

REPORT NO. 24

HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

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THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN (From the Fall of Rome

to the Evacuation of Florence (4 Jun-10 Aug 44)

Information from German Military Documents
regarding Allied Operations in General and
Canadian Operations in Particular

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INTRODUCTORY

1. Information from German military documents for the period of the Italian campaign from 4 Jan-4 Jun 44 has been presented in Hist Sec (G.S.) Report No. 20. The substance of that report consisted of material relating to the role of 1 Cdn Corps in the breaching of the Gustav and Hitler Lines. The next major operation of 1 Cdn Corps culminated in the assault on the Gothic Line. Portentous events took place, however, between these high points of Canadian operations in Italy; the creation of the Normandy bridgehead changed the overall strategic picture, but for the miscarriage of plans to destroy the unsuccessful Fuehrer the tottering empire of Hitler would have collapsed, and Army Group "C" - ever in the dark regarding the future employment of the Allied reserves in the Mediterranean area - withdrew behind

the Arno and was getting ready to offer strong resistance in a system of prepared defences in the Apennines.

2. The present report deals with the information which has become available from German military sources for the period from the fall of Rome to the evacuation of Florence (4 Jun - 10 Aug). During this time the Canadian participation in the fighting was limited to supporting actions by the Regiments of 1 Cdn Armd Bde. These actions were carried out partly in the area of Tenth Army and partly in that of Fourteenth Army. Although not much material has been found in this connection, a rough sketch of the tactical developments on the front of Army Group "C" is being provided here for the sake of continuity and in order to establish a background for the analysis of the succeeding phase of the campaign. For what the principal actors thought at the time and what motivated their decisions will lend perspective to the naked picture of the German dispositions as they were when the drive on the Gothic Line was launched. Beclouded as it was by the successful execution of a cover plan, the question of the prospective employment of 1 Cdn Corps at that time played so large a part in the deliberations of the German commanders in Italy that it can not be overlooked nor brushed aside as lacking in significance.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3. The majority of the documents on which the present report is based were lent to Hist Sec (G.S.) by the German Military Documents Section in Washington, D.C. Some of the more important documents have been photostated;

in all cases where a photostatic copy or a translation is being permanently retained, the first reference to the document is followed by the Hist Sec (G.S.) Master Index Number.

4. The substantial and accurate accounts in the War Diaries of Tenth Army were once more the most valuable source of information. Some information was gathered from the occasionally nebulous War Diary of Fourteenth Army. Material concerning the aftermath of the battle for Rome was found in the records for June 1944 of C.-in-C. Southwest. That month is apparently the only one for which fairly complete records of C.-in-C. Southwest are available; later periods are represented merely by some scattered and fragmentary files.

5. A source of a somewhat different character exists in the form of a narrative based on the accumulation of documents at OKW/WFST (Armed Forces High Command/Armed Forces Operations Staff). The War Diaries of this headquarters are known to have been destroyed, but fortunately we are in possession of a comprehensive study based on this material by Major Percy Schramm, previously professor of history at the University of Goettingen, and during the war in charge of the day to day compilation of the top level War Diary.^{1,2} One section of Schramm's work deals with the events

¹Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 4

²Schramm, Percy Ernst, born 1894, Dr. phil 1922, lecturer Heidelberg 1924, full professor Goettingen 1929, Shreve Fellowship Princeton 1932-33. (From German "Who's Who?" ("Wer ist's?") edit 1935, Crerar Library, Ottawa, Cat No. 083.D36)

in the Italian theatre of war from 1 Apr - 31 Dec 44. A photostatic copy of the translation of this section has been received through the courtesy of Hist Div, U.S. Dept of the Army (981A100.(D11A). In addition to the facts now generally known, a good deal of insight has lately been gained into the reasoning behind the enemy's operations from narratives prepared after the war by German senior commanders. The great historical value of these narratives cannot be diminished by a word of caution regarding the occasional assertions therein of an all-embracing prescience, assertions at variance with the records written at the time, which present a picture rather of laborious and often futile attempts to divine Allied intentions.

6. Well over 1,500 tons of German military documents are in American and British hands. Of this much is gold and much is dross. It is not expected that significant additions to this body of material will be forthcoming. According to Dr Hugh Cole³, material not in our hands by now is either known to have been destroyed or to be in Russian hands. Speculation regarding the whereabouts of the German divisional and regimental records came to an end in December 1947 when the Soviet representative on the Allied Control Commission stated that the remnants of the Potsdam archives had reached Moscow.

ARMY GROUP "C" AFTER THE FALL OF ROME

(a) German Reflections on the Causes of the Defeat

³Cole, Hugh M., "Writing contemporary Military History", Military Affairs, Washington, D.C., Fall 1948, pp 165, 166. (Colonel Cole was the Combat Historian of the U.S. Third Army, and later Chief of the European Section, Historical Division, U.S. Dept of the Army)

7. Two weeks after the fall of Rome, on an intermediate defence line from coast to coast on the height of Lake Trasimene, Army Group "C" was able again to resume its old tactics of delaying warfare. In the meantime however the very existence of the Army Group had been in jeopardy, its Armies in danger of being separated, its western divisions in fear of encirclement and annihilation. In view of some recent additions to our knowledge of the period in question it may be well to go back in the story and to examine from new perspectives the causes of this critical situation. Less even than in the game of chess is it possible in the realm of warfare, with its added imponderables, to determine with accuracy the nature of the variations which might result from one of several changes in a given combination. And while it is not the purpose of this report to engage in speculation regarding that which might have been, some interest no doubt attaches to the reflections of the Army commanders and Chiefs of Staff of Army Group "C".

8. At the end of the first week of June the Fourteenth Army was a badly beaten force. It had been the main sufferer in the whole debacle, and little groups of men banded around some surviving officer were all that was left of many battalions and regiments. At 0600 hours, 6 Jun, Col-Gen Eberhard von Mackensen handed over command of the Fourteenth Army to Gen Joachim Lemelsen.⁴ Mackensen's resignation had not come as a surprise.

⁴Lemelsen had been temporary commander of Tenth Army in November and December 1943 (Hist Sec Report No. 18, numerous references). His confidential file at the Army Personnel Section of the German High Command reveals that on the basis of his performance at that time Marshal Kesselring regarded him as "fully qualified to command an Army". Lemelsen was one of the very few German officers who as a Corps commander had been damned with faint praise and later on was selected for, and successfully exercised, a higher command. He had commanded a Corps in Woehler's Eighth Army in the East. Praising him otherwise,

As variously shown in Hist Sec Report No. 20, the Army commander and his C. of S., Maj-Gen Wolf Hauser, had protested on many occasions against Kesselring's policy of drawing off to the front of Tenth Army the very reserves that would be needed to cope with the expected break-out of Allied forces from the beachhead of Anzio. Apparently ruling out the possibility that stronger resistance by Fourteenth Army would have brought forth a correspondingly greater effort of the opponent, the high officers of Fourteenth Army claim that Kesselring's mistakes had been the cause of their defeat. In his study⁵ Maj-Gen Hauser says:

The diversion of all reserves from the vicinity of the beachhead was a grievous mistake. Its disastrous consequences had to be borne mainly by Fourteenth Army. All protests of the Army against the removal of the reserves and all mention of the consequences thereof had been in vain. The Army had to meet its doom with its eyes open. At the beginning of June then it lost its highly esteemed commander whose further cooperation with Marshal Kesselring had become impossible owing to their complete difference in conception and temperament. This is a model example showing how military command

General Woehler described him as "an average corps commander, not suitable for the next higher command". The Army Group commander had concurred. The explanation of the seeming contradiction may be found in the fact that Woehler and v. Mannstein had never been favourably inclined towards Lemelsen and had actively, though unsuccessfully, opposed his original appointment to the Eighth Army. (G.M.D.S. - Collection of OKW/OKH Personal Files of German Officers)

⁵Hist Div U.S. Dept of the Army, Manuscripts of German Officers, "The Italian Campaign", Part II, Chap 2, Sec A, p. 4 (981SOM (D80b))

should never be influenced by other than sober military considerations. Had the German command done this in the middle of May 1944, Tenth Army would have been withdrawn to the Caesar line in good time, one or two divisions would have remained as a reserve behind the beachhead-front of Fourteenth Army and a break-out of the enemy prevented until Tenth Army would have had completed its fighting withdrawal.

9. In his comments on Hauser's and Westphal's⁶ studies, General von Mackensen⁷ points out the following:

As indicated by General Westphal, there had been differences of a professional (never personal) nature between Marshal Kesselring and myself for some considerable time, and at the beginning of February I had asked the Marshal twice to request from higher authority that I be relieved. I was unable to prevail against him with my less optimistic views which I believed to be correct; I thought that I owed it to the troops under my command to vacate the appointment.

Unfortunately Marshal Kesselring declined to act on my requests at

⁶"The Italian Campaign", op cit, Part II, Chap 4, Section A (981SOM (D80f)). Westphal's comments for this phase are brief. Between 1 May and the date of his replacement as C. of S. of Army Group "C" due to illness and accident, he had been on duty only from 18 - 24 May. From 1 - 17 May and from 25 May - 11 Jun, Colonel Beelitz, First Operations Officer of the Army Group had been his substitute (ibid); on 11 or 12 Jun Lt-Gen Roettiger assumed the functions of C. of S. Army Group "C". (G.M.D.S. - 55291/4, Tenth Army, W.D. No. 7, vol "C" of Appx, tel cons 12 Jun 44)

⁷"The Italian Campaign", op cit, Part I, Chap 12, Appx (981 SOM (D79/o))

that time. I relinquished command of the Fourteenth Army at
0600 hours 6 Jun 44⁸

... I agree with General Westphal that... political, propaganda or
prestige reasons (differing in this from the Armed Forces High
Command and Hitler) did not play a decisive role in
Marshal Kesselring's decisions, but rather his glowing optimism
which, according to my lights, did not count enough with the
realities. This especially with regard to the known quantities of
warfare which are difficult to overcome and differ from the
conditions of aerial warfare with which the Marshal naturally was
more conversant...

The transfer of the reserves from Fourteenth to Tenth Army had been
the first and fundamental error, and the sudden, and for Fourteenth
Army completely unexpected shift in the inter-army boundary made the
situation intolerable.⁹ Hauser's map No. 1 shows clearly the
decisive importance of this sector which was almost denuded of
Tenth Army's troops. In this sector the enemy launched his decisive
push with the French Expeditionary Corps at the focal point. The
result could be foreseen. ...¹⁰

⁸Schramm, op cit p. 37. Schramm merely states: "Effective 2 Jun
Col Gen v. Mackensen was replaced in command of Fourteenth Army by
General Lemelsen".

⁹H.S. Report No. 20, para 123.

¹⁰Kesselring's comments regarding the employment of Para Pz Div
H.G. and the change of the inter-army boundary will appear in his
forthcoming: "Comments of Part II of 'The Italian Campaign'."

10. The views of Maj-Gen Fritz Wentzell, then C. of S. Tenth Army, regarding the Allied offensive in May 1944 have been presented in detail in a manuscript prepared for Canadian Military Headquarters¹¹. General v. Vietinghoff and his able Chief of Staff thought very much alike and usually were of one mind on matters of importance. In his chapter dealing with the phase in question,¹² the Army commander states:

The author agrees in full with the opinions expressed by Wentzell with whom he was in daily exchange of thoughts during the operations and the subsequent internment.

General v. Vietinghoff's synopsis, compressing into a few sentences the gist of many documents, recorded telephone conversations (and in the last part possibly afterthoughts) may well serve to record here Tenth Army's point of view in the shortest available authentic form:

- (1) On the German side, a timely withdrawal of Tenth Army would presumably have prevented the breakthrough to Rome and the smashing of a large part of Fourteenth Army as it was crossing the Tiber, or at least have delayed these events long enough to make possible an orderly withdrawal across the Tiber and through the difficult mountain terrain between Rome and Avezzano. Once the breakthrough had taken place,

¹¹Wentzell, The Italian Campaign from Aug 43 - Feb 45, English text (981.013(D3)). The original German text appears as an Appendix to Chapter 3 of "The Italian Campaign", op cit, Part II (981 SOM (D80/e)).

¹²"The Italian Campaign", op cit, Part II, Chap 3, pp 36-37.

re-establishment of an unbroken front right across Italy during 14 days of hard pursuit represents a performance of which troops and commanders may justly be proud.

- (2) On the Allied side, the operational and tactical planning of the great attack seems to the writer to have been exemplary. This applies most of all to the daring commitment of American Fifth Army, especially the French Expeditionary Corps, for the assault across the rugged mountain ranges.

On the other hand, from the German point of view, it does not appear to have been to the best advantage that the F.E.C., and later also the Canadian Corps, were held in reserve, and not put to better use. Another prompt attack by the former on Subiaco would probably have cut off and smashed the right wing of Tenth Army, to which most of the divisions belonged, including the best.

A strengthening of the pursuit troops by the Canadian Corps in the at first almost open area between Tivoli and the Lake of Bracciano, with the object of striking quickly at Rieti and Terni and through Orvieto to Perugia and Arezzo, would have placed Tenth Army in an almost hopeless position, without in any way prejudicing the pursuit of Fourteenth Army. Tenth Army would probably not have been completely destroyed, but it would have been out of the

question for it to again establish a well organized front as far forward as the Trasimene Lake. Even in the Apennines this could hardly have been done. The breakthrough into the Po valley might well have been the culminating point of the pursuit launched from Rome.

11. Marshal Kesselring, in his comments on "The Italian Campaign, Part I",¹³ made some statements applying with equal relevancy to all phases of the campaign. Regarding orders reaching him from above he said:

When I accepted an order from above I also accepted the responsibility for it. My position was too high to allow me to hide behind the High Command or Hitler whenever this would have suited me or whenever events took an unpleasant turn. ...

Occasionally he seems to sneer at what he calls the "dyed-in-the-wool evacuation-tacticians" whose "slogans would ever prevent any boldness in command" and "who called over-optimism the very quality of faith without which success is unattainable." - Of his Army commanders the Marshal said:

Their good qualities by far outweighed individual weaknesses. In Vietinghoff I would have liked more hardness, in Mackensen more optimism, in Lemelsen more initiative.

¹³Kesselring's Comments on "The Italian Campaign, Part I", pp 10-12 (981 SOM (D 84))

Of particular interest from the Canadian point of view is his rating of the divisional commanders:

Despite his peculiarities I must rate Baade (90 Pz Gren Div) as a front commander of the most impressive type. Almost of equal merit was Heidrich (1 Para Div) who was matchless in the training of troops.

Above average were:

General Fries, 29 Pz Gren Div

General v. Luettwitz, 26 Pz Div

General Rodt, 15 Pz Gren Div

General Boehlke, 334 Inf Div

The above group of six divisions corresponds closely to what Wentzell called "the German Army's best troops".¹⁴ It also corresponds closely to the group from which came the divisions which furnished the main opposition to the advance of the Canadian forces.

(b) Condition of Army Group "C"

12. One week before the evacuation of Rome Marshal Kesselring had reported an estimated 25,000 casualties for the period from the beginning of the Allied May offensive up to 28 May.¹⁵ In a new estimate on 1 Jun he spoke of 35,000 casualties (Photostat: 981A10. (D136)):

¹⁴Wentzell, op cit, p. 41, (981.013 (D3))

¹⁵H.S. Report No. 20, para 169

... The projected allotment of replacements fails to cover the present and imminently expected casualties. According to reports from the formations the number of casualties in the meantime has risen to 35,000 and keeps mounting. Although not (yet) supported by documentary proof, this estimate does not seem to be too high. As a comparative figure O.B.SW cites the 35,000 casualties of the Nettuno battle, where only a part of the divisions of the Army Group were committed, whereas at present all divisions hitherto with the Army Group are engaged in the fighting. In order to maintain the battleworthiness of the mobile formations, O.B.SW therefore again requests an increase in the allotment of replacement battalions.

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/6, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 1-8 Jun, Appx 21, 1 Jun 44)

13. During the battle and the confusion of the first phase of the retreat it was nearly impossible to obtain exact administrative information. On 4 Jun Maj-Gen Preiherr von Buttlar of the Armed Forces Operations Staff had telephoned Kesselring for information regarding the condition of the Army Group; on 5 Jun, in an interesting document (apparently made out in one copy only) the Army Group commander reported the situation as far as known.

(Photostat 981A10.(D137):

... By 2 Jun the divisions had reported a total of 38,024 dead, wounded and missing. The figure keeps mounting.

... The present combat value of the divisions is estimated to be as follows:

Percentage of the actual strength at the beginning of the defence battle:

	Personnel %	Guns %	Hy A.-Tk Guns %
4 Para Div	50	50	50
65 Inf Div	30	50	40
3 Pz Gren Div	20	40	40
362 Inf Div	10	30	5
715 Inf Div	15	60	30
Para Pz Div H.Q.	45	?	? (a)
90 Pz Gren Div	15	30	5
29 Pz Gren Div	20	50	30
26 Pz Div	20	40	20
305 Inf Div	25	50	20
5 Mtn Div	30	40	10
114 Jg Div	20	40	40
278 Inf Div	(Complete less equipment not yet supplied)		
94 Inf Div	10	40	10
92 Inf Div	40	30	40
71 Inf Div	15	?	10
334 Inf Div	50	50	50
15 Pz Gren Div	30	40	20
44 Inf Div (H&D)	15	20	15 ¹⁶
1 Para Div	15	15	15
356 Inf Div	(Complete; not yet committed)		

¹⁶44 Inf Div carried the designation "Reichs-grenadierdivision Hoch and Deutschmeister"; in the present report it is being referred to by the shorter numerical designation.

(a) Including elements not yet committed)

(G.M.D.S - 64832/6, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 1 - 8 Jun, Appx 208, 5 Jun 44). Further information was supplied on 8 Jun in a memorandum listing all the divisions of the Army Group and stating of each whether still capable of commitment or requiring a shorter or longer span of time for reorganization (Photostat 981A10.(D138)). (ibid, Appx 272, 8 Jun 44)

14. By 10 Jun the Tenth Army was in a position to supply at least some concrete information. From a series of abbreviated condition reports, submitted to O.B.SW on 7, 9 and 10 Jun, it is possible to establish the then existing fighting strength of some divisions (Photostats: 981A10 (D139; D140; D141)):

Fighting Strength¹⁷

76 Pz Corps

Para Pz Div H.G.	811 all ranks
15 Pz Gren Div	2,488 all ranks
1 Para Div	902 all ranks
94 Inf Div	1,650 all ranks

14 Pz Corps

29 Pz Gren Div	2,299 all ranks
90 Pz Gren Div	2,185 all ranks
26 Pz Div	1,424 all ranks
Sperrgruppe Ortner ¹⁸ (formerly 44 Inf Div)	1,762 all ranks
Sperrgruppe Schrank ¹⁸ (formerly 5 Mtn Div)	5,223 all ranks
Sperrgruppe Boelsen ^{18 19} (formerly 114 Mtn Jg Div)	3,386 all ranks
305 Inf Div (8 Jun)	587 all ranks

¹⁷Fighting strength (Gefechtsstaerke) means: Total actual strength less personnel on leave, such and wounded, on command, and "trains" (soldiers in charge of transport, baggage, horses etc). (G.M.D.S. 75138/1, O.B.SW, 21 Jun 44)

¹⁸Origin of designation shown in Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 158

¹⁹Due to an error in the original German document, Sperrgruppe Boelsen was shown as Sperrgruppe Ohlsen in Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 158.

A similar picture of ruination emerges from the figures dealing with the number of remaining tanks and guns. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, vol "B" of Appx, Appx 266, 7 Jun; Appx 346, 9 Jun; Appx 364, 10 Jun 44)

15. The foregoing shows how difficult it is at times to establish even approximate figures of casualties. In the statistics prepared at the highest levels of the German military structures the casualties experienced during phases of great combat activity appear only at much later dates. This must be borne in mind whenever the question arises of how much damage was inflicted during a given time. A good deal of information can be gathered from the periodical tabulations prepared by the Chief Medical Officer at the German Army High Command for distribution to a few top-level agencies. (Photostat: 981A10. (D 142) 71 pages). It is seen for instance that of the 7,620,000 casualties reported by the end of March 1945, 423,600 had occurred in the area of O.B.SW. But it will be noted also that the figures for Fourteenth Army remained unchanged from 31 May to 10 Jul 44, and that in consequence the greater part of the losses in the battle of Rome was shown for the first time in July. Considered with due caution, however, the figures for Army Group "C" (exclusive of Navy, Air Force proper and German-allied formations) are not without interest; selected totals will be found in Appendix "A" to this report. (981A10.(D143)). (G.M.D.S. - H 17/205, Casualty tabulations of the Chief Medical Officer of the Army High Command (General Staff Army/Q.M.G. Branch))

16. In a strength return dated 14 Jun (for 1 Jun), O.B.SW declared his inability to supply the figures for Tenth and Fourteenth Armies. (Photostat: 981A10.(D144)). The value of this document lies in the fact that it supplied a strength return for Armeeabteilung v. Zangen.^{20 21 22}

In Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 61, reference was made to the lack of information regarding the numerical strength of this formation. To close this gap in part at least, some figures are being quoted here from the more detailed breakdown in the document:

1 Jun Armeeabteilung v. Zangen

German Army Personnel	57,102
Turcomans	8,479
Italian Formations	<u>15,523</u>
	<u>81,104</u>

²⁰A German "Armeegruppe" or "Armeeabteilung" was not an Army Group in our sense of the word, but merely a temporary, provisional organizations, intermediate in status and responsibility between Corps and Army. The German term for our Army Group is "Heeresgruppe".

²¹A collection of photostats of the most important available documents regarding the organization and task of Armeegruppe v. Zangen is being permanently retained by Hist Sec (G.S.). (981A.Z.)

²²Armeegruppe (later Armeeabteilung) v. Zangen: Hist Sec Report No. 20 paras 26, 61 and others.

In addition to this, the document reported the strength of the organization directly under the command of the "Plenipotentiary Representative of the German Armed Forces in Italy":²³

German Army Personnel	5,847
German Air Force Personnel	16
Non-German Eastern Volunteers	<u>2,291</u>
	<u>8,154</u>

(G.M.D.S. - 62834/5, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 9-15 Jun, 14 Jun 44)

(c) Immediate Measures

(i) Retreat to the Trasimene Line (5-19 Jun)

17. A full analysis of the situation of Army Group "C" after the fall of Rome appears in: Schramm (op cit). The original documents on which Schramm based his study of the deliberations and decisions at the highest level have been destroyed (para 4, above). Some of the documents introduced in the following however will serve to authenticate Schramm's statements by virtue of the fact that they are identical copies of the ones destroyed at the headquarters of the originator; others are operation orders reflecting

²³Plenipotentiary Representative of the German Armed Forces in Italy, General of the Infantry Rudolf Toussaint. (Bevollmaechtigter General der deutschen Wehrmacht in Italian). S.A.: 981CS.(D2). German Chain of Command in the Italian Theatre of War. (G.M.D.S. - 43005/3, W.D., 76 Pz Corps, Vol II of Appx)

Kesselring's views and intentions. On 8 Jun General Warlimont,²⁴ who had been sent to Kesselring's headquarters for information and consultation, reported to Col-Gen Jodl:²⁴

In my opinion the most important fact established so far from my conversations with the Marshal is that, if the worst should happen and despite the greatest efforts the enemy can not be brought to a halt previously, it will be necessary to fall back to the Gothic position in about three weeks. O.B.SW believes that, unless the enemy carries out an encircling landing, he will be able to lengthen this time considerably by fighting a delaying action with all means available. Consequently I concur with O.B.SW in holding necessary the extension and the utmost acceleration of all measures for improving the defence potential of the Gothic position. ...

(Photostat: 981A10. (D 145))

(G.M.D.S. - 64832, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 1-8 Jun, Appx 262, 8 Jun)

18. On the day following this conference with the representative of the Armed Forces Operations Staff, Marshal Kesselring issued a comprehensive

²⁴General of the Artillery, Walter Warlimont, Deputy chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff; Col-Gen Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff.

Operations Order for a gradual fighting withdrawal to the Gothic Line.^{25 26} A photostatic copy and a translation of this document appear as Appendix "B" to this report (981AZ(D50) (G.M.D.S. - 64839/2, W.D., Armeeabteilung v. Zangen). A large map which was appended to the operations order showed the name and course of the various main and intermediate defence lines from the Dora Line to the Gothic Line. (Photostat 981AZ. (D51). The introductory paragraph and some salient points of the order are being quoted here:

For the general conduct of operations in the Mediterranean area it is of decisive importance, particularly in view of Italy as a potential springboard for an enemy operation against the Balkans, to retain as much of Italy as possible. It is therefore the task of the Army Group, by stubborn fighting to prevent the enemy from pushing on further towards the North.

²⁵Prior to 25 Apr 44 known as the "Apennine Position", from 25 Apr to 16 Jun known as "Gothic Position", after 16 Jun 44 known as "Green Line". (For details see Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 62f).

²⁶Schramm, op cit, p. 62:

After the Fuehrer had requested on 15 Jun that the name of the Goten position be changed immediately because, in case of its capture, it would give the enemy a pretext for cries of victory and suscitare false conceptions on our side, it received the name of "Green Line".

Thus it will begin by defending the DORA Line,²⁷ and will only withdraw towards the North if forced to do so by the enemy. However, in the event of any further strengthening of the enemy forces, or if there is a basic change in the situation, a gradual withdrawal to the GOTHIC position may become necessary.

This withdrawal movement is to take place only after stubborn fighting and over several lines of resistance, each of which is to be held as long as possible. Between these resistance lines, the Armies are to form intermediate lines in such a manner that the withdrawal movement will not exceed 15 kms at any one time. ...

... In future, each withdrawal must be approved by O.B.SW. Plans for the following day are therefore to be communicated to O.B.SW not later than 1200 hours of the preceding day.

... Insofar as the situation allows without a decisive further weakening of the fighting power, the DORA position is to be defended, in order to

²⁷Once again a Dora Line is encountered. As the earlier Dora Line preceded the present one by a mere month, the courses of both lines are being restated below:

Dora position in May 1944 (Part of Gustav System):

Formia - 2 km east of Esperia - 2 km west of Belmonte -
M. Bianco - 750 m east of Picinisso - La Meta (connected with
Senger-Riegel between Terracina and S. Oliva).

Dora position in June 1944 (after the fall of Rome):

South slope of the mountains east of Orbitello - south
shore of Lake Bolsena - Narni - Rieti - Aquila - south
slope of Gran Sasso - Torre, thence Foro position.

intercept the enemy's advance and to make it possible for our formations to reorganize.

... In the event of developments in the situation making a further withdrawal absolutely necessary, orders for the withdrawal will be issued by the Army Group. The code word for this operation is ALARICH.

... Once the FRIEDA Line²⁸ has been reached, it is intended to divide the whole of northern Italy south of the Po into two Army areas, which will be taken over by Tenth Army (left) and Fourteenth Army (right).

... All preparations for the withdrawal movement ALARICH are to be made in such a manner that, after the appropriate order has been received from the Army Group, the movement can begin forthwith. The planning staff for this movement is to be limited to the absolutely necessary. Telephone conversations referring to the withdrawal are forbidden.

19. This operations order was received by Hitler with misgivings and distrust. Despite the known tenaciousness of his Army Group Commander, Hitler now suspected him of wanting to fall back to the Gothic Line without offering serious resistance. In his narrative, General Roettiger, Kesselring's Chief of Staff, said:

²⁸Grosseto - Orlija sector - Lake Trasimene - Nocera - Camerino - Tolentino - Porto Civianova (see also para 33 below)

The Army Group Order for the withdrawal to the Apennines was misconstrued by the High Command as meaning that O.B.SW now intended to withdraw to the North "unconditionally" and even when not forced to do so by the enemy. As a consequence of this misinterpretation not a day went by without Army Group receiving verbal or written orders "to resume the definitive defence of the Italian area as far south as possible at all". The resulting tension between the High Command and O.B.SW led even to the situation where Kesselring's repeated request for a personal interview (either for himself or his C. of S.) with Hitler was not acceded to until the beginning of July 1944. ("The Italian Campaign", op cit, Part II, Chap 4, Sec B, p. 7) (981 SOM(D80f))

Even from the limited original documentation available the fact emerges clearly that Kesselring, previously the one to hold his Army commanders on a tight leash, now was himself being firmly taken in hand by the High Command and spurred on severely in his efforts to reach the Gothic Line as late in the year as possible. At that time, shortly after the invasion of Normandy, the German commanders knew well enough that only a miraculous turn of events could ward off an ultimate collapse.²⁹ But the machinery of war was still functioning, and by a combination of superb staff work on all levels, the strong will of Kesselring and the pressure from a High Command extremely sensitive to dangers threatening its pattern of strategy, it became possible

²⁹e.g.: In a telephone conversation at 2215 hours on 11 Jun, C. of S. Tenth Army said to Ops Offr Army Group:

"There can be no doubt that the time for illusions is past; whoever still holds illusions is (expression not recorded) (G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, vol "B" of Appx, 11 Jun, Appx 381a, p. 5)

to slow down the retreat and in effect to prevent the Allies from reaching the Plains of Lombardy before the spring of 1945. A vastly different course of events would have to be recorded, of course, had not the Allied landings in southern France required the withdrawal of seven good divisions from the Italian theatre of war.

20. Kesselring's operations order was issued on 9 Jun. How quickly the High Command reacted can be surmised from an entry in the War Diary of the Army Group on 10 Jun:

In a teletype message to the High Command Marshal Kesselring reaffirms his intention of defending Italy as far south of the Apennines as possible. This intention has already been clearly stated to General Warlimont.

... Nevertheless it is possible that O.B.SW will be forced to continue the withdrawal.

... O.B.SW regards it as his second imperative duty to prevent the destruction of his Armies before they reach the Gothic Line and to let them reach the new line in battle-worthy condition.

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/1, O.B.SW, W.D. 1-15 Jun, 10 Jun 44)

On the next day we find the following entry:

11 Jun Order from the Fuehrer:

Delaying type of resistance must not be continued till the Apennines are reached. After reorganization of the formations the Army Group will resume defence operations as far south of the Apennines as possible.

(ibid, 11 Jun)

Hitler's order to make a stand instead of withdrawing was questioned by Kesselring in a telephone conversation with Jodl on 12 Jun. The representations made by the Marshal on this occasion were recorded in an Appendix to the War Diary (Photostat and Translation: 981A10. (D146). Briefly stated, he pointed out the following:

- (a) under present conditions the defence of unprepared positions is hopeless;
- (b) the danger of an encirclement of Tenth Army is still great;
- (c) if reached with too weak forces, the Gothic Line can not be defended successfully;
- (d) defence far south of the Apennines entails a serious threat to the flanks; the forces available for coastal defence are insufficient;

(e) if due to a slow withdrawal movement the Allies reach the Gothic Line simultaneously with the German troops, there will be danger of an immediate breakthrough.

"For this reason: Renewed suggestion to carry out the operation ALARICH." (see para 18, above).³⁰

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/5 W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 1-15 Jun, Appx 156, 12 Jun 44)

21. After 12 Jun the relations with the High Command were not referred to in the War Diary of the Army Group for a considerable time. However, there is ample though indirect evidence that the suggestions of the Marshal had been turned down flatly.³¹ On 14 Jun he issued a sharply worded "Army Group Order for the Transition to the Defence" (Photostat and Translation: 981A10 (D147)). In essence the order read:

The Gothic Line must be built up to the point where it will be strong enough to resist any large-scale attempt of the enemy to break through

³⁰Kesselring's unusually pessimistic attitude on that day may be explained in part by the fact that he had been advised by the High command of a possible Allied landing operation intended to cut off Army Group "C". (G.M.D.S. 64832/1, O.B.SW, W.D., 1-15 Jun, 11 Jun; Schramm, op cit, p. 47)

³¹In the telephone conversation referred to in para 19f above, at 2215 hours 11 Jun (after Hitler's order to stand and fight had been received), Ops Offr Army Group "C" said to C. of S. Tenth Army:

"There is no doubt that the Marshal had other intentions, but when the Fuehrer says "Thus it shall be done", that is the way it will have to be done. ...

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, vol "B" of Appx, Appx 381a, p. 5, 11 Jun 44)

to the plain of the River Po. In order to win the required time the Army Group will stand and defend the Albert-Frieda Line.³² Every officer and man must know that upon reaching this line the delaying tactics will come to an end and the enemy advance and breakthrough must be stopped. ...

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/5, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 9-15 Jun, Appx 9 for 14 Jun)

His renewed will to stand and fight, as well as his mood, were shown by Kesselring in a conversation with the commander of Tenth Army on 15 Jun:

1115 hours v. Vietinkoff - Kesselring

K: I have just been speaking again with Lemelsen regarding the kind of fighting to be done; that it is impossible - as just has happened - to fall back for 20 kms as the crow flies in one day; that it must not happen again.

v.V: We try anything in order to slow down the tempo.

K: I told him that we have to stiffen the resistance with all forces lest the whole thing begin to slip. In the Albert Line it will have to come to a halt in any case.

³²What is called the Trasimene Line in Allied records, was called the "Albert" or "Albert-Frieda" Line by the Germans.

v.V: I do not believe that it will come to a standstill for long.

K: The Fuehrer has given me explicit orders to defend (the Albert Line). I have given the appropriate orders. ... Lemelsen was made very unhappy by my words, but after all it must be possible to use strong language at times; we can not afford to go back 20 - 30 kms in one day. ...

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 12-16 Jun, Appx 502, 15 Jun 44)

22. A schematic Order of Battle of Army Group "C" was issued on 15 Jun 44. Due to several changes in organization a new edition was prepared on 23 Jun. Photostatic copies and translations of both documents appear as Appendix "C" to this report. (981A10.(D156)) (G.M.D.S. - 64832/5, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 9-15 Jun, 15 Jun 44, fol 285; 64832/4a, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 17-23 Jun, 23 Jun 44, fol 416)³³ All G.H.Q. formations in the area of O.B.SW and their

³³The above German Orders of Battle of Army Group "C" have been compared with the "Order of Battle of German Forces in Italy on 20 Jun 44", as shown in Appendix "E" of "Operations of British, Indian and Dominion Forces in Italy", Part II, Section F, page 26. Disregarding minor discrepancies, in the light of more recent information the following items should be read in conjunction with Appendix "E":

(a) On the German charts 356 Inf Div was shown as a component of 1 Para Corps; in Appendix "E" this division was not listed. The War Diary of Fourteenth Army shows the following entries:

356 Inf Div:

6 Jun	Approaching.
7 Jun	Elements reached area between Lake Bolsena and Tiber.
9 Jun	As troops still green, provided with

various attachments were shown in a tabulation dated 21 Jun. A translation of this list appear as Appendix "D" to this report (Photostat 981A10.(D160)) (G.M.D.S. - 64832/4a, W.D., O.B SW, Appx 17-23 Jun, 21 Jun 44, fol 279)

23. A full description of the tactical detail of the German withdrawal to the Trasimene Line would transcend the scope of this report. A good picture of the difficulties encountered and the evolutions carried out by the German formations during this phase will be found in the pertinent chapters of "The Italian Campaign", op cit. Although Canadian units for the moment were involved in the pursuit to a small degree only, for the sake of continuity and

	battle-experienced N.C.Os.
11 Jun	Relieved elements of 4 Para Div in Corps sector.
13 Jun	The withdrawal of the left wing of 1 Para Corps (356 Inf Div) was carried out successfully, thereby preventing a decisive breakthrough on the inter-army boundary.
14 Jun	Committed on the boundary with Tenth Army. Engaged in heavy fighting. (G.M.D.S. - 59091/1, Fourteenth Armys WD. 3)

356 Inf Div was subsequently shown as operating alongside 4 Para Div (G.M.D.S. - 64832/5, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 9-15 Jun, folios 269 and 274, 15 Jun 44; 64832/4a, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 17-23 Jun 44, fol 169, 20 Jun 46). On the sit maps of adjoining Tenth Army the Division was first shown on 18 Jun in positions south of Montepulciano (G.M D.S. - 55291/15, Tenth Army, sit maps, 18 Jun 44 and later)

(b) On the German charts 188 Res (Mtn Div) and 3 Regt Brandenburg were shown for the Adriatic Coast Command; Appendix "E" shows 187 Res Mtn Div (Note: This latter division had been absorbed by 42 Jg Div as Battle Group 187. Successive orders of battle of 356 Inf and 188 Res (Mtn) Div appear in: G.M.D.S. - H1/533, Orders of Battle of Divisions in Army Group "C". (Photostat: 981A10 (D135)).

(c) On the German charts H.Q. 75 Inf Corps was shown as under command of Fourteenth Army. In this connection the War Diary of Fourteenth Army showed the following entry:

18 Jun To ensure uniformity of command it the coastal area on both sides of Livorno, headquarters 75 Inf Corps with formations under command (less Brigade Group with 14 Pz Corps to be under command of Fourteenth Army (G.M.D.S. - Fourteenth Army, W.D. 3, 18 Jun)

in pursuance of the policy adopted in preceding reports, the most significant documents of Tenth Army and the most important entries in its War Diary are being introduced below.³⁴

6 Jun No clear picture of the situation of Fourteenth Army has been received as yet. No orientations or orders are being received from O.B.S.W. In accordance with its own appreciation of the situation, and on its own initiative, Tenth Army has decided to entrust the operations for the protection of the deep right flank to 14 Pz Corps, at first with 26 Pz Div and 90 Pz Gren Div. Only 76 Pz Corps and 51 Mtn Corps will remain at the front. ...

7 Jun In view of the rapid advance of the enemy west of the Tiber, Tenth Army decides to move 29 Pz Gren Div and 334 Inf Div to 14 Pz Corps. ...

8 Jun The withdrawal movement proceeds as planned. Despite the existing traffic difficulties the new concentration of 14 Pz Corps progresses well. The dispositions of the enemy west of the Tiber point to Orvieto as the next target. Appropriate orders for the conduct of operations after 9 Jun are being given in Army Order No. 14.

³⁴With the exception of those specifically identified, all quotations in paragraph 23 are being cited from the main volume of Tenth Army's War Diary (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Armys W.D. 7)

A photostatic copy and a translation of Army Order No. 14 are being permanently retained (981A10. (D148)(G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7 Appx 6-11 Jun, Appx 30, 8 Jun 44) A good picture of the dispositions of 14 Pz Corps at 2000 hours 8 Jun appears on photostat 981A10. (D149)(G.M.D.S. 55291/14, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, sit maps 1-10 Jun 44). The successive positions of Tenth Army from the Adriatic to the Tiber from 7-9 Jun appear on photostat 981210 (D150) (ibid). Due to the many changes in map code at that time it is necessary to read Army Order No. 14 in conjunction with the last named situation map. The general aspects of the situation were set forth in clear language; all positions however were given by map references requiring the coded map in force at the moment.^{35 36}

The main points of Army Order No. 14 were:

³⁵MAP CODE IN USE AT GERMAN DIVISIONAL AND HIGHER HEADQUARTERS

Map references were based on ordinary gridded maps with an overprint of squares and reference points. The squares were used to indicate the general area in which a feature was located; the reference points (little circles with numbers alongside) were used to show exactly where in a given square the feature was to be found. This was done by stating the direction and distance of the feature from a nearby reference point.

In order to understand certain German military documents it was and is therefore necessary to have a map with the then current overprint of numbers or letters for squares and reference points. For reasons of security the Germans issued periodically new maps with squares and reference points differently arranged and differently numbered. In addition, whenever there was reason to believe that the current code had been compromised, the Germans issued a list of interim changes to be in force pending the issue of a new edition of the overprinted map. (For greater detail see Hist Sec Rep No. 18, Appx "B")

³⁶Due to the fact that reference points on German maps were often placed on featureless ground, a description of the location in each case would require a lengthy explanation; it is therefore more expedient to read the documents in conjunction with the appropriate maps.

Movements of strong enemy forces on the western bank of the Tiber indicate that the enemy's next objective is a breakthrough in the direction of Orvieto with the object of throwing Tenth Army back into the mountains towards the East, and of cutting it off from the Apennines. Tenth Army prevents such a breakthrough by further drastic echelonment of the forces on the right wing, at the same time withdrawing its front, sector by sector, towards the Northwest. ...

The task of 14 Pz Corps is to prevent (at first from the Tiber to a point southeast of Orvieto) an enemy breakthrough on the Army's right flank, and to regain contact with the left wing of Fourteenth Army. ...

24. 9 Jun (W.D., Tenth Army)³⁷

The danger to the flank of 51 Mtn Corps arising from the advance of enemy armour via Arsoli-Carsoli is being countered by an order for the accelerated withdrawal of the Army's left wing.³⁸ ..

Due to the concentration of 14 Pz Corps (including the still fairly effective mechanized divisions) the situation of Tenth Army has been considerably improved. The situation of Fourteenth Army remains

³⁷With the exception of those specifically identified, all quotations in para 24 are cited from the main volume of Tenth Army's War Diary (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7).

³⁸For amendment to Army Order No. 14 see photostat 981A10. (D151) (G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 6-11 Jun, Appx 343, 9 Jun 44)

critical. Contrary to the intention of O.B.SW of committing 14 Pz Corps on the front of Fourteenth Army, Tenth Army suggests that the whole Corps be left under its command. Tenth Army offers to take over a sector west of the Tiber. The suggestion was declined.

10 Jun Due to the situation at Lake Bolsena 90 Pz Gren Div was committed this morning in the threatened sector by Marshal Kesselring without the knowledge of Tenth Army. ...

In connection with a directive received from O.B.SW, Army Order No. 15 was issued today. (Photostat and translation 981A10. (D152) (G.M.D.S. - 55291/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 6-11 Jun, Appx 343, 10 Jun 44)

This order regulated the movements of Tenth Army for the next few days. Its main subject was the strengthening of the Orvieto sector; in addition it contained a list of all G.H.Q. formations attached to 14 Pz Corps, 76 Pz Corps and 51 Mtn Corps.³⁹

11 Jun At 0730 hours Marshal Kesselring arrived for a discussion of the situation. He decides to place 14 Pz Corps under the command of Fourteenth Army. ...

³⁹Map references in this order may also be located on photostat 981A10.(D150) (para 23 above)

For Tenth Army the removal of 14 Pz Corps is a matter of serious consequence. In view of the communication difficulties the conduct of the Army's operations with only two Corps Headquarters is very difficult.

12 Jun As Fourteenth Army is already withdrawing to the "Frieda-West" Line there is now a gap again between the two Armies. The closing of this gap is being hampered by a nearly complete lack of gasoline. Movements for the protection of the focal point Arezzo can not be carried out at the moment for the same reason. It is imperative that big supplies of fuel be made available without delay; - in contrast to this ammunition supplies are ample. ...

The withdrawal movements of 51 Mtn Corps are being harassed increasingly by guerillas apparently assisted by British paratroopers.⁴⁰

With 14 Pz Corps now under command of the neighbouring Army, Tenth Army was a vastly depleted force. A list on the formations and units under its command

⁴⁰A map showing the successive defence lines over which the extreme left wing of the Army Group was falling back is being retained in photostatic form (981A10.(D153) (G.M.D.S. - 55779/5, W.D. 51 Mtn Corps, vol "B" of Appx, sit maps). The map shows how the Battle Groups Hoppe, Boelsen and Schrank withdrew from the Erika, Dennoch, Oskar I and Oskar II positions to the Edith Line (from north of Perugia to Ancona) via the following intermediate defence lines: Katja, Olli, Erna, Ilse, Gertrud, Wilma, Frieda, Elfriede and Mechthild.

was issued on 12 Jun. (Photostat 981A10. (D154) (G.M.D.S. - 55291/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 12-16 Jun, Appx 412, 12 Jun 44)

13 Jun The main worry is the gap between the two Armies. Due to the quick withdrawal of Fourteenth Army there is now no contact with it. The battle for Orvieta has started. The planned strengthening of the right flank with 15 Pz Gren Div is being retarded by lack of fuel. ...

Advanced positions of the Army: 7 km S.S.W. Ficulle - 4 kms E Guardea - road bend 2 km N.W. Montenuco - M. Castabio - Poggio Cancelli - Montorio - Roseto degli Abruzzi.

14 Jun Tac H.Q. Tenth Army moves to Nestore, northwest of Umbertide. ... The right flank of the Army is still in danger due to the immobilization of 15 Pz Gren Div by lack of fuel. The constant interruptions in telephone communications by enemy fighter bombers aggravate the difficulties of command. ...

15 Jun From Orvieto the enemy advances not only to Ficulle but also on Todi, and in the evening his advance elements reach Foligno. An order with the enemy order of battle has been captured from 78 Brit Div. ...

25. During the first part of June the Germans were mainly interested in getting away from the enemy. Now, with orders to make a stand on the

Trasimene Line, and with telephone communications momentarily restored, 15 Jun was a day of prolonged conversations (Photostat: 961A10. (D155)) Tenth Army; Record of telephone conversations for 15 Jun (G.M.D.S. - 55291/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 12-16 Jun, 15 Jun, Appx 502, 34 pp). Considerable interest was shown in the Allied "Order of Battle" that had been taken from a captured dispatch rider:

Tel cons 2100 hours 15 Jun C. of S. Tenth Army - C. of S.
Army Group "C".

Wentzell: ... But we remain in the dark regarding 1 Cdn Corps. The captured order of battle covers the front from coast to coast but this Corps is not mentioned. Either it is in the rear area or possibly in the process of being moved to the front. A signal has been intercepted: "We have contact with our neighbours".

Roettiger: This might account for the increase in signal traffic.

Wentzell: The Canadian Corps may be committed in the direction of Spoleto, it can not yet be at the front in its entirety or it would have been mentioned (in the captured document).

(Ibid)

One hour earlier O.B.SW and the commander of Tenth Army had discussed the situation on the telephone:

Kesselring: ...

Secondly, 1 Cdn Inf Div will advance via Todi.

On your left wing the situation is not harmless. The Canadians (5 Cdn Armd Div) are farthest to the left, with advance elements already past Todi, then

...

An officer of 76 Pz Corps is on his way here. The Corps thinks that the Canadians are at Foligno. It is only a matter of scout cars. ...

(Ibid)

Since 1 Cdn Corps at the time was training in the rear area, and 1 Cdn Armd Bde was complete in the area Mentana - Capena (Hist Offr Report No. 160, para 8; Italy 1: 100,000, Sheet 144, map refs 8782, 7994), Kesselring's concern regarding the presence of the Canadians was based on wrong intelligence reports. The daily intelligence report of Headquarters O.B.SW for 14 Jun had contained the following entry:

1 Cdn Corps advancing via Narni to Terni.

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/5, W.D. O.B.SW, Appx 9-15 Jun, 14 Jun 44, folio 235)

And on 15 Jun:

... 1 Cdn Army Corps in area north of Narni - Terni with an American artillery formation under command (sic). Advance of the Corps is being carried out in two groups, southern group from Narni via Amelia to Alviano, northern group from Terni towards Todi on Route 79. (ibid 15 Jun 44, folio 287)

Subsequent telephone conversations and intelligence reports avoided the subject until 20 Jun, when the following was reported:

Observed: In the rear area of Eighth Army, 11 Cdn Inf Bde and 5 Cdn Armd Bde (sic). (G.M.D.S. - 64832/4a W.D., O.B SW, Appx 20 Jun 44, folio 196)

26. In an appreciation of the situation transmitted to O.B.SW in the evening of 16 Jun, General v. Vietinghoff expressed the following opinion:

... The events of the last few days point to ... the continuation of the main advance of the enemy in the direction of Arezzo. Being aware of the negligible development of the eastern sector of the Gothic line, the enemy may make it his strategic objective to reach the plain of the Po by means of a straightforward break-through in the eastern sector rather than by a far-flung envelopment along the Mediterranean. (Photostat: 981A10. (D157)(G.M.D.S. - 55291/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 12-16 Jun, Appx 534, 16 Jun 44)

The day's telephone conversations dealt mainly with the choice of tactically favourable locations for the Albert Line (ibid, Appx 532, 16 Jun 44). On 17 Jun and 18 Jun the withdrawal to the Albert Line continued. In the evening of 18 Jun Tenth Army reported the course of the Albert Line (and the sectors of the different formations (Photostat 981A10. (D158)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 17-21 Jun, Appx 596, 18 Jun 44). Owing to insistent demands from the highest quarters some definite line had to be shown despite the fact that fierce attacks in the Perugia area and the certain loss of Elba were constantly causing adjustments of the line.⁴¹ Tenth Army's situation map for 18 Jun not being very suitable for photostatic reproduction, the somewhat better map for 20 Jun is being retained in this connection (Photostat 981A10. (D159)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/15, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, sit maps 11-25 Jun, 20 Jun 44). The course of the Albert Line, as reported on 18 Jun, may be found on this map by locating the reference points given in Tenth Army's report.⁴² Junction point with Fourteenth Army was 1 km S.S.W. Villa Astori on the secondary road from Chiusi to Montepulciano (ITALY 1:100,000, Sheet 121, map ref 278841). The course of the line in the area of 76 Pz Corps was reported as follows: 1 km S.W. Villa Astori - along the creek to the western tip to Lake Chiusi - southern tip of Lake Chiusi - Carraia di Torre - height 2 km south of Magione - 500 m south of M. Panciano - Ponte Felcino -

⁴¹Actually it would be very difficult to name a line and say: "This was the Albert Line". Everything was in flux, reports were vague and contradictory. Hitler realized that he was being kept in the dark and let Kesselring know that he was displeased. (e.g.: Schramm, op cit, page 63 of translation)

⁴²In this connection it must be taken into consideration that due to a succession of quick changes in map code at the time, squares 68, 46, 62, 36 on sit map 20 Jun were squares 48, 27, 14, 16 in the report of 18 Jun. (These latter square numbers were merely the original square numbers as shown crossed out on the map of 20 Jun, plus five).

Valfabbrica. Points east of Valfabbrica are not relevant due to the fact that 51 Mtn Corps in the event remained further south in the Frieda Line (from Valfabbrica to Porto Civitanova, see para 33 below). The Germans hoped that with the re-establishment of a continuous line of resistance the crisis resulting from the loss of the Caesar line had now reached its end; but particularly in the area of Fourteenth Army the situation soon began to deteriorate and become critical again.

(ii) Accelerated Development of the Gothic Line

27. On 24 Jan 44, two days after the Allied landings at Anzio, Marsh Kesselring had redefined the tasks of his Armies in an Army Group Order (Hist Sec Report No. 20, para 25). Armeegruppe v. Zangen was then directed "to carry on with utmost energy the construction work on the Apennine position and on the coastal fronts". On 8 Feb the Armeegruppe, in its Armeegruppen Order No. 3 laid down the guiding principles for this work (Photostat and Translation: 981AZ(D6). (G.M.D.S. - 64839/4, W.D. Armeegruppe v. Zangen). The course of the main line from Pesaro to Marina di Carrara (south of La Spezia), and the individual construction sectors were shown on a map issued by the Armeegruppe on 7 May 44 (Photostat 981AZ.(D37)). (G.M.D.S. - 64839/8, W.D. Armeegruppe v. Zangen). Whether it was due to lack of personnel, equipment and material, or due to the comfortable distance from the fighting front, or, as seems probable, to a combination of all these factors, the work accomplished by the end of May in all but the Western sectors was negligible. Any complacency or planned limitation of effort came to an end however on 2 Jun, when after several days of deliberations, due to the loss of the Caesar

line and the certain fall of Rome, the German High Command issued an order for the accelerated development of the new defence position. This document was signed by Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel and began with these words: "The Fuehrer has ordered". In later documents and conversations it was usually called "The Gotenbefehl" (The Gothic Order). A photostatic copy and translation of the order appear as Appendix "E" to this report (981A10.(D161). (G.M.D.S. - 75138/13, W.D., O.B.SW, Position Construction, Dec 43 - Dec 44).

28. As the complete text of the "Gothic Order" is available for verification it may be permissible to quote Schramm's synopsis of the order:

The order mentioned in particular: Installation of panzer protection in the sectors threatened by tanks, the acceleration of fortified construction on the main breakthrough points (driving of galleries, fire embrasures etc.), extensive mining at sufficient depth, evacuation of the civil population from the outpost zone and the main battle zone, installation of an obstacle zone of about 10 km depth in front of the main line of resistance, and within it, thorough destruction of all traffic roads, installations, shelters etc., or preparations to that effect. The General of Engineers and Fortresses was given the mission of reinforcing the Fortress-Engineer Organization (for that work he was to have at his disposal a staff from the Southeast and a rock-drilling company from Norway); the Chief of Armament and Replacements, as far as possible, was to use the construction battalions as cadre personnel for the supervision of Italian civil labour forces; O.B.SW had to bring back to the Apennine position the Italian forces which could no longer be put

in line in the "C" position because of enemy action; the German General Plenipotentiary in Italy had to organize from the Italian male population domiciled in the area or waiting to be evacuated, a civil labor force etc. (Schramm, op cit, Translation, page 35)

29. Regarding the sudden and somewhat belated interest of the High Command in the development of the Gothic Line, General Roettiger, then C. of S. Army Group "C", in his post-war narrative made the following remarks:

Between Rome and the Apennines there was only one natural barrier, the River Arno. But there were no prepared positions south of the northern Apennines. The failure to develop prepared positions in Central Italy must be ascribed primarily to Hitler's usually negative attitude towards the construction of positions in the rear areas. It was his contention that the troops were inclined "to keep one eye towards the rear" whenever they were aware of the existence of a prepared rear-position. And he disregarded all mention of the fact that experience had shown the troops as holding positions with the greatest confidence and tenacity, even in the most difficult situations, when they knew that a covering position was ready in the rear.

For Army Group "C" it was therefore a remarkable and pleasant surprise when Hitler from the beginning of June not only showed keen interest in the development of the line but even issued a special order. As borne out by events, this happened unfortunately rather too late. ...

("The Italian Campaign", op cit Part II, Chap 4, Sec B, Roettiger,
(981SOM(D80f))

30. Count (Karl Heinrich) Klinckowstroem, C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps, was one of the many German officers who knew from bitter experience the disastrous consequences of belated orders in connection with withdrawals and preparation of rear positions (Hist Sec Report No. 20, paras 131-132). Well aware of the contents of the "Gothic Order", but nevertheless foreseeing a repetition of the old difficulties, he made his views known to Tenth Army in the evening of 18 Jun. Apart from revealing once more the added burdens which Hitler's constant distrust imposed on German front commanders, and despite the fact that Klinckowstroem was more or less speaking out of turn and treated accordingly, the record of this conversation may not be devoid of interest to officers who at some time or other may have to contemplate the various aspects of a planned withdrawal:

18 Jun 44, 1630 hours Klinckowstroem - Wentzell

K: The Corps requests to be informed as to which sector of the Green Line it is expected to occupy, in order that it may concern itself with the development of the sector. According to present information, the Green line is in no condition for defence. There is no barbed wire; no mines have been laid; the fields of fire have not been cleared; some command posts are begun, while the greater part are but half completed. The Corps considers it essential that position construction

officers from the divisions that are later to defend these sectors be detailed immediately, with appropriate staffs for the sectors in question, so that construction work may make real progress.

W: The construction of the Green Line is not the affair of the Corps; the present task is to hold the Frieda Line.⁴³ The Corps should keep its eyes to the front.

K: The Corps points out that, in spite of many timely requests on the part of the Corps, neither in the case of the withdrawal to the Dora Line and to the Senger Riegel, nor of the withdrawal to the "C" position did the Army give directives or instructions regarding a probable withdrawal and an allotment of sectors in these lines. On these occasions the Army spoke of battles of mobile warfare, with the result that neither the Senger Riegel nor the "C" position could be held. The Corps therefore urgently requests immediate directives for the construction and later occupation of the Green Line, so that it may make timely reconnaissances with a view to future commitment, strengthening and improved construction of the line. - As the movements in the Corps sector are proceeding according to plan, the Corps is definitely in a position to conduct frontal operations, and at the same time to take over construction work in the Green Line.

⁴³See para 33 below.

W: We will again submit the case, but it cannot be expected that agreement will be found at higher levels.

(handsigned) Graf Klinckowstroem

(Photostat and Translation: 981A10. (D162)) (G.M.D.S. - 55779/10, 51 Mtn Corps, W.D.2, Vol "C" of Appx, Appx C801, 18 Jun 44)

WITHDRAWAL TO THE ARNO (20 Jun - 17 Jul)

(a) Defence and Loss of the Trasimene Positions (20 - 30 Jun)

31. Despite the constant stream of sharply worded directives exhorting O.B.SW to hold the Albert-Frieda Line at all costs, the German High Command knew well enough that this could not be done for long with the forces on hand.⁴⁴ While on the inner wings of the two Armies the remnants of the old elite divisions put up strong resistance against mounting pressure, the focal area of the Allied drive at first was on the right wing and the center of Fourteenth Army where some of the stop-gap formations were relatively helpless in the face of the determined advance of Fifth Army. Subsequently the left

⁴⁴On 12 May O.B.SW had 22 almost complete divisions at his disposal; one month later his forces had been depleted to the point where he had 10 divisions almost fit for action and 16 divisions with the combat value of one reinforced regiment each. Therefore WFST came to the conclusion that only for a limited time would O.B.SW be in a position to hold the enemy in the Albert line. (For complete analysis see: Schramm, op cit, Translation, p. 65)

wing of Fourteenth Army was forced back as well, and Tenth Army had to withdraw its right wing in order to maintain a continuous front.

32. On 21 Jun, 38 Irish Bde (78 Brit Div) and 11 Cdn Armd Regt were pushing forward between Lake Chiusi and Lake Trasimene in the sector of 334 Inf Div, took Sanfatucchio and Carraia, and later in the day Pucciarelli. The Canadians in the sector remained unidentified however until 23 Jun when the daily Intelligence Report O.B.SW carried the following item:

1 Cdn Armd Bde with 11 Cdn Armd Regt

5 kms N.E. Vaiano.

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/4a, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 17-23 Jun, folio 424,

23 Jun 44)

The vague allusions to a possible commitment of 1 Cdn Corps which had cropped up in the telephone conversations of the preceding days were now replaced by a definite but erroneous statement in the main synopsis of Tenth Army's War Diary:

23 Jun Renewed large-scale fighting must be expected momentarily. The decisive factor for the location of the center of gravity of the attack will be the commitment of the Canadian Corps which is now being concentrated behind the front. The Army expects interpolation of the Canadian Corps in the area west of Lake Tresimene.

(G.M.D.S. 55291/1 - Tenth Army, W.D. 7, 23 Jun 44)

33. On 21 Jun 51 Mtn Corps received permission to fall back to the Frieda Line.⁴⁵ (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, 21 Jun 44). The exact course of the line as well as the dispositions of the troops in the line on 24 Jun were shown in considerable detail on a map which is being retained in photostatic form (981A10. (D163)). (G.M.D.S. - 55779/5, 51 Mtn Corps, sit maps 11 May - 25 Jun 44, 24 Jun 44). The events in the area of Fourteenth Army have been detailed in: "Fifth Army History", Part VI. For the sake of completeness however, a photostatic copy is being retained of a trace showing the exact course of the Albert Line and the Anton-Riegel in the area of Fourteenth Army on 21 Jun 44 (981A10. (D164)). (G.M.D.S. 64832/4a, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 17-23 Jun 44, folio 244, 21 Jun 44)

34. According to a location statement of O.B.SW the fighting forces on 22 Jun were deployed from right to left in the following order:

Fourteenth Army	75 Inf Corps	16 S.S. Pz Gren Div
		19 G.A.F. Div
	14 Pz Corps	162(Turc) Inf Div
		3 Pz Gren Div
		20 G.A.F. Div
		90 Pz Gren Div
	1 Para Corps	29 Pz Gren Div

⁴⁵Frieda Line: Valfabbrica - 2 km S.W. Nocera - Camerino - 1 km N.W. Caldarola - Tolentino - along Route 77 to coast at Porto Civitanova.

		26 Pz Div
		4 Para Div
		356 Inf Div
Tenth Army	76 Pz Corps	Para Pz Div H.G.
		1 Para Div
		334 Inf Div
		15 Pz Gren Div
		305 Inf Div
		94 Inf Div ⁴⁶
	51 Mtn Corps	44 Inf Div ⁴⁷
		5 Mtn Div
		71 Inf Div
		278 Inf Div

In rear areas for reorganization:

715 Inf Div
334 Inf Div⁴⁸

⁴⁶The absorption of 94 Inf Div by 305 Inf Div had been rescinded. Tel cons 22 Jun: "The dissolution of 94 Inf Div has been countermanded, the High Command has refused concurrence and has promised 800 replacements per regiment". (G.M.D.S. - 55201/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 22-26 Jun, Appx 699, 22 Jun 44)

⁴⁷44 Inf Div at the time was in process of being relieved by 114 Jg Div.

⁴⁸Less elements with 76 Pz Corps

65 Inf Div

362 Inf Div

For locations and further details see Photostat: (981A10. (D165)). (G.M.D.S. 65832/4a, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 17-23 Jun, folio 337, 22 Jun 44). The locations of Tenth Army and 1 Para Corps may be found on Photostat: (981A10. (D166)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/15, Tenth Army, sit maps 11-25 Jun, 22 Jun 44)

35. On 24 Jun the pressure of 13 Brit Corps between Lake Chiusi and Lake Trasimene increased considerably. Supported by the divisional artillery of 4 and 78 Brit Divs, 12 Cdn Armd Regt and 28 Brit Inf Bde (4 Brit Div) attacked near Vaiano. All German reports mentioned violent fighting, heavy casualties and deep penetrations in the area of 334 Inf and 1 Para Divs and, indeed, seemed to show relief over the fact that the front was not torn up completely. 1 Cdn Corps with 1 Cdn Inf Div and 5 Cdn Armd Div had been reported from the area Todi - Foligno - Terni (G.M.D.S. - 64832/7, W.D., O.B.SW, folio 23, 24 Jun 44). The telephone conversations were filled with anxious speculations regarding the intended role of the Corps. (Photostat 981A10. (D167A)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 22-26 Jun 44, Appx 746, Record of tel cons for 24 Jun 44). At 0920 hours General Herr, Cmdr 76 Pz Corps, said to v. Vietinghoff:

... Now there have been prisoners taken from 4 Brit Div and three Canadians from an armoured brigade. The division has not been confirmed yet, but it can be assumed that these two divisions will be committed at this focal point...

1845 hours Runkel (C. of S. 76 Rz Corps) - Wentzell

... Runkel has just returned from 334 Inf Div. Once more they have fought well but they have also shed a good deal of hair. The infantry forces of the division are now a mere 350 men, so that a battalion from Rodt (15 Pz Gren Div) had to be taken there. The Para and H.G. people have also been extended to that area (2 Bn 3 Para Regt; and Recce Bn H.G. to Pozzuolo). According to Runkel the attackers must be from 4 Brit Div; 78 Brit Div has been beaten so often that the question is: 4 Brit or 1 Cdn Inf Div? 334 Inf Div has lost six Panthers ... One of these days the Canadian Corps is going to attack and then our center will explode ... (ibid)

1820 hours Wentzell - Roettiger

W: Furthermore the situation of Canstein is not clear (Frhr v. Canstein, 1 Ops Offr 334 Inf Div). There is a terrific attack at Vaiano.

R: Yes.

W: My Intelligence Officer tells me that it is 1 Cdn Inf Div; I believe it to be 4 Brit Div.

R: Maybe they are South Africans.

W: They are nearer to Chiusi.

R: Or 78 Brit Div.

W: They are no longer able to carry out that kind of attack.

Personally I believe it is 4 Brit Div, but my Intelligence officer says: "Only Canadians attack like that" - and after all 5 Cdn Armd Div has been identified. ... (ibid)

The telephone conversations of the day dealt with many interesting subjects. Anyone reading the recurring reports of "falling back to the Albert Line" cannot help wondering whether in the face of the stern orders from the High Command, the Albert Line in some sectors was not wherever the troops were falling back to at the moment. Some light was shed on the subject when at 1940 hours General v. Vietinghoff reported the heavy fighting in the area of 334 Inf Div and the left wing of 1 Para Div:

v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

v.V.: ... Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to withdraw to the mountain position behind the Albert Line.

K.: My C. of S. has already reported in that sense. For the moment I am unable to give my consent. I cannot prevent my Commanders from entertaining such thoughts but it would be a catastrophe if they were passed along to the lower levels. You know under

what suspicion I am working here, and if you wish to become my successor you will pass these ideas along to lower levels.

v.V.: Oh no! But unfortunately at the time the more advanced positions were called "Albert Line" whereas the other one is much better and tankproof (ibid)

36. The events of the next day were summarized in the War Diary of Tenth Army as follows:

25 Jun West of Lake Trasimene the defensive fighting continues with unabated violence. The greatest pressure was along Route 71. Although 334 Inf Div was again able to prevent a breakthrough, its fighting strength has further dwindled down. For this reason the commitment of 15 Pz Gren Div on the west side of Lake Trasimene is being considered; this in view of the fact that east of the lake hitherto only 6 Brit Armd Div has been encountered. A further saving of forces east of the lake will be obtained by occupying the "Albert-Riegel"⁴⁹ in the general line: North-east corner Lake Trasimene - M. Tezio - Casa Castalda.⁵⁰ With the occupation of the "Albert Riegel"

⁴⁹Final course of Albert Riegel: Northeast corner of Lake Trasimene - S. Vito - Castel Rigone - M. Penna - Menestrello - M. Tezio - height N.W. of Prozonchio - la Ventia - M. Castellaccio - Fratticiola Selvatica. (from document 981A10. (D170), introduced in para 37 below)

⁵⁰M. Tezio: ITALY 1:100,000, Sheet 122, map ref 6602; Casa Casalda: Sheet 123, map ref 902018

the front of 51 Mtn Corps will be extended westwards; 44 Inf Div will be committed as a compact formation on the west bank of the Tiber. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, 25 Jun 44)

The critical situation west of Lake Trasimene was discussed at length in the day's telephone conversations. Papers found on a British Lt-Col who had been captured in a disabled tank⁵¹ convinced the Germans that 4 and 78 Brit Divs and 1 Cdn Armd Bde with three regiments were alone in the area between the two lakes. This according to Wentzell left the Germans still with the task of worrying about the intentions of the Canadian Corps. At 1855 hours the question of the withdrawal to the Albert-Riegel was being discussed between Wentzell and Roettiger:

R.: The decision of the Fuehrer has just been received. What you wished for has been forbidden.

W.: Forbidden.

R.: It has just come in. Preparations may be made, but nothing else. Maybe it will be lost in action.

⁵¹1915 hours 25 Jun 44. Tel cons v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

v.V.: Unfortunately the Canadians (1 Cdn Corps) have not been located. The whole interrogation has led to nothing ... The prisoners, a Lt-Col and a Major, are a battalion commander and an artillery commander of 78 Brit Div, but they have not given any information ... (ibid)

W.: I know what you mean. (Dann wissen wir Bescheid)

(Photostat: 981A10.(D167B) (G.M.D.S. - 55291/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7
Appx 22-26 Jun, Appx 771 tel cons 25 Jun 44)

37. On 26 Jun Eighth Army increased its pressure on both sides of Lake Trasimene but the deciding events took place in the area of Fourteenth Army where the Allied exploitation of German weakness paid off in terms of deep penetrations. During the morning the two Army commanders were in telephonic communication and while v. Vietinghoff mentioned the violent fighting in the area west of Lake Trasimene, Lemelsen said: "There are no words to express what is going on, he is breaking through on the coast and is extending his gains in the center. Everything goes wrong. There are no reserves to save the situation". Both commanders now were demanding permission to withdraw. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 22-26 Jun Appx 794, tel cons 26 Jun 44). At 1700 hours O.B.SW issued the order for a general withdrawal; Tenth Army received permission to fall back to the Albert-Riegel while offering bitter resistance in the forefield. Pertinent details and map references appear in the following documents:

Photostat 981A10.(D168) O.B.SW, 26 Jun, 1700 hours, Operations
Order for Tenth and Fourteenth Armies.

Photostat 981A10.(D169) Tenth Army, 26 Jun, 2040 hours, Operations
Order for 76 Pz Corp.

Photostat 981A10.(D170)

Tenth Army, 26 Jun, 2225 hours, Operations
Order for 76 Pz and 51 Mtn Corps.

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 22-26 Jun, Appx 795, 796, 797,
26 Jun 44)

38. On the same day General v. Vietinghoff congratulated 22 Flak Bde on the occasion of their first anniversary of existence and 22 Flak Bde returned the compliment by submitting a location trace. (Photostat 981A10.(D171)).

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/7, Tenth Army, W.D., Appx 27 Jun-3 Jul, Appx 855,
28 Jun 44). - According to a detailed breakdown of the replacements received by Tenth Army during the period from 1-26 Jun, the Army had received 7765 men, a further 2121 men had been received but lent to Fourteenth Army or Armeeabteilung v. Zangen, an additional 3,385 men had been reported as being en route to the Army. (Photostat 981A10. (D172)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 22-26 Jun, Appx 802, 26 Jun 44)⁵²

⁵²During these days much armour was lost on both sides and several squadrons of 25 Cdn Armd Delivery Regt were in the area delivering tanks. In this connection the following remarks appeared in German Intelligence reports:

26 Jun Prisoner of War information:
In addition to 11, 12 and 14 Armd Regts, 25 Armd Regt, (previously believed to be a part of 4 Cdn Armd Div) is said to belong to 1 Cdn Army Tank Bde. (Note: The Germans evidently had not yet found out that this designation had been 1 Cdn Armd Bde for more than six months.)

(From captured documents)

27 Jun Organization of 1 Cdn Army Tank Bde (sic):
11 Regt (Ontario)
12 Regt (T.R.R.)
14 Regt (Calgary)
25 Regt (Elgin)

39. The continuing retreat of Fourteenth Army forced Tenth Army to conform by further withdrawals of the right wing. (O.B.SW, Operations Order for Tenth Army, Photostat 981A10. (D.173) (G.M.D.S.-55291/7, Tenth Army W.D. 7, Appx 26 Jun - 3 Jul, Appx 843, 28 Jun 44). A location statement for both Armies appeared in the morning report of O.B.SW on 28 Jun (Photostat 981A10. (D174)). (G.M.D.S. - 64832/7, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 24-30 Jun 44, folios 234 and 235, 28 Jun 44). The developments of 29 an 30 Jun were reflected in the War Diary of Tenth Army by the following entries:

29 Jun Owing to the heavy casualties of the preceding days the enemy limits his activities to small-scale assaults. To maintain contact with Fourteenth Army it has once more become necessary to carry out a withdrawal west of Lake Trasimene. ... (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, 29 Jun 44)

30 Jun The enemy resumed his attacks but not with the violence of the previous days. The situation of Fourteenth Army demands a further withdrawal of Tenth Army. After a categorical refusal at 1405 hours, O.B.SW at 1715 hours issues the order for withdrawal during the night 30 Jun - 1 Jul. ... The last practical line based on Lake Trasimene has now been reached. ... Once the open country has been reached on the right wing, protracted resistance in the new positions will not be possible

The latter replacing disabled tanks;
Insignia: Yellow maple-leaf on black-red-black square.

(G.M.D.S. - 64832/7, W.D., O.B.SW, Appx 24-30 Jun, folio 123, Ic report 26 Jun, folio 187, Ic report 27 Jun 44)

until the more favourable terrain near Arezzo has been reached.

(ibid, 30 Jun)

40. During the month of June Army Group 'C' was increasingly harassed by well organized guerillas. The situation was described by the Intelligence Officer of the Army Group in a memorandum dated 30 Jun. In the closing paragraph the situation was appraised as follows:

In summation it may be said that the guerilla situation in the area of O.B.SW has worsened sharply. The exceedingly small German forces available for the purpose have been unable to carry out effective counter-measures. Foreign troops including a great part of the Italian formations, have shown themselves to be most unreliable; they are a source of danger rather than a help in the fight against guerillas. Apart from their growth in numerical strength, the guerillas have become better organized and are led according to a definite plan. They have an excellent intelligence service in closest cooperation with Anglo-American Intelligence. It will be the aim of the Anglo-Americans to use the guerillas for the purpose of increasing the difficulties of defending the Apennine region, and by the occupation of the mountain ranges on the borders gradually to gain control over the main traffic and communication arteries in the Italian area. (Photostat 981A10 (D202)) (G.M.D.S. - 64832/7, W.D., O.B.SW Appx 24 - 30 Jun, folios 360-363, 30 Jun 44)

(b) From the Trasimene Positions to the first Withdrawals across the Arno
(1-17 Jul)⁵³

41. Kesselring's forces were now gradually being dislodged from their positions east and west of Lake Trasimene and the pattern of alternating resistance and withdrawal according to the degree of Allied pressure became a matter of routine for the current phase.

1 Jul

In the area of Fourteenth Army 75 Inf Corps lost Cecina in heavy fighting; the front was taken back and it was decided to relieve exhausted 19 G.A.F. Div by elements of 16 S.S. Pz Gren Div. 14 Pz Corps withdrew in consequence of the deep penetrations on the boundary with 75 Inf Corps; 1 Para Corps withdrew to conform with 14 Pz Corps. On the same day Fourteenth Army issued a detailed strength return for 1 Jul (Photostat 981A10.(D175). (G.M.D.S. - 62241/4, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4, Appx 1 - 17 Jul, Appx 642, 1 Jul 44). The strength of the various formations was reported as follows:

26 Pz Div	14,911
3 Pz Gren Div	12,292
29 Pz Gren Div	12,889

⁵³In the present report this phase has been sketched in for the sake of continuity and to facilitate further research, if and when required. Statements not supported by specific source references are based on entries for that day in the Main War Diary of the Army concerned. (G.M.D.S. - 62291/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4; 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7)

90 Pz Gren Div	11,840	
65 Inf Div	9,472	
356 Inf Div	10,909	
362 Inf Div	11,536	
19 G.A.F. Div	7,214	
20 G.A.F. Div	4,574	
Grenadier Instr Bde	<u>2,016</u>	of which "Fighting Strength" 45,787 ⁵⁴
	97,653	
Air Force Formations		
4 Para Div	9,161	
Miscellaneous	2,924	
S.S. Formations		
16 S.S. Pz Gren Div	15,838	
Mtn Jg School	1,647	
Mittenwald		
Italians	962	
Russians	<u>883</u>	"Fighting Strength" (Not supplied)
	31,415	
G.H.Q. Combat troops with Fourteenth Army		

⁵⁴For definition of "Fighting Strength" see: Para 14, above, footnote.

G.H.Q.	Arty	8,530	
	Engrs	2,141	
	Armd Tps	4,527	
	Projector Tps	1,593	
	Infantry	652	
	Misc	<u>6</u>	of which "Fighting Strength" 10,115 ⁵⁴
		17,449	

42. Apart from the above formations the Army comprised many small special units. It would be hazardous to draw conclusions from the above figures beyond the data actually supplied. The "Fighting Strength" of the divisions was recorded on 2 Jul:

26 Pz Div	5,627
3 Pz Gren Div	1,587 ⁵⁵
29 Pz Gren Div	5,217 (Infantry: 1734)
913 Pz Gren Div	3,954 (Infantry: 1339)
65 Inf Div	4,601
356 Inf Div	3,927 (Infantry: 2269)
19 G.A.F. Div	1,716
20 G.S F. Div	2,068
162 (Turc) Inf Div	677
4 Para Div	4,054 (Infantry: 1850)

⁵⁵This figure comprises merely the strength of the elements fighting with Battle Group Crisolly (20 G.A.F. Div plus elements 3 Pz Gren Div)

(ibid, Appx 654)

The "Fighting Strength" of Tenth Army's divisions as on 2 Jul was recorded in graphic form on 10 Jul (Photostat 981A10.(D179). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/9, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 10-13 Jul, Appx 1115, 10 Jul 44). According to this document the approximate fighting strength of the divisions was the following:

Para Pz Div H.G.	3,580	
1 Para Div	1,530	
15 Pz Gren Div	2,500	
334 Inf Div	1,750	(formation then under cmd 15 Pz Gren Div)
305 Inf Div	1,410	(formation then under cmd 305 Inf Div)
94 Inf Div	530	
44 Inf Div	2,700	
114 Jg Div	3,420	
5 Mtn Div	3,800	
71 Inf Div	3,140	
278 Inf Div	5,280	
715 Inf Div	4,690	

43. In the area of Tenth Army the first day of the month was relatively uneventful. On the right wing 15 Pz Gren Div (with remnants of 334 Inf Div under command) was hard pressed but managed to cling to the positions at the

northwest corner of Lake Trasimene; on the other side of the Lake 305 Inf Div was forced back at S. Vito; on the Adriatic sector 2 Pol Corps attacked in the Filettrano sector of 278 Inf Div.

44. During, the night 1/2 Jul Fourteenth Army carried out a withdrawal. On the right wing this had become necessary due to the penetrations obtained by the opponent, on the left wing it was a measure for shortening the front. (Siena was evacuated during the following night.) Tenth Army's War Diary summarized the day's events in the following entry:

The withdrawals on the right wing are being followed by the enemy in a hesitating manner. Enemy concentrations are in progress on both banks of the Tiber. After completing his preparations the enemy attacked in the Adriatic sector with two armoured spearheads, intending to obtain a breakthrough at Ancona. It can not be ascertained at the moment whether apart from 3 Pol Div and probably a British Armoured Brigade, the Canadians are possibly going to be committed there.⁵⁶

⁵⁶2 Jul tel cons Wentzell - Roettiger

W: Operations are being conducted according to the needs of the moment; a schematical withdrawal is out of the question.

...

W: If I only knew where the Canadians (1 Cdn Corps) are.

R: The pressure in the Polish sector makes me thoughtful, maybe the Canadians are there?

Wentzell then pointed out that no indications had been noted and no prisoners taken; care would be taken to prevent a surprise.

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 27 Jun - 3 Jul, Appx 933, 2 Jul 44)

45. Withdrawals carried out according to plan had resulted in a considerable shortening of Fourteenth Army's front. Further withdrawals to more favourable positions were planned for the night 3/4 Jul. Large preparations for attack had been observed in the area of Fifth Army for several days. A new schematic order of battle of Fourteenth Army's large formations was issued on 3 Jul. (Photostat 981A10.(D176)). (G.M.D.S. - 62241/4, Fourteenth Army, W.D., Appx 1 - 17 Jul, 3 Jul 44)

War Diary Tenth Army:

...

Three focal points are discernible; the plain of Arezzo, the valley of the Tiber and the Adriatic coast (Ancona) ... In addition to 3 Pol Div, 5 Pol Div and 3 Pol Armd Bde have been identified. After the initial surprise 278 Inf Div has offered good resistance.

Regarding the attacks in the Ancona sector, the Army commander exhorted 278 Inf Div to stand fast as long as possible:

Today again the Fuehrer has ordered to hold Ancona as long, as possible; this not only from the point of view of our own operations but also in connection with those in the western Balkans ...

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 27 Jun-3 Jul, Appx 953,
3 Jul 44)

4 Jul

46. Fourteenth Army had now reached a fairly favourable defence line and went on record as intending "to hold that line for some time". The line in question extended from Castiglioncello (on the coast) - south of Rosignano - Volterra - Castel S. Gimignano - Colle di Val d'Elisa - Vagliagli to Fietri. (G.M.D.S. - 62241/3, Fourteenth Army, sit maps, sit trace 4 Jul 44). No major developments occurred in the area of Tenth Army; the main War Diary carried the following notation:

In accordance with orders from O.B.SW the present lines will be defended until further orders.

Orders to hold had been given by O.B.SW; the text of the document is being retained in photostatic form (981A10. (D177) O.B.SW Operations Order for Tenth Army, 4 Jul 44). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/8, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 4-9 Jul, Appx 974, 975, 4 Jul 44)

5 Jul

47. On 5 Jul, however, Fifth Army resumed its attacks; 75 Inf Corps was under strong pressure at Rosignano and Castellina; east of Montecatini in the sector of 14 Pz Corps penetrations had to be sealed off about one mile behind

the original defence line; 1 Para Corps held its positions. On the right wing and center of Tenth Army there was considerable reconnaissance activity; hard fighting took place in the sector of 278 Inf Div at Osimo 71 Inf Div extended its front to Filottrano while 278 Inf Div was being concentrated between Filottrano and the coast. The situation map of Tenth Army for 5 Jul is being retained in photostatic form (981A10. (D178)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/16, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, sit maps 26 Jun - 8 Jul, 5 Jul 44)

6 Jul

48. In the area of Fourteenth Army Allied pressure continued unabated; the positions were not fortified but could not be given up except for minor adjustments; a repetition of similar attacks on the following day would create a new crisis. On the right wing and the center of Tenth Army there were no significant developments; on the Adriatic coast, 5 Pol Div was probing for weak spots in the front between Osimo and Filottrano.

7 Jul

49. War Diary Fourteenth Army:

In heaviest fighting the Army succeeded in preventing the breakthrough ... As the present line is the last favourable ground south of the Arno, the Army intends to stand fast as long as possible.

Tenth Army: A significant attack occurred on the right wing of 51 Mtn Corps where on the left bank of the Tiber 114 Jg Div was under pressure in the sector south of Montone (north of Umbertide). Increasing pressure was also reported by 278 Inf Div.

8 Jul

50. Mainly due to a deep penetration west of Volterra (90 Pz Gren Div) Fourteenth Army now gave further ground. In a telephone conversation early in the afternoon, C. of S. 14 Pz Corps told C. of S. Fourteenth Army:

The Corps feels that by means of ceaseless attacks the enemy intends to prevent our troops from settling down south of the Arno, and if possible to reach the river crossings first and to block our troops at the crossings.

At 1800 hours Marshal Kesselring consented to a limited withdrawal. On the same day Tenth Army recorded raids in force and air-observed artillery-ranging at the front of 76 Pz Corps, the loss of M. Cucco and Rocca d'Aria in the Montone sector and continued heavy sea-saw engagements in the Adriatic sector. Orders were issued for the construction of a second line of defence to the rear of the Gothic Line.

9 and 10 Jul

51. Allied attacks on all pressure points. Due to the relentless drive of Fifth Army's spearheads at the coast and in the center, Fourteenth Army gave further ground. A map showing the reconnoitred course of the various intermediate defence and switch-positions from the Lilli Line⁵⁷ to the Green Line-Forefield position was prepared by the Army on 11 Jul (Photostat 981A10.(D180)), (G.M.D.S. - 62241/4, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4, Appx 1-17 Jul, Appt 699, 11 Jul 44). The approximate location of these various intermediate lines may be found on a reproduction on reduced scale of this map appearing as Appendix "K" to this report. On the front of Tenth Army there were no major developments on 9 and 10 Jul. Owing to the pressure of 10 Brit Corps in the Tiber valley, 44 Inf Div (west of the Tiber) lost ground and received permission for local withdrawals; on the Adriatic coast 2 Pol Corps obtained some slight gains.

11 Jul

52. On this day Fifth Army was consolidating its gains and making preparations for the next phase of the pursuit. Fourteenth Army remained in its positions; preparations were made, however, for withdrawal to the Lilli Line during night 12/13 Jul. In Tenth Army's area 10 British Corps gained ground in the Tiber valley and the inner wings of 44 Inf and 114 Jg Div withdrew to the line 2 kms south of M.S. Maria - south of Citta ai Castello - M. delle Gorgacce. The deterioration of the situation on the Russian front

⁵⁷From the coast about halfway between Torre di Calafuria and Quercianella - 2.5 km north Chianni - Castelfalci - 3 km north S. Gimignano - 2 km north Poggibonsi - 1 km south Castellina in Chianti - to inter-army boundary at Gaiole in Chianti.

made itself felt when orders were received during the day for the accelerated withdrawal and dispatch to Germany of Para Pz Div H.G.; 715 Inf Div received orders to relieve the departing formation.

12 and 13 Jul

53. In the area of Fourteenth Army 14 Pz Corps was under renewed pressure; 90 Pz Gren Div was forced back in the area of Laiatico, 3 Pz Gren Gren Div on its left lost ground, 26 Pz Div on the right succeeded in holding its positions. The center and right wing of the Army withdrew to the Lilli Line. On 13 Jul 90 Pz Gren Div was barely able to prevent a major breakthrough. In view of the inability of the neighbouring divisions to provide assistance at the critical points, O.B.SW consented in principle to a withdrawal to the Marlene Line. (See Appx "K"). There were no major developments in Tenth Army's area. Documents and telephone conversations dealt mainly with the relief of Para Pz Div H.G. by the numerically strong but qualitatively less valuable 715th Infantry Division. In an Operations Order of 11 Jul O.B.SW had pointed out the importance of preventing a breakthrough in the Tiber valley by standing firm in the defile south of Citta di Castello. (Photostat 981A10.(D181)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/9, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 10-13 Jul, Appx 1186, 11 Jul 44) When the Indian formations of 10 Brit Corps continued to forge ahead on 12 Jul Kesselring said: "I have little confidence in that (44 Inf) Division"; v. Vietinghoff replied: "It is and remains our worst

Division". On 13 Jul 44 Inf Div lost M.S. Maria and M. Civitolla. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/9, Tenth Army W.D. 7, Appx 10-13 Jul, tel cons 12 and 13 Jul 44)⁵⁸

14 Jul

54. Fourteenth Army: Pressure on 14 Pz Corps continued; the Corps was able to hold the Marlene Line but realized that the next day might bring the necessity of falling back to the Nora Line (see Appendix "K"). Tenth Army: No developments at the front of 76 Pz Corps; on the Adriatic coast 2 Pol Corps resumed the attack and made slight gains north of Stuffolo.

⁵⁸In the telephone conversations of 13 Jul the probable intentions of Eighth Army were repeatedly referred to by Vietinghoff and Kesselring. No doubt remembering the categorical statements of Heidrich, who predicted late in April 44 that Cassino would be the focal point of the next attack (Hist Sec Report No. 20 para 68), the Marshal said:

"I am always a bit sceptical of the appreciation of divisional commanders regarding future attacks in their own sectors; I have had bad experiences in this regard in the East and at Cassino."

After the surprise of the Liri valley, 1 Cdn Corps was never far from the mind of the German Commanders; and in a telephone conversation between v. Vietinghoff and Kesselring the following was said:

v.V: ... and then I have just received a report indicating that 2 Pol Corps is regrouping. This may mean several things. Either Eighth Army says: "The Poles are getting nowhere, we take them out and put in the Canadians." But he may also say to himself: "It seems to go well in the center, I will take the Canadians there and push ahead."

K: Which "center" do you mean?

v.V: The Tiber valley.

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/9, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 10 - 13 Jul, Appx 1179, tel cons v.V. and K. 0910 hours 13 Jul 44)

15 Jul

55. In the War Diary of Fourteenth Army the constant pressure of Fifth Army was reflected by the following remark:

In order to prevent the destruction of our formations before they reach the Heinrich (Arno) line and to straighten the front which has been lengthened by several penetrations, the Army, leaving behind strong rear guards, withdraws during night 15/16 Jul with 75 Inf Corps and western wing of 14 Pz Corps to the following line: 7417 (Torre d. Boccale) - 5023 (S.E. Fauglia) - 5055 (2 kms N.W. Capannoli - 5054 (S. of Palaia).

On Tenth Army's front 13 Brit Corps advanced south and south-west of Arezzo, forced a withdrawal along the inter-army boundary, captured M. Lignano (the feature commanding Arezzo) and would soon break through to the Arno valley. 76 Pz Corps received permission to withdraw behind the Arno.

15 Jul 1110 hours tel cons Wentzell - Beelitz

W: ... The situation is as follows: Firstly we have lost M. Lignano. From there the enemy has a view of Arezzo. Therefore we can not remain there much longer. The whole artillery of the enemy is ranging on M. Lignano. A counter attack would be very costly and is out of the question. ...

B: The Field Marshall agrees with me, with M. Lignano in the hands of the enemy we must withdraw.

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/10, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 14-18 Jul, Appx 1226, tel cons 15 Jul)

Minor engagements took place on the Adriatic front.

16 Jul

56. Fighting extended to the whole front of Fourteenth Army and all signs pointed to a big battle on the next day. In a telephone conversation just before midnight C. of S. Fourteenth Army informed C. of S. Army Group that the next day would bring a severe crisis and that no reserves were available with which to prevent a breakthrough that might lend to a crossing of the Arno by Allied troops ahead of the German troops. C. of S. Army Group "C" replied:

"In view of the necessity of gaining time for the preparation of the Green Line every position must be held to the last."

In the War Diary of Tenth Army the day's events were described in the following entry:

In the sector of 76 Pz Corps the enemy followed our own withdrawals already in the morning with infantry and armoured forces. On the whole he was repulsed by our rear elements. Based on the rapid pursuit by

strong forces on a broad front in the Arezzo sector it may be assumed that our withdrawal occurred immediately prior to the launching of a strong enemy attack. Large enemy concentrations near the confluence of the river Aggta and the Tiber point to renewed large scale attacks on both banks of the Tiber. The evacuation of Ancona was again discussed with O.B.SW over the telephone. As the opponent has created large supply bases in Taranto, Brindisi and Foggta, it is improbable that he needs Ancona for a landing in the Rimini area. On the other hand the evacuation of Ancona would bring about a considerable shortening of the front and so increase the resistance value of the greatly overextended Army-front.⁵⁹

17 Jul

57. This was the climactic day of the drive to the Arno; 14 Pz Corps was thrown back and during night 17/18 Jul withdrew to the Heinrich Line across the river. 75 Inf Corps withdrew to the Hildegard position north of Livorno, leaving some rear elements south of the city. The eastern wing of 1 Para Corps remained in the Marlene Line; contact with Tenth Army at M. Matone.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Hitler's Order to hold Ancona had rankled in the minds of the experienced field commanders. Wentzell formulated this most clearly when he said to Roettiger:

...This is another one of those prestige places. To hold Ancona is an imbecility. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/10, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 14 - 18 Jul, Appx 1252, tel cons 16 Jul 44)

⁶⁰While not denying facts, some German War Diarists had become very adept at evading the description of important setbacks by the use of cryptic and euphemistic phraseology. The student in search of facts not available in Allied sources is well advised to scan the daily situation

In the area of Tenth Army the spearheads of Eighth Army advanced on all pressure points; 13 Brit Corps advanced from Arezzo in a northwesterly direction, 10 Brit Corps captured M. Cedrone, 2 Pol Corps cracked the lines of 278 Inf Div in a major assault; a continuation of the advance at Agugliano would (and did) force a German withdrawal from Ancona. The events surrounding the fall of Ancona were described in some detail in the War Diary of 51 Mtn Corps; a translation of the pages in question appears as Appendix "F" to this report (981A10 (D183)). (G.M.D.S. - 62296/1, 51 Mtn Corps, W.D. 3, 1 Jul - 31 Aug, 17 - 19 Jul 44). The dispositions of 51 Mtn Corps on 17 and 22 Jul were shown on a map which is being retained in photostatic form (981A10(D184)). (G.M.D.S. - 62296/2, 51 Mtn Corps, W.D. 2, vol "B" of Appx, sit map 17 and 22 Jul 44). Appendix "F" is best read in conjunction with Tenth Army's situation maps for 17 and 18 Jul (Photostats: 981A10(D185) and (D186)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/17, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, sit maps 9 - 21 Jul, sit maps 17 and 18 Jul 44)

FIGHTING IN THE FLORENCE AREA AND EVACUATION

OF FLORENCE (18 Jul - 10 Aug)

58. Spearheads of the two Allied Armies had now reached the south bank of the Arno; 14 Pz Corps was in the Heinrich Line across the river north of

maps; in the War Diary a disastrous retreat may be glossed over by the citation of commendable resistance in better positions; once lost, large cities become mere map references. - Master maps and daily situation traces of Fourteenth Army from 1 Jul - 30 Sep 44 appear in: G.M.D.S. - 62241/3, Fourteenth Armys, sit maps. Photostats of the master map 6 - 26 Jul as well as of the situation traces for 16, 17 and 18 Jul 44 are being retained by Hist Sec (G.S.) (981A10(D182a, b, c, d)).

Pontederra; 76 Pz Corps in the area north and northwest Arezzo. But it would take another three weeks of bitter fighting to drive the last German elements from their positions south of the Arno.

18 Jul

59. Apart from an American attempt to widen the breakthrough at the joint between 90 Pz Gren and 3 Pz Gren Divs the day was uneventful on the front of Fourteenth Army. During the night 17/18 Jul Headquarters Fourteenth Army were moved from Monsummano (S.W. Pistoia) to Abetone (40 km N.W. Pistoia), Headquarters Tenth Army were moved from Saltino (near Vallombrosa) to Pizzocalvo (12 km E. Bologna). 76 Pz Corps was able to prevent the opponent from reaching the road Arezzo - Montevarchi, but on the Adriatic coast Ancona had to be evacuated in order to prevent the encirclement of 278 Inf Div. - On the occasion of the morning telephone call Kesselring had told v. Vietinghoff that 1 Para Div was about to receive 3,000 replacements. This information and the somewhat alarming reports from the Adriatic sector induced v. Vietinghoff to propose the transfer of 1 Para Div to the coast:

1835 hours 18 Jul v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

v. V.: On the coast there are either completely new tanks, if not a different formation altogether. Assaults have been carried out with unusual vigour. ... Consideration is being given to the question whether it would be possible

to withdraw 1 Para Div from Herr (76 Pz Corps) and to move it over to the coast if necessary. ...

K.: I am not fully in the picture but I have just been speaking with Beelitz about the possibility of other troops having been committed there.

v. V.: It might be the Canadians.

K.: As an emergency measure I suggest that you move down 1028 Pz Gren Regt from the area of Corps Witthoeft.^{61 62}

(G.M.D.S. - 55291/10, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 14 - 18 Jul, Appx 1291, tel coms 18 Jul 44)

⁶¹The proximity of an uncommitted enemy corps would obviously be a matter of paramount concern to any Army commander. In this particular case the Corps in question was 1 Cdn Corps. In accordance with the purpose of the present report such information, while not slanted, is stressed.

⁶²During the morning call on 10 Jul Kesselring told v. Vietinghoff that he would be at Hitler's Headquarters on 19 Jul. Kesselring saw the Fuehrer and returned at 1800 hours 19 Jul (ibid; 19 Jul). It may have been on this occasion that the German High Command was given the impression that Canadian troops were in the coastal area. This was not the case, but even Schramm, (op cit, p.82), in dealing with the events of the last days of July stated:

... On the Adriatic where the enemy had put Canadian and Polish troops in line, our troops withdrew step by step as the enemy, after short pauses, launched consecutive attacks. ...

60. According to "Fifth Army History" (op cit, p. 84) Livorno was taken in the early hours of 19 Jul against light resistance ("There was little fighting in the city"). According to the War Diary of Fourteenth Army, 75 Inf Corps had received orders to hold Livorno until the evening of 19 Jul. Based on the reports of the Corps, Fourteenth Army recorded the following:

75 Inf Corps ... and it came to heavy street fighting in which our troops, while forced to leave the city, succeeded in battling their way through to the North.

On the right wing of Tenth Army 715 Inf Div lost the Monte Maione in bitter fighting. In the sector of 278 Inf Div massed tanks passed the Esino river at Chiaravalle. Despite the fact that the German field commanders were pleased to see 51 Mtn Corps move to shorter lines, the tactics employed by 2 Pol Corps in their successful enterprise became the subject of prolonged discussions. In this connection the record of Tenth Army's telephone conversations on 19 Jul is being retained in photostatic form. (981A10.(D187)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/11, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 19-22 Jul Appx 1309, 19 Jul 44). Excerpts from the conversations are being quoted below:

1010 hours 19 Jul Wentzell - Roettiger

W: ... I am worried by the new tank tactics of the opponent. If he continues to make himself strong on a narrow front - with 200 tanks in the lead - the tanks accompanied by planes - and the infantry following in the rear - he will obtain further

successes. When troops are being overrun by 200 tanks they can not wait for the enemy infantry. There is a difference between advancing with a few tanks and with such masses.

R: Did they all come at the same time?

W: More or less. This is a new problem. We must look deeper into this; it is of importance for the Green Line.

R: Very much so.

...

W: This is an entirely new problem. Previously he (Hoppe, Cmdr 278 Inf Div) has done very well against the entire Polish Corps; now, after all the casualties the enemy has suffered he succeeds in breaking through.

R: This is not an entirely new procedure.

W: Yes, it is an absolute novum. Far ahead the tanks are advancing with air and artillery support.

R: And the infantry follows in their wake. ... But if such armoured groups are discovered in their assembly positions they can be destroyed by the artillery.

W: Yes, if recognized in time. ... The placing of anti-tank guns in the Green Line must be speeded up by all possible means. ... All divisions in reasonably tank-proof country must give up their anti-tank weapons.

...

R: Where infantry is in danger of being overrun by massed tanks, a second strong defence line must be created so that the tanks can be intercepted between the two lines.

1100 hours Wentzell - Roettiger

W: It is just as I expected, on the coast the enemy is advancing with massed tanks. At Chiaravalle 30 tanks have already crossed the river, the others can be seen following.

...

W: If it goes on in this manner the danger becomes great. The Army Commander has therefore come back to his intention of moving 1 Para Div to the coast; to the Green Line for the time being. ...

R: But to take out 1 Para Div where Para Pz Div H.G. has just left; there will be pressure in that sector too.

W: That may be so, but it is not so dangerous there as we are moving into mountain country. But I see pronounced danger on the coast, and (Field Marshal) Alexander sees the soft spot and says to himself "there it goes well" and acts accordingly.

R: True enough.

1500 hours Wentzell - Roettiger

R: What decision have you made?

W: The Army Commander wants to move 1 Para Div.

R: If you believe it to be necessary and justifiable the Marshal agrees to it.

2230 hours v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

v.V: On the whole we succeeded (in stopping the breakthrough).

K: I was really frightened. ...

K: Today I spoke to the Fuehrer about your Army. He said "Yes, they are my best divisions". ... (ibid)

20 Jul

61. At the German inter-army boundary Monte S. Michele was lost during the day; preparations were under way for the dispatch of 90 Pz Gren Div to the area north of Florence as a mobile Army Group reserve; Kesselring gave orders to prepare the Paula Line for prolonged defence (see Appendix "K"). The road from Poggibonsi to Florence was described as the probable main axis of the next Allied advance, orders were given for suitable preparations. In the area of Tenth Army the day's main events occurred on the extreme right and left wings. The loss of Monte S. Michele to 6 South African Armd Div was ascribed in part to an attack from the rear by strong guerilla forces on 2 and 1 Bns 735 Inf Regt (715 Inf Div). It was the first occurrence of this nature in the Italian theatre of war. On the Adriatic coast Morro d'Alba was captured by Allied forces. 278 Inf Div was bolstered by the arrival in the sector of 914 Aslt Gun Bde, the 17 cm battery of 557 G.H.Q. Arty Bn and 6 guns from 525 G.H.Q. Hy A-tk Bn.

21 Jul

62. The sole development of any consequence occurred in the Citta di Castello sector, where renewed pressure from 10 Brit Corps caused Tenth Army to issue orders for a limited withdrawal on the inner wings of the two Corps during the night 21/22 Jul. An agent claimed to have seen the insignia of 1 Cdn Inf Div and 1 Cdn Corps in the area of 2 Pol Corps. (G.M.D.S. - 55292/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Int rep Jul 44). The day's events

were overshadowed by the attempted assassination of Hitler on the previous day.⁶³

22 Jul

63. Intensive Allied preparations were observed at the front of 1 Para Corps, particularly on the east side of the road Poggibonsi - Florence. In the area of Tenth Army there were minor engagements at the usual pressure points. In the morning O.B.SW and the Army Commander discussed the situation on the Adriatic coast:

0915 hours 22 Jul

⁶³Kesselring and his Army Commanders were apparently unaware of the plot. Irrespective of any different opinions which they might have held, at that moment they had no choice but to dispatch professions of undying loyalty to the Fuehrer. Although the plotters had come from their own class and no doubt had suffered much anguish before deciding to place love of country above honour and safety; and although no German general could fail to realize that Hitler was leading the country to its doom, Kesselring and his Army commanders chose to remain loyal to their oath of allegiance. In this connection photostatic copies of the following documents are being retained:

- 981A10.(D188a) Tenth Army, 21 Jul 44, Message to Hitler (G.M.D.S. - 55291/11, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 19-22 Jul, Appx 1338, 21 Jul 44)
- 981A10.(D188b) O.B.SW 21 Jul 44, Text of Message to Hitler (ibid, Appx 1339)
- 981A10.(D188c) C. of S. Tenth Army, Address before the officers of Army Headquarters, 21 Jul 44 (ibid, Appx 1341)
- 981A10.(D188e) Fourteenth Army, 21 Jul 44, Message to Hitler (G.M.D.S. - 62241/5, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4, Appx 17 Jul - 30 Aug, Appx 741, 21 Jul 44)

K: Did the enemy bring up additional forces?

v.V: We do not believe that fresh infantry forces have arrived but we have a report stating that the Canadians are behind the Poles. Polish prisoners and deserters have indeed always claimed that 2 Pol Corps would be relieved after the capture of Ancona, but as far as the infantry is concerned nothing of that nature has taken place up to now. Regarding armoured forces, a British armoured brigade has been observed and the Polish Armoured Brigade has received replacements. That makes two complete armoured brigades up there.

K: Possibly the Canadian Armoured Division is there.

v.V: We hear constantly about the Canadians being in the rear area, but it is well possible that they are being saved for the attack on the Green Line. Farther up the coast the terrain is more favourable for their attack. For this reason it has been my constant wish to move 1 Para Div in order to have something decent there.

K: By 15 Aug Heidrich will have received 3,000 replacements.

v.V: That is alright, but Heidrich trains replacements for six weeks before commitment at the front.

K: Yes.

(Photostat 981A10(D189)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/11, Tenth Army, W.D. 72, Appx 19-22 Jul, Appx 1371, tel cons 22 Jul 44)

To establish the picture of Allied dispositions in the reasonably nearby rear-areas was primarily the task of the Corps Intelligence Officer of 51 Mtn Corps.⁶⁴ ⁶⁵ A detailed appraisal of the enemy situation, based on the findings of this officer, was submitted by the Corps to Tenth Army on 22 Jul. A photostatic copy and a translation of this report appear as Appendix "G" to this report (981A10. (D199)). (G.M.D.S. - 62297, 51 Mtn Corps, Int Reps 1 Jul - 31 Aug, Ic Nr. 137/44, 22 Jul 44). The situation was appreciated in the sense that strong Canadian and British forces were being assembled in the Adriatic sector for a major breakthrough. Apart from the facts that the Army commander was ever predicting major action on the coast, and that the Intelligence officer according to all his training was bound to reach the same conclusion, there is no possible doubt that the report in question reflected the complete success of the deceptive scheme "OTTRINGTON" which had been carefully planned and executed by Eighth Army to create this very impression.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Int Offr 51 Mtn Corps: Dietrich v. Menges

⁶⁵v. Vietinghoff to Kesselring on 2 Aug: "51 Mtn Corps has an excellent Ic". (G.M.D.S. - 61437/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Appx 1-4 Aug, Appx 37, tel cons 2 Aug 44)

⁶⁶Hist Sec, C.M.H.Q., Report No. 187, Operation "OLIVE" to the Crossing of the Marecchia River, para 8

In the evening of the same day O.B.SW appeared at the headquarters of Tenth Army and said that the Allies might drop the plan for a landing in southern France and commit all available forces in Italy. The coasts would be the focal points but a breakthrough to the North at Florence was always a possibility. The forces on the Adriatic would have to be deployed in depths 1 Para Div and one projector battalion to go behind the left wing.

23 Jul

64. Kesselring now called at the headquarters of Fourteenth Army and repeated his remarks regarding the probable cancellation of the landing in southern France in favour of an all-out attack on Army Group "C". The views and directives of the Marshal on that occasion were recorded by Fourteenth Army in a memorandum (Photostat 981A10.(D190)). (G.M.D.S. - 62241/5, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4, Appx 17 Jul - 30 Aug, Appx 749, 23 Jul 44). Pressure on Fourteenth Army increased during the day, particularly in the sector of 1 Para Corps, where 13 Brit Corps had relieved the C.E.F. and was making the initial moves of the advance to Florence. The Germans knew well that 13 Brit Corps with 8 Ind, 2 N.Z. and 6 South African Armd Div had extended its operations further to the West; regarding the support of 8 Ind Div by Canadian armoured elements, there was however only one entry made in the records:

25 Jul ... Canadian armoured troops (?) allegedly seen with
6/13 Frontier Force Rifles.

(G.M.D.S. - 62242/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 4, Int reps 25 Jul 44)

On 23 Jul an Italian deserter had claimed that 5 Cdn Armd Div was moving north from the Siena region (ibid, 23 Jul). This piece of information was of interest to the Chiefs of Staff of both Armies; the matter was discussed on the telephone at 1145 hours 23 Jul. Wentzell stated the reasons which had led to the assumption that the Canadians would appear at the coast, and closed with the words:

... Clarification of this matter is of decisive importance to Tenth Army as 1 Para Div is being moved to the coast on the assumption that the Canadians will be committed there.

(Photostat 981A10.(D195)). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/12, Tenth Army, W.D. 4 Appx 23-27 Jul, Appx 1393, tel cons 24 Jul 44)

65. On the left wing of Fourteenth Army 1 Para Corps was under pressure and withdrew to the Olga Line. On both wings of Tenth Army Allied preparations were observed. The War Diary of Tenth Army carried the following entry:

... The fact that Eighth Army is continually taking over sectors lying further to the West, the fact that American Fifth Army now commands only one Corps in the front line, and the concentration of strong enemy formations at Naples and Salerno lead to the conclusion that the enemy is making preparations for a new landing operation. It may be directed against southern France or the Ligurian coast or the plains of the Po. In the meantime the resistance potential of the Rimini - Ravenna area has been increased materially; the infantry forces will be strengthened

greatly by the imminent arrival of 98 Inf Div; in exchange 94 Inf Div will be moved to the Trieste area.

25 Jul

66. From the coast to 5 km west of Empoli Fourteenth Army was now in the Heinrich Line, from there to the inter-army boundary in the Olga Line. Pressure on 1 Para Corps continued, there were penetrations at the center of 356 Inf Div (M. Collegalla and Pgio di Rugliano). During night 25/26 Jul the eastern wing of 14 Pz Corps withdrew to the line: Sovigliana (N.W. Empoli) - Rmpoli - Villa l'Allore - la Martignana. In the area of Tenth Army local withdrawals in the sectors of 114 Jg and 305 Inf Divs. - On 25 Jul the sixth edition of the map: Italy, 1 : 100,000 (with new reference points) was taken into use by all higher headquarters of Army Group 'C'. A good specimen of this edition appears in the records of 51 Mtn Corps. It shows the whole area of Tenth Army and the main defence lines of 51 Mtn Corps on 26 Jul, 29 Jul, 5 Aug, 8 Aug, 12 Aug 44. (Photostat 981A10.(D191) (G.M.D.S. - 62296/2, 51 Mtn Corps, W.D. 3, vol "B" of Appx, sit maps)

26 Jul

67. During the day 1 Para Corps succeeded in maintaining its positions but during night 26/27 the front was taken back to the Paula Line (running S.E. from Montelupo (on the Arno) along the north bank of the river T. Pesa to Cerbaia, thence Pisignano - Faltignano - Falciani - la Presura - Strada in Chianti - Mugnana - Cintoja and to the inter-army boundary at C. Pian d'Albero

(ITALY 1:100,00, Sheets 106,113), (see Photostat 981A10.(D192), Master Map for sit traces Fourteenth Army, 27 Jul - 26 Aug 44). (G.M.D.S. - 6224/3, Fourteenth Army, sit maps 1 Jul - 30 Sep 44). 90 Pz Gren Div received orders to move to the area on both sides of the road Parma-Modena; the first regimental group to move on 27 Jul. Under pressure itself, but mainly in order to conform with the movement of 1 Para Corps, the right wing of Tenth Army received orders for a further limited withdrawal.

27 Jul

68. Fourteenth Army: The last rearguards of 75 Inf Corps were driven from their positions south of the Arno. In the sector of 14 Pz Corps the withdrawal to the Paula Line was not followed immediately; on the front of 1 Para Corps Allied troops were consolidating and reconnoitring. Contrary to earlier plans the remnants of 19 G.A.F. Div now were moved north for reorganization. The Corps Commanders were told that the Green Line - forefield position would have to be defended, this to be followed by delaying resistance on the way back to the Green Line and then definitive defence of the Green Line. Tenth Army: Following the withdrawals of the night 26/27 Jul the day was uneventful. On the telephone the Chiefs of Staff of the two Armies discussed Allied intentions. The transfer of Allied air bases from Foggia to the West led both to believe that an attack on southern France would be the next Allied move; a major attack on the Adriatic or at Genoa would not require such shifting of air bases (G.M.D.S. - 55291/12, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 23-27 Jul, Appx 1487, tel cons 27 Jul 44). On 25 Jul 87 Inf Corps was named "Armeeabteilung Ligurien"; with the assumption of command by

Marshal Graziani the designation would change to "Armee Ligurien". Army Liguria would comprise the following formations:

- 3 Ital Inf Div ("San Marco")
- 4 Ital Mtn Div ("Monte Rosa")
- 34 German Inf and 42 German Jg Div

Marshal Graziani was to be subordinated to O.B.SW but fully responsible for his Army. Army Headquarters staff would be supplied by 87 (German) Inf Corps (ibid, Appx 1490.)⁶⁷

28 Jul

69. Pressure on 1 Para Corps was growing, particularly in the Cerbaia sector of 29 Pz Gren Div. The Army Commander told O.B.SW the positions could not be held without fresh reserves. In the area of Tenth Army the heights commanding; the San Sepolcro basin were lost and withdrawals to conform were ordered. 1028 Pz Gren Regt received orders to join 715 Inf Div; 15 Pz Gren Div was told that it would be committed on the coast in the case of an Allied landing; the Chiefs of Staff of Tenth Army and Army Group 'C' discussed the possible advantages of interchanging the two Corps Commanders and their staffs for the operations in and after the "Green Line - forefield position" ("Feurstein more experienced in mountain warfare, Herr in flat country, Herr

⁶⁷This implied the dissolution of Armeeabteilung v. Zangen. General v. Zangen, who had an excellent record as a Corps Commander on the Eastern front, reappeared in August 1944 as the commander of Fifteenth Army in France.

would do well on the coast"). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/13, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 28-31 Jul, Appx 1507, tel cons 28 Jul). On the "Enemy Situation Map" prepared by 51 Mtn Corps on 28 Jul, 1 Cdn Inf Div was still being shown with the Italian Liberation Corps ("according to reliable sources"), and 1 Cdn Corps in the Adriatic rear area ("according to agents") (Photostat 981A10.(D200)). (G.M.D.S. - 62297, 51 Mtn Corps, Int reps 1 Jul, 31 Aug, 28 Jul 44)

29 Jul

70. Fourteenth Army: Continued pressure and hard fighting west of Cerbaia. Tenth Army: Uneventful. Telephone conversations dealt mainly with Allied dispositions: the center of gravity was shifting farther to the West, over two-thirds of 13 Brit Corps were now operating on the left wing of Fourteenth Army; Tenth Army would have to extend its front to the West;⁶⁸ but on the other hand 1 Cdn Corps was said to be in the coastal area near the joint of 278 Inf and 71 Inf Divs; the attack on Florence would be forthcoming soon, and although primarily a holding action it would have the character of a prestige undertaking. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/13 Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 28-31 Jul, Appx 1526, tel cons 29 Jul 44)

30 Jul

⁶⁸New inter-army boundary as of 0400 hours 31 Jul: 13253 - 14546 - 15085 - thence as before. (For details see: Photostat 981A10.(D193). (G.M.D.S. - 55291/13, Tenth Army, Appx 28-31 Jul, Appx 1527, 1528, 1529, 29 Jul 44). (For map references see Photostat 981A10.(D191) (para 66 above).

71. Minor engagements on the front of both Armies. The Corps of Tenth Army received permission for local withdrawals during night 30/31 Jul.

Marshal Kesselring enquired about the presence of the Canadian Corps in the Adriatic sector. Tenth Army was unable to confirm its presence; agents were said to be engaged in the solution of the problem. (G.M.D.S. - 55291/13, Tenth Army, W.D. 7 Appx 28-31 Jul, Appx 1549, tel cons 30 Jul 44)

31 Jul

72. The most significant development was the renewal of determined pressure on 29 Pz Gren Div and the right wing of 4 Para Div. In the evening the left wing of 14 Pz Corps and all formations of 1 Para Corps received orders to fall back during the night to an intermediate defence line forward of the "Bridgehead position Florence". The extreme right wing of Tenth Army withdrew to conform. - The bulk of 1 Para Div was now assembled near Cattolica on the Adriatic coast. Tenth Army detailed the measures to be taken in the event of an Allied landing in the area of Genoa (case GUSTAV) or an Allied seaborne hook on the Rimini - Ravenna area (case RICHARD). (Photostat 981A10.(D194) (G.M.D.S, 55291/13, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, Appx 20-31 Jul, Appx 1574 and 1575, 31 Jul 44)

73. After the attempt on Hitler's life the telephone conversation had become very guarded; Wentzell was the first one to revert to the expression of "candid opinions":

1115 hours 31 Jul Wentzell - Beelitz

W: I am of the opinion that the whole strategical situation in Italy is not being handled properly.

...

B: Too pessimistic?

W: No. Much too optimistic in view of the situation in the East.

B: I told Roettiger yesterday that no officer not in the picture regarding the conditions in the East can judge the situation here.

W: I am of the opinion - and I have said the same thing to Roettiger over three weeks ago - that we should be in the shortest possible line from the republic to the coast.⁶⁹

...

⁶⁹The words "republic" and "coast" presumably meant "Switzerland" and "Adriatic coast". When the same two officers discussed the situation on 6 Aug, Wentzell said:

A withdrawal to the shortest position between Switzerland and the Adriatic and should have been carried out four weeks ago. It is foolish to tie up down here large forces which ought to be employed where there are no mountain chains between the enemy and Germany.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Appx 5 - 8 Aug, Appx 127, tel cons 6 Aug 44)

It is always the same old story. Strategically speaking we are badly disposed. From three to four divisions could be saved by an order to shorten the front.

B: Preparations are being made.

W: This is all much too late and should have been done long ago, then we would now have 3 - 4 divisions up there. But there is no strategical forethought on our side and we always muck around with battalions as long as possible.

B: One cannot talk about this, we must ...

W: There is no insight. All is lunacy. With one wing we are up in Finland with the other one down at Rhodes; in the center the enemy is in Germany. ... It is incomprehensible. There is an old farmers' saying that in an emergency everybody rallies around the flag. We do not even think of this. The enemy is in Germany, the war is coming to an end, but we are still up at Murmansk. Instead of rallying around the flag the wings are extended who knows how far. I cannot understand it any more.

(ibid, Appx 1570, tel cons 31 Jul 44)

74. At the turn of the month O.B.SW still believed the next Allied move would be a sea and airborne operation against Liguria. But a landing in

France was just as possible; at least 20 divisions were available for the purpose.⁷⁰ Calculations of Allied capabilities were based on the information shown on the "Enemy Situation Map" issued on 2 Aug. Photostatic copies of this document, as well as of the succeeding editions of 11 and 20 Aug appear as Appendix "H" to this report (981A10.(D196a,b,c)).⁷¹ (G.M.D.S. - 61439/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Int reps Aug 44). From the Canadian point of view it is interesting to note that the map for 2 Aug was the last one to show a Canadian formation in the Adriatic sector prior to the identifications resulting from the actual commitment of the Corps. On 2 Aug 1 Cdn Inf Div was still shown with the Italian Liberation Corps. At the end of July Lt-Col Pretzell was promoted from Ops Offr 71 Inf Div to Ops Offr Tenth Army. Pretzell is the officer who later prepared the study: "Material for the Presentation of the Battle of Rimini" (Original Text and Translation: H.S. 981.011 (D3)).

1 Aug

75. On the front of the Army Group the day was uneventful. A summary of Tenth Army's estimate of the situation was recorded in the form of an introduction to War Diary No. 8 (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, 1 Aug - 30 Sep 44):

At the moment the enemy is inactive on Tenth Army's front. The focal point of the fighting lies in the Florence area where the British,

⁷⁰For complete analysis see: Schramm, op cit, Translation, page 52.

⁷¹The "Enemy Situation Maps" of Fourteenth Army carried identical information.

following a visit of the King at the front, are endeavouring to obtain a prestige success by capturing Florence. In accordance with the withdrawal movement of Fourteenth Army the right wing of Tenth Army must slowly be taken back to a new line.

Deliberately weakening the Army's right wing in favour of the Adriatic sector, the unseasoned 715th Infantry Division was committed on the extreme right. 1 Para Div, relieved by 715 Inf Div, was deployed behind 278 Inf Div in and forward of the Green Line.

Its task is to back up the latter division which has suffered severe casualties in the Ancona battles and to prevent an early penetration of the Green Line at all costs. Enemy reconnaissance and artillery activity, as well as ship movements in the port of Ancona and the identification of 1 Cdn Corps (sic) on the left wing of 51 Mtn Corps lead to the expectation of an early attack.

In view of the increased tonnage and the arrival of warships in the Mediterranean an enemy landing is furthermore being expected either on the west coast of Italy or in southern France. In order to prepare for all contingencies, Tenth Army is readying, suitable coastal defences, particularly in the area Rimini - Ravenna, with all available means and with the utmost dispatch. 94 Inf Div is en route to the area of Trieste while 98 Inf Div is on the way to the danger zone. In addition 15 Pz Gren Div and a Blocking Group from 162 (Turc) Inf Div are being held in

readiness as a mobile reserve for commitment on shortest notice. At the present time the Army has the following formations under its command:

1 Para Div	Army Reserve
76 Pz Corps with	715 Inf Div
	334 Inf Div
	15 Pz Gren Div
	305 Inf Div
51 Mtn Corps with	44 Inf Div
	114 Jg Div
	5 Mtn Div
	71 Inf Div
	278 Inf Div
Corps Witthoef with ⁷²	162 (Turc) Inf Div
	94 Inf Div
	Coastal Defence
	Area Venice.

2 Aug

76. With the tactical situation remaining unchanged in all other sectors, 1 Para Corps and the left wing of 14 Pz Corps came under severe pressure.

⁷²Corps Witthoef had been under command of the Army since 17 Jul 44 (G.M.D.S. - 55291/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 7, 16 and 17 Jul 44)

After several telephonic requests for permission to withdraw, O.B.SW finally concurred at 1355 hours, and orders were given to fall back during the night 2/3 Aug on the "Bridgehead position Florence". Rearguards were to remain in the present positions. The right wing of 76 Pz Corps (astride the Arno, a few miles south of Pontassieve) was bent back accordingly.

3 Aug

77. There was no longer any doubt that 1 Para Corps would have to fall back behind the Arno, and at 1020 hours O.B.SW gave his consent for withdrawal of the mass during the night 3/4 Aug to the Heinrich-Berg (Mountain) Line at the northern outskirts of Florence. In view of the imminent evacuation of Florence, Tenth Army now selected defence lines further north (Photostat D 981A10. (D196)). (G.M.D.S. - 61437/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Appx 1-4 Aug, Appx 58, 3 Aug 44). A warning order for the exchange of the two Corps Headquarters was issued on the same evening (Photostat 981A10.(D197)); (ibid, Appx 59):

To take full advantage of 51 Mtn Corps' experience in mountain warfare and 76 Pz Corps' experience in operations with mobile formations

51 Mtn Corps to command:

715 Inf Div,

334 Inf Div,

305 Inf Div,

44 Inf Div,

114 Jg Div;

76 Pz Corps to command:

5 Mtn Div,

71 Inf Div,

278 Inf Div,

1 Para Div,

and upon reaching the Green Line in addition:

162 (Turc) Inf Div and

98 Inf Div.

15 Pz Gren Div to go into Army Reserve east of Bologna.

The exchange of headquarters became effective at 1800 hours 8 Aug 44.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, 8 Aug 44)

4 Aug

78. Three rear-guard battalions of 1 Para Corps, with orders to remain south of the Arno on 4 Aug, were forced to cross the river early in the morning. The mass of 1 Para Corps was slowly moving to the Heinrich - Berg position. Rearguards were stationed along the north bank of the Arno. East of the German inter-army boundary, in the area of Tenth Army the left wing of

4 Inf Div captured Monte Finetto in the morning and Monte Altuccio in the evening. The failure there of some companies of 576 Inf Regt (completely reorganized with remnants of 94 Inf Div) created an embarrassing situation for 305 Inf Div and caused some concern in higher quarters lest a deep penetration at this point force a premature withdrawal beyond the projected Green Line forefield position. The responsible company commanders were warned for court of inquiry (G.M.D.S.) - 61437/2, Tenth Army, W.D., 8, Appx 1-4 Aug, Appx 83, tel cons 4 Aug 44). During the day Kesselring inquired about Allied dispositions on the Adriatic coast; v. Vietinghoff was unable to supply the desired information and said the divisions were trying to take prisoners for identification (ibid).

5 - 10 Aug

79. During these days there were no engagements of significance in the area of Fourteenth Army. Extensive reconnaissance activity failed to throw light on Allied changes in dispositions. On 8 Aug 90 Pz Gren Div was placed under command of the Ligurian Army. Most of the rear elements of 1 Para Corps seem to have left the city of Florence during the night 10/11 Aug.⁷³ In the area of Tenth Army hurriedly brought up, units had succeeded in stabilizing the situation at the Monte Altuccio and the withdrawal of the Army continued to

⁷³The opaque style of Fourteenth Army's War Diary makes it often difficult to evade misconstructions. Fighting at the time had died down and the withdrawal of 1 Para Corps to the Heinrich-Mountain Line had lost some of its urgency; the ever recurring references however to the withdrawal of the Corps to that line seem to be references to the movements of the "last", "the very last" and the "absolutely last" rear elements.

proceed according to plan. At the headquarters of Allied Fifteenth Army Group it had been decided in the meantime to breach the Gothic Line in the Adriatic sector. Deceptive measures were now operating in reverse. As a consequence of this development a new and radically different picture of the enemy situation on the Adriatic coast was submitted to Tenth Army by 51 Mtn Corps on 7 Aug, a few hours before the transfer of this headquarters to the right wing of the Army. A photostatic copy and a translation of the document appear as Appendix "J" to this report (981A10, (D201)). (G.M.D.S. - 62297, 51 Mtn Corps, Int Repts 1 Jul - 31 Aug, 7 Aug 44). C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps now stated flatly that neither the previously reported enemy concentrations nor the presence of Canadian formations in the front had been confirmed and that there were no indications of an imminent large scale attack. On Tenth Army's "Enemy Situation Map" for 11 Aug (see Appx "H"), 1 Cdn Corps was shown in the reserve of Eighth Army. During the middle of August, when the Germans had finally become convinced that the Adriatic coast was very lightly held, Eighth Army was massing its divisions there for a surprise thrust through the Gothic Line.

80. This report has been prepared by Capt L.G. Steiger, Historical Section (G.S.).

(C.P. Stacey) Colonel,
Director,
Historical Section (G.S.)

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APPENDIX "A"

to H.S. Report No. 24

ARMY GROUP "C"

CASUALTY STATISTICS

981A10. (D143)

Ref: para 15

German Army

Selected Progressive Casualty Totals from 22 Jun 41

To:	10 Army	14 Army	Armeegruppe v. Zangen	Directly under command Army Group "C"	Army Group "C"	All Fronts (Army)
20 Apr 44	208,420	28,880	737	547	238,584	4,242,806
30 Apr 44	209,024	30,103	816	597	240,540	4,294,030
10 May 44	209,626	31,339	888	662	242,515	4,318,600
20 May 44	212,085	32,605	966	701	246,357	4,386,942
31 May 44	215,481	38,351	1,028	772	255,632	4,466,504
10 Jun 44	218,298	38,351	1,118	823	258,590	4,496,077
20 Jun 44	221,782	38,351	1,277	866	262,276	4,528,641
30 Jun 44	224,639	38,351	1,492	955	265,437	4,554,219
10 Jul 44	226,042	54,974	1,555	1,038	283,609	4,604,067
20 Jul 44	229,396	65,596	1,568	1,237	297,797	4,715,941
31 Jul 4	233,059	81,090	1,612	1,384	317,145	4,816,766
10 Aug 44	234,893	84,112	1,658	1,510	322,173	4,951,265
20 Aug 44	236,397	86,434	Army Group Liguria	1,707	324,538	5,029,278
10 Sep 44(1)	242,579	88,459	4,384	1,894	337,316	5,305,722
20 Sep 44	248,595	90,225	5,867	2,003	346,690	5,381,133
30 Sep 44	255,194	93,610	6,946	2,179	357,929	5,632,697
10 Oct 44	259,104	98,091	7,307	2,313	366,815	5,707,778
31 Oct 44(2)	268,651	104,588	8,274	3,046	384,559	5,909,460
10 Nov 44	272,642	104,697	8,370	3,140	388,849	6,242,266
20 Nov 44	274,236	105,014	8,370	3,237	390,857	6,297,716
30 Nov 44	277,461	114,025(3)	-	3,346	394,832	6,420,700
10 Dec 44	280,029	114,376	-	3,395	397,800	6,474,250
20 Dec 44	284,335	114,622	-	3,467	402,424	6,531,388
31 Dec 44	287,016	114,985	-	3,720	405,722	6,608,501
10 Jan 45(4)	290,025	115,440	-	3,919	409,393	6,681,872
20 Jan 45	290,695	115,544	-	3,967	410,206	6,729,500
31 Jan 45	291,617	115,747	-	4,037	411,401	6,796,249
10 Feb 45	292,485	116,229	-	4,087	412,801	6,952,843
20 Feb 45	293,328	116,652	-	4,331	414,311	7,074,005
28 Feb 45	294,029	117,192	-	4,412	415,633	7,201,551

10 Mar 45	294,992	120,266	125	4,472	419,85	7,352,066
20 Mar 45	295,813	121,267	229	4,610	421,919	7,463,497
31 Mar 45(5)	296,460	122,074	350	4,731	423,615	7,620,323

- (1) Tabulation for 31 Aug 44 not available
(2) Tabulation for 20 Oct 44 not available
(3) For Army Group Liguria and Fourteenth Army
(4) Amended edition
(5) Army Group "C" surrendered on 2 May 44: April figures are not available

APPENDIX "B"

to H.S. Report No. 24

ARMY GROUP "C"

OPERATIONS ORDER

9 Jun 44

(Photostat and Translation)

981AZ. (D50)

Ref: para 18

O.B.SW and

9 Jun 44

Commander of Army Group "C"

Copy No. 4

No. 246/44

Operations Order

For the general conduct of operations in the Mediterranean area, it is of decisive importance, particularly in view of Italy as a potential spring-board for an enemy operation against the Balkans, to retain possession of as much of Italy as possible. It is therefore the task of the Army Group, by stubborn fighting to prevent the enemy from pushing on further towards the North. Thus, it will begin by defending the Dora line, and will only withdraw towards the North if forced to do so by the enemy. However, in the event of any further strengthening of the enemy forces, or if there is a basic change in the situation, a gradual withdrawal to the Gothic position may become necessary. This withdrawal movement too is to take place only after stubborn fighting and over several lines of resistance, each of which is to be held as long as possible. Between these resistance lines, the Armies are to form intermediate lines, in such a manner that the withdrawal movement does not exceed 15 km at any one time. Resistance lines and intermediate lines are to be reconnoitred successively, constant reports being sent in to the Army Group.

A) Fighting Around and North of the Dora Line

During the fighting around and north of the Dora line, it is important that, while conserving, our fighting power, the heaviest possible losses in personnel and materiel be inflicted on the enemy. To achieve this object, the enemy's advance must be delayed by the constant formation and subsequent change in location of anti-tank concentrations at the main lines of attack, as well as by blocking the mountain passes. Of decisive importance is the timely and adequate blocking of the Orbetello defile, as well as maintaining the closest contact between the inner wings of the armies. Again extensive use of the repellent firing power of our heavy weapons, more especially of the long range artillery, is indicated (see O.B.SW (Commander Army Group "C") C.G.S. No. 0126/44 Secret, 9 Jun 44).

In future, each withdrawal must be approved by O.B.SW. Plans for the following day are therefore to be communicated to O.B.SW by not later than 1200 hrs on the preceding day.

14 Pz Corps, 90 and 29 Pz Divs will be transferred by Tenth Army to Fourteenth Army on the west bank of the Tiber, passing under command of the latter with the crossing of the Tiler. 26 Pz Div is to be taken back by Tenth Army along the boundary line between Fourteenth and Tenth Armies as Army Group Reserve.

Insofar as the battle situation allows - without decisively further weakening our own fighting power - the Dora line is to be defended, in order to intercept the enemy's advance, and to make it possible for our

own formations to reorganize. Fourteenth Army is to withdraw immediately at least two hard-hit formations (if possible 65 and 362 Inf Divs; later also 92 Inf Div), and Tenth Army at least one formation (94 Inf Div) from the front line, and is to transfer them to the Gothic line for rejuvenation, where at the same time they will act as security garrisons. In addition, Fourteenth Army is to hasten the evacuation of 715 Inf Div, complete with supplies, to the West.

B) Conduct of Battle north of the Dora Position as far as the Gothic Line

In the event of developments in the situation making a further withdrawal absolutely necessary, orders for this will be issued by the Army Group. The code word for this operation is: ALARICH.

a) On this code word being given, the following army boundaries will become effective:

1) Fourteenth Army and Army Abteilung v. Zangen: Elba - Piombino - 5 km N Nassa Marittima - Siena - 10 km SW Montevarchi (villages in the zone of Army Abteilung v. Zangen).

2) Fourteenth Army and Tenth Army: Course of the Tiber as far as the river fork 10 km SE Orvieto - the highway Orvieto, Chiusi, Montepulciano - 10 km SW Montevarchi - Pontassieve (highway in zone of AOX 10) - Viechto (AOK 10) - Cattaia (AOK 10).

3) Tenth Army and Army Abteilung v. Zangen: At first unchanged.

Army Abteilung v. Zangen is to make preparations for handing over its blocking formations in the Grosseto area and east to Fourteenth Army, in such a manner that, when the new army boundaries come into effect, these formations can be taken over quickly by Fourteenth Army.

b) The withdrawal is to take place by sectors, if possible by alternating (leap frog) commitment, over the resistance lines shown on the accompanying trace, and the intermediate lines are to be fixed in detail by the Armies. The junction points between the resistance lines and the intermediate lines along the seam of Fourteenth and Tenth Armies are to be decided on jointly by the AOK's, and the results communicated to O.B.SW. To ensure the requisite close contact between the two Armies, liaison groups in adequate strength are to be held in constant readiness. Furthermore, care must be taken during the withdrawal, that the retreating troops are received in their new position by sufficiently strong forces. For this withdrawal movement too, the principle holds good that each resistance line must be given up only on orders from O.B.SW, after hard fighting, in which the heaviest possible losses must be inflicted on the enemy.

c) Points which are especially threatened in the terrain in front of the Gothic position must be secured in good time by the commitment of blocking units. The core of these blocking operations must lie between

the position constituting the main defence line at the time and the next resistance line.

d) Preparations for the evacuation of the Island of Elba and the Island of Pianosa are to be made so that this operation can be synchronized with the beginning of the withdrawal movement from the western Frieda position. A separate order for this operation is being issued. The G.H.Q. formations released hereby are to be transferred to the Fortress Brigade for strengthening the coastal defence in the La Spezia sector. Details for the evacuation are to be worked out immediately between Army Abteilung v. Zangen and the German Naval Command, Italy, subject to the basic principle of a four days warning.

C) Disposition and Commitment of Forces for the Conduct of Battle in the Gothic Position

With the occupation of the Frieda position, the intention is to divide the whole of northern Italy south of the Po into two Army Areas, which will be taken over by Tenth and Fourteenth Armies. Army Abteilung v. Zangen will then again be committed as 87 Inf Corps.

a) Disposition of commands. Right: Fourteenth Army

Left: Tenth Army

Boundary line between the Armies: Pontassieve - Viechio - Cattaia (village in AOK 10 zone) - Castanoso (east of Bologna) - from there

north as far as the boundary of Mil Admin H.Q. Ferrara and Bologna (17 km WNW Ferrara).

Rear boundary of the army areas: West and northwest boundary of Mil Admin H.Q. Genoa - passing into west and north boundary of Mil Admin H.Q. Parma - from there passing into west and northern boundary of Mil Admin H.Q. Padua - the operational zone of the High Commissioner of the Adriatic coast.

It has been suggested to the Supreme Command that these army areas be defined as operational areas.

b) The following commitment of forces is intended, and this is to be taken as the basic principle for all preparations for occupation of the Gothic position:

aa) Fourteenth Army with three Corps Headquarters (one of which will probably be 51 Mtn Corps). In addition, nine divisions and 135 Fort Bde in commitment on the front including the coast as far as the French boundary, as well as two panzer or panzer grenadier divisions in reserve. Subsequent commitment of 5 Mtn Div and the two High Mountain battalions in the western part of the Gothic position is planned.

bb) Tenth Army with four Corps Headquarters (including the Venetian Coastal Command and the Adriatic Coastal Command). In addition,

11 divisions (less 188 Res Mtn Div) committed on the front and the adjacent coast, as well as three panzer or panzer grenadier divisions in reserve.

cc) To be at the disposal of the Army Group, and responsible at the same time for the training of the reserve formations: One Panzer Corps Headquarters.

dd) Fourteenth and Tenth Armies will report their intended disposition in the Gothic position (giving the divisional numbers) by 20 Jun at latest. The divisions now committed on the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian coast will be committed in the Gothic position with Fourteenth Army.

c) Security Garrison

The exhausted divisions of the Armies (see section 'A') are to be transported to the Gothic position in one uninterrupted movement for rejuvenation and commitment as security garrison. For transport to the rear of additional exhausted divisions, previous approval by O.B.SW is required.

Furthermore, all elements of the supply troops, trains, and field reserve battalions which can be spared, as well as all those formations which in consequence of loss of arms consist only of personnel, are to be withdrawn to the Gothic Line forthwith; armed with spare weapons, and

committed to further strengthen the security garrison. Upon arrival of the replacements, the field replacement battalions are to be organized in such a way that in case of necessity they can be committed as complete battalions in the defence of the Gothic Line.

In order to permit a proper direction of the reinforcement stream, the divisions to be relieved are to report to Army Group without delay. The relief of G.H.Q. troops (such as 400 Recce Bn and G.H.Q. artillery formations) is also to be provided for. Where no orders to the contrary are issued in individual cases, G.H.Q. troops will remain under their previous commands during the period of rejuvenation. A special order follows concerning rejuvenation of the exhausted formations.

d) To enable the Armies to become familiar with the course and construction of the Gothic position as early as possible, without prejudice to the overall responsibility of Army Abteilung v. Zangen, construction work in Fourteenth Army's future sector is to be carried out by 75 Army Corps; in the future sector of Tenth Army by the Venetian Coastal Command. The Armies will establish contact with these Corps Headquarters as early as possible. However, nothing may be changed in the arrangements already made for geographic location of the line.

e) Headquarters to be prepared

Headquarters of O.B.SW: Recuaro (35 km NE Verona) Advanced Headquarters in the Reggio area.

Fourteenth Army Headquarters: In the Parma area. Withdrawal Headquarters behind the Genoa coastal defence sector about in the Alessandria - Tortona area.

Tenth Army Headquarters: In the Ostilia area. Withdrawal Headquarters in the area north of Treviso.

After reconnoitring, the A.O.K.'s will report on the Headquarters and Advanced Headquarters which have finally been decided on.

D) General

a) Demolitions. All military objects which might be of value to the enemy, including the harbours on the east and west coasts, are to be destroyed to the greatest possible extent. Detailed orders are to be issued by the Armies. Responsibility for carrying out the demolitions will be passed to the Armies, who in their turn may authorize their subordinate commands to give the demolition orders.

In a very much higher degree than heretofore the enemy advance must be stopped by the demolition of all objects of value to him. No bridge, no tunnel, no railway installation or similar object of value must be allowed to fall into his hands intact. Every last engineer must be employed for this task. I draw attention once again to my order stating that the engineers are not to be committed for infantry fighting, but for duties such as these.

As regards destruction of industrial objects, the special orders for this already issued by the Quartermaster General/O.B.SW apply.

b) Security

All preparations for the withdrawal movement ALARICH are to be made in such a manner that, after the appropriate order has been received from the Army Group, this movement can be begun forthwith. The planning staff for this movement is to be limited to those absolutely necessary.

Telephone conversations referring to the withdrawal movement are forbidden.

(handsigned) KESSELRING
General Field Marshal

ARMY GROUP "C"

ORDER OF BATTLE

15 and 23 Jun 44

981A10. (D156)

Ref: para 22

Position as of 15 Jun 44

45 Copies
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Order of Battle of Major Formations

O.B.SW														
Directly under Army Group	14 Army				10 Army				Army Abteilung v. Zangen					
	14 Pz Corps		1 Para Corps		Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps		51 Mtn Corps		Directly under Army	75 Inf Corps	Comdr Venezia Coast	Comdr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Directly under Army
715 Inf Div	162 Inf Div (Turc)	90 Pz Gren Div	29 Pz Gren Div	26 Pz Div	92 Inf Div	H.G. Pz Div	71 Inf Div	278 Inf Div	334 Inf Div	16 SS Pz Div		188 Res Div	Comdr Alpenvorland	
	(relieved after arrival of 19 Lw Fd Div)				absorbed by									
		20 Lw Fd Div	4 Para Div	356 Inf Div		1 Para Div	5 Mtn Div	114 Jg Div	94 Inf Div	42 Inf Div		3 Brandenburg Regt		
65 Inf Div	19 Lw Div (in trans-Div it)	3 Pz Gren Div			362 Inf Div	15 Pz Gren Div			305 Inf Div	135 Fort Bde				
						44 Inf Div (H.u.D.)				Comdt Elba				
										34 Inf Div				
715 Inf Div	162 Inf Div (Turc)		29 Pz Gren Div	26 Pz Div	16 SS Pz Gren Div	362 Inf Div (new)	H.G. Pz Div	278 Inf Div	71 Inf Div	278 Inf Div	94 Inf Div	188 Res Mtn Div	42 Jg Div	
	90 Pz Gren Div	20 Lw Fd Div	4 Para Div	356 Inf Div			5 Mtn Div	114 Jg Div	5 Mtn Div	114 Jg Div		3 Brandenburg Regt	Comdr Alpenvorland	
65 Inf Div	3 Pz Gren Div				19 Lw Fd Div		15 Pz Gren Div			44 Inf Div (Hu.D)			34 Inf Div	
													135 Fort Bde	

APPENDIX "D"

to H.S. Report No. 24

ARMY GROUP "C"

G.H.Q. FORMATIONS UNDER COMMAND

21 Jun 44

(Translation)

981A10. (D160)

Report No. 24

Ref: para 22

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*) in process of formation
**) in transit

G.H.Q. TROOPS

O.B.SW													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	14 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Artillery													
Senior artillery commanders	G.H.Q. Coastal Arty Cadr SW	316				317							
Artillery commanders			476	451		414	122	107	Coastal Arty Cadr (static)	200			
G.H.Q. artillery regimental headquarters for special employment (mech)			553				2 Arty Instr Bde	554					
G.H.Q. assault gun brigades		214 914					907						
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (10 cm gun mech)													
G.H.Q. artillery battalions 15 and 17 cm gun battalion (mech)		557 (less 4 Bty) 923 (Bty)	I Arty Instr Bde 2 (less 1) 764, 922 (Btys)										
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (flare shell mech)			III/Arty Instr Bde 1										
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (lt fd hows mech)		602, 733		II/51									
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (hy fd hows 10 cm guns mech)			450	(document damaged)		IV/Arty Instr Bde 2	451						
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (21 cm mortar mech)		4/557		(document damaged)		V/Arty Instr Regt 2							
Batteries light field guns	18			(document damaged)		61erz							
High mountain batteries				(document damaged)					3, 4				
G.H.Q. artillery battalions (22 cm mortars mech) or (22 cm mortars, partly mobile)			998 mech	(document damaged)		608							

O.B.SW													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	4 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
G.H.Q. artillery batteries (21 cm guns)					659, 660								
Fixed Artillery													
Battalion headquarters													
a) 7.5-10.5 cm													
b) 10.6-17 cm													
c) 17.1 cm and heavy													
G.H.Q. Flak battalions				302	307								
Railway Artillery													
Battalion headquarters								616 (tactical only)	646 (tactical only)				
Batteries								712, 2/725	459	Hauser			
								691, 693, 459, 932, 933 (Hagen Woran)					
G.H.Q. Coastal Artillery													
Regiments		927 less III		Port Regtl H.Q. 927	41101		1102					1103	
Battalions				117, III/927	667			1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1104		1114			
Batteries a) 7.5-10.5 cm b) 10.6-17 cm c) 17.1 cm & heavy					Sterz			1-5/956					
Light observation battalions (mech)				7	64								
Light observation battalions (partly mobile)		71			70								
V. and E. platoons (rations)													
Reinforced meteorological platoons													
Heavy velocity measurement platoons													

O.B.S.W													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	6 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	4 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Light velocity measurement detachments			518		637				649 (static)				
Mechanized sections													
Fire direction batteries					500								
Engineers													
Engineer regimental headquarters			543			604			112 (mil) for special employment, 413 (mech)				
Engineer battalions (mech) (partly mech)						60				Instr 4, 45			
Engineer battalions (horses drawn)													
Engineer bridging battalions													
Engineer landing regimental headquarters													
Engineer landing battalions													
Assault boat detachments													
Armoured engineer companies (G)				811									
Engineer mine detection platoons													
Bridging train section headquarters					936								
Bridging train section B (mech)					44, 95, 161, 2/505, 2/62								
Bridging train section B equipment unit with escort battalion													
Bridging train section J (mech) (heavy armoured)					840								
Bridging train section K (light armoured)						30-1/2 PI	1/2 PI 3						
Miscellaneous engineer forces													

O.B.SW													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	4 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Mountain engineer battalions			818										
Construction Engineers													
Senior engineer commanders		Bessel								36			
Engineer regimental headquarters for special employment		792 430, 432 Slener 105, 115, 118, 119											
Engineer construction battalions	401 (naval command)					433							
Position construction headquarters													
Position construction engineer battalions				790	736, 791			413 (service with troops)		789, 820 ^{mm} 821 ^{mm} , 788			
Eastern construction battalions													
Snow removal companies													
Landing engineer bridging companies													
Engineer bridging battalions	560												
Fortress engineer commanders									II				
Fortress engineer headquarters									30, 34	16, 413 mil 30, 19 ^{mm})			
Fortress engineer battalions													
Rock-drilling companies		6	7	5, 8						19 ^{mm} , 29 ^{mm} 30 ^{mm}) 4 coys F ^{mm})			
Military geological station		7							34				
Local construction companies		5/9											
Fortress Engineers													
Local defence troops													
Fortress engineer section groups					I/16, II/16				III/16 I and III/30 I/34, II/34				

O.B.SW													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	4 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmt 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Construction brigades		2 Slovak											
Fortress engineer special headquarters									Nobiling				
Fortress supply staffs									6				
Fortress engineer parks									530				
Projector brigade headquarters													
Projector regiments (mech)		71			56								
Chemical Warfare Troops													
Smoke battalions													
Infantry													
Assault battalions	Service School O.B.SW												
Infantry regiments and panzer grenadiers		13/3 and 16/4 Brandenburg	1028		II/3 Brandenburg		1027 Inf Instr Regt						
Machine gun battalions													
Mortar battalion													
Jaeger battalions													
Anti-aircraft defence battalions		A.A. Intr and Tro Coy		1/501		501 less 1 Coy							
Fortress brigade headquarters for special employment								135 Cmt Genoa					
Fortress regimental headquarters				924									
Fortress battalions								905, 906, 907		903			
Eastern battalions					III/871								263, 617, II/198
High mountain battalions				3		4							
Local defence troops	678, 527 less 2 (Police troops) (Comdt P/W's)	686 (Q.M.G.) 783								676			

O.B.S.W													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	14 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Panzer regimental headquarters													
Independent panzer battalions	216	1/4			504,508						208 less 1 Coy		
Independent panzer companies													1/208
Radio control battalions (companies)													
Armoured Troops													
G.H.Q. Panzer Jaeger Battalions	100s												
Mixed, light, medium and heavy anti-aircraft guns (mechanized sections)													
7.5 or 7.62 cm on Mark III tanks or 38 ton self-propelled mounts													
8.8 cm battalions (mechanized sections)													
8.8 cm on Mark IV tanks (Hornets)	525												
8.8 cm on Mark IV tanks (Perdinand)					1/653								
Reconnaissance battalions (mechanized)						400							
Signal regiments	598 7(Recce)	508			524								
Signal battalions	Special Employment Italy Special Employment 13								487				
Signals													
Fortress signal headquarters	26												
Fortress wire-laying detachments	2/26, 3/26												
Radio companies									1/654 (Special)				

O.B.SW													
ARMIES													
CORPS	Directly under Army Group	Directly under Army	76 Pz Corps	51 Mtn Corps	Directly under Army	14 Pz Corps	1 Para Corps	75 Inf Corps	Directly under Army Abteilung	Cadr Venetian Coast	Cadr Op Zone Adriatic Coast	Cadr Op Zone Alpenvorland (Mil Cmd 1010)	General Plenipotentiary of German Armed Forces in Italy
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16
Signal parks	592	511/South							511/North				D.V.Op Coy 13 and 14/650 Tel Op Coy 36 and 43/644 Fd Switchboard Bn for Special Employment 1
Mountain reconnaissance staff											Seits		
Miscellaneous G.H.Q. Troops													
Field police battalions		1 and 2/692, 541											
Survey and mapping battalions	673 (Florence)												
Propaganda companies	699												
Security regimental headquarters													38
Survey batteries	602												
Light map printing battalions	520 (Lake Garda)										1218 (M)		
Security troops	1219* 1216 M (Q.M.G.)				936						509, 705, 1207 (M), 1209 (M)		
Frontier guard battalions										B		A	
Armoured train											24		
					Instr Staff for Counter-Guerrilla Warfare								

** Note: Columns 6 and 15 showed no entries.

GERMAN HIGH COMMAND
ORDER FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT
OF THE GOTHIC LINE

2 Jun 44

(Photostat and Translation)

981A10. (D161)

Ref: para 27

O.B.SW

2 Jun 44 1415 hrs

Copies to: O.B.SW

General of Engineers & Fortifications

Chief of G.H.Q. Armament & Recruitment

O.T. Central at G.H.Q.

General Plenipotentiary of the German Armed Forces in Italy

G.H.Q./Q.M.C.

Ref: Additional Fortress-like Construction in the Defence Position.

1.) The Fuehrer has ordered that work on fortress-like construction in the Apennine position be accelerated, and that, in order to achieve this end, the manpower and materiel committed be augmented. The following points are important:

a) Anti-tank security in those sectors threatened by tanks, with particular attention to those openings still necessary for traffic.

b) Acceleration of fortress-like construction, where possible rock-tunnelling, along the main lines of attack, with special provision of loopholes and other protection against bomb attack for numerous artillery emplacements and anti-aircraft guns. Based on experience in the Senger Riegel, an elaborate system of positions is called for, even on those mountain fronts which are considered almost inaccessible.

- c) Extensive mining operations in adequate depth (even though in the simplest form) in front of the entire position, involving evacuation of the civilian population in the outpost area and the main battle area.
 - d) Preparations for creation of an obstacle zone about 10 km in depth in front of the main line of resistance, by lasting demolition of all traffic routes, installations and shelters; these operations to be carried out at once if possible.
- 2.) The Commander of Army Abteilung v. Zangen remains responsible under O.B.SW for the execution of all the construction work, and for the fulfilment of the Fuehrer's demands. In order that he may have a framework to build on as regards personnel and materiel, for immediate acceleration of the construction work, the Fuehrer has ordered:
- a) That the General of Engineers and Fortifications strengthen the fortress engineer organization of the Apennine position in such a way as to ensure the requisite efficient organization. A specially capable fortress Engineer Commander, experienced in this type of construction, to be entrusted with the technical side of the entire fortress engineer work. A fortress engineer staff for the Southeastern zone will be placed at his disposal for carrying out the additional construction. Yet another staff is to be brought from the Eastern zone.

For strengthening the rock-drilling forces, a company will be brought from the zone of the C.-in-C. Norway. A proposal is to be submitted immediately regarding the recruitment of more rock-drilling and construction troops.

The necessary construction equipment - particularly rock-drilling equipment, air compressors, etc - is to be obtained in as large a quantity as possible and immediately routed to the forces already working in the position. As regards steel foundations etc, to begin with, 100 O.T. steel foundations (60 are already on the way to Italy, 40 were intended for the Pyrenees) and 26 O.T. steel foundations with panzer turrets are to be brought, with an additional four on completion (by 1 Jul). The General of Engineers and Fortifications will examine and report on further possible assignments (exclusive of the 40 which are in readiness for the East).

- b) The Commander of G.H.Q. Armaments and Fortifications will form as many construction battalions as possible, as a cadre for the supervision of Italian labour forces, and will report as soon as possible on the number, organization and degree of readiness for transport. It is enough that they be armed with side-arms and they may be drawn from the older age-groups.
- c) O.B.SW will withdraw to the Apennine position those Italian construction forces in the C-Position which as a result of enemy

action are no longer fit for commitment. There they will be assembled, and a German cadre provided, in accordance with 2b.

O.B.SW will provide the Organization Todt with the vehicles required for the construction work.

- d) In collaboration with the competent authorities, and while proceeding with previous plans, the General Plenipotentiary of the German Armed Forces in Italy will form civilian labour battalions in the Apennine position zone, particularly from the male population which is to be evacuated, or which is domiciled there. It is intended that they be incorporated in the construction battalions, in accordance with 2b; that they occupy separate billets; and that they be allotted German rations. The General Plenipotentiary of the German Armed Forces in Italy will report on the probable number in all, and on the date on which they are expected to be ready.

The population in the construction zone (altogether about 20 km in depth), and in the areas immediately to be affected by the extensive mining operations and the intended barriers and demolitions, is to be evacuated.

Preparations are to be initiated immediately, and intended action reported.

The Commandeer of G.H.Q. Armament and Recruitment will immediately route 2,000 German soldiers to the General Plenipotentiary in Italy

(the order has already been issued) for evacuation measures and recruitment of the male labour forces.

- e) O.T. Central is requested to strengthen the German O.T. cadre in the Apennine position, to an extent in keeping with the increased labour commitment, and without weakening the coastal flanks on the Ligurian Sea, and on the Adriatic north of the Apennine position, and to take all other measures necessary to attain the required construction performance.
 - f) G.S. Army/Q.M.G. will see to it that O.B.SW be given an increased allotment of mines for the extensive mining operations. The fact that this will mean a shortage in the Southeast and in the North must be accepted. Possibilities of increased production of emergency mines in Italy are to be examined.
- 3.) On the tenth of each month (beginning 10 Jul) the General of engineers and Fortifications will submit a report on the construction situation and a construction progress report (to include mining operations) to OKW/Armed Forces Operations Staff.

(signed) Keitel OKW/WFSt/Op. (H)

No. 005612/44

APPENDIX "F"

to H.S. Report No. 24

51 MTN CORPS

MAIN WAR DIARY

(Translation of) for

17, 18 19 Jul 44

981A10. (D183)

Ref: para 27

(War Diary 51 Mtn Corps 17 - 19 Jul 44)

17 Jul 44

[Corps H.Q.]:

Permanent quarters Pennabilli

After hours of artillery preparation, as expected, the enemy attacked Mte Cetrone on both sides of the Tiber on a wide front with a strong spearhead. After severe fighting, the enemy succeeded in capturing the height. A further assault on Hill 611 led to a penetration 3 km southwest of 92/32. In the remainder of the Corps zone, the night passed without serious fighting.

During the morning, our counter-attacks succeeded in sealing off and reducing the penetration area north of Mte Cetrone. East of the Tiber, the heavy defensive action continued throughout the morning. Intense artillery fire on our positions and artillery firing positions.

In the sector of 278 Inf Div, after the most intense artillery and mortar fire, and with extremely heavy commitment of fighter-bombers and bombers over the main battle area and over the supply routes between 42/49 and north of 42/65, with the point of main effort at Case Nuove and along the highway 42/65 and 10/37, the enemy advanced to the attack with strong forces, including about 120 tanks.

After successful defensive action against the first waves of the attack, the enemy succeeded, after smashing our forces, in pushing in our front at Case Nuove and Point 360 4 km northwest of 42/65. Fighting in the sector of 278 Inf Div assumed more and more the character of a major attack. With the scanty reserves released from the adjoining sector, it was possible by evening to form an emergency sealing-off front on the general line 42/18 - 2 km south of 10/37 - 10/38 - 3 km west of 10/44 - 2 km south of 10/44. The bitter fighting continued. Seven enemy tanks were destroyed. In the sector of 44 Inf Div, in the area 2 km northwest of Mte Santa Maria, an enemy assembly position (three battalions) was smashed by concentrated fire. Sustained heavy enemy artillery fire in the left divisional sector.

On the right wing of 114 Jg Div a counter-attack resulted in a further narrowing down of the enemy's penetration area.

East of the Tiber, the enemy was able to extend his penetration area from Hill 611 against 1 Bn 721 Jg Regt, which was much exhausted by fighting, and after moving up new forces supported by intense artillery fire, he was able to push our troops back still further; and these withdrew, still fighting, behind the stream sector 2 km southeast of 92/32. The enemy suffered heavy casualties from concentrated artillery fire, with one tank destroyed. Our own losses were considerable.

In the sector of 5 Mtn Div, continuous enemy movements, with one armoured scout car destroyed by artillery.

71 Inf Div successfully supported the defensive action of 278 Inf Div by attacking the enemy tanks and assembly positions in the area south of 42/49.

2 Bn 3 Brandenburg Regt arrived, and placed under command of 44 Inf Div. 733 Lt Arty Bn placed under command of 44 Inf Div.

Intention: To hold the present line. The left sector of 114 Jg Div taken over by 5 Mtn Div.

Withdrawal of left Corps sector to the general line 42/48 - south of 10/37 - south of 10/39 - 10/47.

71 Inf Div takes over the right battalion sector of 278 Inf Div.

The following battalions are reported as exhausted by fighting:

I/721, I/992, II/992, I/994, II/994 and I/993.

Very lively activity by enemy ground attack aircraft and bombers.

0034 hrs Out: Report to Tenth Army on gun assignment for 44 Inf Div.

0855 hrs In: Report from 278 Inf Div: From 0615 hrs the most intense artillery fire, fighter-bomber and bomber commitment with the point of main effort in the Case Nuove and Hill 360 areas.

1010 hrs Out: Order to 278 Inf Div: After the release of Lt-Comdr Klusemann by the Division, the name of the new combat commander [for Ancona] is to be submitted.

1247 hrs Out: Order to 114 Jg and 5 Mtn Divs for withdrawal to the new line. Boundary lines.

1900 hrs Memo: Telephone conversations between C.-in-C. Tenth Army and General Commanding 278 Inf Div. Rather serious penetration. Necessity for withdrawing wing to "Hildegard" line south of Ancona recognized by Commander-in-Chief. But Ancona must definitely be held.

1915 hrs Out: Order to 71 and 278 Inf Divs for withdrawal to new line, and holding the height northwest of Candia di Ancona.

1916 hrs Out: Order to 71 Inf Div: 3 Bn (Russian) 578 Regt 305 Inf Div to be moved up for commitment in construction work in Green Line.

2000 hrs In: Order by Tenth Army for further maintenance or reorganization of divisional battle schools. Stafed by picked instructors.

- In: Request from 2 Bn 3 Brandenburg Regt for recognition of a day of guerrilla warfare on 4 Jun on Mte Bello at Luco ne'Marsi (British paratroops).

- In: The Chief of the General Staff Tenth Army asserts that the General Staff work is not accurate. There are discrepancies in the strength returns.

18 Jul 44

Permanent quarters

Pennabilli

In the sector of 278 Inf Div, the heavy attacks continued throughout the night. The enemy followed up steadily with fresh armoured forces and captured Polverigi. Mte Bogo, which had temporarily been lost, was recovered in a counter-attack. Ofagna was held to the last. Continuing his thrust in the direction of Chiaravalle, the enemy pushed through to Agugliano, where fighting is still in progress. At approximately 2200 hrs the withdrawal movements began as ordered. Combat outposts and covering parties still in contact with the enemy on the entire front. The enemy suffered severe and bloody losses. Our own casualties were considerable.

71 Inf Div has taken over the right sector of 278 Inf Div. After dark, in the right Corps sector, the enemy attacked on a wide front from Mte Cetrone to Hill 375, 2 km southwest of 92/32. Isolated

penetrations were quickly cleaned up by local counter-attacks, and the attack was brought to a halt for the most part by midnight.

From 0420 hrs enemy artillery fire increased in intensity in the right divisional sector. Artillery from 71 Inf Div is still firing in support of its neighbour's motor vehicle traffic, and shelling enemy concentrations in the area south of 42/49. Since 0600 hrs the combat outposts of the division 4 km southwest of 42/47 have been attacked, and shelled by artillery. Our own reconnaissance brought in a captured Italian.

In the sector of 278 Inf Div, after moving up new tanks (about 200 tanks in all were counted), the enemy was able to push forward from 10/37 to the North and Northeast. According to the latest report from the Division, the enemy is advancing with tanks and infantry from Castel d'Emilio towards the North and from 10/37 towards the Northeast in the direction of Terrette a Mare, with the spearhead in the Tasso il Taglio region. According to the report of a liaison officer, the enemy tank spearhead is said to have reached the localities Camerata, Picena, Crancetta and Castelferretti. The "Wildflecken" battalion, which was moved up in lorries, has been thrown forward to hill 274, 3 km northeast of 10/37 to take over.

Our withdrawal movements, handicapped by strong enemy aircraft commitment, are under way. Formation of an emergency sealing-off front on the line 10/33 - 10/36 by 278 Fd Repl Bn. The transfer of

two battalions from the right sector of 71 Inf Div is in progress. It is not yet known whether our forces in the area south of 10/41 will be able to fight their way through. The moving up of the "Wildflecken" battalion was hindered by gun-fire and mine-laying carried out by sabotage troops landed in the Fano area. When the operation was finished the enemy re-embarked.

In the remaining Corps sector the morning passed quickly. 3 Bn (Russian) 578 Regt 71 Inf Div has been dispatched to the area ordered. No further reports from 278 Inf Div had come in by 2100 hrs. A liaison officer has been dispatched to the Division. In the sector of 114 Jg div, at about 1600 hrs, the enemy attacked in company strength from Monte Cedrone in a northwesterly direction. At the same time, enemy assault detachments and companies, pushing forward from Hill 566, were thrown back with bloody losses. Reinforcements observed in the monte Cedrone sector were effectively shelled by our artillery. In the sector of 5 Mtn Div an enemy armoured scout car was destroyed 4 km southwest of 57/33. An attack by approximately two companies on the left sector of 71 Inf Div was repelled by our artillery.

Intentions: To withdraw the left Corps sector to the general line: 42/11 - 42/28 - 10/31 - 10/36.

To relieve the two right battalions of 71 Inf Div, and move them into the sector of 278 Inf Div, leaving small covering parties in

the former sector. To move one company from 5 Mtn Div into the sector of 278 Inf Div.

To dispatch an armoured scout platoon from 44 Inf Div to guard the coastal highways.

To hold the present line in the remaining Corps sector.

Lively enemy aerial reconnaissance and ground attack aircraft activity.

1127 hrs Out: Order to 71 Inf Div and 278 Inf Div: The enemy has broken through the sealing-off front in the sector of 278 Inf Div. By early on 19 Jul the Corps withdraws, while holding the position on the left wing of 5 Mtn Div. To form a covering force behind the new sector of 278 Inf Div, II/211 and I/194 are to be relieved by 71 Inf Div and moved up to 278 Inf Div. To release these, 71 Inf Div is dispatching battalions II/191 AND II/194 from the Green Line.

1254 hrs Out: Order to 278 Inf Div: During the night 18/19 Jul the following are moved up from Corps Witthoeft: 914 Aslt Gun Bde, 525 G.H.Q. Anti-tk Bn, one 17 cm battery from 557 C.H.Q. Arty Bn. The Brigade will be committed only as a whole. Employment of the Brigade for anti-tank defence is forbidden.

1652 hrs Out: Report to Tenth Army. Request for arms for battalions II/191 and II/194 from 71 Inf Div.

1715 hrs Memo: Telephone conversation between C.-in-C. Tenth Army and General Commanding:

The situation does not look good. General Hoppe hopes to be able to withdraw the greater part of the troops from the area threatened with encirclement, and to commit them in the new positions. The Commander-in-Chief promises to send strong forces. The General Commanding requests that he be given a free hand in good time, as things may soon come to a head on the other wing too.

1800 hrs Memo: Tel con: Corps Ops Officer, Major Burchardt, G.S.C., to Ops Officer, Tenth Army, Colonel Berlin, G.S.C.:

The Corps requests permission to withdraw to the line 92/14 - 92/29 in the event of a major attack on the right wing.

1845 hrs In: C.-in-C. Tenth Army expresses his recognition to 44 Inf Div and 114 Jg Div.

1903 hrs Out: Order to 5 Mtn Div and 278 Inf Div: 5 Mtn Div to move up a strong company with improvised mechanization to the sector of 278 Inf Div during the night 18/19 Jul.

1915 hrs Memo: Tel con: Maj-Gen Wentzell and Major Burchardt, G.S.C.:

In case of overwhelming enemy attacks, the Corps has permission to form up in the rear areas.

2400 hrs Out: 44 Inf Div dispatches armoured scout platoon to 278 Inf Div during the night 19/20 Jul, to guard the coastal highways against enemy commandos.

19 Jul 44

Permanent quarters

Pennabilli

The following report received from 278 Inf Div: After a successful breakthrough with strong tank forces at Agugliano, on 18 Jul a new tank battle developed in the area Camerata - Picena - Castel d'Emilio - Paterno di Ancona. Though the troops were already much exhausted by fighting, it was possible to form a defence front towards the South and Southeast on the general line Grancetta - Passo il Taglio, and so to make possible a withdrawal of the forces south of Ancona. It is owing to the stubborn stand of the troops holding this line that the mass of the troops south of Ancona were able to withdraw to the Esino sector.

The enemy's plan to cut off the forces at Ancona with his superior tank strength did not succeed. Of 15 batteries, only two or three,

which were committed in close combat in anti-tank fighting, had to be blown up. The mass of the assault guns and anti-tank guns were able to withdraw in time. The number of tanks put out of action has increased to 16.

On 18 Jul 1900 hrs, 278 Inf Div held the following line: Height at Maria Nuova - the heights from Mazzangrugno - Mulino d'Agugliano - the Esino sector as far as the mouth of the river.

On the whole the night passed quietly.

After bringing up additional tanks, the enemy continued his concentrated tank thrusts during the night and the morning in the sector of 278 Inf Div, with the point of main effort at 10/34. South of 10/34 he succeeded in crossing the Esino with about 30 tanks, and pushing forward in a westerly direction to north of the highway 10/31 - 10/34. There are more tank concentrations of up to 30 tanks southeast of 10/34. With further groups of from about 30 - 40 tanks the enemy pushed forward as far as the region 10/36. Here three armoured scout cars with infantry on board, and supported by fire from about 30 tanks, succeeded in crossing the ford south of 10/36, and reaching the northern bank of the river. The fighting, which owing to lack of the requisite anti-tank weapons, is bitter and accompanied by heavy losses, still continues.

278 Inf Div withdrew fighting to the general line: North of 10/31 - the eastern border of Mte San Vito - the eastern border of Mte Marciano - 2 km southeast of 10/35.

In the remaining part of the Corps zone, the morning passed without any serious fighting.

An attack in company strength against the left wing of 71 Inf Div, 2 km southeast of 10/32 was repulsed.

In the afternoon 278 Inf Div was able to repel further enemy thrusts on the general line: 10/31 - 3 km east of 10/333 - 2 km northwest of 10/36. The enemy is still bring forward tanks in the area 10/34 - 10/36 and along the coastal highway. Since Jul, 26 tanks have been put out of action by the Division.

In the fighting of the last few days the Division has lost approximately 2000 men.

In the remaining part of the Corps zone the day passed quietly.

.....

2 Bn 211 Gren Regt, 1 Bn 194 Gren Regt and 3 Bn 85 Mtn Jg Regt placed under command of 278 Inf Div.

During the morning there was lively enemy serial activity; during the afternoon there was little owing to bad weather.

1800 hrs Memo: Tel con: C.-in-C. Tenth Army and General Commanding:

278 Inf Div hard hit, and has re-assembled in covering position on the Esino. New breakthrough of tank spearhead at Chiaravalle.

Proposal by General Hoppe for a new line. The main thing is, that

278 Inf Div should be able to hold on until reinforcements arrive.

Intention: To commit 1 Para Div as relief. The situation on the right gives no anxiety.

1901 hrs Out: Order to 5 Mtn Div, 71 Inf Div and 278 Inf Div: The enemy has captured Chiaravalle on the left wing of the Corps.

In spite of intense tank concentration, he has not succeeded in breaking through.

By 20 Jul 0600 hrs, 71 Inf Div, with II/211 again under command, takes over the right sector of 278 Inf Div.

2050 hrs Out: Order to 114 Jg Div, 44 Inf Div and 5 Mtn Div: On recognition of a major enemy attack, the divisions are authorized to withdraw to the general line: 92/16 - 92/21 - north of 92/31 - 92/40 - 92/41 - 92/42.

2400 hrs In: Approval from Tenth Army for withdrawal of left wing to a new line of resistance during the night 19/20 Jul.

Out: Order to all divisions re condition reports, monthly training report and replacement report.

Out: Order to all divisions for reconnoitring an advanced position from 4 - 6 km in front of the Green Line. In the sector of 114 Jg Div the position is to be especially developed. It is intended to hold it for some time.

APPENDIX "G"

to H.S. Report No. 24

51 MTN CORPS

ALLIED DISPOSITIONS AND INTENTIONS

IN THE ADRIATIC SECTOR

(Photostat and Translation)

981A10. (D199)

Ref: para 63

D r a f t

H.Q. 51 Mtn Corps

22 Jul 44

Intelligence No. 137/44

12 Copies

Copy No. 12

Ref: Appreciation of the Enemy Situation
in the Adriatic Coastal Sector

To:

Tenth Army

It is thought by Corps Headquarters that the enemy, after capturing Ancona, is moving into a position of readiness with strong forces on the eastern wing of his front, with the object of breaking through our lines with massed forces, especially tank formations, and rolling up the German forces in Italy from the flank into the plains of Northern Italy, and so cutting them off from their communications in the rear areas.

The following information which has recently come to hand concerning the enemy favours this theory:

- 1.) Numerous prisoner of war statements referring to a major action in the Ancona - Rimini area, possibly connected with a landing.
- 2.) Statements of Polish prisoners to the effect that after the capture of Ancona they were to be relieved by fresh British troops.
- 3.) Statements of agents, whereby badges of 1 Brit Div and 5 Brit Corps have been identified in the Pescara - Termoli area, and badges of 1 Cdn Corps, 1 Cdn Div and 12 S. Afr Div in the Osimo area.
- 4.) Statements of agents from Perugia dated 14 Jul 44, according to which troops belonging to the Fifth Army were to be transferred from the West to the East coast, and coloured divisions moved up.
- 5.) Statement of a captured German soldier who subsequently escaped, to the effect that he had seen English-speaking soldiers in the zone of 3 Pol Div wearing blue berets with red borders, apparently not armoured troops.
- 6.) Report from reliable source on the presence of British and Canadian networks in the Adriatic sector.
- 7.) Movements which have been observed for some time past forward of 5 Mtn Div, having a main West - East direction (confirmed on 19 Jul by the statement of a female line-crosser from Fabriano).

- 8.) The appearance of numerous vessels in the harbour of Ancona even on the second day after the capture of the town. Increasing shipping activity during the succeeding days.
- 9.) The moving into position of heaviest artillery in the battle area N.W. Ancona was observed by an agent.

Assuming that Eighth Army retains command in the Adriatic coastal sector, and that the adversary adheres to his principle of keeping the American and the British forces separate, the following identified formations come under consideration for an operation of this nature:

1 Cdn Corps with 1 Cdn Div. 5 Cdn Armd Div and possibly elements of
4 Cdn Armd Div (?)

5 Brit Corps: 6 and 8 Ind Divs, 1 and 5 Brit Divs, 2 Bde 1 Brit
Airborne Div, 24 Guards Bde, 1 Regt 23 Armd Bde, 6 Aus Div (?), 12 S.
Afr Div.

In reports from agents there is also talk of transferring American formations from the West.

In order to identify the enemy's movement into assembly position as early as possible, Corps H.Q. has taken the following measures:

- 1.) The divisions have been informed of the aforementioned possibilities, and directed, by means of active combat reconnaissance to bring in numerous prisoners and line-crossers, who are to be searchingly cross-examined on all statements which might have any bearing on the subject.

- 2.) The security organizations which are tactically under the command of Corps H.Q., 150 Front-line Recce Det and 257 Engr Experimental Det, are centred in the coastal sector. We have placed radio operators in Chieti, Catignano, Ancona and Jesi. But as they could only be supplied with "network" equipment, their work depends on the re-starting of the power plants destroyed by us. Up to now no reports have come in from that source. The work of these security organizations is rendered more difficult by the shortage of agents, which is caused by the military situation. Corps H.Q. has placed means at the disposal of the divisions for organizing a front-line short-range reconnaissance service in their own zones, using casual agents and having a limited objective. Useful results have already been achieved by these means. (Recognition of the artillery concentration, badges of 1 Cdn Corps, 1 Cdn Div and 12 S. Afr Div, in the zone of 278 Inf Div)

- 3.) During the following days the Short Range Reconnaissance (Wireless Interception) Platoon Heide-Inge attached to Corps H.Q. pushes forward a detachment into the zone of 278 Inf Div, to ensure complete coverage of enemy radio traffic. The work of the short-range wireless interception platoon is rendered more difficult at present by the loss of valuable

technical personnel through enemy action, transfer and detachment. In consideration of the particularly large sector for which this unit is responsible, additional qualified personnel is needed.

Corps H.Q. points out that the results achieved by the aforementioned methods of information-gathering, in order to produce a reliable and up-to-date enemy picture require constant checking from the air, and aerial reconnaissance should not be confined to the coastal area, as it is probable that enemy preparation will extend farther inland. According to the report of an agent, it is planned to make preparations for the landing in the area from Fabriano - Macerata - Porto Civitanova.

The likelihood of a landing on the deep left flank of the Corps in the Rimini - Lake of Cormacchio area is assessed by Corps H.Q. as follows:

The enemy should know from experience gained in previous landings that operations of this nature, though they generally succeed if materiel is committed in sufficient quantity, are accompanied by heavy losses.

Hence he will first try to achieve his goal - the break-through into the Plains of Lombardy - by land. For an adversary numerically superior in armour and infantry, the Adriatic coastal area, with its hilly and thickly wooded terrain, offers favourable conditions for this operation. If in spite of repeated attempts, the enemy should fail to break our resistance at any point, a landing behind the lines on the left flank of the Corps may be expected.

K1

(Initials of C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps)

APPENDIX "H"

to H.S. Report No. 24

TENTH ARMY

"ENEMY SITUATION MAPS"

2, 11, 20 Aug 44

981A10. (D196) (a,b,c)

Ref: para 74

APPENDIX "J"

to H.S. Report No. 24

51 MTN CORPS

ALLIED DISPOSITIONS AND INTENTIONS

IN THE ADRIATIC SECTOR

7 Aug 44

(Photostat and Translation)

981A10. (D201)

Ref: para 79

H.Q. 51 Mtn Crops

7 Aug 44

Intelligence 854/44

Appreciation of Enemy Situation
in the Adriatic Sector

Refs: "Enemy Situation" dated 22 Jul. Chart showing Enemy Forces in the Adriatic Sector, dated 28 Jul 44

A. Formations Committed in the Front Line

10 Ind Div: Right boundary of 25 Bde in area 188/40 (prisoner's statement of 29 Jul); adjoining, 12 Lancers as far as 162/36 - 28 - 20 (captured documents of 2 Aug); on 6 Aug 97 Lancers identified at Caffirenze through captured documents, possibly replacements for components of 20 bde 10 Ind Div, which were recently transferred to the West from the area N.E. Citta di Castello. Subordination not known; either 10 Ind Div or 10 Corps.

Adjoining on the East: Composed Household Regt [Household Cavalry] Regiment (prisoners' statements of 24 Jul), right boundary presumably W. 186/53, 194/44, directly under command of the Corps. In the area occupied by 12 Royal Lancers and Composed Household, Italian volunteer formations are also

committed (agent's statement). The formations have mainly security and reconnaissance tasks. In the rear areas there may be components of 6 Ind Inf Div as a tactical reserve.

Italian Liberation Corps:

Adjoining on the East up to S.W. Castellone, Nembo Division (prisoners' statements of 2 Aug); Castellone to Corrinardo, 1st Raggruppamento with components of the Legnano Division (68 Regt, prisoners' statements of 2 Aug, and San Marco Regt, captured documents of 6 Aug and prisoner's statement of 6 Aug). In rear areas, 33 Bn Bersaglieri and 3 Alpini Regt.

Order of battle of the Italian formations not yet clear, as the divisions are still obviously in process of formation, and individual battalions whose equipment is complete are committed for short periods at the front and then again withdrawn.

The mixed British Polish 209th Division reported by prisoners on 28 Jul appears open to question. The Canadian formation (by reliable source reported to be at the front) has hitherto not been confirmed by prisoners and agents.

2 Pol Corps: (see attached chart)

Adjoining Italian Liberation Corps on the East, 5 Pol Inf Div (confirmed on 26 Jul by a Polish deserter); on the coast 3 Pol Div (confirmed by prisoners on 6 Aug).

In the zone of the Polish Corps, 7 Hussars and 8 Tank Regt (components of 8 Brit Army Tk Bde) are committed with 5 Pol Div; 2 Pol Armd Bde with 3 Pol Div.

B. Enemy Activities

In the sector of 12 Royal Lancers and Composed Household (sic), in general only enemy reconnaissance activity with reconnaissance thrusts in up to company strength. In the zone of Italian liberation corps reconnaissance thrusts in up to battalion strength. In the zone of 2 Pol Corps, the enemy has recently made several attempts to follow up our withdrawal movements with armoured elements.

Lively enemy reconnaissance activity.

Enemy artillery operations in the Adriatic zone are centred in the sector of 2 Pol corps, where there is artillery of heavy, in isolated instances, of heaviest calibre. During the past two weeks enemy artillery fire has decreased in intensity, and a transfer of the "centre of gravity" within the Corps to the coast in the sector of 3 Div has become apparent.

Our troops report lively enemy motor vehicle traffic opposite the entire sector, with the greatest activity in the zone of 2 Pol Corps. Traffic to and from the front, and in an easterly and a westerly direction are on the whole about equal.

Since occupation by the enemy, much shipping activity in the harbour of Ancona, including vessels of some size. According to the reports of line-crossers, this is mostly due to harbour repairs, clearance of debris and the unloading of materiel. In consequence of strong fighter aircraft defence, inspection of the harbour by air reconnaissance no longer possible; our own marine operation with Italian personnel, with the object of sabotage and reconnaissance did not meet with success, as the vessels struck mines.

Although it has recently been possible to obtain continuous information from the enemy rear areas behind the entire sector from prisoners, line-crossers and agents, up to the present time the moving up of additional forces behind 2 Pol Corps and on the right wing of Italian Liberation Corps, which was forecast in the enemy appreciation of 22 Jul on the basis of information in our hands at that time, has not been confirmed. Agents and line-crossers report various strange badges in these areas, but in general no great concentrations. And on the coastal road from Pescara to Civitanova a line-crosser observed but little traffic on 17 Jul.

A decrease in the number of Polish radio networks about ten days ago, from which it was concluded that relief operations were underway in the zone of the

Polish Corps, was followed during the last few days by a recrudescence of radio traffic to normal proportions.

The possibilities for infiltration of agents into the Adriatic zone have improved considerably during the past month. During July six of our agents returned from the area near the front line with for the most part new information. Up to now it has proved good practice to give the agents a very limited assignment, as regards range and time. Four more agents are still out in the Adriatic area. At least some of them can be counted on to return.

C. Enemy Appreciation

Major attacks are not at present expected in the zone of 12 Royal Lancers, Composed Household and the Italian Corps. The enemy will limit his activities to reconnaissance thrusts of up to battalion strength, to assault detachment operations reconnoitred and guided by civilians with the object of eliminating our strong-points, and to infiltration behind our lines. In the zone of 2 Pol Corps, Corps H.Q. considers an attack possible at any time with the forces at present on hand (two Polish divisions and about two armoured brigades). Signs pointing to a directly imminent attack with new Allied formations have not so far appeared. Rather there exists the impression that the enemy concentration which showed signs of beginning in the Adriatic coastal zone on 22 Jul has made little progress in the meantime. Even with the most efficiently camouflaged preparations for movement into assembly position, agents, line-crossers and prisoners, who have recently been arriving continuously from this area, would have observed indications of some sort. The numerous new

devices which have been seen, mostly on individual vehicles, above all in the rear areas of the Italian Corps zone, may be partly attributed to the fact that the adversary has mechanized the newly formed Italian formations with British vehicles belonging to the most diverse units, and has assigned to them British supply services.

Corps H.Q. considers it possible that the enemy, in his rear areas, is still busied with road repairs and concentration of materiel, and that he has meanwhile assembled the troops which are to take part in a major attack further to the rear, where they will be better concealed from our reconnaissance, and that he will only move them up to the front at the last moment. With regard to enemy preparations for landing in the Adriatic sector, no new information has come in recently.

Graf KLINCKOWSTROEM

Apps: Order of battle of the Polish Corps and Divisions

APPENDIX "K"

to H.S. Report No. 24

FOURTEENTH ARMY

MAP OF DEFENCE LINES FROM

LILLI LINE TO GREEN LINE - FOREFIELD POSITION

(Reduced Scale)

981A10. (D180)

Ref: para 51