West Wall.
 - (3) To surrender or collapse.
 - (4) To employ new or secret weapons.

b. Discussion. Since the line of the SEINE-lower MARNE is compromised, it is believed that 2a(1) is of high order of probability. 2a(2) is viewed as of doubtful probability due to the logistic difficulty of the enemy being able to move his Fifteenth and First Armies to the West Wall in the face of our superior mobility. 2a(3) is believed of increasing probability as the field army commanders fully appreciate the hopelessness of the military situation in France. ...

c. Reasons. Whatever elements of the Seventh Army would escape across the SEINE would be thoroughly demoralized and would need rest and reorganization. ... However, the route to Germany will be guarded only by the First German Army, which is insufficient to protect so long a front against the Allied forces. A delaying action is believed all that can be accomplished.

#22. 27 Aug.
Enemy Capabilities.
"(1) ...
(2) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.
(3)..."

#23. 31 Aug.

*1. Summary of the Enemy Situation.

a. First German Army.

(6) **Mission.** The First German Army, like the Fifteenth and the Nineteenth, is definite on a defensive mission; that is, to prevent a breakthrough to the east, thus keeping open the RHONE Valley for the withdrawal of German units from southwest and southern France, while keeping contact with Fifteenth Army on its right (west). A retirement to the West Wall with as much as can be saved from the debacle in France is now believed to be its paramount task.*

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

- (1) To withdraw as rapidly as possible for final stand on West Wall under concept of Fortress Germany.
- (2) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.
- (3) The possibility of use of secret and novel weapons: No change.

b. **Discussion.** The enemy must appreciate that the largest factors operating in his favor are the logistic problems confronting the Allied armies in France, and the approach of autumn rains with its mud and poor flying weather. It is, therefore, probable that he will delay upon favorable terrain, such as the ARDENNES and ARGONNE Forests, the heights of the FOEVRE, the BOSGES Mountains and on the MEUSE, to permit the escape of Nineteenth Germany Army from the south and the retirement of the First, together with the Fifteenth and Nineteenth, to the Siegfried Line."

#24. 3 Sept.

*2 Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

- (1) The enemy is capable of manning the West Wall for an all-out defense.
- (2) The enemy is capable of revolution leaning towards Bolshevism.
- (3) The enemy is capable of revolution with a government oriented with the West.
- (4) The enemy is capable of guerilla warfare conducted by women and children under Nazi Party leadership.

b. **Discussion.** The implementation of 2a(1) is, of course, axiomatic. ...

c. **Reasons.** It is not believed the West Wall can be successfully defended in the face of overwhelming air and ground superiority.* The Catholic Church, particularly in southern Germany, was believed strong enough to assume leadership and control during the chaos of defeat. The military opposition's influence was shaken by the failure of the July coup d'etat, the leadership purged. The underground would not be generally strong enough to dominate the situation.

#25. 11 Sept.

Titled: Counterintelligence in Belgium.

#19. FUSA. Presentation.

#26. 11 Sept.

#1. Summary of the Situation.

g. Although the RHINE is the best natural line of defense for Germany, it is believed that a stand will be ordered on the West Wall for reasons of prestige, and the fact that the loss of Germany west of the Rhine will be a staggering blow to national pride. Furthermore, air fields west of the RHINE are needed and are currently being used. A study is being made of the possibility of the defense of the RHINE. It is believed that the over-running of the West Wall will cost him so much of what remains of his Western armies that unless troops are evacuated successfully from Finland, Norway and the Balkans, he will not have the man-power necessary to win the RHINE.

#2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

- (1) The enemy is capable of an attempt for all-out defense of the West Wall.
- (2) The enemy is capable of retirement to the RHINE after the overrunning of the West Wall.
- (3) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.*

#27. 12 Sept.

Titled: Counterintelligence in Germany.

#28. 15 Sept.

#1. Summary of the Situation.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) The enemy capabilities listed in G-2 Estimate No. 26, dated 11 September 1944, were: 'The enemy is capable of 2a(1) an attempt for all-out defense of the West Wall; (2) of retirement to the RHINE after the overrunning of the West Wall; (3) of collapse or surrender.

(2) The exercise of capability 2a(1) cited above

is now current. ...

b. Strategic. The enemy has committed the major portion of his effectiveness to defense of the METZ-VERDUN gateway. He has apparently withdrawn no substantial part of his beaten armies from Normandy behind the RHINE to rest and refit, but has kept them in the RHEINELAND. In addition he has brought flank troops from southern and central Germany across the RHINE for use in a ground role and the defense of airfields, highway and bridges. The fifteenth Army is thoroughly engaged in extricating itself across the SCHELT and out of Holland to except the Second British Army. The scratch formations holding the shoulder on the right(east) flank of the Second British Army running over to the left(north) flank of the First U.S. Army are concerned with a defensive role. The bulk of the German western forces are engaged in the battle of the MOELLE as a covering position for the West Wall and in preparing to defend the VOSGES and the West Wall to the Swiss frontier. For the first time the enemy has succeeded in anchoring his flanking left(southeast) flank.

c. The strategic opportunity offered at the moment to the First U.S. Army is enormous. A breakthrough in the sector of the V

and VII Corps of the West Wall offers the possibility of a swift advance to the RHINE. This would force the enemy to evacuate the RHINELAND because he would then occupy a compromised line with an obstacle at his back. The cutting of strategic roads and bridges and the prevention of withdrawal across the RHINE could effect the destruction of the remaining enemy western field forces. Having pierced the first belt of the West Wall south of AACHEN the VII Corps has the glittering possibility of rapidly piercing the second, and proceeding via STOLBERG-LURIC to COLOGNE. The V Corps has the possibility of continuing its advance north of the ROSE LE along the valley of the AAR to ANDERWACHEN. A rapid exploitation of the approaches to the RHINE bridges should effect the destruction of the I SS Pa Corps, II SS Pa Corps and offers the possibility of seizing the RHINE bridges intact with bridgeheads on the eastern bank.

22. Conclusions.

a. The enemy capabilities cited in 1a(1) above remain unchanged for the moment. However, exploitation of the strategic possibilities would eliminate 2a(1) and (2) cited in para 1, and reduce the enemy to a third capability, that of collapse and surrender.*

#29. 21 Sept.

Titels: Political and Psychological.

#30. 26 Sept.

22. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) If given time to assemble the above reinforcements the enemy is capable of determined and sustained defensive battle along the West Wall.

(2) The enemy is capable of retiring to the east(right) bank of the RHINE and continuing to defend.

(3) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender and, in either case, the continuation of partisan warfare.

(4) The enemy is capable of using new weapons and chemical warfare.

b. Discussion. Determined defense of the West Wall is current. The enemy will continue it as long as possible, using the time gained to bring reinforcements, to create reserves and improve his command organization, logistics and fortification. Some evidence has appeared of fortification on the right bank of the RHINE. The implementation of capability 2a(2) will, therefore, be determined by his success in defending the West Wall. The implementation of the capability of collapse or surrender is unpredictable. The emotional uplift connected with the defense of the homeland is bound to decline from war weariness and the realization of the hopelessness of the war situation. Though the army in the field and governments in the home area cease to function, partisan warfare may be continued by large elements from chavvinise as well as from cooperation.

The implementation of the capability of using the so-called Y-weapons is current. Use of chemical warfare is problematic.*

#11. FUSA. Documentation.

#21. 1 Oct.

Titled: Political and Counter-Intelligence - The Netherlands.

#32. 9 Oct.

*1. Summary of the Situation.

a. General. The enemy's capability of sustained defensive battle along the West Wall in the sector of the First U.S. Army has been destroyed. The West Wall is now breached in four places and passages through it have been established. In the meantime it has been re-defined by German propaganda to include the area between the German border and the RHINE. This sleight-of-hand does not alter the fact that the capability referred to in G-2 Estimate No. 20 is gone. The terrain between the frontier and the RHINE provides two features of value for defense, particularly against armor, in the River ROER and in the River RHEIN. These natural features and the intensive community digging are believed to indicate the enemy's tactics. The enemy is being driven back and the ROER.

b. Enemy Forces.

- (1) The line-up of enemy forces on the West front is:
 - Army Group B: Seventh, Fifteenth, First Para Armies.
 - Army Group G: First, Nineteenth, and Fifth Panzer *

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

- (1) The enemy is capable of retiring to the east(right) bank of the ROER and defending in hastily constructed field fortifications.
- (2) The enemy is capable of retiring to the east(right) bank of the RHEIN for the same purpose.
- (3) The enemy is capable of endeavoring to withdraw behind the RHINE.
- (4) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion. Photo interpretation indicates that a line following generally along the east bank of the ROER has been prepared and the implementation of its defense is current. Implementation of capability 2a(2) can be expected to follow when the enemy is driven from the line of the ROER, if his withdrawal is not prevented and if he can reach the RHEIN line. The implementation of capability 2a(3) is viewed as of low probability at this time, but may be expected to follow when the line of the RHEIN is compressed. Implementation of capability 2a(4) is of increasing probability as defeat continues to engulf German territory and the hope in secret weapons proportionately fails. The rigid control of the German people by the SEDAP is weakening in areas approached by our forces and an increasing number of civilians are endeavoring to remain behind rather than evacuate their homes under SA and S compulsion. The enemy is faced with the problem of garrisoning a long line with insufficient troops and of necessity must determine priorities in the disposal of his fe. reserves. There is no evidence yet that he has recognized the threat of First U.S. Army's attack by committing reserve, especially of armor, to meet this threat."

#33. 17 Oct.

*1. Summary of the Situation.

a. General. The enemy has reacted to the larger penetrations of the Siegfried Line north and south of AACHEN and the isolation of AACHEN by concentrating at least four of his best mobile divisions for a counteroffensive to restore the West Wall and to expel the invader from German soil. After ten days of piecemeal reinforcements which involved ... the enemy has drawn from the reserves of his armies at least four of his few remaining counterattack divisions ... The enemy's reactions have been characterized by piecemeal counterattacks which were shattered by artillery and air action. His counterattack ordered for 13 October was cancelled shortly before 0900 because the weather was good. On 15 October he recommenced counterattacking with the arrival of bad weather. It is believed he is convinced that he cannot counterattack successfully in weather when fighter-bombers can fly and the artillery observation planes afford our artillery superior observation. It is believed that his highest command has yet to learn that its troops cannot counterattack successfully in the face of our vastly superior artillery, TD and other heavy weapon support.

b. Reserves. Although four of the Pz or Pz Gr Divs of first quality have appeared on our front, it is believed that he has available at least five more. These are 9 Pz, now believed reconstituted and divorced from 116 Pz Div, 9 SS, withdrawn from Second British Army front a fortnight ago, 10 SS, 2 SS and 12 SS. 17 SS, Pz Lehr and other ghosts from NORMANDY may be revitalized but are believed to be for the time being out of the picture. Other reserves are the famous Goetterwehrerung wave of the 500 series, the Furlough series, and the striking slender list of reconstituted divisions from RUSSIA available to the enemy for the Western front. Reserves left to GERMANY for the Western front are currently viewed as slim until the HUNGARIAN front on AUSTRIA's doorstep is stabilized. The garrisoning of a revitalized CZECHOSLOVAKIA will contain other reserves. Divisions from NORWAY, FINLAND and GREECE are not currently available, nor can anything substantial be further sequestered from ITALY.*

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

- (1) The enemy incapable of defending his re-defined West Wall, which included the area between the German border and the RHINE.
- (2) The enemy is capable of retiring behind the RHINE.
- (3) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion. Capability 2a(1) is current. Capability 2a(2) will be exercised only when forced upon the enemy. Capability 2a(3) may well follow a decisive defeat west of the RHINE.*

#34. 31 Oct.

*1. Summary of the Situation.

a. General. Since the fall of AACHEN the enemy in the First U.S. Army sector, mainly Seventh German Army (CG: Gen der Pz Tr Erich Brandenberger), has been on the passive defensive, improving positions and making local readjustments in troop disposition, and eager to secure prisoners for intelligence purposes. Further north, however, in the

13. P. 2. Documentation.

sector of Second British Army, the enemy has launched a limited offensive in the WELJEL (L-7065) area with 9 Pz Div, 15 Pz Div, and possibly 7 SS Pz Div, all three divisions probably under command of the XVII Pz Corps. The purpose of the enemy's attack is twofold. First, to relieve pressure on his hard-pressed troops in Holland and Western Belgium by forcing a diversion of divisions within 21 Army Group from other combat areas to meet the threat; secondly, to threaten the flank of Ninth U.S. Army and cause similar repercussions within 12 Army Group at a time when the enemy suspects us of mounting an offensive. Also, at this particular moment, each yard of ground gained by his troops in the field is worth one hundred miles in propaganda and morale to the enemy on the home front. Elsewhere on the Western Front, the enemy appears content with the temporary stabilization of the situation. This period of comparative inactivity has afforded him the long-desired opportunity to substitute infantry for armor in the lines. The eleven armored divisions under command of G-in-C West are at present disposed as follows: 10 SS Pz Div is engaged in Holland; 9 Pz and 9 SS Pz Divs are involved in operation around WELJEL; 1 SS, 2 SS, 12 SS and Pz Lehr Divs are reforming in Northwestern Germany under a Panzer Army headquarters; 2, 11 and 116 Pz Divs have been withdrawn from the line and are probably west of the REINE, serving as mobile reserves while refitting; finally, 21 Pz Div was last reported en route to the Seventh U.S. Army sector. Although the tank regiments of these divisions have not been identified, in most cases, since the retreat across France, their early reappearance must be reckoned with. A revised estimate of the German tank production figures shows production to be in the neighborhood of 900 tanks per month. Despite the heavy demands of the Panzer Divisions engaged in the east, it is safe to assume that certain proportion is being allotted the Panzer forces of G-in-C West.

b. Reserves. Once more, the priority on reserves within the Reich has gone to the east. The losses being suffered by the German Army Group South UKRAINE in Hungary are among the greatest of the war. ...

c. Air. The enemy's air effort in support of his ground force in the west is still only on a limited scale. Recent large-scale Allied daylight attacks have forced the enemy greatly to reinforce his single-engine fighter force defending the REICH at the expense of his tactical air force. Even during the enemy's major counterattack against our forces in the AACHEN gap, and more recently during the attack on WELJEL, he failed to produce the fighter strength necessary to prevent our planes from bombing and strafing his troops almost at will. Such tactical support as can be spared from the defense of the Reich is directed toward protection of key communications points immediately behind the front lines, and then the operational effort seldom exceeds more than 100 sorties per day. It is possible, however, that the frequent rounding of our strategic air force due to bad weather will release a considerable number of enemy fighters.

2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) The enemy is capable of continuing his attacks on the front of the Second British Army and thus threatening the flank

of Ninth U.S. Army.

(2) The enemy is capable of simultaneously attacking Ninth US. Army and Second British Army with any or all of the three Panzer Divisions now in reserve west of the ROINE with the object of breaking AACHEN OVERHEADS and forcing an Allied withdrawal from German soil.

(3) The enemy is capable of attacking on the front of First U.S. Army with the object of retaking AACHEN and driving First U.S. Army from inside his border.

(4) The enemy is capable of continuing his efforts to stabilize the situation and prevent a further advance into Germany.

(5) The enemy is capable of employing V-1 and V-2 in a tactical role.

b. Discussion. Capability 2a(1) is current. Capability 2a(4) is of highest probability if capability 2a(1) fails. If capability 2a(1) succeeds, capability 2a(2) is to be expected. Capability 2a(3) is of lower probability. Capability 2a(5) may be expected at any time.

c. Reasons. The German doctrine of defense calls for counter-attack, and he assumes the passive defense only when he is powerless to do anything else. Having had four to six weeks rest for his counter-attack divisions, he is now capable of large-scale counter-attacks or a minor offensive. His strategic objectives are, first, to spoil our expected offensive against Germany, and, second, to drive us from German soil. A breakthrough by his concentrations in the VIEL-CHILLENFROHEN sector would enable him to turn south on both banks of the SAAR (NEUSE). A ~~xxxx~~ successful maneuver of this kind would achieve both of the above objectives. How far his supply situation, particularly fuel, would permit this is problematical. However, his desperate strategy may be based on the hope of seizing our supplies of motor fuels, similar to his plan in Tunisia to break through to TEBESSA, supply himself from our dumps, and then cut north."

835. 12 Nov.

1. Summary of the Situation.

a. Since the publication of G-2 Estimate No. 34, dated 31 October 1944, the limited offensive of 9 Pz and 15 Pz Gr Divs in the SITTEN-LEINEL area was halted by the enemy on the arrival of additional forces to strengthen their front. 9 Pz Div has now been withdrawn and contact with 15 Pz Gr Div is slight. There were indications that another division, probably 9 SS, was nearby in order to exploit any weakness which might have developed. Since that offensive the enemy has been passive between ARNHEM and BELFORT, except for rigorous patrols all along the front for identification. West of ARNHEM he has been forced north of the NAAS.

(1) 5th German Army. Tac/R has revealed considerable train movement and PWs have stated that reserves are being brought up. The appearance of the 272 Inf Div in the line will probably be followed by other Volksgrenadier Divisions in order to strengthen his front with infantry so that an offensive, if launched, would not paralyze his line by a counterthrust in another sector and compel him to divert his strength elsewhere.

(2) First Para Army. Student's command in the enemy bridgehead west of the MAAS will probably soon have a mobile reserve. Although the exact locations of 3, 5 and 6 Para Divs are unknown, all indications point to their refitting in the First Para Army area near the ROER. ... If this reserve is given mobility it should form an offensive force to be reckoned with. A study of the terrain adjacent to the GELDEN-VENLO-ROERMOND axis reveals unsuitable tank country. Low plateaus of sand or gravel, scattered heath and bog make patchy going for armor. It is reasonable to assume that, should the enemy be able to make his Para Divs mobile, their employment in this area would be more effective than the armor under XVIII Pz Corps.

(3) Fifteenth German Army. The battered elements of this command are now behind the MAAS and retirement under pressure by successive delaying actions along favorable terrain obstacles like the NAAL, the RUPPER RHEIN and the TESSIL is probably the plan. The systematic and unnecessary flooding of Bolland supports this view.

b. Enemy Strategy. The value to the enemy of his bridgehead over the MAAS at BIERGOND-VENLO is apparent. His objectives are (a) to reach the coming Allied offensive, and (b) to drive our forces from German soil. A successful attack coming down the west bank of the MAAS in conjunction with the breakthrough in the SITTARD-MAASTRICHT sector would offer the enemy such booty in the way of desperately needed supplies. This might compel the withdrawal of the First and Ninth U.S. Armies from Germany. An attack in the SACHEN area would be subsidiary to the above penetration and might possibly, if a penetration were achieved, form the lower hook of the 'Heil und Keil' strategy of the Germans. The enemy has obviously staked all on the defense of the West by defending on the west bank of the ROER. It is a hazardous position for an army to fight with an obstacle like the ROER at its back. In crossing the lines of supply from its major bases, the only justification of such strategy apart from the sentimental one of defending ever foot of German soil is that a successful counteroffensive can be launched from such a position. It is believed that the enemy was attracted to the VENLO-GELDENKIRCHEN area by our obvious weakness at that point.

c. Reserves. The bulk of the enemy's reserves is armor under the newly identified Sixth Panzer Army in the BIELEFELD area, plus the parachute division already mentioned. A new command may be set up to control these units.

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) The enemy is capable of an offensive against the Second British and Ninth U.S. Armies.

(2) The enemy is capable of an offensive against First U.S. Army.

(3) The enemy is capable of a continued defense, using its armor as a counterattack force in order to seal off any penetration.

(4) The enemy is capable of the employment of V-1 and V-2 tactically.

b. Discussion. The implementation of capability 2a(1) is viewed as of high probability. 2a(2) is regarded as of secondary probability. 2a(3) is current and 2a(4) may be expected at any time.

Reasons. It is now a race against time. Can the enemy complete his dispositions for his offensive prior to the launching of our attack? With the approach of winter in the East it is believed the enemy will stake all on an offensive in the West. It is a desperate gamble by a desperate foe. It remains to be seen if the attack by Third U. S. Army will influence his offensive plans. He has already reinforced this front with armor. Pz from 11 Pz Div taken in this area report that they left METZ on 18 November, arriving the next evening in the METZ area. It is believed that his entire front has been stiffened to hold against an Allied offensive while he launches his blow to the north, probably between AACHEN and VERDUN, with the possible scheme of penetration of a penetration to the west and southwest on both banks of the MEUSE. Although his immediate stocks of fuel are probably ample, it may be difficult for him to maintain a sustained offensive."

36. 20 Nov.

a. Summary of the Situation.

General. Since publication of G-2 Estimate No. 35, dated 12 Nov 44, the enemy's capability of a spoiling attack is now lost, since First U.S. Army's attack was launched on 16 November, uninfluenced by enemy actions. ... On the First Army front the enemy has resisted our advance behind his wire and minefields and to date has not been forced to throw in any reserves of armor or high quality infantry. In the zone of V and VII Corps, the enemy has been content to remain on the passive defense. The enemy responded to penetration on the Ninth Army front of his defenses in the KEMMENDORF area by throwing in 9 Pz and 15 Pz Gz Divs.

(1) Seventh German Army. The 36 VC Div was sent from Seventh German Army to help First German Army in the METZ area, while 212 VC Div came in to take its place. In addition 272, 26, 277 have appeared since the previous estimate; therefore, the trend of reinforcing the front west of the MEUSE with all formations available from Germany and Denmark continues.

(2) Fifth Panzer Army. Fifth Panzer Army has apparently shifted XVIII Pz Corps south from the VIMMO-VILLER area, for 9 Pz Div and 15 Pz Gz Divs have appeared in the GILLENBERG area. Apart from this shift no other armor has been committed, particularly out of the XII SS Corps, which is believed to be the backbone of Fifth Panzer Army.

(3) Sixth Panzer Army. Although main movements, Pz and refugees indicate a heavy movement from BIELEFELD - PADERBORN - GIETRACH across the RHINE into the battle area, none of the following divisions: 1 SS, 2 SS, 9 SS, 12 SS and Pz Lehr, have yet been committed.

(4) First Para Army. The success of Second British Army's attack west of the MAAS indicates that the enemy is giving up his air bridgehead west of the river and apparently intends to defend on the east bank from ECHEPOND to ST. AGATHA.

(5) Fifteenth German Army. The Fifteenth German Army appears to be executing a delaying action or a withdrawal, probably to the IJSEL position.

b. Enemy Strategy on the Western Front.

(1) With the giving up of his bridgehead over the MAAS and the launching of the Allied offensive, the enemy's strategic plan

appears to be based on counterattack rather than a planned offensive, opened on his own initiative. The key to his strategy probably will be found in the whereabouts and activity of his Sixth Panzer Army. He must either wait until a soft spot develops on the Allied front or until the Allied offensive breaks down with heavy losses before going over to the counteroffensive. Possibly he will be compelled to limit himself to defensive counterattacks. The recapture of the WEST WALL in the ruins of Ninth and First U.S. Armies may yet be attempted, but if not, his next defensive battle will be based on the ROER River, the defense of which may be assisted by inundations caused by blowing dams on the upper ROER.

(2) The enemy's overall strategy on the Western Front can be summed up as the defense of the REICH west of the RHINE. This effort is proving difficult under the synchronized attacks of seven Allied Armies exerting pressure on a 900-kilometer line. The enemy appears to lack sufficient mobile reserves of counterattacking quality, especially armor, to seal off penetrations and prevent major breakthroughs. It is not unreasonable to believe that his defense of the Reich west of the RHINE will be unsuccessful and that he will soon be forced into retirement behind the RHINE which, skillfully executed, may lead to another military disaster comparable to the Battle of France.

c. Reserves Available to the C-in-C West.*

(1) In the area of Army Group B it seems quite possible that Sixth Panzer Army, consisting of 1, 2, 9, and 12 SS, and Pz Lehr, constitute the principal reserves. Ground reports from Pz and civilians, together with Tec/E reports of train movements, appear to substantiate the disposition of this reserve approximately in the following areas: 1 SS Pz Div, BREITENBURG area; 12 SS Pz Div, DUESSELDORF; an unidentified Pz Div at ZUFFENHOFEN and another at ECKENFELDEN. The whereabouts of the 250th Pz Div is obscure. Of the other five Pz Divs and Pz Gr Divs in Army Group B, viz: 2 Pz, 3 Pz Gr, 9 Pz, 15 Pz Gr and 126 Pz, all are now committed except 2 Pz, which has been reported resting and refitting southwest of COLOGNE, but may be the division unloaded near TIER 15 Nevers r. Nothing is known of 10 SS Pz Div, which was last seen north of ARHEIM.

(2) The reserve situation for the First Para Army remains unchanged with 2, 3, 5 and 6 Para Divs uncommitted, with rumors that the use of para divisions may be extended with non-jumping paratroopers but selected and, therefore, high quality infantry.

(3) The reserve situation of Army Group C, particularly with respect to armor and Pz Gr, appears poor and C-in-C West may divert any of the foregoing divisions to the front of the Third U.S. Army.

d. Key Features, ...

*2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) The enemy is capable of defense of the Reich west of the RHINE, probably along the general line LUSSEL-MAAS-ROER and WEST WALL, and in the Third U.S. Army area MAGNOT LIET-WEST WALL and the RHINE.

(2) The enemy is capable of retiring to a defensive line behind the RHINE.

(3) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

(4) The enemy is capable of an air 'blitz' to regain air supremacy in limited vital areas.

b. Discussion. The implementation of capability 2a(1) is current. 2a(2) is at the moment remote, with 2a(3) an increasing possibility in direct proportion to the success of the current Allied offensive. No surrender of the present government is believed possible, yet if the strategic opportunity of destroying the German Army west of the RUINE with an obstacle at its back is exploited, the surrender of large groups may be expected, possibly leading to collapse, particularly if the RUINE is crossed. However, resistance to the death from Paul Freilings and guerrilla bands should be expected, especially in PROSENJA and BRALDENBURG. 2a(4) may well be attempted but will be of short duration and limited in scope.

c. Reasons. The deterioration of the enemy situation in the sector of the Third U.S. Army and his current retreat to the MAGNOT LINE, and possibly the WEST WALL, in the zone of the XII and XI U.S. Corps, together with the continuing loss of ground on the front of the Seventh U.S. and First French Armies, shows he has insufficient reserves to meet the offensive of the southern Allied armies. In the north, of the ten armored or Pz Gr Divs in Group B he has now committed four or five, leaving five to meet the pressure of the Second British, Ninth and First U.S. Armies. If this armor be held in the north, his southern front will deteriorate further, whereas if they are sent south to patch up the NETZ or BELFORT gateways, his northern flank will be seriously threatened, particularly if good weather continues. The enemy lost a big advantage in not being able to put in a spoiling attack prior to the commencement of the present Allied offensive. The employment of his reserves will now be dictated by Allied penetrations through his field fortification and with this loss of initiative their employment en masse is dubious. In Army Group B it has to date been corps-wise, as the XVII Pz Corps was employed first in the REIJEL-LIESEL area and now in the GELLENKIRCHEN sector. If this pattern be followed Sixth Panzer Army will not be employed as a unit. With increasing pressure from Second British Army farther north, thus lengthening the threatened front, the enemy will probably be forced to employ these last reserves division-wise. The only other assets are Volksgrenadiers Divs and the intensive field fortifications which he has had too little time to construct.

See Table of Reserves in Germany.

REF ID: A557786
 17, 10 Dec.

U.S. -- According to the stamp upon the first page: "Received, Dec. 11, 1944, Est Arst G-3."

1. Summary of the Situation.

a. General. Since the publication of G-2 Estimate No. 36, dated 20 Nov 44, the enemy has stubbornly contested every foot of ground in the zone of action of the First U.S. Army. He has defended with one Ard, one Para, one Pz Gr and eighteen Inf Divs. 116 Pz Div is now out of the line for repair, 3 Pz Gr is about due, ten Inf Divs have been consolidated into four for a net loss of six, one

1st Div was dissolved and a further Div, 3 Para, is badly mauled. (See Order of Battle Notes, Annex No. 1, G-2 Periodic Report No. 178, 5 Dec 44). Back of the line of the ROER he has intensified his defense some by fortification in depth, converting each village into a strong point, and has notably strengthened the field fortification on the line of the MOET. His armored reserve appears to be quartered in houses and barns along the railroad generally in a semi-circle from DUESSELDORF to KOBLENZ, with KOBLENZ as a center point. He has brought up and continues to bring up Army and Corps artillery formations and to build up his fighter and fighter-bomber strength on the Western Front. It is plain that his strategy in defense of the Reich is based on the exhaustion of our air efforts to be followed by an all-out counterattack with armor, between the ROER and the Eifel, supported by every weapon he can bring to bear. The suspension of V-1 fire from the BADENAUER area and the ROER sites is believed to be based on the use of his railroads for the bringing in of new Volksgrenadier divisions west of the RHINE and for the buildup of the necessary artillery and supplies to support his all-out ground counterattack. It is very probably that his current production of V-1's is being routed to new sites in the BLACK FOREST and elsewhere east of the RHINE, where they can be brought to bear in support of his all-out counterattack by interdicting and bombing our supply installations and artillery areas. PWs mentioned seeing artillery units with new guns preparing to fire the compressed air shell, and the use of this or other secret weapons is to be expected. In the face of the Third U.S. Army's penetration toward the SAAR Basin, Von Rundstedt reluctantly dispatched Pz Lehr from his carefully hoarded reserve. Its commitment revealed, however, that two months spent in WESTPHALIA reforming and refitting had failed to bring it up to the strength and standing of the 1943 first-class Pz Div. Persistent rumors from PWs and from other sources give grounds for suspicions that 5 SS Pz Div Viking has replaced Pz Lehr in Von Rundstedt's armored reserve. Tac/Int and ground sources further indicate a buildup in the BIELEFELD-WITTLICH area, where Pz Div Grossdeutschland has been reported by PWs and Pz Lehr or elements thereof by a usually reliable source. A captured order for a comb-out of selected personnel speaking the American dialect to report to Hq Skorseny at FRIDENTHAL, near GRANFENBURG, by 1 November, obviously presages special operations for sabotage, attacks on CP's and other vital installations by infiltrated or parachuted specialists. An extremely intelligent PW whose other observations check exactly with established facts stated that every means possible is being gathered for the coming all-out counteroffensive. It is notable that morale among PWs freshly captured, both in the Army cage and at Communications Zone cage, recently achieved a new high. This has been expressed by attempts to escape and avowed eagerness on the part of the prisoners to return and rejoin the battle for Germany. It is apparent that Von Rundstedt, who obviously is conducting military operations without the benefit of intuition, has skillfully defended and imbanded his forces and is preparing for his part in the all-out application of every weapon at the focal point and the correct time to achieve defense of the Reich west of the RHINE by inflicting as great a defeat on the Allies as possible. Indications to date point to the location

Para IVSA. Documentation.

of this focal point as being between ROHRDORF and SCHILDER, and within this bracket this concentrated force will be allied to the Allied forces engaged by the German High Command to be the greatest threat to successful defense of the Salch.

(1) Seventh German Army. The right(north) wing of the Seventh German Army has been strengthened by a sidestepping to the right and north of German Division on the front, by the bringing of 351st Div from the NITL to the GRY sector, by the bringing of 3 Para from First Para Army to the DUKEN sector, and by the buildup of armored reserves in the EUSKROUEN-TRUELICH area. The left wing and the general front of the Seventh German Army appear to have been strengthened by the arrival of Volksgrenadier divisions out of Germany. 352nd Div is indicated by a deserter as being in the VIII U.S. Corps sector, and unexplained troop movements to TRUELICH and to TRUELICH-GIEUEND suggest others.

(2) Fifth Panzer Army. Fifth Panzer Army has shared the strengthening by the arrival of 58th Para Div of the Sixth Panzer Army. Although 10 SS is apparently withdrawn from the line after have bolstered 9th and 15th Div in the GELIKENHAGEN sector, its presence immediately northeast of GELIKENHAGEN is continually alleged by PRs.

(3) Sixth Panzer Army. Sixth Panzer Army as listed in Annex 1 to G-2 Directive No. 36 is known to have lost 1st Lehr, but is suspected to have obtained 58th Para Div in its stead.

(4) First Parachute Army. First Parachute Army has yielded one Para Div to the needs of the AACHEN sector, but has probably gained replacements from the Fifteenth German Army and still is probably possessed of 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 Para Divs, although a ground report indicated 5 Para Div was enroute to the AACHEN sector. Pure logic would expect 5 Para to be committed in the BENTHEIM-SCHNIDT area in the defense of the dams, with other good quality infantry possibly being used by Von Rundstedt for this purpose.

(5) Fifteenth German Army. Due to the flood conditions on the NEERH RIVER and demolition of dikes, this army has released for use on other fronts the following divisions: 85, 245, 256, 391 and 363 Inf Divs. Four of these have been recommitted, leaving 85 and 391 still available. One or both of these may be committed in other sectors, with possibly one in First U.S. Army area. 59 and 346 Divs have also disappeared from the line in Holland and their present whereabouts are unknown. Christiansen's Holland Corps appears to have taken over the sector formerly occupied by Fifteenth Army on the right (west bank) of First Para Army, and the whereabouts of General Von Senger's headquarters at the present time remain uncertain. Evidence from the points to the new location of Fifteenth Army at KORTIGSLYEN, perhaps with Von Senger's Fifth Panzer Army acting as Panzergruppe, subordinate to it. In such case no mention as Panzergruppe (Berch) functioned under Seventh Army in NORMANDY.

B. Strategy. The restoration of the West Wall is still a probable strategic objective. The dilemma which has confronted the enemy in the defeat of the Nineteenth Army and its retreat across the upper SAAR has been accepted without a drain on the armored reserve of the Sixth Panzer Army. The retreat to the SAAR has been set by the dispatch of

Pa Div, three Fifteenth Panzer divisions, and will probably call for the commitment of one Inf Div and another Pz Div. 2 Pz is a logical choice. The enemy has let his situation in front of the upper RHINE and the ROER deteriorate while still conserving reserves between DUESSELDORF and KOELN. Von Rundstedt apparently is accepting setbacks in the south rather than compromise his hope of a decisive success in the north. This would appear to be the keynote of his strategy in the defense of the ROER west of the RHINE. During the past month there has been a definite pattern for the seasoning of newly-formed divisions in the comparatively quiet sector opposite VIII Corps prior to their dispatch to more active fronts. The enemy is well aware of the tactical 'traps' which he holds in the ROER River dams. Our recent attempts to breach the dam walls by air bombardment, as yet unsuccessful, have served to emphasize our own concern with the flooding of the ROER Valley. The enemy has reacted by building up his forces on the route of approach to the CHWAMPEHAUDEL and the DEPTALSPANN, the key dams in this system of barrages. Besides the divisions in the Sixth Panzer Army, the enemy has 2 Pz and 116 Pz Divs conditionally available for local counterattacks in the defense of the dams, in addition to at least two Volksgrenadier divisions which are available from the VIII Corps sector.

c. Reserves Available to C-in-C West. Sixth Panzer Army, as mentioned above, 2nd, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Para Divs of First Para Army, two or three VG Divs from Germany, one or two Divs from Norway, and the possibility of one or two reconstituted Pz Divs from the East appear to be the present limit of reserves available to C-in-C West. During the month of November the enemy suffered losses amounting to roughly four divisions a week. He has been replacing these losses from reserves east of the RHINE at the rate of about one and one-half per week, with the divisions being made up by the saving of five or more divisions from Holland plus other reserves on hand west of the RHINE. There is reason to believe that he can continue to meet this heavy attrition for the next month or two by drawing next on divisions now enroute to Germany from Norway, in addition to the continuing flow of six divisions a month from Germany. Once the Norwegian divisions are exhausted, he may still have other reserves made available by the shortening of his Italian front, and from the Balkans.

2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy Capabilities.

(1) The enemy is capable of continuing his defense of the line of the ROER north of DUESSELDORF, his present front line west of the ROER governing the dams, and thence south along the West Wall.

(2) The enemy is capable of concentrated counterattack with all armor, infantry and secret weapons at a selected focal point of a line of his own choosing.

(3) The enemy is capable of defending on the line of the ROER and subsequently retiring behind the RHINE.

(4) The enemy is capable of collapse or surrender.

b. Discussion. Capability 2a(1) is current. The exercise of capability 2a(2) is to be expected when our major ground forces have crossed the ROER River, and if the dams are not controlled by us, maximum use will be made by the enemy of flooding of the ROER in conjunction with his counterattack. Implementation of 2a(3) will occur most probably in the event his counterattacks are unsuccessful.

He will hold on the WEST in the nature of a delaying action to cover the retirement of his armies east of the RHINE. He may be expected to continue defending on the east of the RHINE with every means he has saved out of the forces now west of the RHINE, plus Volkstruppen and other reserves. The implementation of capability 2a(4) is still a possibility. Any severe defeat inflicting shock on the enemy, either militarily or psychologically, may result in popular revolt, general strikes, railroad strike, or even mutiny of part of his forces. Any one of these events might produce collapse and surrender by groups. No surrender by the Nazi Party is to be expected.

g. Reservoir. The enemy is apparently reconciled to the loss of ALSACE and to defending behind the upper RHINE. He is now fighting in the SAARLANTERN area and along the SAAR River in defensive action similar to that in the AARNE sector. There is no disposition to retire behind the RHINE except where he has been forced to do so, and this occurred in a sector where his West Wall is east of the RHINE. The continual building up of forces to the west of the RHINE points consistently to his staking all on the counteroffensive as stated in capability 2a(2).*

#38. 20 December 1944.

IV. G-2 Periodic Reports.

A. Hitler's SIEGFIED LINE Order.

(Source: FLIS. 5 Rank October. In L-953(25))

*3. MISCELLANEOUS.

d. Second British Army reported that the order translated below has often been referred to as the order from the Fuehrer which cannot be countermanded under any circumstances.

*Local Defense Tng Bn 1/6

HQ 15 Sep 44

Telephone Message

1. The SIEGFIED Line is of decisive importance in the battle for GEFANY.

2. I order:

The SIEGFIED Line and each of its defensive positions will be held to the last round and until completely destroyed.

This order will be communicated forthwith to all HQs, military formations, battle commands and troops.

G-in-C WEST

Time of Origin: 3.45 hrs

Transmitted by: Signal Reporting

Time of Receipt: 3.45 hrs

Center (Pvt. QUACK)

Approved by: Pvt. BERTSCHER!

(Source: Second British Army Intelligence Summary No. 120, 2 Oct 44)*

1. FUSA Documentation.

B. Enemy Capabilities, 1 Sept. - 15 Dec. 1944.

(Sources: Sept.-Oct., L-553(25); Nov., L-554(16); Dec. L-496(1A))

The ENEMY CAPABILITIES section's title was included in the daily G-2 Periodics, but narrative discussions were not provided. Instead, under that section's title was the phrase: See G-2 Estimate No. ____, Dated ____, referring to the latest G-2 Estimate. As noted elsewhere in this DOCUMENTATION, under G-2 Estimates, very frequent Estimates were issued, and the enemy capabilities were discussed in them.

Supplementing its own views, the FUSA G-2 Periodic #180, 6 Dec., contained Annex #3, titled SHARP VIEW OF THE ENEMY SITUATION. This was the SHARP Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 17, for the week ending 3 December 1944. Its entire section ENEMY CAPABILITIES was quoted.

C. Sixth SS Panzer Army.

(Sources: Oct., L-553(25); Nov., L-554(16); Dec., L-496(1A))

N.B. --- This Sixth SS Panzer Army was a reserve German army which struck the American forces during the Counteroffensive. Because it was an unknown, but potential factor, the object of this section is to cite the FUSA's opinion's about this force, as they appeared in the daily G-2 Periodics.

In order to accomplish this purpose, each G-2 Periodic 1 Sept. - 15 December was examined. The scrutiny was commenced with 1 September, even before the FUSA reached the SINGNIED line on 12 September, in order to locate any possible reference to the formation of an army, regardless of its designation.

#135. 22 Oct.

a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) Indications of a build-up of enemy reserves in the REIMS(F2790) area continue to be received.

(2) Reports from Germany mention the possibility of the formation of a new Panzer Army under which will be grouped all the battered panzer divisions from NORMANDY, particularly the SS formations. At least five of these divisions have been in the Reich since early September."

#142. 29 Oct.

Order of Battle Notes:

9.2. HIGHER COMMANDERS OF THE SAFFEN SS - IN THE WEST (SOV: SHARP DIGEST #142) 143)

As considerable doubts as to the commanders of higher SS formations in the WEST persist, the following summary of information is supplied:

COMMANDER	RANK	RECENT INFORMATION	PROBABLE ASSIGNMENT
SEPP DIETRICH	Obot GF	HQ at HORNALD(F-59) on 15 Oct.	No Pa Army forming in GERMANY? *

#147. 3 Nov.

Order of Battle Notes.

*1. Information from P/Ws and other sources provides the following locations: --

Supreme HQ West and Army Group D	Fwd BAD B-S, Main BAN NAUBHIM
Army Group B	Fwd KANTEN, Main BESEL(A-24)
Army Group C	Fz(V-9999) Main OBERALBACH (N-2532)
First Army	ST. AVOLD (Q-2556)
First Para Army	TRBORG and/or BINKERLO
Seventh Army	'WALDLAGER' (SSOG 4,16/51/7 360177)
Fifteenth Army	BOEDERICH (recently bombed, probably moved)
Nineteenth Army	Fwd NEUBAUER, Main? HADENWELLEN.*

N.B. --- The object of listing the above is to indicate the composition of the Sixth SS Pz Army.

#149. 5 Nov.

Order of Battle Notes.

*6. a. A deserter reports that on 10 October, the Sixth Panzer Army was regrouping in the BERGHEIM BULEFELD area, commanded by SEPP DIETRICH. It is said to include 2 SS, 10 SS, 12 SS and Pz Gren Divisions. COMMENTS: The presence of such a Panzer Army, with DIETRICH in charge, has been suspected. 10 SS Pz Div, however, is still in the ARWINE sector, and it seems probable that 1 SS Pz Div, in the EINLEFELD area, is the division in question.

(Source: 12 Army Group P.R. No. 153) *

#152. 8 Nov.

*d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

The following view of current enemy reserves is taken by Higher Headquarters:

(1) ...
 (2) The only new arrival on the Western Front during the period has been the 18 Volksgrenadier Division. This is in contrast to the arrival of 269 Infantry Division and the reappearance of 91 and 361 Infantry Divisions the preceding week. However, in spite of lack of identifications it is apparent that some reinforcements did arrive. Tactical reconnaissance late in the week showed what appeared to be heavy troop movements into the Northern part of First US Army's sector. Whether these arrivals were new infantry divisions, a part of the newly identified Sixth Panzer Army from East of the RHINE, or merely a part of the forces held behind the line in tactical reserves, such as 2 or 9 Panzer Divisions, is not yet clear. Since tanks have not been in any of these movements, it is conceivable that the movements may account for the arrival of infantry only. It is not likely that the German High Command will see fit to expend its last reserve of armor East of the RHINE, at least not until vital areas are immediately threatened. This will certainly be true as long as tactical reserves i

in the form of 2, 9, and 10 SS Panzer Division exist in the North and 11 Panzer is available in the South, possibly bolstered by other mobile units. 116 Pz Div is now committed at SCHMIDT.

#158. 14 Nov.

"d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) Photo reconnaissance of 6 November concerning possible untrailing stations in the PADERBORN(B-74) area, reveals that the main PADERBORN railway station was heavily loaded including many flats. Four trains were present, two of which were in motion, one being double engine headed. Sidings near BAD LIPPERSINGE(B-85) and SENNELAGER (B-65) were headed mainly with empty flats. This heavy activity may indicate preparation for a movement from that area and very likely involved units of PANZER ARMBEE SIX.

#160. 16 Nov.

"c. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) PWs captured by V and VII Corps during the period state that 9 SS Pz and 12 SS Pz Divs have arrived in the DUREM(1246)-ELSPORN(F180605) area within the past few days. These statements serve to confirm the belief that the movement of Six Panzer Armee (1 SS, 2 SS, 9 SS, 12 SS, Pz Lehr Divs) from the PADERBORN-MESSEN MÜNSTER areas, starting on 6 November had as its ultimate destination the area west of the RHINE covering the approaches to COLOGNE. Due to the constant delay imposed on enemy rail traffic by our air attacks, it is unlikely that more than two, or possibly three, of the five divisions could have arrived in the area prior to 16 November. If this is the case, then we may well have caught the enemy in the midst of detraining the remainder of Six Panzer Armee and inflicted heavy losses on him during the course of the day's air preparation which included extremely heavy attacks on key communication points in the rear areas. See Par 3b.2

#161. 17 Nov.

"c. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) No further information was received during the period from TACFR or other sources regarding the arrival of units of Sixth Panzer Armee in the JULICH-DUREM-BIRKELIN-MUSKIRCHEN area during the past few days. PW statements, however, continue to confirm the presence of 9 SS Pz and 12 SS Pz in the rear area.

#163. 19 Nov.

"d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) The entry of 15 Pz Gren Div into the line on the right (with north) of 9 Pz Div in the Ninth U.S. Army sector, leaves only 2 Pz Div as an unlocated reserve -- excluding the divisions of Panzer Armee Six. Of the five divisions which are believed to form Panzer Armee Six, three (1 SS, 9 SS and 12 SS) have been located in the AACHEN-COLOGNE corridor with 2 SS Pz Div and Pz Lehr Div still to be accounted for in this area. A statement by an officer prisoner

REF ID: A557786

captured by 30 U.S. Inf Div during the period may provide the answer. It is noted that 2 SS Pz Div in W. the area F-1672 and that another Pz Div (either SS VIKING, HILDEBRAND or GROSSMUTSCHEN) is located to the south.

(2) In addition to the Pz Divs of Sixth Panzer Army which are believed to be in reserve behind the fortified line of the FORT RAY, it may be assumed that at least one Volksgrenadier, not yet in contact, is proving the infantry component to man the defenses of the area which have been dug within the past two months.

#164. 20 Nov.

a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. Reliable reports have been received stating the 10 SS Pz Div is on the move south from the Second British Army sector. Elements of the Division may be committed any time within the next twenty-four hours on the Ninth U.S. Army front and thereafter on the front of the First U.S. Army. The movement of this Division to the AACHEN-COLOGNE corridor may be taken as an indication that the enemy intends to keep Sixth Panzer Army intact as long as possible and avoid committing his major reserve piecemeal as he did in Normandy.

#165. 23 Nov.

a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. Further confirmation has been received of the report that II SS Pz Corps had left the British sector and moved south opposite Ninth or First US Armies. It is considered likely that this Corps will control two, or more, of the SS Pz Divisions under Panzer Army Six. Identification of a Pz from 901 PzR (Pz Lehr Div) in the vicinity of F-6233 during the period, places one division of this new armored army a considerable distance from the AACHEN-COLOGNE corridor, where the Army is being held in reserve. There are two possible explanations; one, that Six Panzer Army is composed of 1 SS Pz, 2 SS Pz, 9 SS Pz and 12 SS Pz Divs and did not arrive east of the RHINE with Pz Lehr Div undamaged. Another, and more likely explanation may be that the enemy, despite all his efforts to avoid it, has been forced once more to begin piecemeal commitment of his armor & reserves.

#171. 27 Nov.

Order of Battle Notes:

#5. General.

a. Reports of the movement of Fifteenth German Army from NORMAN to the AACHEN corridor are too persistent to be ignored. During the past week, the head-on force of this Army has been reported at several localities in the First U.S. Army zone of action. At the moment, however, it is difficult to find a logical explanation for the reported shift. Fifteenth Panzer Army is known to control the sector between Seventh Army and the First Para Army, while Sixth Panzer Army is east of the RHINE in reserve. The following reports have been received:

... Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. The
 interrogations of a number of PWs from Pz Lehr I-V has produced several
 interesting facts about Pz Panzer ADs. All PWs were aware that
 there were six Panzer Divisions in WESTPHALIA while their division was
 in reserve. (Presumably 1, 2, 9, 12 SS Pz Divs, Pz Lehr Div and 2 Pz Div (P)).
 The PWs stated that the intention was to use these six panzer divisions
 against the UN. Last week, however, the situation in STRASBOURG
 was so critical that Pz Lehr Div was dispatched to the south.

Although it is possible that SS divisions in Pz Armee are
 far better in the receipt of men and equipment than any
 panzer divisions, the present state of Pz Lehr divisions may be taken as
 a guide to the combat efficiency of the remainder of this highly-priced
 reserve army upon which so many German hopes are staked.

... According to the omitted paragraph between the
 above two, the Pz Lehr was made up of remnant of the old Pz Lehr
 Div, plus young and inexperienced recruits. Some companies did not
 receive any training as company units. No unit training as ever given
 to bat all or regiments.

1174. 30 Nov.

a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) ...
 (2) Ninth U.S. Army quotes a PW from 21 PGR (10 SS Pz
 Div) as stating that his division is soon to be relieved by 1 SS, 2 SS
 or 12 SS Pz Divs. (COMMENT: The movement of 10 SS Pz Div east of the
 ROER into reserve is accepted. It is unlikely, however, that the
 enemy will commit one of the carefully headed division of Six Panzer
 Armee in the last west of the ROER, or even east of the river, unless
 the situation becomes far more critical than at present or he is ready
 to launch a coordinated counterattack.)

1175. 1 Nov.

a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) PWs from Pz Lehr Div captured by Third U.S. Army
 claim that 5 SS Pz Div was in WESTPHALIA in the vicinity of CALLE
 during November, 1944. Twelfth Army Group states 5 SS Pz Div has not
 been identified on the Russian Front for some time. This division has
 often been rumored to be in GERMANY, and PWs have recently stated
 that 5 SS Pz Div in WESTPHALIA would bring the number of panzer divisions
 under Panzer ADs to a total of six (including Pz Lehr) which
 confirms statement to that effect made by other PWs. Previously,
 2 Pz Div was considered the only other candidate available for the
 role of sixth panzer.

Order of Battle Notes:

a. Reserves:

b. PWs from 3 Pz Gr Div have not appeared with
 reports that 12 SS Pz Div was to relieve their formation on 23 November.
 COMMENT: If reports are before, these rumors are to be taken with caution.

Undoubtedly, the divisions of Sixth Panzer Army are popular with the army as long as there exists a chance of their being relieved.

#179. 5 Dec.

"a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) The possibility exists that a second panzer division has been withdrawn from the original six divisions of Sixth Panzer Army and been sent to the south in the wake of Pz Lehr Div. ..."

#180. 9 Dec.

"a. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) The growing influence of HITLER in German military affairs is evidenced by the fact that Six Panzer Army is an SS Army. An extremely cooperative and well-informed P/W states that the full designation is 'SS Pz AOK VI'. (See Annex 1)."

Order of Battle (Annex 1.):

"a. Reserves:

a. Sixth SS Panzer Army:

(1) A cooperative and well informed P/W stated that the Army controlling 130 Pz Lehr Div while in WESTPHALIA was designated Sixth SS Pz Army. P/W also stated that I SS Pz Corps, 9 SS Pz Div 'Hohenstaufen' and 10 SS Pz Div 'Frundsberg' were also under control of Sixth SS Pz Army. Same P/W claimed he saw the designation 'SS Pz AOK VI' on a document appointing Major (SS) FIEDNER (a Wehrmacht Officer), formerly of 130 Pz Lehr Div, as G-4 (Ib) of this Army early in November. P/W also stated SS Obergruppenfuhrer (SS Lt Gen) 'Drupp' DIEBICH commands Sixth SS Pz Army.

(2) It has been suspected that the Panzer Army which reformed in WESTPHALIA was designated Sixth SS Pz Army. In this is the first concrete evidence of the SS designation. Logically, this title would be appropriate since the Army is commanded by an SS General and includes at least four SS Panzer Divisions (1, 2, 9, and 12) and two SS Panzer Corps (I and II). Further, the fate of German units with the success of this new Army. Just as DIEBICH's SS Pz Army now attempts to guard the body of all Nazis. Under these circumstances it would seem logical for the Nazis to honor the new Army with the elite SS HIT title.

(Current Third U.S. Army)."

#184. 10 Dec.

Annex 4. SIXTH SS PANZER ARMY.

"Since the move of Sixth SS Pz Army from its retraining and training area in WESTPHALIA to its present location, much has been said about the disposition of the Divisions under its command. The vast majority of reports regarding these locations have been furnished through interrogation of P/Ws who had either recently passed the area in question or picked up information concerning the whereabouts of these units by hearsay. Interrogation of civilians also supplied a number of clues which were helpful in solving the puzzle of the Sixth Pz Army.

The Army as a whole occupies the area between the RIVER and the RHINE RIVER. The northern boundary of this sector probably runs from ST. LOUIS to the Rhine. From this line south, SS troops are to be found in almost every town and village, and much of their armor and heavy equipment such as artillery is thought to be stored in buildings, while the rest is no doubt camouflaged in wooded areas. Small concentrations of men and equipment are thought to be south to a line extending from WINDSOR (F6523) to BLANKENHILL (F2305). The pattern of rail and road movement observed by TAC/FA confirms the presence of at least four armored divisions in the area described above.

At least four SS Panzer Divisions are accepted as part of the Sixth SS Pz Army. They are probably grouped under I and II SS Pz Corps. It is thought likely that another Panzer Division, and possibly two, may yet be added to this Army. 1 SS, 2 SS, 9 SS, and 12 SS Pz Divs are the divisions accepted under Sixth SS Pz Army, and it is thought that 3 Pz Div and 5 SS Pz Div may yet appear.

*Dispositions are estimated to be as follows:--

- 1. 2 SS Pz Div.

These locations show a possible route of entry into the area. However, it is thought likely that the division is now located in the area bounded by the following points at which elements were also reported on the dates shown:--

- Vicinity of PESCH (F1688) on 30 November.
- WICKHAM (F0783) on 7 December.
- WINDSOR and BLANKENHILL on 3 December.
- JUELICH (F1373) on 8 December.
- WINDSOR (F2466) on 8 December.

Far above under 2 SS Pz Div as the northernmost formation of Sixth SS Pz Army.

- 2. 9 SS Pz Div:

Not much has been heard of this unit, and in fact, a very recent report points out that it is a Pz Gr Div instead of Panzer as it was in WINDSOR. Nevertheless, it must be accepted as part of I with SS Pz Army. Elements of this division were reported as follows:--
ST. LOUIS (F1260); East of JUELICH (F0659); WINDSOR (F0785).

Further information lacking, the general area is believed to hold the 9 SS Pz Div. This seems plausible, since there is sufficient natural camouflage to effectively conceal troops and equipment.

- 3. 12 SS Pz Div:

More reports have been received regarding this division than any other one of Sixth SS Pz Army. Most of them claimed the division to be in the area East of WINDSOR or between WINDSOR and BLANKENHILL. Specific locations mentioned were:--

2 December - At BLANKENHILL (F-2466) and vicinity.

The wooded area East of JUELICH, as shown above, holds 9 SS Pz Div. However, it is not improbable that some elements of 12 SS Pz Div are

located there as well, since there is sufficient concealment available. It will be noted that the general pattern of the given locations runs roughly from DUBAÏ to COLOMBE. Most of them are again in and around wooded areas which provide cover for troops and equipment. Thus we estimate that the 1st SS Pz Div is located with its main elements in the vicinity of DUBAÏ and in the woods to the north and south of it. Rear element may still be between DUBAÏ and COLOMBE. This brings the division into the First U.S. Army zone of action, probably in front of VII Corps.

4. 1 SS Pz Div:

The division is no doubt preparing to take a lead in future operations and since it has no assigned sector as yet, it must be ready to take part in any threatened attack. As expected, 1 SS Pz Div is presently thought to be in front of First U.S. Army, probably in the general area north of BUNTSCH (F2383) and FUSKLEIN (F2380). Many troop concentrations were reported here as well, adding confirmation to the belief that a Panzer formation is in this area.

5. 5 SS Pz Div (WIKING):

Reports regarding this division have been vague. It had been reported remaining in SIBIRIA in November as part of Sixth SS Pz Army. P/15 reported it to be located in rear of 25 Inf Div in the vicinity of (F2370) very recently. A definite location can not be given, but since it is out of contact on the RUSSIAN front, it is a prospect for contact in SIXTH SS Pz Army.

6. 2 Pz Div:

This division was known to be operating since early October. Most reports placed it in KOBIENZ, but now it is reported to have moved to the west side of the RUMBE River. On 3 and 9 December, it was reported to be in the general area between KOBLENZ and BUNTSCH, but these reports may actually be referring to troops of 1 SS Pz Div. On 6 December, 2 Pz Div was reported in STUBBE (F1356) and vicinity. It had been reported in the area between STUBBE and BUNTSCH for some time before, and lacking other information, it must remain here. Other reports, from sources generally reliable, maintain that the division is the 2nd Pz Div (WIKING) etc.

Conclusions:

Plans are shown the entire set of locations of Sixth SS Pz Army in this area. This places 2 SS and 5 SS Pz Divs in the area to the front of Ninth U.S. and Second British Armies. 12 SS and 1 SS Pz Divs would not limit the zone of action of VII and I Corps of First U.S. Army respectively. 3 SS Pz Div is present, and 2 Pz Div are probably also in the zone of action.

The reports concerning 'GROSSERWEICHAUER' Pz Div place it in the area south of the one occupied by 2 Pz Div, but it is not thought likely that this division will appear as a member of Sixth SS Pz Army. 3 Pz Div has also been reported in the front, it is out of contact on the RUSSIAN front, but lacking information, no definite conclusions regarding its whereabouts can be made at this time.

1. Para, Reconnaissance.

#184. 13 Dec.
No mention.

#185. 13 Dec.
No mention.

#187. 13 Dec.
(1. Enemy Situation at End of Period.

d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. Para from the 3 Para Div (3 Para Regt) continue to state their division was relieved by the 12 SS Para Div. VII Corps comments: "It is not apparent that the majority of the 3 Para Div is east of the POER River. Due to its depleted condition, it is safe to assume that it will be relieved. The 12 SS Para Div could easily take the place of the 3 Para Div in the line. (Army comment: With a number of Volksgrenadier and a few Infantry and parachute divisions still available in the West, it is believed here likely that one of these will be shoved into the line to relieve 3 Para Div rather than one of the divisions of G-in-C West's counter-attacking reserve, Six Panzer A, etc.)"

#188. 14 Dec.
No mention.

#189. 15 Dec.
No mention.

2. Miscellaneous, December.

#186. 12 Dec.

d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. Train movements indicate that the build-up of enemy forces on the western slope of the MOSELLE VALLEY continues. GROSSDEUTSCHLAND div has again been reported to be in the area by Para. A conservative estimate would place at least two Volksgrenadier and one Panzer or Panzer Grenadier divisions in the enemy's rear area opposite VIII U.S. Corps. A northern movement of 12 and 14 SS Divs, therefore, is to be expected especially, particularly if enemy losses in the BUREN area are sustained at present high level."

#188. 14 Dec.

d. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(1) 1-2(Air) Summary of Movements

(2) A G.I. woman, whose statements are believed to be reliable according to VIII Corps, has given the following information of her observations behind the German lines during the 3 days beginning 10 Dec. She saw enemy horse-drawn vehicles, pontoons, small boats and other river crossing equipment coming from the direction of BITBURG (L-1353) and moving West through GELCHENBERG (P9451). In BITBURG, she overheard some military personnel saying that it had taken 3 weeks to get there from ITALY; there were also troops in the town with grey uniforms and black collar patches. She also stated that she had

seen many artillery pieces, both horse-drawn and carried on trucks. (Comment: A very interesting report. Build-up of troops has been confirmed by TAG/R and PW statements. However, presence of large numbers of engineers with bridging equipment suggests preparation for offensive rather than defensive action. No division from ITA.I has been reported on the move to the West front by Higher Headquarters but the possibility always exists that such a move has, in fact, taken place.)

#189. 15 Dec.

*Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(2) Reinforcements for the WEST WALL between DUNKEN and TRINA continue to arrive. The identification of at least three or four newly reformed divisions along the Army front must be reckoned with during the next few days. Although the enemy is resorting to his attack propaganda to bolster morale of the troops, it is possible that a limited scale offensive will be launched for the purpose of achieving a Christmas morale 'victory' for civilian consumption. Many PWs now speak of the coming attack between the 17th and 25th of December, while other relate promises of the 'recapture of AACHEN as a Christmas present for the DEER Führer'.

(3) VIII Corps reports that an abrupt change of routine of enemy personnel opposite 9th U.S. Arm Div strongly suggests that new troops may have arrived in that area. (Comment: Very likely a recently arrived V.G. Div coming in to relieve 212 V.G. Div.)

*2. Enemy Operation During Period.

a. General Summary.

(1) First U.S. Army Sector: Further advances were made by our troops to the west bank of the ROER near River in the VII Corps sector against decreased enemy opposition. Principal gains in the V Corps sector were in the KESTERBUCH (70024) area.

...

Order of Battle Notes.

*1. UNITS IN CONTACT - North to South: --

- a. VII Corps Sector: 246 Volksgrenadier Div, 3 Para Div, Ele 17 Volksgrenadier Div, 353 Inf Div, 981 Gr Bgt of 272 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 344 Volksgrenadier Div, and 6 Para Rifle Bgt and II/Kernan Support Rgt (85 Inf Div).
- b. V Corps sector: Ele 344 Volksgrenadier Div, Remnants 89 Inf Div, 126 Volksgrenadier Div, 272 Volksgrenadier Div, 277 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 18 Volksgrenadier Div, and Ele 12 Volksgrenadier Div.
- c. VIII Corps Sector: 18 Volksgrenadier Div, *Ele 116 Pz Div, 26 Volksgrenadier Div, 352 Volksgrenadier Div, *Ele 276 Volksgrenadier Div, and 212 Volksgrenadier Div.

(* Identified after close of period)

seen many artillery pieces, both horse-drawn and carried on trucks. (Comment: A very interesting report. Build-up of troops has been confirmed by TAC/R and PT statements. However, presence of large numbers of engineers with bridging equipment suggests preparation for offensive rather than defensive action. No division from I.T.A.I has been reported on the move to the West front by Higher Headquarters but the possibility always exists that such a move has, in fact, taken place. VI

1189. 15 Dec.

*c. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(2) Reinforcements for the WEST WALL between DUREN and TRIER continue to arrive. The identification of at least three or four newly reformed divisions along the Army front must be reckoned with during the next few days. Although the enemy is resorting to his attack propaganda to bolster morale of the troops, it is possible that a limited scale offensive will be launched for the purpose of achieving a Christmas morale 'victory' for civilian consumption. Many PT's now speak of the coming attack between the 17th and 25th of December, while other relate promises of the 'recapture of AACHEN as a Christmas present for the FUEHRER'.

(3) VIII Corps reports that an abrupt change of routine of enemy personnel opposite 9th U.S. Arm Div strongly suggests that new troops may have arrived in that area. (Comment: Very likely a recently arrived V.G. Div coming in to relieve 212 V.G. Div.).

*2. Enemy Operation During Period.

a. General Summary.

(1) First U.S. Army Sector: Further advances were made by our troops to the west bank of the ROER near River in the VII Corps sector against decreased enemy opposition. Principal gains in the V Corps sector were in the KESTERBUCH (FOO24) area.

...

Order of Battle Notes.

*1. UNITS IN CONTACT - North to South: --

- a. VII Corps Sector: 246 Volksgrenadier Div, 3 Para Div, Ele 17 Volksgrenadier Div, 353 Inf Div, 981 Gr Bgt of 272 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 344 Volksgrenadier Div, and 6 Para Rifle Bgt and II/Merom Geering Bgt (85 Inf Div).
- b. V Corps sector: Ele 344 Volksgrenadier Div, Remnants 89 Inf Div, 126 Volksgrenadier Div, 272 Volksgrenadier Div, 277 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 18 Volksgrenadier Div, and Ele 12 Volksgrenadier Div.
- c. VIII Corps Sector: 15 Volksgrenadier Div, *Ele 116 Pz Div, 26 Volksgrenadier Div, 352 Volksgrenadier Div, *Ele 276 Volksgrenadier Div, and 212 Volksgrenadier Div.

(* Identified after close of period)

and any artillery pieces, both horse-drawn and carried on tracks. ...
... of large numbers ...
... for ...
... No division from ...
... by Higher Headquarters
... but the possibility always exists that such a move has, in fact, taken place.

1180. 15 Dec.

Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention.

(2) reinforcements for the West Wall between BUKEN and ...
... The identification of at least three or four ...
... divisions along the Army front must be reckoned with ...
... the next few days. Although the enemy is according to the attack ...
... propaganda to bolster morale of the troops, it is possible that a ...
... limited scale offensive will be launched for the purpose of achieving ...
... a Christmas morale victory for civilian consumption. Enemy P's now ...
... speak of the coming attack between the 17th and 25th of December, ...
... as the 'capture of the 'recapture of' AACHER as a ...
... Christmas present for the XXXX Führer'.

(3) VIII Corps reports that an abrupt change of routine ...
... of major personnel opposite 9th U.S. Army Div strongly suggests that ...
... one front may be seriously in that area. (Comment: Very likely a ...
... recently arrived V.C. Div coming in to relieve 212 V.C. Div.)

2. Snowy Operation During Period.

a. General Summary.

(2) First U.S. Army Sector: Further advances were made ...
... by our troops to the west bank of the ROSE River in the VII Corps ...
... sector with decreased enemy opposition. Principal gains in the ...
... VIII Corps sector were in the STATIONCHON (FOO24) area.

Order of Battle Notes.

1. Units in Sector - North to South:

- a. VII Corps Sector: 216 Volksgrenadier Div, 3 Para Div, 217 Volksgrenadier Div, 353 Inf Div, 281 St. Lt. 35 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 114 Volksgrenadier Div, 208 8 Para Rifle Bn and II/Kernan Goeling Rgt (85 Inf Div).
- b. V Corps Sector: Ele 24 Volksgrenadier Div, Elements 59 Inf Div, 320 Volksgrenadier Div, 172 Volksgrenadier Div, 277 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 18 Volksgrenadier Div, and Ele 12 Volksgrenadier Div.
- c. VIII Corps Sector: 15 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 116 Tr Div, 26 Volksgrenadier Div, 352 Volksgrenadier Div, Ele 276 Volksgrenadier Div, and 212 Volksgrenadier Div.

(* Identified after close of period)

W. G-2 Periodic #190, 1600011-162/00A Dec. Dated 17 Dec.
(Source: L-116(18))

c. Reserves and Other Forces Capable of Intervention. During the period, the enemy committed no less than seven, possibly eight, new divisions on the front of the First U.S. Army. The attack was launched in the V and VIII Corps sectors, with the bulk of the new divisions appearing on the VIII Corps front. The following known reserves remained uncommitted at the end of the period:

First United States Army Zone

Sixth Panzer Army
1 SS Pz Div
2 SS Pz Div.
9 SS Pz Div
5 Para Div
25 Inf Div

RIFEL Area
At least one 7 G Div
11 Pz Div
One unidentified Arm Div

Ninth U.S. Army Zone: 9 Pz Div; 10 SS Pz Div)

There was no doubt that the enemy was making an all-out effort to smash through our lines and achieve objectives deep in our rear areas. Therefore, the early commitment of a large portion of the remaining enemy reserves must be expected in both the V and VIII Corps sectors, with perhaps the greatest pressure being exerted along the boundary of the two Corps.

7. ENEMY CAPABILITIES.

a. (1) The enemy is capable of attempting to exploit his initial gains by driving through into our rear areas and seizing highroads over the Moselle River. He will move at night as directed in the V and VIII Corps and probably continue nightly parachute operations. Increased air support of his operations can be expected.

(2) The enemy is capable of ~~attempting~~ confining himself to attacking with the limited objective of driving us from German soil and regaining his best rail positions.

(3) The enemy is capable of defending his present gains.

b. (1) Capability a(1) is currently being implemented. Recent indications are that this is the enemy's all-out bid for victory. At this time, he has moved out of his tank and permanent fortifications. Resources are still available. The enemy has staked all on this offensive, he cannot afford to halt its execution now.

(2) If the enemy attack shows signs of bogging down, then ~~it is~~ ~~likely~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~enemy~~ ~~will~~ ~~be~~ ~~able~~ ~~to~~ ~~halt~~ ~~its~~ ~~advance~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~present~~ ~~time~~ ~~and~~ ~~regain~~ ~~its~~ ~~best~~ ~~rail~~ ~~positions~~ ~~and~~ ~~defend~~ ~~its~~ ~~present~~ ~~gains~~.

(3) Capability a(3) is considered unlikely at this time. The ground the enemy has gained to date is, in many cases, not as satisfactory for the defenses as the rail positions he has just left. Furthermore his supply situation is such that he must continue forward in order to life off captured supplies.

Order of Battle Notes:

*1. Units in Contact - North to South--

a. VII Corps Sector:

VC Divs --- 474 245; 272 (31 Gr. Rgt); Remnants of 344.
Para Divs --- 3; 5 Para (1110 Rgt).
Inf. Divs --- 88 (11/Hornum Coering Trng. Regt.);
Regt 355 (Remnants).

b. V Corps Sector:

VC --- 12, 273, 277, 362.
SS Pz --- 16.
Inf. --- 89 (1. and 12.)

c. VIII Corps Sector:

VC Divs --- 121, 26, 62, 352, 500, 133, 278.
Pa Div. --- 2, 116.
Para Div. --- 97

*2. New Identifications:

a. Elements of 5 Para Div.

b. " of 116 Pa Div.

c. A 1/4 was taken from the 3/25 SS Pz Co Regt of 12 SS Pz Div at 1-41733. He states that the regiment participated in an attack in this area on the afternoon of 16 December and that it was to renew the attack on 17 December. COMMENT: This would constitute the first identification of any elements of Sixth SS Pz Army in the battle area.

d. Elements of 62 Inf Div.

e. Pz identification of 10 GAB Div was not accepted by FUSA.

f. Elements of 17 SS Div.

g. " " 2 Pz Div.

(h. not listed and omitted, possibly carelessness)

i. Elements of 160 VC Div.

*3. Translation of German Documents.

These pertained to the attack's scope and importance, and were identical with those of the VIII Corps. However, the Von Hundstedt Order of the Day, 11 Dec., the most significant of the VIII Corps (106th Div.) captured documents, was not included. This Order proclaimed the formation of ensigns.

*4. G-2 Periodic #191, 17 Dec.

*5. G-2 Air Summary of Movements:

In the attack area, many concentrations were seen and movement was to the East and Northwest. Due to general fluidity, no exact picture can be drawn from operations in these areas except that the enemy seems to have concentrations to the rear which he is bringing up.

On Air Reconnaissance.

177. 1. 1945.

*3. C-2 (Air) Weekly Summary of Rail Movement (For Peak Ending 012100).

(a) A definite pattern of rail movement in the First US Army sector has been established from plottings made over a week's period. There were three axes of movement; these were in order of density.

1. KOLN & DUREN.
2. KOLN - MUSEIRCHEN - KALL lines.
3. DUREN - ORVENBACH line and the KOLN-ROBLER lines.

(b) In the KOLN - DUREN line there were 14 sightings which were all to the west of the Rhine River, which between DUREN and ORVENBACH, 8 trains were seen. The total number of trains seen on main and secondary roads in this area was 25. The marshalling yard at EIBOLD (F2260) showed considerable activity over the period with sightings of up to 200 cars on the sidings.

(c) On the KOLN-MUSEIRCHEN-KALL line there were 17 sightings, with focal point of activity at MUSEIRCHEN, LIEBACH (F3645) and KALL (F106), sightings of up to 300 cars were made in the marshalling yard at MUSEIRCHEN. There were daily sightings of trains standing at sidings at LIEBACH.

(d) The KOLN-ROBLER lines along both sides of the RHINE showed regular daily usage throughout the period as could be expected.

(e) An interesting build-up took place at VETTELERS (F2039). This was reported at the beginning of the period by a PW as being a railhead and with a different train sighted there daily, it is believed this PW statement has been confirmed.

(f) Other sporadic sightings were made which indicated use of the ABERNACH (F-760) - MAYEN (56392) line, the SIMTIG-ARHREINER line and the BORN-MUSEIRCHEN line.

183. 9 Dec.

*3. C-2 (Air) Weekly Summary of Movement:

(a) There were two days during the week in which no sightings were made due to poor weather conditions, however, during the remainder of the week the main rail lines in the Army zone were well covered and some interesting observations have been made. The most significant fact which has been brought out is that on all rail lines in the V and VII Corps zone, to and including the RHEIN Valley, there has been train movement at some time during the week.

(b) The KALL-MUSEIRCHEN line showed its greatest activity during the early part of the week and apparently subsided thereafter due to bombing of KALL and MUSEIRCHEN marshalling yards, some considerable backlog had occurred.

(c) The MUSEIRCHEN-LIEBACH-KOLN line showed some activity throughout the week with a heavy build up of made up trains in the LIEBACH yards on 5 December. The BORN-ARHREINER-MUSEIRCHEN line showed the greatest activity on 5 December, however, some traffic on this line has been sighted throughout the period. It is possible that the heavier traffic during the 5th was the result of a large troop movement into or out of the MUSEIRCHEN-LIEBACH area.

(d) The main LUREN-KILN Line showed sporadic activity throughout the week. The most numerous sightings along this line, however, were at KORNEN(FRESE). This indicates that KORNEN is a detouring point for troops and only necessary supply trains are being run further up to BURN and DEKKE.

(e) Considerable activity has been noted throughout the week at ANKREILER and in the yards to the east. Tanks on flats have been seen here and it seems quite likely that this is a rail-head for a panzer division in reserve or refitting in this area. In view of the tunnels in this area sightings of vehicular activity in the vicinity is also probable that a large supply installation is located here and being fed by the SINDIG-ANKREILER Line.

(f) Numerous sightings were made throughout the period on the lines running on both sides and parallel to the RHINE between KORNEN and KILN. The bulk of this movement was north. Ten made up trains sighted in the KILN yards indicates that sufficient repairs have been made in the yards to handle traffic into and out of the First and Ninth Army zones.

F184. 10 Dec.

"4. G-2 (Air) Summary of Movement:

(a) Observations today were limited to the period between 1200 hours and 1500 hours.

(b) Scattered MT movement was observed in all the forward areas in front of V and VII Corps. The larger groups were sighted in the areas around EMBKEN(F1732), where twenty (20) trucks were observed, F3327 where thirty (30) vehicles were seen moving southwest and FURSTENBERG(F3118) where thirty (30) MT were seen. The latter falls in an area of suspected panzer concentrations.

(c) The town of VEITHEISS(F1936) showed considerable rail activity again today, with the sighting of two (2) trains, one (1) of fifty (50) cars and the other of twenty-five (25) cars. ...

(d) On the eastern bank of the RHINE River normal ER activity took place. Barge traffic on the RHINE itself was up to its usual heavy rate.

(e) No definite sighting of armor took place."

F185. 11 Dec.

"(1) G-2 (Air) Summary of Movement for 11 December 1944.

(a) Reconnaissance was very limited throughout the day, thereby making a comprehensive summary difficult.

(b) Rail movement was seen on the DUREN-BUSKIRCHEN-KOLN line with the sighting of one train moving southeast from VEITHEISS. This, together with the sightings of two trains at VEITHEISS yesterday and ten vehicles seen moving in both directions between VEITHEISS and GLADBACH(F2341) today, indicates that VEITHEISS is again active as a railhead.

(c) The sightings of two trains of approximately twenty flat cars containing vehicles or tanks, parked on sidings of three different rail lines within a four mile radius of BUSKIRCHEN, may mean that since BUSKIRCHEN marshalling yards have been subjected to continued bombing, trains are now being dispersed on various sidings within the area for unloading instead of being bunched in one yard.

(d) Vehicular traffic was sparse and scattered with a majority of movement in the EW (12241) - BUSKIRCHEN - ROEPFEN - DUREN area with no predominate direction indicated. There was also a convoy of ten vehicles spotted moving east about three miles east of SEIMMATH (K9224).

*(2) Additional activity noted on air photos: 4 probable tanks in the vicinity of BUNSFELD (F-1544). Also 15 vehicles in the courtyard of the building at F172503. Vehicular activity in the vicinity of BUSKIRCHEN where heavy track activity is seen in the vicinity of the woods at F276276 and a convoy of 15 vehicles moving southwest between TISSKIRCHEN (F2928) and GRIEZE (F2827).

*(3) Pts from the 353 VG Div (941 Regt) stated that they had been used as replacement for the Division on 9 December, although they had been scheduled for the 116 Pz Div. They stated that the 116 Pz Div as of 9 December was in ESPERFEL (F-69).

#186. 12 December.
No mention.

#187. 13 Dec.

*3. Defensive Organization.

(1) Aerial Photography: During the past several weeks the enemy has continued to improve his defenses east of the ROER River, particularly north of DUREN. During this time wire has been placed in front of trenches and additional entrenching has been accomplished. A shift of artillery also became apparent and at the present time a concentration of artillery in the EISEN (F1251) - GRIEZE (F1252) area is indicated.

Considerable movement in the VII Corps zone between the ROER and RHEIN Rivers has been taking place. Although long convoys or large concentrations of motor vehicles have not been evident, a few vehicles could be seen at one time or another in almost every small village in this area. Motor movement on the roads has likewise been limited to a few vehicles in any one locality with no definite trend in direction. Tracks in and near woods are frequently observed.

Railroad activity has been very heavy and the speed with which cut trackage is required gives ample indication of the importance attached to this form of transportation. Much activity has been observed at ROER, SEIMMATH, LINLAR, SINDRAF, EISEN, and GRIEZE. Traffic has not been confined to main lines and the network of use military railroads is apparently kept operating.

Opposite the First Army about 60 bridges have been prepared for demolition, the majority of them being toward the north in the path of the VII Corps. The railroad bridges on the EISEN-DUREN-ROER line and the bridges on the railroad that parallels the RHEIN River appear to have a high priority in these preparations.

#188. FUSA. No. continuation.

#188. 1. Dec.

#1. G-2 (Air) Summary of Movement:

(a) Although skies were generally clear, fog and ground haze over the bases limited operations. Observations were made only between 1200 and 1600 hours.

(b) No rail movement of note was observed west of the RHINE except in the TRIER area. The R/Is at TRIER and HERRANG (L2435) showed considerable activity and two trains (one southward one on siding) were sighted between TRIER and PHILIPSBURG (L2051). East of the RHINE the R/Is at CHERLIE (F5-7) contained four made up trains of medium length. Other scattered activity was observed further to the east but no trend of movement was indicated.

(c) Sightings of vehicular activity was less than of any time previously. The one sighting of interest was that of a concentration of 10 tanks and 4 trucks together with 200 foot troops along the road about two miles northwest of BREIDEN (F0617)."

#189. 15 Dec.

#1. G-2 (Air) Summary of Movement: Railroad movement as seen by aerial reconnaissance was practically negligible, with the exception of two trains facing east at BREIDEN. A sighting of eighty freight cars near EISDORF (F1800) and twelve to fourteen vehicles in the same area may indicate EISDORF is still being used as a supply point or loading and detraining area. This activity at EISDORF and the sighting of a thirty car train moving south out of BREIDEN (F1977) may have some connection, possibly the movement of replacements or a unit into or out of the northern part of VII Corps sector using EISDORF as a detraining or entraining point.

A truckhead at HEINRICH (F1127) may be indicated by the sightings of thirty four vehicles moving into and out of the town.

Observations only covered the period from 1030 to 1330 hours."

H. Receipt of Twelfth Army Group G-2 Summary Periodics.

No.	Date(Dec.)	Entered G-2 In File.	(Source: L-555(), Day, Item No.
#193.	121800A- 191800A.	160822 Dec.	(8), 16, #16.
#192.	121800A- 141800A.	150820 Dec.	(8), 15, #14.
#191.	121800A- 131800A.	140910 Dec.	(7), 14, #17.
#190.	121800A- 121800A.	130915 Dec.	(7), 13, #20.
#189.	101800A- 111800A.	120830 Dec.	(6), 12, #20.

I. G-2 Targets.

The G-2 Target Subsection issued by the Office of the IC of S, G-2. A G-2 Target Section was established 10 July 1944, to offer the Air Force targets for attack in areas of interest to the First U.S. Army. It used information from higher and lower headquarters, photo interpretation, PW and civilian interrogation reports, etc.

(Source: FUSA REPORT OF OPERATIONS, 20 OCTOBER 1943 - 1 AUGUST 1944. Annex 35, C-2 Section, p. 131.)

An examination of these Reports for the first half of December was made, and, in general, the reports consisted of: Summary of enemy movements (rail & highway); Summary of photographic interpretation; Ground Source Information; Anti-tank defense belts; and the Conclusion. Reports were approximately 2-3 pages, and were daily. Reports were available among the FUSA records for the following days: 2-3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15 December; but, lacking were those of 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

The following citations will largely pertain to the Conclusions of the reports, inasmuch as they indicate the trend of opinions.

(Source: In L-496(21), Air Missions.)

Target - 2-3 Dec.

"1. Conclusions.

a. The build-up of SS, Armored, and other troops is continuing along the lines (1) DUREN-EUSKIRCHEN-GENUEND-SCHEIDT, with those name towns as centers of activity, and (2) EUSKIRCHEN-PLATZHEIM-GLADRACH-ZULPICH-EUSKIRCHEN. The following named towns have appeared as centers of activity during the past week in the role of (1) higher headquarters (b) troop and supply detraining, and regulating stations (c) semi-permanent supply points. They are considered to be defended villages and profitable targets for aerial bombardment."

EUSKIRCHEN, GLADRACH, ZULPICH, EUSKIRCHEN, GENUEND, KALL, MÜNSTERKIRCHEN.

"b. The KNAPSACK industrial area is furnishing considerable electrical power and partially processed coal for synthetic fuel, is concentrated in a comparatively small area, and its destruction would further hamper enemy movement."

Target - 4 Dec.

"1. Conclusions: -- Detraining of units to be held in reserve has taken place in previously reported towns and villages from NIVES to JUELICH to DUREN to ZULPICH to EUSKIRCHEN to ABBENWILDER by many small trains and small units well dispersed. Marshaling yards are no longer of major size to the dispersion of small units in towns and villages E of the ROER and W of the REIN. There are indications that the enemy is utilizing more billets in towns, villages, and farms, and fewer wooded areas than was the case in the period 15 October to 15 November 1944."

Target - 5 Dec.

"1. Conclusions.

a. Further verification of reinforcements arriving during the past week in the WITTLICH-BITBURG area confirms the fact that the WESTERN LINE in the WEST has been very lightly held and that fresh troops are arriving for reserve or relief.

b. The rail operations and riding at EISENBERG (F1530) and HILLEN (F3616) continue in their marked activity and are recommended for immediate priority targets.

c. Heavy traffic continued on both sides of the RINE, with yesterday's activity on the SINGIG-ERBACH-LINZ triangle, which presents a congested rail and bridge area."

Target - 13 Dec.

*Further prevented serial reconnaissance for both photos and observation of enemy rail movements.

*4. Conclusions. No change."

Target - 12 Dec.

*5. Conclusions.

The enemy continued strengthening his positions both on the ROELK plain and in the EISEL, with emphasis on securing cover for launching counter attacks."

Target - 14 Dec.

*a. G-2 Air Summary.

(1) Although skies were generally clear, fog and ground haze over the base limited operations. Observations were made only between 1200 and 1600 hours.

(2) No rail movement of note was observed west of the RINE except in the TRIER area. The M/T at TRIER and EHRANG showed considerable activity, and two trains (one south and one on siding) were sighted between EHRANG and PHILIPPSTADT. East of the RINE, the S/T at OBERLIL contained four made-up trains of medium length. Other scattered activity was observed further to the east, but no trend of movement was indicated.

(3) Sightings of vehicular activity were less than at any time previously. The one sighting of interest was that of a concentration of 10 tanks and 4 trucks together with 200 foot troops along the road about 2 miles northeast of DREIBORN."

*4. Conclusions.

Troop concentrations in the EISENBERG-ZULFICH Line continues."

Target - 15 Dec.

*1. Summary of Enemy Movements.

a. G-2 Air Summary of Rail and Highway Movement. Rail movement as seen by serial reconnaissance was tactically negligible with the exception of two trains facing East at REININGACH. Observation covered only the period 1200 to 1300.

*3. Conclusions.

a. Units previously reported have retreated close to defensive positions between the ROELK and the EISEL. They have not been admitted (except for artillery) and are held in reserve, bivouaced in towns and villages close to detrainning points. The same towns previously reported are still being used for evacuation and supply.

b. In the TRIER-PRUM sector, 3-4 divisions with armor and some bridging equipment have moved in since 20 November. Bad weather has prevented observation of large movements into or out of this

error for periods as long as four days at a time. There is no indication of change in the enemy's use of rail junctions, railroads and rear echelon establishments from the list previously submitted."

B. Target Sub-section Memo, 6 Feb. 44, apparently to G-3.
(Source: In I-496(21) Air Missions.)

Other

"1. The enemy has moved units practically to front lines by rail. He has chosen cities, towns, and farm villages for billets and has kept his armor on established roads to avoid indicating armored movement by tracks.

"2. This study has produced the names and approximate coordinates of all towns and rail junctions in which enemy reserves are known to have billeted, in which they are known to have detained, and the principal rail junctions, crossovers, and switching centers through which their trains must pass within Army's zone of action. There are 38, fifteen of which are within medium or heavy artillery range.

"3. They are arranged in three lists:

a. List 1. --- Important Rail Halting Points behind beyond effective artillery range - recommended as targets for heavy and medium bombers.

b. List 2. --- Troop Concentration Points, and Rail Junctions within effective medium/heavy artillery range -- recommended as targets for artillery and fighter bombers.

c. List 3. --- Troop Concentration Towns beyond artillery range - primarily fighter bomber targets - two rail junctions (ARRORE and HILFHEIM) are included although not troop concentration points in order to complete breaking up of the rail net.

"4. ..."

Lists were attached.

VI. G-2 Journal File.

A. VIII Corps Woman Informer.

(Source: G-2 Jln. File, 14 Dec., in I-555(7))

H.5. --- This woman was taken by the 28th Division on 14 Dec. See also Division and Corps levels for details, particularly the Corps for evaluation.)

Item #74. File entry: 142400Z Dec.

G-2 Midnight Roundup, 142450Z Dec.

"VIII Corps ..."

"VIII Corps: A German woman, who had been given permission to pick up some of her clothes in the WIANZEN (P9049) area and was picked up by German patrol and sent to the rear for interrogation, gave the following information of her observation behind the German lines during the 3 days beginning 10 December. She saw many horse-drawn vehicles pontoons, small boats and other river crossing equipment coming from the direction of BITBURG (L1353) and moving west through GRENDELINGEN (P9651). In BITBURG she overheard some military personnel saying that it had taken 3 weeks to get there from ITALY and that she had seen

is BITBURG, troops with gray uniforms and black collar patches. She stated that she had seen many artillery pieces both horse-drawn and carried on trucks.

The woman's nerves were jarred quite a bit, when, while returned to our lines after escaping from the Germans, she struck a trip wire and exploded a mine. However, she is believed to be reliable.

VIII Corps: ...

Item #75. File entry: 14,2400A Dec.
FUSA, G-2 ISUM, #B-922. 14 Dec.

"... German woman who was behind enemy lines for three days beginning ten December and escaped to our lines stated that in BITBURG (Love 1353) she saw troops with gray uniforms and black collar patches. Also states in GUTCHLINGEN (Peter 2451) she saw horse-drawn vehicles, pontoons, small boats, and other river crossing equipment moving west from direction of BITBURG. In BITBURG she heard some military personnel remark that it had taken them three weeks to get there from ITALY. She also saw many horse-drawn and truck-drawn artillery pieces but no armor. ..."

(2) Item #5. File entry: 150225A Dec. Received: 150210A Dec.
VIII Corps ISUM #C82 #231. 141800A-142400A Dec.

General: Civilian reports considerable trucks, horse-drawn vehicles, arty, pontoons, small boats and other river-crossing material, moving west at GUTCHLINGEN #9451 on 10 December. Some sources reports US troops in BITBURG whose conversation indicated it took 3 weeks for them to come into this area from ITALY."

B. Entries on 16 December.
(Sources: In L-555(8), 16 Dec.)

#16. 160832 Dec.

Twelfth Army Group, G-2 Periodic, #193. 141800A-151800A Dec.

#56. 161440 Dec.

G-2 received the following message from the V Corps, 161244 Dec:

*1) Just below right flank of V Corps enemy has taken LAUBERATE (16096).

*2) Document taken at L-024975 stated "...soldiers on the Western front your great hour has struck. Strong attacking armies are advancing today. Everything is at stake. You bear in yourselves a holy duty to give everything and achieve the super human for our fatherland and for our Fuhrer, and for G-in-C Keat Runstedt!"

*This call to arms to be made known to all soldiers without exception at once before beginning of attack.

01
12 VG Div

(Note has been given to VIII Corps)

113. PIA, Document 1100.

H.D. - Distribution of this indicated it was sent to C/S, G-3, G-4, G-5, G-6, Lane, Robinson, Silvey. The last three, however, did not check having received it, although their names were pencilled on the distribution slip.

796. 162400A Dec.

FUSA G-2 15TH AB-925. 1600a-2100a 16 Dec. Operational Ugent.
To: CG, STAFF, 12 AFVT GROUP KLIN & TAG, 21 AFVT GROUP BAIN & TAG, ...

Entries indicated the ISIS was transmitted at 0430 on 17 Dec., and that it was received by 12th Army Group at 0610 per RJB. The 15TH was filed in the FUSA G-2 Jln. File 162400A Dec.

"Early this morning, starting about 0530 Able, heavy enemy artillery fire fell along most of the army front with sporadic artillery fire falling in rear areas at St. Vith (Peter 8368), Malsy (King 7024), Terviers (King 6723), and Dupon (King 8027). Beginning at 0600 Able and throughout the morning the enemy launched counterattacks at numerous points along the main front. VIII Corps and Southern V Corps front, with two small attacks on VII Corps front. Elements of six newly appeared divisions, including two panzer divs, were identified. These were the 2 Pz and 116 Pz Divs, and the 12 VG, 62 VG, 560 VG, and 276 Inf Divs. In addition there is very scanty evidence for possible presence of elements of 5 Para Div and 366 Inf Div. Document signed by CG, 12 VG Div, and captured this morning told German soldiers that their great hour had struck, that strong attacking armies were advancing today, and that everything was at stake, calling upon them to give their all for Germany, the Fuehrer, and Rundstedt. ... Captured documents taken from body of German officer in 116 Pz Div sector including operational orders and Orders of the Day from Rundstedt, Fodol, Mantouffel plus Commanding Generals of 66 Corps 116 Pz Div and 62 VG Div clearly indicate large scale offensive launched today with St Vith as first major objective and subsequent drive to East and Northwest. Rundstedt's Order of Day states quote large armies are attacking the Americans. It is possible everything on this operation quote. ... Lineup of divisions on accompanying map show 62 VG Div in sector (Peter 9475) (Peter 9475) with 116 Pz Div to the south in sector (Peter 9475) (Peter 9475); 11 Pz Div next in line to the south and 2 Pz Div below 11 Pz Div. South boundary of 66 Corps shown as running from (Peter 980732 to 823819) which is also south boundary of 62 Inf Div. Operation is known as quote Greif unquote and Rundstedt's Order of Day was addressed to both quote soldiers of 11 Pz and 116 Pz unquote. ..."

C. Air Instances.

FUSA G-2 received or issued the following that dealt with air reconnaissance. These documents were filed daily in the G-2 Journal File.

IX Tactical Air Command's A-2 Periodic, Daily.

Su many of Operation for ... Daily. Describes air operations, but lacks commentary.

