

AIR HISTORICAL BRANCH

1-1779
~~RESTRICTED~~

TRANSLATION NO. VII/67

RESTRICTED

GERMAN ANTI-INVASION MEASURES

NOVEMBER 1943 - JULY 1944

Extracts from the war diaries of the

German 7th Army.

TRANSLATED BY

AIR MINISTRY, A.H.B.6.

31st MARCH, 1948

G.181563

C O N T E N T S

Orders issued by von Rundstedt, dated November 8, 1943.

Orders issued by von Rundstedt, dated November 26, 1943.

Orders issued by von Rundstedt, dated December 28, 1943.

Blumentritt's circular, dated January 17, 1944, on Jodl's visit to the Channel coast.

OKW orders, dated January 18, 1944.

General Jodl's views on invasion dates and probable direction, dated May 10, 1944.

Hitler's Order of the Day to his troops in the west issued to C. in C's on May 13, 1944.

Hitler's demand to 'hold fast', dated July 1, 1944.

Hitler's order on the conduct of the Normandy campaign, dated July 8, 1944.

Orders issued by von Rundstedt

November 8, 1943.

Because of the 'general reconsideration' proposed by C. in C. Netherlands, the army, and the military commanders in occupied territories, and in accordance with the enclosed review of the situation, I have described to the Fuehrer and to the Supreme Command the general position and the present supply of personnel and material in that section of the army in my command and have expressed the conclusions drawn from this in the form of demands for the improvement of the defence against the heavy attacks made by the Allies against the occupied western zone, in their attempt to force a decision.

The C. in C.s will be able to examine this secret judgment of the situation when they visit C. in C. West.

In Directive No. 51 the Fuehrer has confirmed this judgment of the situation, and has given these orders:

1. Nothing has altered in the heavy demands made on our military strength in the struggle against Bolshevism. The danger in the east remains, but the extent of the territory there allows of quite a considerable loss of ground without the vital life of Germany being dangerously affected. But it is very different in the west. If the enemy succeeds here in breaking through our defences on a wide front, then the imminent consequences are beyond imagination.

2. All the signs indicate that the enemy will launch an attack against the western front in Europe at the latest in the spring of 1944 - perhaps earlier.

3. It is therefore no longer permissible that the west should be weakened so that other fronts should be strengthened. The Fuehrer has therefore decided to strengthen the defences in the west, especially at the important points which lie nearest to the British Isles, for the enemy will probably attack there; there the decisive invasion battles will be fought. The probable danger points lie in the area under the command of C. in C. Netherlands, C. in C. 15th Army and C. in C. 7th Army.

At the same time other attacks can be expected, which are connected with the main one, and which are intended to divert our attention - for example a simultaneous attack might be made against the south coast of France. Since at the beginning of the battle the entire force of the enemy's attack will be directed towards the occupation of the coast, our coastal defences must be increased to the maximum in the possibly short time left, using all available strength of personnel and materials in the western area.

I would refer in this connection to the standing orders No. 31 issued by C. in C. West on October 21, 1943 (on the completion of the defence in depth of the coast) and No. 32 issued on October 28, 1943, and to the conferences on this subject held on November 10 and November 11.

Once again I insist that iron and concrete should be poured into the main defensive line with all the resources of the Todt organisation, while the second position in the field will be supplied by all available troops with all additional aids.

4. The immobile weapons (such as anti-tank guns, tanks dug into the ground, artillery of all kinds, mines and so on) which in the next few weeks and months will be coming to the west are to be placed closely massed together at the danger points on the coast. I have already begun to allocate the weapons for this purpose, although I am fully aware that the defences in less threatened sections cannot yet be improved.

5. If in spite of this the enemy achieves a landing by using all his forces, he must be met by the full weight of our Counter-attack. Therefore everything depends on swift and sufficient concentration of forces and material and on effective development of the existing large units into valuable fully mobile reserves ready for attack, so that we can counter-attack and drive the enemy back into the sea.

6. Therefore all forces from these parts of the coast which are not attacked, that are ready for action must be thrown in against the enemy with all possible dispatch.

Marinegruppe West and Luftflotte 3 will support the army in their ruthless assault.

7. Arrangements will be made for this development by taking special measures. These measures are:

(a) Sufficient mobility of all panzer and panzer grenadier divisions in the west, and the equipment of these units with 93 Panzer IV's each, or with assault guns and heavy anti-tank defence, by the end of December. Speeding-up of the completion of the arming of the SS Panzer Division 'H.J.' and of the 21st Panzer Division.

(b) Further replenishing of the reserve panzer divisions in the west.

(c) The monthly assignment during November and December 1943 of 100 heavy anti-tank guns in addition to the heavy anti-tank guns necessary for the new formations in the west.

(d) Allocation of a greater number of weapons (among them about 1000 machine guns) to improve the equipment of the divisions permanently located in the coastal defence area.

(e) Plantiful equipment of the units in the threatened area with tank close combat weapons. Improvement of the artillery fighting-power and the anti-tank defence of the units in the coastal defence area, and the strengthening of the army artillery.

8. Independently of those forces coming to the west, and apart from the draft-conducting battalions, construction battalions, security battalions and battle groups to be transferred to the west from instruction units, training establishments, and convalescent units, within 48 hours of the appeal from the Director of Army equipment and GOC Ersatz Army, the following measures are to be prepared by C. in C. Netherlands and the C. in C. of the armies, and are to be reported to me by November 12, as having been initiated:

(a) The withdrawal and re-equipment of every division in the coastal defence area, on the assumption that that sector will not be attacked (since the direction of the enemy's attack cannot be known beforehand). If it is attacked, C. in C. West will decide which divisions are then to be withdrawn.

(b) The increase of the mobility of these divisions by every possible means. I am well aware that with the means we can expect to be available, only a certain number of these divisions can be made mobile. Circumstances will decide which these shall be. These forces must be kept in readiness as 'mobile reserves' along with the army concerned, and kept constantly ready.

For C. in C. Netherlands 1 division, for the 15th and 7th armies 2 divisions each, for the 1st and 19th armies, 1 division each is the minimum.

(c) The installation of emergency units and other makeshift troops of every kind (drawing on construction squads and available defence forces) in that part of the coast which will then have been evacuated. Also the question of the return of the rear troops and mine disposal squads must be considered, and the maintenance of signals communications. The command of such a sector can be in the hands of O.C. Artillery, O.C. Engineers, and so-on.

(d) Other proposals for the armies which may release forces for the decisive battles. It is quite clear that these measures are thorough, but it is also clear that only firm resolution on the part of all available forces in the decisive area will bring us victory.

/For

For this reason I reserve to myself the right to decide on the release of senior officers for staff courses, or even for exercises.

9. It is obvious that in these circumstances the populace must be ruthlessly compelled to take part in all necessary repair work, keeping open damaged roads and communications, and so on.

The Military Commanders will see to this.

10. I request C. in C. Marinegruppe West and C. in C. Luftflotte 3 to acquaint me with the measures which must be passed through their official channels in conformity with the Fuehrer's Directive No. 51, so that the cooperation of the three services may be as close as possible in battle.

As soon as the proposals of C. in C. Netherlands and of the armies are laid before OKW, I will arrange, as preparation for the defence, that there will be exercises to practise the bringing up of the considerable motorised reserves and the units which are temporarily mobile and on battle training, and also that units and higher commands going over to training can be withdrawn from the coastal defence area and replaced by emergency units and other defence troops. The experience gained in these exercises will be of immediate value.

I know that these orders demand the utmost exertion from every individual in the coming weeks and months. But every individual also knows what is at stake.

Let all responsible for the carrying out of the Fuehrer's command take care that not one moment and not one ounce of energy is wasted in futile questions, but let them see to it that the power to defend and to attack is built up.

Orders issued by von Rundstedt

November 26, 1943.

In Ob. West, Ia Nr. 673/43 g. Kdos. Ch. dated November 18, 1943, I ordered the start of the preparations for the building up of an army group to counter-attack against the expected enemy large-scale attack.

In contrast to the localised attack at Dieppe in the summer of 1942, and according to all experiences since (e.g. Sicily, Salerno), it will be a case in future of so attacking the enemy once they have landed, with heavy armoured troops wherever is most suitable for such operations, that these valuable units will not be sacrificed to the ships' guns of the enemy, but will be able to lead a decisive thrust.

That means - naturally it depends on circumstances and the state of the battle area - that for the tanks to rush into concentrated enemy fire from heavy ships' guns and to thrust recklessly straight to the coast is today no longer the only way, but instead the large tank units must fight away from this zone of fire, unless the enemy fleet is compelled by our fire to stand off from the coast and to give up its power to influence the battle on land.

Next to the opposition put up by the coastal batteries, in my opinion the heavy and continuous attacks of our air forces on the enemy fleet (including transport ships) will play a decisive role. Everything depends on depriving the enemy during the landing of his artillery support from the sea and his supply of new forces, heavy weapons and reinforcements.

I cannot judge which air forces can be placed at the disposal of C. in C. West in the event of a large-scale enemy landing. However I consider specially effective the intervention of powerful forces of fighters and above all of numerous torpedo-bombers, since the latter without doubt represent the most effective means of attack against any considerable naval target. It is obvious that very strong fighter protection will be necessary for this.

I would ask you to attend to this question and - if possible - have the adequate air forces ready so that in the event of a large-scale landing they can be sent into action as early as possible, and continuously.

Orders issued by von Rundstedt.

December 28, 1943.

I. OKW announces that the concentration of the enemy's forces in Southern England is almost completed. C. in C. West can therefore count on the fact that from the middle of February, the enemy preparations will be complete.

From the middle of February, the enemy large-scale landing can be expected at any time. The urgent necessity to bring up all possible forces to the specially threatened coastal strip in spite of the obstructing by the enemy air force of our communications network makes it vital to begin our preparations before the enemy seek a decision by their large-scale landing.

II. The Fuehrer has therefore ordered:

As the 15th Army's front and the right wing of the 7th Army (the Cotentin Peninsula) are specially threatened, the bulk of the available forces must be massed behind these fronts. The units brought up are to be hurried on in their training and are to construct their positions splinter-proof.

III. The beginning of the concentration is to be from January 1, 1944.

IV. Individual measures to be taken:

(a) By C. in C. West:

1. Beginning from January 15, 4 divisions are to be withdrawn from the coastal front held by the 1st, 7th and 19th Armies and are to be put, from February 1, into the area mentioned in II. Reserve Divisions 159 and 165 will be released for coastal defence duties in the occupation of the coastal defence sections. The rest of the occupation will be completed, in conformity with the the preparations of C. in C. West, by fortress troops, troops from the east, emergency units and defence units.

2. In connection with the grouping of the 4 infantry divisions (see 1) the possibility should be examined of bringing nearer to the threatened coastal sector, in the second half of January, some fast moving divisions, in particular the 21st Panzer Division, and having them made ready for action there.

3. To strengthen the defence of the evacuated coastal defence areas, and to defend the area left unprotected by the withdrawal of the Reserve Divisions 159 and 165, Divisions 271, 272 and 275 are to be brought up to the area Besançon - Toul - St. Dizier - Dijon and St. Etienne - Lyon - Bourg respectively, behind the area occupied till now by the 243rd Infantry Division. The transferring of the above divisions must be completed by January 10. The formation of the divisions in the new areas must be carried out quickly and they must have formed battle groups ready for attack for February 15.

(b) By director of Army Equipment and GOC Ersatz Army:

1. From January 15, 4 reinforced regimental groups are to be brought up to the area commanded by C. in C. West. They are to be brought in to support 3 divisions and 1 regiment of the 348th Infantry Division in the specially threatened coastal sectors.

2. From January 1, the instructional units of the Panzer School are to be brought up. From them the Panzer Instructional Division is to be set up in the Verdun - Toul - Nancy - Luneville area. Orders for this are to be issued by Director of Army Equipment and GOC Ersatz Army. 1 artillery regimental H.Q. staff, 2 batteries and L. of C. troops must be supplied by C. in C. West to help with the building up of this division, which is to be completed by March 1.

3. From January 15, 5 air defence battalions are to be brought up. They will act as a substitute for the defence regiments which are to be put into the coastal defence, or they can strengthen the guard for the permanent way.

(c) By C. in C. South-West: From the end of January the 'Hermann Goering' Panzer Division is to be brought up, without tank or assault gun equipment. The bringing-up of the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division is intended for the end of February. Speedy refitting of both divisions will be ordered specially by the Army General Staff. Accommodation space will be announced by C. in C. West.

(d) By Director of Armed Forces Transport: Between January 25 and February 15, the personnel reserves for the railway are to be brought up to C. in C. West's area in 2 or 3 groups, and installed at the danger points in the vital stretches.

Blumentritt's circular dated January 17, 1944, on Jodl's visit to the Channel coast.

1. On the Fuehrer's orders, General Jodl, Chief of the Operations Staff of OKW visited a part of the Channel front, to get a picture of the state of preparedness of the defence.

2. If circumstances permit, he or his deputy (General Warlimont) will later make a second tour, which will extend to the area of the 1st and 19th Armies.

3. The principal observations made to me were the following:

(a) It is easily seen that in the history of the building of the western fortifications, system has only gradually appeared since 1942-1943. While considerable sectors are much more strongly fortified than was thought at OKW, others again are disappointing. Everything depends on the quickest possible establishment of uniformity in the defence system.

(b) The great indifference towards the French, many of whom can certainly be described as agents in harmless guise is very noticeable. Just as noticeable is the almost peacetime attitude towards French concerns and the German administration in the coastal zone.

This will be violently altered by OKW after the report to the Fuehrer, with the result that in the coastal defence area, only the military leader who is responsible for the defence will have any say, and no one else. He can at any time evacuate inhabitants whom he does not wish to have in this zone. Also in these areas, only his commands about the pulling down of buildings, cutting down of woods, construction of field works, getting material from the land and so on are decisive, since they serve the vital defence of the west.

(c) Camouflage and field construction vary a great deal. Some divisions have their installations excellently camouflaged and well built.

(d) Holding of the army group reserves (panzer divisions and motorised divisions) at the coast needs very accurate timing, so that these divisions will not be brought into battle too soon, but will be able to be sent quickly, according to circumstances, to the different fronts under C. in C. West. Also OKW must be in a position to move units from these divisions at any time to other fronts. Besides this, there are at the moment various 'exercises' to be prepared by C. in C. West, both inside and outside of his area.

(e) The supplies ordered by the Fuehrer need constant checking. If defence installations are 'surrendered' during exercises, excuses such as "We could not hold on any longer, because we had no more ammunition or supplies" lead in every case to court martial investigations, and to speedy discharge. As the stores are in many cases not yet completed, the Chief of the Operations Staff of OKW takes the view that at least the important defence areas should be provided with the prescribed stores, so that they will not exhaust their stock of ammunition.

(f) Right up to the most advanced front, the number of soldiers in billets with portfolios is astonishing; a proof that very many depôts and offices are doing paperwork, instead of being interested in construction and defence. In this matter we await the result of the 'combing out' and the proposals of the 'commissions' which have been set up.

(g) Foreign troops drawn from eastern countries:

In general a good impression was received, but their arms were criticised.

Suggestions made by C. in C. West about this had up till now shown no results.

Chief of the Operations Staff of OKW drew attention again to the fact that careful inspection, a framework of trustworthy personnel, and close association with German troops in the event of attack are vitally necessary.

In no event should they be given independent duties in the coastal defence without German leaders.

(h) The disposition of the coastal artillery was criticised to a certain extent. Batteries must not be placed on the forward slope (important for the placing of new installations).

(i) Second line of defence:

Progress of construction in some positions not entirely satisfactory. The populace could take a larger share in this. C. in C. West requests that complaints about non-participation or too half-hearted participation by the populace should go at once to him, so that he can have it dealt with by the military commander concerned.

(k) Defence areas themselves still differ very much. Huts as billets in many places are still exposed and make perfect bomb targets.

(l) Equipment with bicycles:

A.Q.M.G. West has assigned considerable numbers of bicycles to the armies. Yet in some places the lack of bicycles to create mobile reserves was stressed. The bicycles are intended to ensure the mobility of the troops, not to provide comfort for the orderly room, etc. C. in C. West will regularly allocate to the armies whatever bicycles become available.

OKW orders dated January 18, 1944

A. According to certain signs, the enemy preparations for landing in the west may be directed against Portugal and also against the Biscay coast and Southern Bordeaux. Landings in these sectors may be planned as subsidiary undertakings along with the present aim, to draw our reserves away from the Channel coast. The possibility must not be overlooked that the enemy may remove the main area of his attack on the Continent to Southern France, by extending the landings to the French Mediterranean coast. In this case, the first aim of the enemy will be to unite both invasion forces somewhere in the course of the Garonne and thus to cut the connections with the Iberian Peninsula.

B. The preparations made up till now for a large-scale enemy landing in the area under C. in C. West will not be suitable if these circumstances occur, since C. in C. West has, according to his orders, prepared his forces otherwise for action. The Fuehrer has therefore ordered the following counter-measures to be prepared:

1. By C. in C. West:

(a) In the first case, an effective blockade of the Spanish border. The forces used are to be increased beyond what was planned. The blockade is to be strengthened by the timely destruction of the most important installations on

the roads and railways leading in from the south. These measures are to be undertaken even if Spain should refuse to cooperate. Next the coastal defence in the southern sector occupied by the 1st Army is to be strengthened by at least 1 division. Preparations are to be made to bring in further troops. In connection with this, withdrawal of forces from the 15th Army's area will only be considered as a last resort.

(b). In the second case, there is to be gathered in the south of France a group of forces of at least 6 divisions (got by the dispersal of the concentration of forces in the 15th Army area), among them 3 or 4 fast moving units, and the southern area of the 1st Army and the French Mediterranean coast is thus to be strengthened. It will be the task of these operational forces to oppose the enemy in any further developments in the Iberian Peninsula, to prevent the enemy from gaining a foothold on the north coast of Spain, or to defeat the formation of a second front north of the Pyrenees. If it is clearly recognised that the enemy is building up a concentration in the south-west Europe area, then it will be necessary to bring to this new front all the forces which can be spared from the defence against secondary undertakings on the Channel coast as well as the major part of the forces from the other commands.

2. By the Luftwaffe:

In accordance with the verbal instructions given on January 5, C.in C. Luftwaffe will make all preparations to oppose with all his forces an enemy landing in Portugal, which might have the harbour of Lisbon as its main point of concentration. He will also prepare to support C.in C. West in the coming operations (see B 1).

3. By the Navy:

Supreme Command of the Navy, Operations Division will examine the possible and necessary measures to be taken by the Navy in the event of enemy operations against Portugal and the Biscay coast.

General Jodl's views on invasion dates and probable direction,
dated May 10, 1944.

The following summing-up was transmitted by General Jodl to C.in C. West, by telephone, on May 9, 1944:

1. (a) OKW expects the enemy attack to begin in the middle of May - above all, May 18 is a possible date. Naturally we have no irrefutable evidence of this.
- (b) Main objective - firstly, Normandy; secondly Brittany.
- (c) We must expect that the enemy may try to destroy the defences on land and the garrisons on the coast within a narrow area, by continuous heavy bombing attacks, with simultaneous heavy firing and attacks from the sea. The possibility of the use of new weapons cannot be excluded. Very powerful air landings will be carried out, perhaps even in the hours of darkness.
2. (a) Troops must be skilfully camouflaged and dispersed.
- (b) Everything which is not protected by concrete must be dug in.
- (c) Special precautions must be taken in the peninsula against airborne troops.

/Hitler's

Hitler's Order of the Day to his troops in the west - issued to C.in C.s on May 13, 1944

The following Order of the Day of the Fuehrer is to be communicated at once to the divisions, and so many copies of it stored that by the beginning of the invasion the order can be issued at once right down to the regiments. The order is to be issued on commands from Operations Staff of OKW. The utmost secrecy is to be kept during the present issue and storing of the order so that the order may not be made known too soon. After it has been made known, the order is to be destroyed. Publication in newspapers at the front or on the wireless is forbidden.

"Soldiers of the western front, the enemy has embarked on the attack on Europe which we have long awaited. His intentions are known to us all. You are called on to bring them to nought and thus to ensure our national safety, the existence and the future of our people. In the victorious offensive in the west in the months of May and June, 1940, we had built up the military and material requirements for that struggle. Since then powerful fortifications have been raised on the coast of Europe by the toil of years. Now you defend our continent. Here you will defeat the attack of the enemy on your people and empire.

Soldiers, in this fateful hour I appeal to your valour, to your established courage and to the steadfastness of your hearts. It is your duty in all circumstances to forbid to the enemy entry into Europe. In this struggle you will combine the power of your weapons with the strength of your souls. The defeat of this attack is a question of life and death for our people and a historic task whose fateful importance demands the utmost from each of you. Here there can be no weakening and no manoeuvring, here a halt must be made, to stand fast or to die. Every leader, every commander of a strong point, of an island, of a fortress or of a ship must pledge to me his honour that he will never surrender, that he will continue the struggle to the last fighter, to the last grenade and to the last cartridge. In these days the German people and the whole world look to you.

I know that each of you, my brave soldiers, is deeply imbued with the will to fight in the coming days for a happy future for our people and to establish it safely for ever. Wherever the enemy attacks, he must be destroyed. He will not succeed in gaining a foothold on the coast that we defend. Victory will thus be ours! You are called on to fight for it and thus to fulfil the last requests of our fallen comrades.

Hitler's demand to 'hold fast' - Rommel's teleprint message - dated July 1, 1944.

The Fuehrer has decreed:

"The present positions are to be held. Every further breakthrough by the enemy is to be hindered by tenacious defence, or by local counter-attacks."

I refer again to my conference with the C. in C.s and beg you to make full use of the concentrated fire of all the heavy guns, directing it at the known enemy positions.

Hitler's order, transmitted by C. in C.West, on the conduct of the Normandy campaign, dated July 8, 1944.

The Fuehrer has given the following directive for the conduct of the war in the west:

1. The enemy has succeeded in the landing in Normandy, and in the surprisingly speedy capture of the Cotentin Peninsula with the fortress of Cherbourg.

The rapid widening of the bridgehead from Elboeuf to south of Granville which the enemy expected has miscarried.

The enemy's next aim is very probably to push forward on both sides of the Seine towards Paris and so go over to the free use of the bulk of his most mobile forces.

A second enemy landing in the 15th Army area is therefore probable in spite of all the risks, the more so that his obvious intention of putting out of commission the sites for the long-range firing on London is becoming more urgent. The distribution of the forces still available in England point clearly in the first instance to attacks against the area between the Somme and the Seine by the divisions held ready north of the Thames, but attacks against Belgium and Holland are also indicated. Nevertheless surprise attacks to capture an important harbour in Brittany cannot be discounted. Equally, an attack on the French Mediterranean coast is a possibility. The time will depend on the intentions and the progress of the general operations. It is unlikely that the enemy will conduct two large-scale operations in the mediterranean simultaneously.

2. The state of our forces at the moment and the commitments of the greater part of the fast moving units prevent our making a major attack to destroy the enemy in his bridgehead. But the enemy bridgehead cannot be allowed in any circumstances to be materially widened, because otherwise our own forces will no longer be sufficient to keep the bridgehead encircled, and the enemy will break out into the main area of France, where we have no suitable mobile forces with which to oppose him.

3. For the immediate future therefore, I order the following conduct of the campaign by C. in C. West:

(a) The present front at the bridgehead must be held, apart from slight tactical or regional alterations. The greater part of the fast moving units must be released at once by the infantry divisions which have arrived, and by those which are gradually arriving, and kept ready to act as reserves for counter-attack.

In addition to this, a speedy withdrawal of the 12th SS Panzer Division and the exchange of battle-weary infantry divisions for fresh troops is to be considered.

(b) After the relief of the fast units and their refitting near the front, an operation is to be prepared under the leadership of Panzer Group West Command, with the specific aim of driving a wedge into the enemy bridgehead by a surprise thrust, splitting it up as much as possible, destroying the strong forces and creating favourable conditions for further operations.

When it is reported to me that the vastly superior enemy artillery with its limitless supply of ammunition is destroying every position and every attack, I reflect that the method used by the German 5th Army in September 1914 must be tested: a surprise infantry attack by night without any previous gunfire and a thrust right through to the battery positions. This method holds out promise of great success if there is careful preparation, good leadership and complete surprise, since the enemy infantry is described as inferior and very vulnerable.

(c) The strong reserves of the 15th Army behind the coastal front must remain there until evidence is obtained whether the American Army Group is going to undertake a new landing or will bring their forces into the bridgehead of General Montgomery's army. A previously discussed exchange of a fast unit of the 7th Army for an infantry division of the 15th Army can be considered at this time.

(d) The heavy enemy artillery fire must be met, exactly as in the last war, by the scattered deployment in depth of our own troops and by close concentration of all our guns and mortars (also the divisional artillery) under O.C. Artillery. Where the front approaches the coast, the batteries of long-range guns must be concentrated.

(e) The front held by the 19th Army weakened by the withdrawal of 3 infantry divisions, must be strengthened again as quickly as possible by the bringing up of the 716th and 352nd Infantry Divisions and the draft conducting battalions intended for this purpose. Preparations must be made for the rapid bringing up of the 11th Panzer Division to the 19th Army.

(f) To maintain the battle strength of the infantry divisions in C. in C. West's area, battle-weary infantry divisions are to be withdrawn in good time from the front, so that the number of divisions is kept as complete as possible. Only thus is re-equipment in a short time possible. C. in C. West cannot count on further infantry divisions being brought in from other fronts. The maintaining of the battle of the west can only be achieved by exchange and re-equipment within that area.

(g) The safety of the V1 sites must be constantly guarded against airborne attack. Besides the improvement of the guard and the drilling of the troops in the sites, the question must be raised whether further defence units supplied by emergency units could not be made available here.

(h) The struggle with the enemy terror organisation in C. in C. West's area is to be pursued with all possible means. The formation of bands well armed and organised on a military basis is to be prevented by mobile defence troops. Assistance of every kind is to be at the disposal of these defence troops, so that any threat will be eliminated.

(i) To maintain traffic on the most important stretches of the railway and on the main roads, commanders of iron courage must be brought in, with mixed staffs to whom the appointment of railway engineers and similar technical troops, the command of the construction columns of the TODT organisation, and of the defence troops is to be transferred, along with the organisation of the flak protection.

In spite of repeated enemy attacks, important installations - especially bridges - must be repaired in these main lines of communication. In this way, too, communications over the Seine must be re-established.

(k) In so far as it is not employed in the completion of fortifications already begun, the whole TODT organisation is to be used for the urgent repair work on destroyed traffic installations.

(l) For the protection and essential increase of navigation on the Seine, C. in C. West is to unite under one leadership the authorities already having a share in the Seine navigation and those which are to be brought in because of the war situation. Exact division of duties is to be arranged (mine-sweeping service, flak defence, allocation of personnel, fuelling stations, repairs and other shipping matters). Similar measures are to be taken in connection with those inland waterways which may become of special importance for getting supplies to the troops.

4. The Navy:

It remains the duty of the Navy to attack enemy supply routes continuously with all available forces, to damage the enemy naval forces and transport ships wherever they may be, and to prevent fresh landings by the use of coastal batteries and defence forces. Specially important is the continued mining of the approaches and landing places and attacks on the enemy heavy naval guns. The approach to Cherbourg harbour is to be mined, in close cooperation with the Luftwaffe, to deprive the enemy permanently of the use of this great harbour, till now the only one on the Continent. After that, the laying of defensive minefields off our own coast is to be continued.

The U-boats are to be so used that they achieve directly or indirectly the maximum easing of the strain on Army Group B while suffering the minimum possible losses. After the attacks in the Channel, the renewal of the U-boat warfare in the Atlantic can be considered.

/The

The available marine troops in the western area will remain at the disposal of C. in C. West for important defence duties. The completion of these tasks by the navy is of the utmost importance for the successful carrying out of the duties of the armed forces in the west.

5. The Luftwaffe:

Is to continue with all possible forces the struggle against the enemy invasion fleet and warships.

The mining of the Seine Bay is to be continued, with concentration on the mouth of the Orne, the convoy routes and the sea area off Cherbourg.

Every opportunity must be used, in cooperation with the land forces, to attack the focal point of the battle in the bridgehead.

In accordance with more exact orders from C. in C. West, fighter defence is to be provided for main railway lines and approach and supply routes, as well as for cross-country routes along the front.

6. C. in C. West will report to me:

- (a) His views, especially on 3(b)
- (b) Timetable for the relief of the fast units, and for the withdrawal from the battle group of the 77th, 91st and 352nd infantry divisions.
- (c) Suggestions for further re-grouping and release, to maintain the fighting power of the units in Normandy, in C. in C. West's area.
- (d) Choice and organisation of the approach and supply routes to be protected, as well as the main railway lines.

In addition I command that Army Group B reports, as far as conditions permit:

- (a) Their intention with regard to the withdrawal of the major part of the fast units.
- (b) At the right time (after the relief and re-equipment of these fast units), their intentions with regard to the operation to be undertaken by Panzer Group West Command (with map).
- (c) An approximate timetable for (a) and (b), as well as proposals for the withdrawal from the battle group of the 77th, 91st and 352nd infantry divisions.
- (d) Proposals for further re-grouping within the Army Group B area, to maintain the fighting power of the B units in Normandy.
- (e) The complete organisation of the approach, supply and cross-country routes to be protected in the Normandy battle area, in so far as they lie within the area of Army Group B (with 1 : 200,000 map).

It is obvious that intentions and timetables depend completely on the situation of the enemy.

A.H.B.6, DISTRIBUTION

Same as for Translation VII/64.