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THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN: The Battle of Rimini  
and the subsequent Advance to the River Ronco  
(11 Aug - 31 Oct 44)

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

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HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)

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

1. Information from German military documents concerning the earlier phases of the Italian campaign has been set forth in Historical Section (G.S.) Reports No. 14 (Sicily), No. 18 (Southern Italy), No. 20 (Central Italy) and No. 24 (From the Fall of Rome to the Evacuation of Florence). The present report is a direct continuation of Report No. 24. It deals with the information from German sources for the period of the Allied advance through the Apennine positions, but differs from the preceding report in the manner of presentation and coverage. Material of general interest is overshadowed by specific information on the role of 1 Cdn Corps in the dislodging of the enemy from his Apennine strongholds. Developments in the area of Fourteenth Army, less spectacular and decisive than in the previous phase, are dealt with cursorily and mainly in connection with the supporting actions carried out by the elements of 1 Cdn Armd Bde. The operations of 1 Cdn Corps during the time in question have been described in detail in Historical Section, Canadian Military Headquarters, Report No. 187 (The Breaking of the Gothic Line and the Capture of Rimini) and Historical Section Report No. 25, (From the Marecchia to the Ronco). The role played by 1 Cdn Armd Bde under command of 13 Brit Corps in the drive of Fifth Army through the central part of the Gothic Line has been described in Historical Section, Canadian Military Headquarters, Report No. 175.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

2. 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 (G.M.D.S.), Washington, D.C. A number of these 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.
3. In preceding reports the information from the War Diaries of Tenth Army was frequently supported and amplified by material from Corps and Army Group levels. Records of lower formations and units were almost totally lacking, a circumstance regretted most keenly whenever the details of an action would have been of particular interest to the Canadian military historian. In the case of the present report this situation was aggravated by the unavailability of the records of 76 Pz Corps, the formation which controlled the divisions opposing the Canadian advance. The substance, therefore, of this report had to be drawn almost entirely from the fortunately well kept records of Tenth Army. These in turn are available only up to 31 Oct 44. Almost no



German material has been found for the last three months of Canadian operations in Italy, and in consequence this series of reports comes to an end with the presentation of the material covering the suspension of the Allied offensives in Italy at the end of October 1944.

4. Despite the fact that diligent search by competent agencies has hitherto failed to unearth the War Diaries of 1 Para Div, it might be well to remember that German commanders were encouraged to prepare, and deliver for safekeeping to the headquarters of their affiliated reserve formations, full copies of their own official War Diaries. It would be difficult, for instance, to believe that the ambitious and competent Heidrich should have failed to deposit the records of his famous division in some relatively safe place. If not destroyed, they may come to light at some future date and add to our store of information on the battles with their perennial foe and nemesis, the First Canadian Corps.

#### DISPOSITIONS OF TENTH ARMY ON 11 AUG

5. During the last days of July and early in August, when Allied pressure forced Fourteenth Army to fall back behind the Arno river and to evacuate the city of Florence, Tenth Army, to conform with the movements of the neighbouring Army, and alternately prodded by 2 Pol Corps and 10 Brit Corps, continued its gradual withdrawal in the direction of the Gothic defences. Following the exchange of the two Corps Headquarters on 8 Aug (Hist Sec Report No. 24, para 77), on 11 Aug Tenth Army from right to left was disposed as follows:

Tenth Army (Headquarters at Pizzocalvo, 12 km east of Bologna)

51 Mtn Corps (Headquarters 2 km south-west of Dovadola)

715 Inf Div<sup>XX</sup>  
334 Inf Div  
15 Pz Grn Div<sup>XX</sup>  
305 Inf Div  
114 Jg Div<sup>XX</sup>

76 Pz Corps (Headquarters at S. Pietro, 1.5 km south-east of Meleto (near Monte Gridolfo))

5 Mtn Div adjoining 114 Jg Div  
71 Inf Div in coastal plain  
278 Inf Div on land front to coast

and 1 Para Div<sup>XXXX</sup>

Corps Witthoeft<sup>XXXXXX</sup>

162 (Turc) Inf Div (Cattolica - Ravenna area)  
98 Inf Div<sup>XXXXXX</sup>

Venetian Coast Command (Gen of Inf Dostler)

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<sup>XX</sup> From inter-army boundary at S. Donato a Torre (on river Arno, 6 km west of Pontassieve).

<sup>XXXX</sup> In process of being withdrawn into Army Reserve; disengagement of last substantial elements completed by 24 Aug (para 35 below).

<sup>XXXX</sup> To Corps boundary between Passano and Caione, approximately 11 km south-west of Mercatello (on river Metauro).  
(Footnotes continued on page 3)



The dispositions of the two Corps on the land front have been taken from the following documents:

Tenth Army, sit map 10/11 Aug 44 (Photostat 981A10.(D202))  
(G.M.D.S. - 61437/17, Tenth Army, W.D.8,  
sit maps 1-13 Aug 44)

51 Mtn Corps, sit map 12 Aug 44 (Photostat 981A10.(D203))  
(ibid)

76 Pz Corps, sit map 12 Aug 44 (Photostat 981A10.(D204))  
(ibid)

The balance of the information presented in this paragraph and the footnotes thereto, is based on the entries between 1 and 15 Aug in the main volume of the aggregation of source material, which in its entirety constitutes Tenth Army's War Diary No. 8 (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, August and September 1944)

(Note: A full order of battle of Tenth Army for 15 Aug appears as Appendix "A" to this report (see para 13 below)).

TENTH ARMY'S INTERPRETATION OF THE SITUATION  
PRIOR TO THE ALLIED CROSSING OF THE METAURO RIVER  
(11 - 25 AUG)

6. According to the documentary evidence, during the second week of August Tenth Army had reached the conclusion that the Adriatic sector, far from teeming with enemy formations, was actually very lightly held (Hist Sec (G.S.) Report No. 24, para 79). Furthermore, the records written at the time of the events show quite clearly that any changes in the dispositions of Tenth Army between 11 and 25 Aug were either a direct consequence of the Allied invasion of Southern France or were in response to local tactical requirements. The gradual changes leading to the dispositions as they were at the time of the Metauro crossings, will be mentioned in the following paragraphs; they are of lesser importance, however, than other facts related below in connection with the appreciation of the situation as it developed from day to day in the minds of the Corps, Army and Army Group commanders and their Chiefs of Staff.

11 Aug

7. The situation, as seen by the enemy on the morning of 11 Aug, is shown below by a series of excerpts from the day's telephone conversations:

0910 hrs v. Vietinghoff (Heinrich, Col-Gen, Comd Tenth Army) - Kesselring (Albert, Field Marshal, Comd Army Group "C")

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~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ (Footnotes continued from page 2) Complete in Corps reserve in coastal area between Fano and Cattolica.

~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ Corps Witthoeft under command of Tenth Army since 17 Jul 44.

~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ Relieved 94 Inf Div in Ravenna - Cesena area. Took over command in area at 1800 hrs 2 Aug, was complete in area by 15 Aug.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 1-15 Aug 44)



v.V: ...And then I have an idea which I should like to mention casually. In the area of Hoppe<sup>■</sup> and Raapke<sup>■</sup>, if one were to throw in some additional forces, one might perhaps carry out a small counter-attack and possibly wipe out the Poles<sup>■</sup>

K: That would be very desirable, but for the moment my eyes are turned steadily towards the right, so that I do not think that any forces could be spared.

v.V: I quite understand. We would need Heidrich, Rodt and Baade<sup>■</sup>. If it were possible to make these available, it would be possible to achieve something worthwhile within four to five days.

K: I believe so too, unless possibly after all the Canadians should be massed in their rear area. Have you found out just where they are?

v.V: It is not clear yet. First radio interception said they were behind the left wing. But now deserters say there is no one there. So it may have been a radio deception.

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■ HOPPE, Harry, Lt-Gen, Comd 278 Inf Div.

■ RAAPKE, M., Lt-Gen, Comd 71 Inf Div.

■ Under the circumstances this was of course a somewhat pathetic idea; impracticable in view of the total remaining German strategic potential; ill-timed in view of the explosive situation in the Tyrrhenian area. Such enterprises of opportunity were still possible at the time when Ludendorff had attempted to create a workable pattern for total war by subordinating all agencies of the state to the military. But now, in his attempt to create such a pattern in a different way, Hitler had made the armed forces the tool of the political high command, and army commanders had become cogs in a machine. As far as Kesselring is concerned, his performance in Italy shows that he was aware of the impossibility of separating strategy from political considerations; despite his frequent misreadings of Allied intentions he served his master well - it was the master rather who failed him.

■ HEIDRICH, Richard, Lt-Gen, Comd 1 Para Div.

RODT, Eberhard, Lt-Gen, Comd 15 Pz Gren Div.

BAUDE, Ernst Guenther, Lt-Gen, Comd 90 Pz Gren Div.



K: Who is on Raapke's left wing near Corinaldo?  
Is there anything new from there?

v.V: Up to now there have only been reports about  
Poles from there. At the moment this is really  
all. ...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/4; Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 9-12 Aug, Appx 244,  
tel cons 11 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D205)<sup>≠</sup>)

12 Aug

8. With his attention centred on the Tyrrhenian flank,  
on 12 Aug Marshal Kesselring was further put at ease regarding  
the situation in the Adriatic sector by the commander of Tenth  
Army. General v. Vietinghoff reported the absence of any sub-  
stantial British or Canadian forces in the rear area of 2 Pol  
Corps; what he did not know of course was that a great trek of  
Eighth Army's assault divisions to this area was already under way.  
A picture of comparative quiet and serenity was conveyed by the  
following remarks:

0905 hrs v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

v.V: It has been quiet with us. There is nothing  
special going on, and due to the various state-  
ments of deserters, we now have a definite feeling  
that there is no one behind the Poles.

K: That there is nothing behind them?

v.V: Yes, nothing. There are only Poles and Italians  
there. The Poles have become somewhat more inter-  
mixed with the Italians; there is a British  
armoured brigade there, but there are no signs  
of the presence of British forces in any strength.  
It has been established by agents that in one rear  
sector even the bridges have not been repaired, so  
that in my opinion, there is no question of a large-  
scale frontal attack.

K: What about a seaborne hook?

v.V: I consider it possible on psychological grounds.  
Agents' reports keep coming in of some impending  
action in the Balkans. But it has always been  
my experience that when all agents' reports  
point to something happening at a certain point,  
then nothing happens there. And for this reason  
I consider it possible that the forces from  
Taranto and Bari are meant for action against us.

K: That may well be...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/4; Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 9-12 Aug, Appx 262,  
tel cons 12 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

9. As mentioned in several of the day's telephone  
conversations (ibid), two Allied convoys had been observed in

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<sup>≠</sup> Item 981A10.(D205) is a complete set of photostatic repro-  
ductions of Tenth Army's telephone conversations from 11-31  
Aug 44.



the vicinity of Corsica. Decisive events could not be far off, and Marshal Kesselring was making his final arrangements for the projected counter-moves to a landing at Genoa.<sup>#,##</sup> In view of the quiet situation on the Adriatic coast he was now ready to draw upon those formations of Tenth Army, which had been earmarked for service as a mobile Army Group Reserve in just this case (case GUSTAV; Hist Sec Report No. 24, paras 72 and 75). With the mass of 15 Pz Gren Div at the moment still entangled in fighting (only 104 Pz Gren Regt of the Division had already been assembled near Bologna) O.B.SW at 1410 hrs gave Tenth Army (in substance) the following orders:

...Transport arrangements will be made permitting 1 Para Div to move off in the direction of Genoa on 12 hours notice.

...Army Group "C" holds in readiness the transport required for transfer on short notice of one regimental group of 98 Inf Div.

...The Blocking Group of 162 (Turc) Inf Div to be ready for movement on 12 hrs notice.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/4, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 9-12 Aug, Appx 264a, 12 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D206))

In addition to these precautionary arrangements, 104 Pz Gren Regt (15 Pz Gren Div) and 4 Para Regt (1 Para Div) were alerted in the evening for immediate departure in a westerly direction.

10. Probably encouraged by the full success of an earlier, though much more elaborate, deception scheme creating the illusion of a build-up of Canadian forces on the Adriatic (Hist Sec Report No. 24, para 63), 1 Cdn Inf Div before their departure to the east coast tried to make the Germans believe that a Canadian assault force was being deployed in the Florence area. Had the Germans heard of this, no doubt they would have been further confirmed in their belief that a major thrust in that sector was imminent. By one of the vagaries of war, however,

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# The definite expectation of an Allied landing in Southern France would presumably have made such measures seem less urgent; in that event the Allies would surely follow the valley of the Rhone to eliminate Nineteenth Army as a threat to the right flank of the armies invading France from the West, but hardly debouch laboriously from the mountain passes on Kesselring's deep right flank, which could be turned so much more easily from Genoa (See also para 13, footnote 1.).

## PRETZEL, Horst, Lt-Col, G.S.C., at that time First Operations Officer of Tenth Army, in his post-war narrative: "Material for the Presentation of the Battle of Rimini" said:

In antithesis to Tenth Army, until after the middle of August O.B.SW edlung to the belief that the enemy would execute a large-scale landing in the Genoa area ...  
(981.011(D3), translation, p.3)



the Germans, although at the time desperately anxious to obtain information regarding Allied dispositions along the Arno, and despite the great number of civilians in the area, apparently never heard of the "Red Patchos" having been seen there. Careful perusal of all available records of Fourteenth Army for the period from 6-26 Aug reveals only a few casual references to Canadian forces:

12 Aug According to reliable sources 56 Inf Div and 5 Cdn Armd Div confirmed in the rear area of Eighth Army...

According to radio interception, Canadian formations south of Florence.

17 Aug According to prisoner of war statements: Canadian tanks attached to 8 Ind Div.

(G.M.D.S. - 62242/1, Fourteenth Army, Int Repts 1 Jul - 30 Sep 44, vol 3, Kurzneldungen, 12 Aug and 17 Aug 44). (Photostats 981A10.(D207) and (D208)).

The "accidental" capture by the enemy of a well coached member of a Field Security Section for instance, then, as on some other occasions, might have greatly strengthened the total effect of deceptive measures; the Main War Diary of Fourteenth Army for the period contains unusually frequent references to intensive reconnaissance work, and on 14 Aug the plaintive statement:

The taking of prisoners meets with difficulties, as the opponent refuses to become engaged in close combat.

(G.M.D.S. - 62241/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D.4, 1 Jul - 30 Sep, 14 Aug 44)

Due to the great importance of keeping track of Allied changes in dispositions, Fourteenth Army at the time was issuing revised versions of the "Enemy Situation Map" at intervals of three to four days. None of these maps show Canadian forces as being in the Florence area; 1 Cdn Corps was firmly believed to be complete in the reserve of Eighth Army. (G.M.D.S. - 62242/2, Fourteenth Army, Appx to Int Repts 1 Jul - 30 Sep 44)

13 Aug

11. Mainly in order to facilitate the disengagement of 115 Pz Gren Regt and other elements of 15 Pz Gren Div for the purpose of joining the Army Group Reserve, a local withdrawal of the left wing of 51 Mtn Corps was ordered for the night 13/14 Aug. 76 Corps for the day reported merely harassing fire and encounters with assault detachments. At 0915 hours Generals Herr<sup>m</sup> and v. Vietinghoff discussed the situation on the telephone; Herr said that local attacks, but definitely not a major attack, were being expected on the left wing; v. Vietinghoff said that the Corps would have to get used to the idea of losing 1 Para Div; he did not think, however, that the Allies were planning a landing in Italy. Herr agreed, and expressed the belief that the landing would take place in France. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/5, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 13-16 Aug, Appx 286, tel cons 13 Aug) (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

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\* HERR, Traugott, Gen of Pz Tps, Comd 76 Pz Corps



14 Aug

12. There was no fighting of any consequence in the area of Tenth Army. 305 Inf Div (with headquarters at Badia Prataglia) extended its command over the area previously held by 15 Pz Gren Div. Headquarters 76 Pz Corps were established at Gradara (south-east of Cattolica). 1 Bn 4 Pz Regt (a G.H.Q. tank formation) was placed under the direct command of 76 Pz Corps (ibid, Appx 304). (Photostat 981A10.(D209)<sup>2, 3</sup>)

15 Aug

13. The day's tactical developments on the Army front were of a minor nature; harassing fire on the left wing of 71 Inf Div increased in intensity; strikingly stepped-up Allied aerial activity included bombardment of the city and port of Ravenna. In the area of Corps Witthoeft 98 Inf Div was now complete in its assigned positions. At 0700 hours the Naval Liaison Officer notified Army Headquarters by telephone of the Allied landings in Southern France~~XXX~~. Apparently no further news regarding this development was received during the day; in uncertain anticipation of the possible repercussions, the day's telephone

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\* Item 981A10.(D209) is a complete set of photostatic reproductions of Tenth Army's daily final situation reports to O.B.SW for the period 11-31 Aug 44.

\*\*\* If only to show that "an army - is an army" wherever you find it, a message is quoted below that was addressed to all General Staff Officers by Col-Gen Heinz Guderian (appointed Acting Chief of Army General Staff after the attempt on Hitler's life):

24 Jul The report and command technique of the General Staff is unsatisfactory. Reports must be made conscientiously. Expressions like "if possible - as soon as the situation allows - as a rule - for the time being" are signs of senile calcification and will not be used. ...

Guderian

14 Aug Tenth Army to O.B.SW: All notified.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/5, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 13-16 Aug. Appx 312a and 312b, 14 Aug 44)

\*\*\* Much useful information regarding the developments in Southern France will be found in: Hist Div U.S. Dept of the Army, Manuscripts of German Officers, "The Italian Campaign", Part II, Chap 6, "The Development of the Situation in North-Western Italy in Connection with the Allied Landing in Southern France" (Photostat 981SOM(D80j)). The definiteness with which General Roettiger therein speaks of the expectation by Army Group "C" of an Allied landing in Southern France can hardly be reconciled with the many indications in contemporary documents (H.S. Report No. 24, para 74) of Kesselring's belief that a landing at Genoa was just as probable. According to the records there is no doubt that most general officers of the Army Group expected the landing to take place on the French coast. Whether Kesselring shared this opinion but stressed the danger of a landing on the Italian coast in order to spur on his commanders can not be determined without reference to the Army Group's records written at that time. Unfortunately these are not available.



conversations were short and desultory<sup>2</sup>. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 15 Aug 44). A new "Schematic Order of Battle" of Tenth Army was issued during the day; a photostatic copy and translation of the documents appear as Appendix "A" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/5, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 13-16 Aug, Appx 338b, 15 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D210)).

16 Aug

14. With Marshal Kesselring having been called to Hitler's Headquarters in connection with the developments in Southern France, the day's telephone conversations were mainly between Roettiger and v. Vietinghoff. Army Group "C" had no information from the latest invasion front; the Armed Forces High Command was said to be in the same position. 76 Pz Corps reported a further increase in the intensity of harassing fire on the sectors of 278 and 71 Inf Divs. This was taken as a sure sign that a resumption of the Polish advance was imminent, and it was decided to let the opponent complete his deployment and then to make a quick local withdrawal to the line Pagano - 1.5 km south of Barchi - Meloni - 1 km north-west of Fudi (on the coast). (G.M.D.S. - 61437/5, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 13-16 Aug, Appx 348b, tel cons 16 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D205)). (Formal consent by Army Group "C": Ibid, Appx 375, 16 Aug)

17 Aug

15. In connection with the problem of Allied dispositions in the Adriatic sector, the commander of 76 Pz Corps made the following remarks:

0910 hrs Herr - v. Vietinghoff

... During the last few days the volume of traffic in the mountains has been rather striking. I do not think that this means a troop movement. In Ancona the enemy is unloading busily; it may be assumed that there are movements of supply going on, which extend far inland.

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\* The increasing audacity of the Italian guerillas at the time was reflected in a telephone conversation of that day:

1300 hrs WENTZELL, (Fritz, Maj-Gen, C. of S. Tenth Army) -  
ROETTIGER, (Lt-Gen, C. of S. Army Group "C")

W: Here we are having fearful trouble. Four Italians have been shot between the Army commander's residence and Army headquarters. The guerillas have taken horses from the farmyards. That too was in the vicinity of the headquarters. The Army commander is furious and insists some action be taken lest Army headquarters itself be attacked in the end ... it is certainly alarming when 300 metres from our headquarters four Italians have to be laid low; ... our sentries are all Santa Clauses [very old] ...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/5, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 13-16 Aug, Appx 326b, tel cons 15 Aug 44).  
(Photostat 981A10.(D205))



According to the reports - 300 vehicles per hour - it must be a colossal mechanized movement. It could of course be that the enemy is exchanging some of the foreign troops for reconnaissance units - pressure must be put on Schrank<sup>#</sup> or Raapke to get hold of a prisoner somehow. The order has already been given. A dead Englishman has been found in the area where the commotion has been going on; the whole thing may be a relief movement. ...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 17-19 Aug, Appx 374b, tel cons 17 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10(D205))

16. The landings at Marseilles had now made a major landing at Genoa fairly improbable, and in the evening of 16 Aug Wentzell had said to Hauser<sup>##</sup>:

1810 hrs ...Looking at the situation as a whole we have too much in Italy; taking the broader view, the troops are now needed elsewhere ...

(Ibid, tel cons 16 Aug 44)  
(981A10.(D205))

It was therefore no surprise when in the morning of 17 Aug the order was received through the headquarters of Army Group "C" for immediate dispatch [to O.B.West] of 15 Pz Gren Div via the Brenner Pass. The pertinent orders from Army Group to Army, and from Army to 51 Mtn Corps are being retained in photostatic form (981A10.(D211) and (D212)). (G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 17-19 Aug, Appx 374 and 373, 17 Aug 44)

18 Aug

17. On this day 51 Mtn Corps reported sporadic harassing fire and lively vehicle traffic on the road west of the Arno from Talla to the North and on the road Monterchi - Città di Castello. 76 Pz Corps reported some harassing fire in the sector of 5 Mtn Div and, in the early evening, increasing pressure on the outposts of 71 and 278 Inf Divs. The outpost elements of both divisions were forced to yield ground, those of the former division at C. Micci ( 2 km SW Monte Porzio), those of the latter at Mondolfo. At Mondolfo the Polish infantry was supported by artillery and ground attack airplanes. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, 18 Aug 44)

18. While the senior officers of Tenth Army continued their vague speculations regarding the meaning of the intensive traffic in the rear areas of the opponent, the daily intelligence report of Fourteenth Army (for unknown, but no doubt, if they were known, interesting reasons) carried the following item:

From reliable source: Unusually large supply transports are being carried out at the present time in the Adriatic sector. They include bridging equipment. In connection with the intensive aerial activity in that sector, it seems that the enemy there is making preparations for

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# SCHRANK, M., Maj-Gen, Comd 5 Mtn Div

## HAUSER, Wolf, Maj-Gen, C. of S. Fourteenth Army



large-scale operations.\*

(G.M.D.S. - 62242/1, Fourteenth Army, Int Rep: 1 Jul - 30 Sep 44, vol 3, Kurzmeldungen, 18 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D213))

In the meantime Marshal Kesselring had returned from Hitler's headquarters, and the morning conversation with the commander of Tenth Army opened as follows:

0910 hrs v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

K: I have just been away for two days ... how are things looking down your way?

v.V: At the front of the righthand Corps all is quiet, but in front of the Corps on the left, in Schrank's area and east thereof, for some days rather marked activity has been observed behind the enemy front. Whether, as the Corps thought at first, that is only in connection with supply traffic which is now passing through Ancona, I do not know. I think it possible too that he is bringing in a new Brazilian or Greek division. In any case it is still doubtful what is happening there ...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Appx 395, tel cons 18 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

During the morning a meeting had been arranged for the next day between v. Vietinghoff and Kesselring. In a telephone conversation at 1050 hrs C. of S. Army Group "C" informed C. of S. Tenth Army for the benefit of the Army commander that the question of the transfer of 5 Mtn Div would be broached by Kesselring at the forthcoming meeting (ibid).

19 Aug

19. The tactical build-up of Eighth Army on the Adriatic was now in full swing, and the Poles increased pressure on the coast to the point where penetrations at various points brought home to the Germans the necessity of replacing weary 278 Inf Div by stronger formations or risk a breakthrough to the Green Line. Even without being aware of the massive forces being concentrated in the area by the opponent, Tenth Army and 76 Pz Corps judged themselves to be in an awkward position due to the certainty that the fully manned and well led 5th Mountain Division would have to leave the Army area. 90 Pz Gren Div would of course have been effective in the Genoa area, but was unsuited for operations in the Western Alps, and it could be expected that in the absence of

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\* The fact that the significant matter of the bridging equipment was not mentioned in the conversations of Tenth Army may point to an unsatisfactory condition in the dissemination of information. Tenth Army's Intelligence file for August 1944 is barren of information; the records of 76 Pz Corps are not available; the monthly Intelligence Summary of the Army looks as if it had been prepared hurriedly at a later date. On the basis of the available material it cannot be ascertained whether the Army's intelligence personnel had lost face over the previous fiasco, whether it continued to supply erroneous conclusions, or was unable to obtain any information at all; at any rate the telephone conversations for the period do not contain the once familiar phrase: "My Intelligence Officer tells me".



unduly alarming developments on the Adriatic coast 5 Mtn Div would be transferred to the Italo-French border. The upshot of the day's prolonged consultations was an order from Tenth Army for the regrouping of 76 Pz Corps. A photostatic reproduction and a translation of the order appear as Appendix "B" to this report<sup>¶</sup> <sup>¶¶</sup>. (Photostat 981A10.(D214)) (G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 17-19 Aug, Appx 418, 19 Aug 44)

20. This order provided for the transfer, by the morning of 23 Aug, of 1 Para Div to the Green Line - forefield position (along the north bank of the Metauro river), followed by the withdrawal of 278 Inf Div through 1 Para Div and thence laterally to the sector of 5 Mtn Div, whereupon the latter would withdraw and move off to a destination to be indicated by O.B.S.W. The "Red Line" of 5 Mtn Div, referred to in para 2, section b, of the regrouping order, was the divisional portion of an intermediate defence line forward of the Green Line - forefield position; it extended from the Corps boundary at 4 km north-east of Mercatello - 4 km south of Lunano - Monte Nuovo - S. Apollinare (1.5 km south-south-west of Pieve di Cognà) - Pallino (5 km north-north-east of Urbino). A picture of the original positions of 76 Pz Corps and 51 Mtn Corps, as they were on 19 Aug before the beginning of the withdrawals and regroupings, is being retained for purposes of reference in the form of photostatic copies of the following well-prepared situation maps:

981A10.(D215) 76 Pz Corps, sit map 19 Aug 44  
981A10.(D216) 76 Pz Corps, artillery positions 19 Aug 44  
981A10.(D217) 51 Mtn Corps, sit map 19 Aug 44  
981A10.(D218) 51 Mtn Corps, artillery positions, 19 Aug 44

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/18, Tenth Army, W.D.8, sit maps 14-19 Aug 44)

21. Partly in order to conform with the developments in the area of 76 Pz Corps, and partly to expedite the urgently desired extrication of the last elements of 15 Pz Gren Div from the front (particularly the Reconnaissance Battalion), during the

¶ Notes on the personal meeting of that day between Kesselring and v. Vietinghoff are not available; much relevant detail appears however in the records of the day's telephone conversations between the various Chiefs of Staff.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 17-19 Aug, Appx 417, 19 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

¶¶ At 2310 hrs Wentzell said to Hauser:

... The enemy picture is that 8 Ind Div and 6 Brit Armd Div (sic) are on our inter-army boundary. Then 4 Ind Div is in our vicinity in the Saltino area. With us, there seems to be one division missing - 4 Brit Div. He seems to be putting more and more in reserve. Now one must see what he is going to do with all these reserves ... On our east wing there is some trouble; Hoppe's infantry are no longer any good and we must put Heidrich in there ... (ibid)



day Tenth Army requested and obtained the consent of Army Group for the gradual withdrawal of 51 Mtn Corps to the "Red-Blue Line", one of the intermediate defence lines forward of the Green Line-forefield position. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/6, Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Appx 17-19 Aug, Appx 420, 19 Aug 44)

20 Aug

22. In the early hours of the day Tenth Army received a directive from O.B.S.W authorizing a withdrawal to the Green Line forefield position in the area of 76 Pz Corps and announcing the immediate return of 4 Para Regt to the Division. A photostatic copy and a translation of the document appear as Appendix "C" to this report (G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 437a, 20 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D219))

23. When during the day considerable pressure developed on the elements of 278 Inf Div at Cerasa, 76 Pz Corps decided to carry out the withdrawal to the north bank of the Metauro in two quick bounds. For the night 20/21 Aug a move to an intermediate line still forward of the Green Line-forefield position was ordered<sup>#</sup> (ibid, Appx 437b, 20 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D220)). The Metauro would then be crossed during the night 21/22 Aug (ibid, Appx 438, issued 20 Aug, dated 21 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D221)).

24. Tenth Army's "Enemy Situation Map" for 20 Aug appears in photostatic form as Appendix "D" to this report; it will be noted that 1 Cdn Corps was shown complete in Eighth Army Reserve (ibid, Appx 491a, 22 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D196c), repeated from H.S. Report No. 24, Appx "H").

25. Composition and strength of Tenth Army on 20 Aug were reflected in the "Weekly Report" issued on that day (ibid, Appx 447, 20 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D222)). Some of the information contained in that report has been extracted and re-arranged for the purpose of supplying a rough picture of the Army's strength at that time:

Tenth Army 20 Aug 44

Battalions	51 Mtn Corps	76 Pz Corps	Corps Witthoeft	Total
Strong (over 400 )	4	8	11	23
Medium (below 400 )	13	8	2	23
Average (below 300 )	13	11	2	26
Weak (below 200 )	8	1	-	9
Exhausted (below 100 )	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>81</b>

# This intermediate line extended inland from Madonna del Ponte (on the coast) - Palombara - Piagge - south of Cavallara - road junction south-east of Villadelmonte - Isola di Fano - S. Martino dei Muri - Monte Scatto - Molleone - Secchiano (3 km west of Cagli) - Fonte di Cerreto (7.5 km west of Cagli) - Apecchio - north of Fontana Parnacciano (9 km south-south-west of Mercatello). (Decoded from Appx 437b, ibid)



Guns (with Inf Divs)	51 Mtn Corps	76 Pz Corps	Corps Witthoeft	Total
A.-Tk guns medium	9	-	-	9
A.-Tk guns heavy	78	50	27	155
Guns light	119	107	61	287
Guns heavy	24	25	15	64
Assault guns	24	20	7	51
Propaganda projectors	-	4	-	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>570</b>

21 Aug

26. In the absence of any pronounced pressure on the right wing of 76 Pz Corps O.B.SW may now have felt that a mere authorization to fall back (para 22 above) might fail to bring immediate results, and at 0015 hrs 21 Aug he issued an order for the withdrawal of the Army to the Red Line:

The development of the situation requires the early commitment of 5 Mtn Div on the Italian French border. To accelerate the taking out of this division the Army withdraws to the Red Line ...

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 20-25 Aug, Appx 464a, 21 Aug) (Photostat 981A10.(D223))

27. Following a withdrawal during the night, 51 Mtn Corps remained undisturbed during the day, but in the area of 76 Pz Corps fighting developed in all divisional sectors, and in the coastal sector reached such proportions that 278 Inf Div was forced to cross the Metauro in the afternoon, and not during the night 21/22 Aug as had been planned originally. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 21 Aug 44). In the meantime 1 Para Div was moving southwards to the north bank of the Metauro and on the following day assumed command of the sector of 278 Inf Div (ibid, 22 Aug). On Tenth Army's situation map for 21 Aug the north bank of the Metauro was shown as being held by the units of 278 Inf Div; on that of 22 Aug by those of 1 Para Div (G.M.D.S. - 61437/9, Tenth Army, W.D.8, sit maps 20-29 Aug 44).

28. During the day it had been mentioned in telephone conversations that 334 Inf Div too might now have to be moved to another theatre of war (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 21 Aug). Although there were then no signs of major action in the Adriatic sector, General v. Vietinghoff expressed concern over the depletion of his forces in a memorandum to O.B.SW, in which he requested a mobile division as an Army reserve by 1 Sep at the latest, possibly from Fourteenth Army and in exchange for 98 Inf Div (G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 20-25 Aug, Appx 465, 21 Aug) (Photostat and Translation 981A10.(D224))

22 Aug

29. The situation map of Tenth Army for 22 and 23 Aug is being retained in photostatic form (G.M.D.S. - 61437/19, Tenth Army, W.D.8, sit maps 20-29 Aug 44 (Photostat 981A10.(D225))) According to this map and as shown in the War Diary of Tenth Army (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 22 and 23 Aug) the front line of 76 Pz Corps on these two days was as follows:



Ospizio (on the coast, 2 km NW Fano) - Bignano Zacchini (5 km SW Fano - due north Carrara - C.S. Anna (4 km SE Monbaroccio) - S. Francesco (1.2 km SE Serrungarina) - Parra di Gaifa (5 km W. Fossombrone) - Point 696 (7 km SSE Fernignano, on the north bank of the Candigliano river) - due north of Acqualagna - south end of the railway tunnel 7 km SSW Fernignano; due south of the 'a' in Frontino di Naro) - S. Vincenza di Candigliani (7 km SW Urbani) - Cemetery Pieve dei Gratticoli (5 km SE Mercatello) - Ripa dell'Alto - M. Morricie (8 km SSW Mercatello) - il Montaccio (7.5 km SW Mercatello).

30. The day's telephone conversations were carried out by officers of lesser rank than usual. They revealed a mood of satisfied well-being. Nineteenth Army was roundly criticized for its poor performance, routine business was discussed, the enemy situation in the Adriatic sector was not mentioned at all and the atmosphere seemed to be free from any sense of urgency. At the same time a few miles further south the Eighth Army was slipping into assembly positions for its drive through the Gothic Line. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 20-25 Aug, Appx 482, tel cons 22 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

31. How far in the meantime the constant fight against the partisans in the rear areas had degenerated into a series of murderous German marauding expeditions can be gathered from a warning issued in this connection by Marshal Kesselring on 22 Aug. A photostatic copy and a translation of the document appear as Appendix "E" to this report. (Ibid, Appx 489a) (981A10.D226))

23 Aug

32. In the area of 51 Mtn Corps the gradual withdrawal to the Red Line was continued; in that of 76 Pz Corps 5 Mtn Div reported that the enemy had observed the withdrawals and occupied Acqualagna. 71 Inf Div reported some increase in the harassing fire on its sector; 1 Para Div reported that the opponent had crossed the Metauro river and was digging in on both banks\* (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 23 Aug).

33. Regarding Allied air activity the Main War Diary of Tenth Army carried the following notation:

Strikingly intensive activity of bombers and fighter-bombers, particularly attacks on the railroad stations along the Via Emilia (presumably for the purpose of disturbing the recognized movements of 5 Mtn and 15 Pz Gren Divs) and on the coastal defence zone of 98 Inf Div. An attack by 94 four-engine bombers on the industrial section and the railway station of Ferrara caused heavy damage.

(Ibid, 23 Aug)

34. The records of the telephone conversations for this day and for many days thereafter were filled with recitals of endless difficulties due to air attacks in the dispatch of 5 Mtn Div to the West. (Photostat 981A10.(D205)). A fleeting reference to the enemy situation was made during the day by Wentzell, who said to Runkel\*\*:

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\* According to Tenth Army's situation map for 22 and 23 Aug (see para 29 above) this crossing would seem to have taken place near the coast in the vicinity of Madonna del Ponte.

\*\* RUNKEL Henning Werner, (called "Fritz"), Col, C. of S. 76 Pz Corps



Unfortunately the enemy situation is very obscure. The Army has received a report on large naval units at Pola but this report was later withdrawn. In spite of that, such reports are somewhat disturbing and nothing must be taken away from Corps Witthoef.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 502, tel cons 23 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

24 Aug

35. On the whole the day was uneventful on the front of Tenth Army. The Armoured Reconnaissance Battalion of 15 Pz Gren Div finally left the area of 51 Mtn Corps to join the mass of the Division now waiting to move off via the Brenner Pass. Of 5 Mtn Div, the Field Replacement Battalion was entrained near Forlì, 1 Bn 85 Mtn Jg Regt was ready for loading near Bologna, and after darkness had set in 3 Bn 85 Mtn Jg Regt moved off in vehicles towards Mantua with the intention of entraining when and where possible. In comparison with the preceding day Allied air activity had lessened; the main subject of the day's telephone conversation was the plan to create an Army reserve by withdrawing 334 Inf Div from the front. In the afternoon 51 Mtn Corps received orders to extricate one half of the division by 30 Aug, and to make arrangements permitting a removal of the other half on short notice. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 24 Aug 44)

36. Instructions for the withdrawal of 334 Inf Div from the front and the corresponding widening of the sectors of the remaining divisions were laid down in a Corps Order issued on the same day. (G.M.D.S. - 62296/4, 51 Mtn Corps, W.D.3, vol 'C' of Appx, Appx C 386, 24 Aug 44). (Photostat 981A10.(D227)). Possibly due to his careful training in the old Austrian General Staff, General Furststein was ever ready to explain the reasons for his actions, and the Corps Order began with a description of the enemy situation on the Corps front:

Very considerable enemy forces have been withdrawn from the Corps front for commitment in Southern France or seemingly also on the Adriatic coast. At the present time, on the right wing of the Corps 8 Ind Div has been confirmed with its right wing at Pontassieve. Eastwards of the Arno it is not known to what extent 6 Brit Armd Div has been withdrawn from the front and replaced by another division (4 Ind Div?). Now as before 10 Ind Div (with 9 Brit Army Tank Bde attached) can be assumed to be on both sides of the Tiber and with the right wing extending to the area west of San Sepolcro. At the moment only irregular formations seem to be in the adjoining sector.

There are no indications of any kind pointing to the arrival of new enemy formations, and for the time being, therefore, no large-scale attacks are to be expected. For this reason Tenth Army has ordered the withdrawal of 334 Inf Div to form an Army reserve.

(Ibid)



25 Aug

37. As far as Tenth Army was concerned 25 Aug was a quiet day; the sun was shining brightly and it was very hot. (G.M.D.S. - 61437/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, 25 Aug 44). Generals v. Vietinghoff and Heidrich were on leave (Tel cons 25, 26, 27, 28 Aug) (Photostat 981A10.(D205)). Wentzell and Kesselring were in telephonic communication at 1010 hrs:

K: What's new with you?

W: Nothing special is happening here. So far the withdrawal towards the Red Line has proceeded according to plan.

K: What do you know about the enemy?

W: We still do not see very clearly. We get reports from one place and another. First there is a report from the Macerata area that something is happening there; then a new cavalry regiment is supposed to have appeared before 44 Inf Div. But just because the situation is so obscure we want to withdraw something into reserve. Our intention is to withdraw one half of 334 Inf Div by 30 Aug, and if all goes well we want to withdraw the whole Division.

K: That would be very desirable ...

K: Otherwise nothing of importance?

W: Otherwise nothing. We must now watch carefully what he is doing on the Adriatic. When he sees Heidrich's men there he may take his forces further inland.

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/7, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 20-25, Aug, Appx 544, tel cons 25 Aug) (Photostat 981A10.(D205))

38. Apart from an unusual number of documents dealing with the dispatch of personnel to various training courses, the day's records include the details for a large conference called by Tenth Army for 30 Aug to deal with the problems that would arise in the event of a sudden rush of traffic across the River Po (ibid, Appx 553) (Photostat 981A10.(D228))(see also para 73 below). The Allied air attacks on the Ravenna - Ferrara - Bologna triangle had now assumed serious proportions, and in addition to the constant stream of reports of minor destruction, word had been received that the big railroad bridge north of Ferrara had been destroyed. Tenth Army notified O.B.SW that the work of repair was going on by day and night and that fourteen anti-aircraft batteries were now detailed for the protection of the bridge (ibid, Appx 555)(Photostat 981A10.(D229)).



THE BATTLE OF RIMINI (25 AUG - 21 SEP)

Dispositions of Tenth and Fourteenth Armies on 25 Aug

39. According to Tenth Army's situation map for 24 and 25 Aug the divisions on the land front of the Army from left to right were then deployed in the following order; the location of headquarters is given in brackets:

TENTH ARMY (Pizzocalvo, 12 km east of Bologna)

76 Pz Corps (Gradara)

1 Para Div (S. Pietro, near Calibano)  
71 Inf Div (Monte Gridolfo, as of 25 Aug)  
5 Mtn Div (Macorata Feltria)  
(In process of being thinned out  
pending relief by 278 Inf Div.)  
(HQ 278 Inf Div at Mercatino as of  
25 Aug)

51 Mtn Corps (Bertinoro)

114 Mtn Jg Div (Badia Tedalda)  
44 Inf Div (Balzo)  
305 Inf Div (Badia Prataglia)  
334 Inf Div (Casale)  
(preparing for withdrawal  
to form an Army Reserve)  
715 Inf Div (1 km east of inter-army  
boundary at S. Biagio,  
south of Vicchio)

(G.M.D.S. - 61437/19, Tenth Army, W.D.8, sit maps  
20-29 Aug, sit map 24 and 25 Aug 44) (Photostat  
981A10.(D230a))

The section of the above map showing the dispositions of the left wing of 76 Pz Corps appears in photostatic form as Appendix "F" to this report (ibid) (Photostat 981A10.(D230b)). In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, Corps Witthoeft under direct command of Tenth Army with 162(Turc) Inf Div and 98 Inf Div is presumed unchanged in the coastal area from Cattolica to Ravenna; unchanged also is Venetian Coast Command (as shown in Appx "A" to this report).

40. The frontline divisions of Fourteenth Army from the inter-army boundary to the Tyrrhenian Sea were disposed as follows:

1 Para Corps

356 Inf Div  
4 Para Div  
362 Inf Div



14 Pz Corps

26 Pz Div  
65 Inf Div  
16 S.S. Pz Gren Div<sup>\*</sup>

(G.M.D.S. - 62241/3, Fourteenth Army, sit maps 1 Jul - 30 Sep, sit map 25 Aug 44)

In connection with the above line-up it must be noted that 26 Pz Div had been warned in the afternoon of 24 Aug, and during the morning, afternoon and early evening of 25 Aug had received progressively detailed orders for immediate withdrawal from the front and assembling near Inola as an Army Group Reserve.

(G.M.D.S. - 62241/5, Fourteenth Army, W.D.4, Appx 17 Jul - 30 Aug 44, folios 844a, 846, 846a) (Photostat 981A10.(D231))

Across the Metauro and to the Foglia River (25/26 - 29 Aug)

26 Aug

41. In pursuance of the order from O.B.SW for Tenth Army to withdraw to the Red Line (para 26 above), during the night 25/26 Aug 76 Pz Corps was on the move from the positions along the Metauro river in the direction of this line, which in fact was the outpost area of the Green Line.

42. The crossing of the Metauro river by the advance elements of 1 Cdn Inf Div during the last ninety minutes of 25 Aug was therefore unopposed and the early exploitation past the Via Flaminia to Serrungarina and Saltara did not result in fighting contact with 2 Bn 211 Gren Regt (71 Inf Div), then moving ahead of the Canadians in the general direction of Mombaroccio. The front line of 76 Pz Corps as at 1000 hrs 26 Aug was recorded by Tenth Army on a special map, which is being permanently retained by Hist Sec (G.S.) in photostatic form (G.M.D.S. - 61437/19, Tenth Army, W.D.8, sit maps 20-29 Aug, sit map 76 Pz Corps 1000 hrs 26 Aug 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D232)). A photostatic copy is also being retained of the situation map of 51 Mtn Corps for the same day (ibid) (Photostat 981A10.(D233)).

43. German opposition to the advance of the Canadian units on that day was not substantial and consisted mainly of sporadic rearguard actions. Considerable interest however attaches to the reactions at higher levels to the surprising developments in the Adriatic sector. The subject is dealt with

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\* In the reserve of Fourteenth Army at the time were 29 Pz Gren Div and 20 G.A.F. Div. 3 Pz Gren Div was then being concentrated at Verona for transfer [ to O.B.West ] via the Brenner Pass. The Division completed loading on 27 Aug and from then on was unavailable for commitment by O.B.SW; it was still available in the evening of 25 Aug, when in response to the report of an Allied landing at Ravenna O.B.SW alerted 26 Pz Div and 3 Pz Gren Div for immediate transfer to Tenth Army. The report proved to be unfounded and the order was cancelled at 2315 hrs (G.M.D.S. - 62241/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D.4, 24 and 25 Aug 44).



below in some detail by the presentation of a series of excerpts from the record of the day's telephone conversations (G.M.D.S. - 61437/8, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Appx 572, tel cons 26 Aug 44)(Photostat 981A10.(D205)):

0900 hrs Wentzell - Runkel (German synopsis)

The enemy artillery has been very active. According to the computations of the artillery observation unit, 25,000 shells have been fired on the left wing of the Corps. There has been no infantry action so far. Heidrich's left wing is still in the old positions. Where the fireworks took place everybody had left. One can see from these fireworks that the enemy is concentrating more and more on the joint between the two divisions. That area must be made secure ... Something is happening on the front of 5 Mtn Div; the enemy picture there has changed. The Army thinks that 4 Ind Div is there. According to the information now on hand at Corps headquarters the reconnaissance battalion of 4 Ind Div seems to be there. Whether the whole outfit is there we shall see during the next few days.

The paratroopers are now being strengthened; the Division has received 2,000 reinforcements. Heidrich does not intend to commit these before 15 Sep; situation permitting he may well do so. Seeing the paratroopers there, the enemy may turn inland. But C. of S. believes that within three to four days matters on the Corps front will come to a head; he is worried about Hoppe's sector [the sector where 278 Inf Div was about to relieve 5 Mtn Div].

1025 hrs Wentzell - Berlin<sup>#</sup>

On the whole there is nothing special. In the sector of 1 Para Div a British major from 1 Brit Div has been taken prisoner. What that means is not clear. It is possible that 1 Brit Div has been moved there through 8 Ind Div...

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# BERLIN, Hermann, G.S.C., then C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps, (Appointed 25 Jul, relieved v. Klinckowstroem and assumed functions on 14 Aug, appointed C. of S. 40 Pz Corps on 15 Sep, relinquished functions as C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps on 22 Sep, was succeeded in that appointment on the same day by GARTMAYR, Georg, Col, G.S.C., previously a section chief in Army General Staff, Q.M.G. Branch.(G.M.D.S. - 62298/2, 51 Mtn Corps, Personnel Section, Report for August 1944, Appx 8, 14 Aug 44; G.M.D.S. - 63606, 51 Mtn Corps, Personnel Section, Report for September 1944, fol 284, 15 Sep; Appx 17, 22 Sep 44).



On the coast a Pole has been taken prisoner, who states that they have been relieved by British formations<sup>#</sup>.

1345 hrs Wentzell - Roettiger

W: At Raapke's centre, near Montefelcino, they have taken a prisoner from 46 Brit Inf Div.

R: Well, well.

W: And so this Adriatic business becomes ever more serious.

...

W: Yesterday, the Polo who was taken prisoner on the coast stated that British formations were arriving there too. That cannot be a reference to 46 Brit Inf Div.

R: It must be another formation.

W: Yes. Now we have been busy trying to figure out what forces he could bring into action; it will be ten or eleven divisions.

R: To do that he would have to round up everything.

W: That is what he does; he did the same at Cassino. The question now is whether he intends to execute a straight land operation or a combined one ...

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# The first recorded reference to the statements of the Polish prisoner was made at 1025 hrs 26 Aug. Thereafter this subject was repeatedly mentioned during the day. This prisoner may have been captured on 24 Aug as Pretzell says ("The Battle of Rimini", op cit, (para 9 above) page 11 of translation), or, as seems more probable, on 25 Aug, but the information obtained from him was apparently not available at higher headquarters until the morning of 26 Aug. In this connection it might be noted that the Army's Intelligence Summary for August 1944 does not carry any reference to prisoners made or interrogated on 24 or 25 Aug, but for 26 Aug carries the following entries:

From prisoners the first news has been received of the relief of 2 Pol Corps by British formations . . . . In view of the fact that Canadians have been captured, commitment of 1 Cdn Corps must be reckoned with . . .

(G.M.D.S. - 61439/1, Tenth Army, W.D.8, Int file August 1944) (981410.(D235))

(Note: The above Intelligence Summary, though rather poor on the whole (para 18 above), in this particular case seems to support the weight of evidence pointing to the conclusion that this important information was not available prior to 26 Aug)



- R: How did you arrive at the figure of ten or eleven divisions?
- W: At the present time the following are not committed: 1 Cdn Corps, 5 Brit Corps, 6 South African Armoured, 42, 46, 56 and 57 Divs...
- R: In that case he would have to put in everything he has.
- W: That is what he does.
- R: Does he really do that?
- W: If he could thereby collapse our eastern wing. That he will go for the eastern wing - which is what one certainly must expect - is after all exactly the manner in which an operation ought to be conducted in order to ...
- R: The direction is the right one, all right ...

1650 hrs Wentzell - Major Schnell (Ops Offr 76 Pz Corps)  
(German synopsis)

The enemy is attacking with 46 Brit Div in the boundary area between 71 Inf Div and 1 Para Div. It can be assumed that he believes our withdrawal to be to the Green Line, and that he is therefore in close pursuit so as to smash us before we reach that line. This also explains the strong bombing attacks on the Green Line, particularly west of Pesaro, in 15 - 20 waves of 6 - 12 aircraft each. C. of S. asks for the Corps' appreciation of the situation. The Corps still believes that the attack will be halted. It must not happen that the enemy reaches the Green Line before we do. Whether the Corps will fall back to the Red Line during the night Sch. does not know.

1710 hrs Wentzell - Kesselring

- K: How do things look with you?
- W: I think that it is going to be quite an affair on the Adriatic coast. The British have appeared on Raapke's front, and now, at this very moment, comes the news that the Canadians are said to have appeared exactly at the joint between Heidrich and Raapke. Prisoners have been brought in too. Heidrich's battalion commander swears by his head that they are Canadians. But that must first be definitely confirmed. - Also the bombing patterns which have been reported today show that something is going on there, and that the enemy has a definite project in view. And the immense air activity which has been going on the whole day in Raapke's and Heidrich's sectors over the area forward of the Green Line and over the Line itself points to the same thing. One must assume that he has something big in view in order to smash us even before we reach the Green Line.