

Tenth Army, W.D. 8, Int Repts Sep 44, Report Propaganda Liaison Offr) (Photostat 981A10:(D284)). A tabulation in this document shows that a total of 2,945,000 leaflets, pamphlets and "news-papers" were dropped at the front during the month. 500,000 copies were made of the report on a fictitious interrogation of a Colonel Larionoff, who was said to have been a departmental head in the Soviet Ministry of War, to have repeatedly conversed with Stalin and Timoshenko, and to have revealed Soviet ambitions for the future. To this the Army commander, or his Chief of Staff, had added the following marginal note: "Did he at least exist? Please inform at once". Custom-tailored material was prepared for the Canadians:

For the Canadian troops a short story "Tony and Jenny" was written and 250,000 copies printed. It tells how at home the girl friend of a volunteer, who is fighting in Europe, is taken over by a war profiteer (ibid).

The Canadian born and raised wife of Interpreter Burnester (305 Inf Div) prepared a "Letter from Ontario", which excelled in local colour. (250,000 copies) (ibid)

Nearly two million leaflets were distributed among the civilian population:

To show the conditions prevailing in the Allied occupied part of Italy, 500,000 facsimiles were made of a fictitious letter from a Canadian soldier hospitalized at Trentola (ibid).

1 - 10 Oct

150. On 1 Oct the attempts to retain Monte Battaglia were given up. But cohesion between the two Armies had been established again and the Germans were hopeful of preventing Fifth Army from reaching the Via Emilia. In the Adriatic sector the rains had softened the ground, thereby ensuring a breathing spell for 76 Pz Corps. On 1 Oct Tenth Army had the following formations under its command, from West to East:

51 Mtn Corps with 715 Inf Div  
98 Inf Div (one regiment committed with 715 Inf Div; two still recuperating)

305 Inf Div  
356 Inf Div

76 Pz Corps with 114 Jg Div  
278 Inf Div  
90 Pz Gren Div  
26 Pz Div  
29 Pz Gren Div  
1 Para Div

Commander Venetian Coast with 162 (Turo) Inf Div and  
Commander Defence Area Venice (Maj-Gen Gall)

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 1 Oct 44)

Fourteenth Army at that time comprised the following major formations:



1 Para Corps with 334 Inf Div (nearest to boundary)  
44 Inf Div  
362 Inf Div  
4 Para Div  
16 S.S. Pz Gren Div  
94 Inf Div (en route to Army)  
Infantry Training Brigade

14 Pz Corps with 65 Inf Div  
42 Jg Div  
135 Fortress Brigade  
1043 Gren Regt (from 232 Inf Div)

Army Reserve: Battle Group composed of elements  
from 100 Mtn Regt (5 Mtn Div)

A schematic order of battle of the large formations of the Army was issued on 1 Oct. A photostatic copy of the document appears as Appendix "Q" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 65922/2, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, Appx 998, 1 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D287)). A tabulation of the G.H.Q. troops then with Fourteenth Army was issued on the same day (*ibid*, Appx 999, 1 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D288)).

151. Contrary to earlier intentions it was now decided to move 94 Inf Div immediately to the left wing of Fourteenth Army to relieve 44 Inf Div (*op cit*, W.D. Tenth Army, 1 Oct 44). C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps told Wentzell on the telephone that Canadians had been seen near Marradi, and that attention would have to be given to this fact. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 1-6 Oct, Appx 10, tel cons 1 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285)). (Note: The Canadians that had been seen might have been either from 11 Cdn Armd Regt, then operating in support of 1 Brit Div, or from 14 Cdn Armd Regt, then operating in support of 8 Ind Div. See H.S. Report No. 175.)

152. On 3 Oct it became necessary for Tenth Army to lend further assistance to the hard-pressed eastern wing of the neighbouring Army. Due to rain and raging waters the Adriatic sector was quiet; there was moderate pressure on the centre and right wing of 51 Mtn Corps, but the two still uncommitted regiments from 98 Inf Div had to be dispatched to the sector across the inter-army boundary, where 334 Inf Div had replaced faltering 44 Inf Div and was now in difficulties itself. In addition to this the boundary was temporarily shifted, and 715 Inf Div took over the responsibility for one regimental sector of 334 Inf Div. In connection with all these movements the War Diary of Tenth Army carried the following notation:

3 Oct ... In so doing Tenth Army relinquished the last reserves which could have been made available to meet any situation arising in the mountains or at the coast. The resumption of large-scale fighting on the Adriatic however may now be looked forward to with confidence. Thanks to the weather the divisions have some time for recuperation and for the improvement of their deeply echeloned positions.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 3 Oct 44)



153. On 4 Oct the Fifth Army exerted very strong pressure on both sides of the Futa Pass. Tenth Army pointed out that, due to the deflection of potential reserves, an Allied attack on the Adriatic would have to be met with tactics of "mobile warfare". 76 Pz Corps received orders to reconnoitre a defence line between Imola and the Valli di Comacchio (ibid, 4 Oct 44).

154. On 5 Oct, after losing more ground along the Futa road, 4 Para Div and 362 Inf Div succeeded in halting the enemy for the time being. - The "Final Appreciation of the Day" in the Main War Diary of Tenth Army read:

Today the enemy attacks again at the centre of the Army's front and at the inner wings of the two Corps (Sogliano al Rubicone). On the Army's left wing increased enemy artillery fire. As, due to the weather, the enemy is unable to attack at the coast, a shift of the "centre of gravity" to the area east of the Saviò valley is within the realms of possibility. The attack on Sogliano indicates that from there he intends to break through in the direction of Cesena. In consequence the Army issues orders to 76 Pz Corps to make immediate arrangements permitting the commitment of 29 Pz Gren Div at the Corps boundary on short notice. ...

In addition to this, one regimental group from 90 Pz Gren Div is to be assembled during the night 5/6 Oct as a mobile Corps Reserve.

(Ibid, 5 Oct 44)

On this day Tenth Army issued a comprehensive Schematic Order of Battle. A photostatic copy and a translation of the document appear as Appendix "R" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 1-6 Oct, Appx 93, 5 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D289))

155. On 6 Oct the offensive of Fifth Army was stalled by bad weather. Moderate pressure continued on the front of 51 Mtn Corps; on the front of 76 Pz Corps the day was uneventful. During the morning report Kesselring told v. Vietinghoff of an order which had been received from highest source:

0925 hrs 6 Oct v. Vietinghoff - Kesselring

...

K: My high superior has sent me a message. He points out that Schlemm (1 Para Corps) must definitely be brought to a halt.

v. V: It is about time. Otherwise certain consequences become inevitable.

K: These he declines. He says that each man must be convinced of the necessity. We must help ourselves. Help yourself and God helps you.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/2, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 1-6 Oct, Appx 106, tel cons 6 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))



The text of this message was passed on to the commander of 1 Para Corps for verbal communication to his divisional commanders. A photostatic copy and a translation of the latter document appear as Appendix "S" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 65922/2, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, Appx 1014b, 6 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D290))

156. Better weather on 7 Oct led to a resumption of Fifth Army's attacks. On the whole, 1 Para Corps was able to hold its positions on that day (G.M.D.S. - 65922/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 7 Oct 44). On the left wing of 51 Mtn Corps British forces made further gains and advanced from Sogliano to the area of M. Farneto. In the Adriatic sector 76 Pz Corps was harassed by heavy artillery fire. At 1705 hrs the Army commander told Kesselring that a further thinning out of the front near the coast was dangerous and would entail an immediate withdrawal in case of a serious attack (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 7 Oct 44).

157. On 8 Oct, determined attacks by Fifth Army with large forces forced 1 Para Corps to yield further ground. Once more the situation was critical and a major breakthrough was prevented by a narrow margin only. (op cit, W.D. Fourteenth Army, 8 Oct 44) In the area of Tenth Army the pressure on 51 Mtn Corps and the right wing of 76 Pz Corps continued throughout the day. In order to have unified command over the forces defending the approach to Cesena from the mountains, at 1200 hrs 356 Inf Div was placed under the command of 76 Pz Corps. At 1930 hrs Marshal Kesselring called at the headquarters of Tenth Army, and shortly thereafter 29 Pz Gren Div received orders for immediate intervention at the junction of 356 Inf Div and 114 Jg Div in the area between Savio and Sogliano. Despite the threat to Cesena by 5 Brit Corps, General Herr remained of the opinion that the outflanking movements at the Army's centre were of a more or less diversionary nature, and that the main blow would fall near the coast. Earlier in the day Marshal Kesselring had announced the forthcoming arrival of 18,000 reinforcements from the convalescent hospitals in northern Italy and of 3,000 replacements from Germany. Since the Army Group had suffered 30,000 casualties during the month of September, this was not sufficient to restore previous strength, but enough to constitute a substantial alleviation of the manpower situation. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 8 Oct 44)

158. On 9 Oct heavy fighting continued at and east of the Futa Pass road (sector 65 Inf Div) and in the area west-north-west of Fontanelice (98 Inf Div and 334 Inf Div). On the whole the German formations held their lines, and individual penetrations were brought to a halt in the depth of the main defence line. (op cit, W.D. Fourteenth Army, 9 Oct 44). In the area of Tenth Army 51 Mtn Corps succeeded in retaining M. Cece and in clinging to its positions in the Portico valley. 76 Pz Corps was under particular pressure at M. Farneto and Montigallo. Counter-attacks were discontinued in view of the precarious situation of 1 Para Corps, which seemed to make advisable the concentration of one division from Tenth Army near Cesena as an operational reserve. It was therefore decided to make preparations for the defence of the Savio sector south and southwest of Cesena, and to withdraw 278 Inf Div from the front for this purpose. Orders were also given for the accumulation of fuel for the ferries and other means of traversing the River Po. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 9 Oct 44)



159. In the early days of September both Armies had received letters from Army Group requesting information for the Japanese Military Attaché on experiences with large formations in counter-attacks on established enemy beachheads. The reports submitted in this connection by the two Armies appear in photostatic and translated form as Appendix "T" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 7-11 Oct, Appx 179/180, 10 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D291)) and G.M.D.S. - 65922/2, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, Appx 1028b, 9 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D292))

160. On 10 Oct, in sharply concentrated local attacks, Fifth Army endeavoured to exploit previous gains. Apart from 262 Inf Div, which was driven further back in the area east of the Futa Pass road, 1 Para Corps managed to hold its positions in hard fighting (op cit, W.D., Fourteenth Army, 10 Oct 44). In the area of Tenth Army the main pressure rested on 29 Pz Gren Div and 90 Pz Gren Div. The latter formation was forced to withdraw, leaving rear guards in the line Longiano - 2.5 km south-east of Gambottola. In the Adriatic sector the day was quiet. In the afternoon the weather began to clear up. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 10 Oct 44)

11 Oct

161. On 11 Oct Fourteenth Army succeeded in holding its positions against formidable attacks on the centre of 1 Para Corps during the night and throughout the day (op cit, W.D. Fourteenth Army, 11 Oct). During the day however, Marshal Kesselring decided to place 98 Inf Div, 334 Inf Div and 44 Inf Div under the command of Tenth Army (51 Mtn Corps) as of 0800 hrs 12 Oct. The three divisions were to remain in present positions; the inter-army boundary was to be moved correspondingly further west; the G.H.Q. troops to remain in present attachments, and Inf Trg Bde to be absorbed by 44 Inf Div. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 7-11 Oct, Appx 214, 215, 216 and 217) According to the telephone conversation of 12 Oct it was strongly felt that this step would bring about a decidedly more adroit and economical handling of the forces concerned. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 235, tel cons 12 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

162. With 5 Cdn Armd Div in Corps Reserve, and flanked by 2 N.Z. Div on the right and 46 Brit Div on the left, on 11 Oct 1 Cdn Inf Div began moving forward towards Cesena and the Savio. During the first phase of the advance, resistance from the forces of 90 Pz Gren Div and 26 Pz Div was light; these divisions, and particularly 1 Para Div nearer to the coast, were not disinclined to fall back to the bridgehead position at Cesena and the western bank of the swollen Savio, where defence action would be practicable and profitable once more. As expressed in various telephone conversations between 7 and 11 Oct, Corps, Army and Army Group were again having much trouble with Heidrich, who was holding 7,000 fresh reinforcements in an area between the Rivers Po and Adige, was planning intensive training for these forces, and had visions of fortifying and defending Ravenna. Reminded by Kesselring - on the telephone and during a personal visit of the Marshal to divisional headquarters - of the fact that such considerable forces could not be kept out of the fighting at the moment, Heidrich claimed to have received direct orders from Hitler and Goering to



rebuild his Division forthwith "for Fuehrer and Reich". The plans for the Ravenna area, already countenanced by Herr, were disallowed by Kesselring; but on the whole the affair developed in the customary manner, and as described by Roettiger at 2035 hrs 10 Oct in the following words:

Heidrich has prevailed again. O.B.SW wants to talk to Hermann [Goering] about this; but they already have enough other troubles up there.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/3, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 197, tel cons 11 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

12 Oct

163. With the situation at 1 Para Corps showing signs of further deterioration, at 1545 hrs Marshal Kesselring ordered the immediate transfer of 29 Pz Gren Div to Fourteenth Army to relieve 362 Inf Div (1 Para Corps). A breakthrough to Bologna and Lake Comacchio would mean the bottling up of 76 Pz Corps. The greatest danger to Tenth Army rested therefore in the attack on the Via Emilia from the foothills, and 76 Pz Corps began thinking in terms of a quick general withdrawal in case of need. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 12 Oct 44). At, and north of the Via Emilia 90 Pz Gren Div was withdrawing under some pressure; 26 Pz Div reported the presence of enemy forces the main defence line, and 1 Para Div was harassing traffic across the Fiumicino. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 12-15 Oct, Appx 232, sit rep Tenth Army, 12 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D286))

164. During the day v. Vietinghoff had visited the three divisions just taken over from 1 Para Corps. Though noted for an exceptionally even temper, the Army commander returned to his headquarters blazing with anger. Confirming earlier remarks on the telephone, he wrote to Kesselring (who knew it already) that the divisions had been badly handled by Schlemm (General of the Air Force Alfred Schlemm, Comd 1 Para Corps); that he was unapproachable, inelastic and ruthless; and that he was conducting purely linear warfare and demanding immediate and ill-prepared counter-attacks, thus ruining even good divisions in disproportionately quick time (ibid, Appx 238)

13 Oct

165. The front of 1 Para Corps and 51 Mtn Corps continued to crumble bit by bit at all pressure points. Increased preparations for further advances were clearly discernible. 90 Pz Gren Div astride the Via Emilia, and 26 Pz Div at Gambettola and on the west bank of the Scolo Rigossa reported defensive successes for the day. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 12-15 Oct; Appx 256, sit rep Tenth Army, 13 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D286)) Just south of the Via Emilia was 2 Bn 200 Pz Gren Regt (90 Pz Gren Div); between highway and Bulgaria was 3 Bn 200 Pz Gren Regt. At Bulgaria were 1 and 3 Bns 361 Pz Gren Regt (90 Pz Gren Div); at Gambettola 2 Bn 9 Pz Gren Regt (26 Pz Div), flanked by 1 Bn 9 Pz Gren Regt (26 Pz Div) and 26 Pz Recce Bn - all on the west bank of the Scolo Rigossa. Further on was 1 Bn 67 Pz Gren Regt (26 Pz Div); then, as far as Pte Rigossa, 2 Bn 39 Inf Regt and 2 Bn 40 Inf Regt (remnants of 20 G.A.F. Div under command 26 Pz Div). North-east of Pte Rigossa to the sea was 1 Para Div, with



4 Para Regt at the divisional boundary. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/10, Tenth Army, sit maps 11-20 Oct, sit map 13 and 14 Oct 44)

166. In the Main War Diary of Tenth Army note was taken of the fact that 4 Ind Div, 4 Brit Div and 56 Brit Div had vanished from the Adriatic sector, "which might indicate the enemy's intention of increasing pressure in the direction of Bologna, and eastwards of the Savio valley on Cesena" (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 13 Oct 44). Despite the order for immediate transfer, the mass of 29 Pz Gren Div was still engaged in fighting in the old sector; at the same time the first advance signs of a coming transfer of 90 Pz Gren Div were seen in the fact that in the evening of 13 Oct, Tenth Army directed 76 Pz Corps to concentrate one regimental group from 90 Pz Gren Div by the morning of 15 Oct in the area west of Cesena. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 12-15 Oct, Appx 259, 13 Oct 44)

14 Oct

167. Fourteenth Army reported some lessening in intensity of the attacks on 1 Para Corps (op cit, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 14 Oct 44). A further crumbling of the front at all pressure points was reported by Tenth Army. At the cost of high casualties, particularly officers, a breakthrough was prevented however. Concern was caused by the reappearance of 78 Brit Div west of the Santerno. Further orders were given for strengthening the defence in the Savio valley south of Cesena. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 14 Oct) 90 Pz Gren Div reported the loss of Gambettola:

After hours of artillery preparation the enemy, in battalion strength and supported by 20 tanks, attacked 1 km SW 12427 (Gambettola). After heavy fighting and severe casualties the locality [Gambettola] 600 metres west of 12427 was lost. Individual enemy tanks advanced north as far as the railway line. The penetration has been sealed off.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/4, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 12-15 Oct, Appx 278, sit rep Tenth Army, 14 Oct 44)  
(Photostat 981A10.(D286))

A situation map of 76 Pz Corps, as of 0800 hrs 14 Oct, is being retained in photostatic form (G.M.D.S. - 63426/10, Tenth Army, sit maps 11-20 Oct, sit map 76 Pz Corps, 14 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D293)). A part of this map showing German dispositions in the Cesena sector appears in photostatic form as Appendix "U" to this report (ibid), (Photostat 981A10.(D294)). A photostatic copy is also being retained of the situation map of 51 Mtn Corps on 14 Oct 44 (ibid), (Photostat 981A10.(D295)).

15 Oct

168. By now the Germans had gained a fairly accurate picture of Allied regroupings. An "Enemy Situation Map" was issued on 15 Oct. A photostatic copy of the document appears as Appendix "V" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 63427, Tenth Army, Int Repts Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D296)) Fourteenth Army reported reconnaissance and holding attacks on 14 Pz Corps, and



the continuation of heavy attacks with very strong artillery support on 1 Para Corps. Attacks were repulsed or penetrations sealed off after some loss of ground. In view of the interpolation of 1 U.S. Armd Div and the obvious readiness of several assault divisions for an all-out attack in the direction of Bologna, Fourteenth Army expected a major attack the next day, and ordered a ruthless denudation of the lines of 14 Pz Corps in favour of 1 Para Corps. Army Liguria had reported all units of 232 Inf Div en route to Fourteenth Army; all but 1045 Inf Regt had arrived and were moving to the front of 14 Pz Corps to relieve units required by 1 Para Corps. Concern was felt over the delay in the arrival of 29 Pz Gren Div, which was engaged in heavy fighting on 14 Oct and was only now being relieved in the old sector by 278 Inf Div. (G.M.D.S. - 65922/1 Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 15 Oct)

169. Most divisions of 51 Mtn Corps and 76 Pz Corps reported sharp pressure on their positions during the day. 98 Inf Div (in the Sillaro valley) reported heavy artillery fire reaching as far as the Emilia. With Monterenzio lost, fighting centred on the area north-west of S. Clemente. 334 Inf Div reported heavy fighting for M. la Pieve since midnight. Repeated attacks (78 Brit Div and 12 Cdn Armd Regt) were repulsed. Severe pressure was felt by 90 Pz Gren Div; outposts and rear elements astride the Via Emilia were forced back. Pressure by superior opposing forces forced rear elements of 26 Pz Div to withdraw in a northerly direction in a heavy delaying action. "After two hours of artillery preparation, and after several fruitless initial attempts, the opponent succeeded in crossing the Scolo Rigossa at S. Angelo in Saline." (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 15 Oct 44)

16 Oct

170. Due to bad flying weather the attack of Fifth Army astride the Futa Pass on this day did not assume the expected dimensions; but nevertheless, a deep penetration was made 2 km west of the Futa Pass road. This in turn necessitated taking back the whole eastern wing of 1 Para Corps. In the afternoon 29 Pz Gren Div assumed command in the penetration area (1 km north-west of Querceto and the western slope of M. Della Vigna), where 71 Pz Gren Regt (with total strength of 280 men, and under command of 65 Inf Div) had been forced back. The Acting Army Commander (General Fridolin v. Senger und Etterlin, Comd 14 Pz Corps) asked Marshal Kesselring whether the delay in the arrival of the balance of 29 Pz Gren Div was unavoidable. A speed-up was promised. (Op cit, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 16 Oct)

171. Major attacks on the right wing of Tenth Army did not materialize, but 98 Inf Div was hard pressed and lost Ronco Britti and M. delle Tombe. 334 Inf Div was holding fast in a new line  $1\frac{1}{2}$  km north-east of M. la Pieve. In the Adriatic sector 90 Pz Gren Div, 26 Pz Div and 1 Para Div lost some ground under pressure:

90 Pz Gren Div: Outposts withdrew to main defence line under pressure from superior forces. After moving into assembly positions during the night (15/16 Oct), the enemy, supported by tanks, attacks on both sides of the Via Emilia. Attack is repulsed.



After obstinate fighting with assault detachments the combat outposts on the left wing are also forced back.

26 Pz Div: Superior enemy forces attack our rear elements on the right wing and force them back to the outpost area (of the main defence line). During the noon hours enemy with tank support attacks combat outposts 3 km NW Gambettola.

1 Para Div: The Division directs continuous harassing fire on enemy concentrations on the left wing of the Division and stops an enemy attack 3 km NNE Gambettola.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 16 Oct 44)

172. In the course of the day's telephone conversations C. of S. Fourteenth Army praised the work of the Acting Army Commander (para 170 above). 1 and 4 Para Divs had received large drafts of reinforcements from the German Air Force, and the high staff officers of the Army Group and the two Armies were exploring the best method of approaching Heidrich and Trettner\* with a view to obtaining a loan of 1,000 replacements from each Parachute Division until the arrival of the Army drafts. It was a difficult situation. Wentzell said to Rootiger: "With the paratroops it is not so that O.B.S.W can interfere with orders". Kesselring and v. Vietinghoff agreed that the loss of the areas east of the Savio was unpleasant but not tragic. The left wing of 76 Pz Corps (from Cesena to the coast) would have to make the difficult crossing of the river when there was a temporary lessening of pressure; rear elements were at the front, and only allowed themselves to be forced back slowly. With 1 Cdn Inf Div in action, 5 Cdn Armd Div would not be far away; the "centre of gravity" however was of course on the right side of the active front. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 319, tel cons 16 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

17 Oct

173. In heavy fighting, 1 Para Corps succeeded in holding its positions with the exception of the area west of the Futa Pass road. 29 Pz Gren Div repulsed nine consecutive attacks and eliminated all penetrations by immediate counter-thrusts. (G.M.D.S. - 65922/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 17 Oct 44). The gangrenous condition at the focal points was most pronounced at the inter-army boundary, where 98 Inf Div (now with a total fighting strength of 455 men) was unable to prevent a breakthrough. Calls for help to both Armies brought immediate assistance, and an order from Tenth Army for the immediate dispatch of 190 Pz Recce Bn (90 Pz Gren Div) to the sore spot, height 622, north of Ronco Britti. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 17 Oct 44)

174. In the Adriatic sector, British and Canadian forces worked their way closer to Cesena. 90 Pz Gren Div was attacked along the Via Emilia and the railroad line. The Canadian advance along the railroad line was eventually stopped after heavy and costly fighting. 26 Pz Div lost ground

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\* TRETTNER, Heinrich, Maj-Gen, Comd 4 Para Div



north of Ruffio. 1 Para Div was under constant harassing fire, repulsed an attack 2 km west of Sala, and laid harassing fire on concentrations near Sala (ibid). In view of the possibility of a breakthrough to Bologna, and the necessity for thinning out 76 Pz Corps in favour of the Army's right wing, as well as in view of the British advance from the South and the Canadian advance along the axis of the Emilia on Cesena, 76 Pz Corps proposed a withdrawal in a northwesterly direction to avoid possible encirclement. Army Group refused consent, and demanded that Cesena be held (ibid). In the telephone conversations the consensus of opinion was that unless something drastic were done immediately, the Via Emilia would be lost within the week. The balance of 29 Pz Gren Div and 90 Pz Gren Div would have to be withdrawn from 76 Pz Corps regardless of the consequences. Vietinghoff told Kesselring on the telephone that 1 Para Div might be able to stem the tide if it were moved to a critical sector. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 339, tel cons 17 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

175. Regarding 1 Cdn Armd Bde, the "Enemy Situation Bulletin" of 51 Mtn Corps carried the following notation on 15 Oct:

Unclearified in particular are the whereabouts of 1 Cdn Armd Bde, which, according to Allied reports, has given valuable support in the area between Florence and Bologna.

(G.M.D.S. - 63602, -51 Mtn Corps, Int Reps Sep and Oct 44, 15 Oct 44)

In a telephone conversation at 1130 hrs 17 Oct, C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps told Wentzell that Canadian tanks had been seen in the area of M. Cece, where all three battalions of 66 Bde (1 Brit Armd Div) were committed (op cit, tel cons 17 Oct 44).

176. A schematic order of battle of Army Group "C" as of 10 Oct 44 appeared in the records of Tenth Army on 17 Oct. According to this document the Army Group was then composed as follows:

ARMY GROUP "C"

ARMY OF LIGURIA

75 Corps	34 Inf Div
	5 Mtn Div
	157 (Res) Mtn Div
	3 Regt Brandenburg (less 1 Bn)
	Regt Meeralpen
Corps Lombardia	148 Inf Div (upgraded from Res)
	232 Inf Div
	3 Ital Div (S. Marco)
	4 Ital Mtn Div (M. Rosa)



FOURTEENTH ARMY

14 Pz Corps	94 Inf Div
	42 Jg Div
	135 Fortress Bde
1 Para Corps	334 Inf Div
	98 Inf Div
	65 Inf Div
	44 Inf Div (H. & D.)
	4 Para Div
	362 Inf Div
	16 S.S. Pz Gren Div

TENTH ARMY

20 G.A.F. Fd Div (under direct command)

51 Mtn Corps	715 Inf Div
	305 Inf Div

76 Pz Corps	90 Pz Gren Div
	1 Para Div
	26 Pz Div
	114 Jg Div
	278 Inf Div
	356 Inf Div
	29 Pz Gren Div

Commander Venetian Coast

162 (Turc) Inf Div

OPERATIONS ZONE ADRIATIC COASTLAND (97 Corps H.Q.)

188 (Res) Mtn Div
237 Inf Div
71 Inf Div

A photostatic copy of the document appears as Appendix "W" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-2 Oct, Appx 242b, 17 Oct 44 for 10 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10. (D297)) Apart from smaller formations and G.H.Q. troops, the Army Group accordingly comprised a total of 30 divisions, one of which was a panzer division, three were panzer grenadier divisions and 26 were infantry divisions. In strength and fighting value there were of course tremendous differences between these formations, which ranged from elite down to quite inferior aggregations. With the Via Emilia serving as a base line for lateral movements the Germans had little difficulty in shifting formations to sectors where assistance was needed most urgently at the moment. The elasticity of the German theatre command in the regrouping of forces no doubt was one of the main factors preventing the debouchment of the Allied forces in the second half of October from the hills and valleys to the Via Emilia.

177. A complete schematic order of battle of Tenth Army was issued on 18 Oct. A photostatic copy of the document appears as Appendix "X" to this report (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 371, 18 Oct 44 (Photostat 981A10.(D298))



178. At the front of 1 Para Corps pressure continued unabated, and, as the day went on, the situation on the right wing of 51 Mtn Corps showed further deterioration, while the left wing reported holding attacks by the newly committed 2 Pol Corps. 200 Pz Gren Regt (90 Pz Gren Div), which was urgently needed in the sector of 98 Inf Div, was locked in fierce and costly fighting with Canadian units advancing along the Via Emilia and the railroad line. South of Cesena the situation was no less serious, and on the right flank of the Canadians the New Zealanders too were fighting at the Pisciatello river. In the meantime however Marshal Kesselring had received strict orders not to yield ground in any sector. This meant that in order to hold ground in a relatively unimportant sector the whole Army Group was being placed in jeopardy. In all telephone conversations the commanders and chiefs of staff harped ceaselessly on this point, and v. Vietinghoff wired to Kesselring time and again, and with mounting insistence, that the sector east of the Savio should be given up. Kesselring had been of the same opinion for several days, and at 1400 hrs he finally decided to assume personal responsibility by countenancing a delaying withdrawal to the Savio.\* (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 362, tel cons 18 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

179. In the Main War Diary of Tenth Army the fighting in the sector of 90 Pz Gren Div was described as follows:

During the night 90 Pz Gren Div smashes an enemy attack on both sides of the Via Emilia. An enemy attack along the road embankment leads to a penetration north of the embankment. Another attack by combined arms on the left wing of the Division is beaten off. Only during the morning hours, in repeated counterthrusts and heavy fluctuating fighting, with heavy commitment of projectors and artillery, is it possible to seal off the penetration north of the road embankment (1.5 km west of Ponte della Pietra). Steadily gaining in strength, the enemy continues his attacks against a much weakened front. In the centre section the enemy, supported by tanks, penetrates, swings north, and rolls up two battalions, which fall back fighting to the new line.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 18 Oct 44)

Tenth Army's situation map for 18 Oct is being retained in photostatic form (G.M.D.S. - 63426/10, Tenth Army, sit maps 11-20 Oct, sit map 17 and 18 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D299)).

19 Oct

180. 1 Para Corps now reported a lessening of pressure; individual local attacks were repulsed (op cit, Fourteenth Army,

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\* Students of the phase in question will find the 31-page record of the day's telephone conversation a particularly interesting document.



W.D. 5, 19 Oct). At 0005 hrs Marshal Kesselring released the signal confirming his verbal authorization for the withdrawal on the left wing of Tenth Army. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 383, 19 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D300)). In the critical sector 98 Inf Div was again losing ground; 114 Jg Div and elements of 90 Pz Gren Div were under pressure at the outskirts of Cesena. In the evening the transfer of the battalions of 200 Pz Gren Regt to the inter-army boundary began. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 19 Oct) With 2 Pz Corps operating at the centre of the Army front the retention of 1 Para Div at the coast seemed unjustified; plans were made for the commitment of the formation at the main front. The disengagement of 200 Pz Gren Regt implied the loss of Cesena. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 382, tel cons 19 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

20 Oct

181. General Lemelsen had returned to his headquarters and resumed command of the Fourteenth Army. Local attacks were sealed off after some loss of ground (op cit, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 20 Oct). 98 Inf Div was being pushed back further. In the morning General Baade (Comd 90 Pz Gren Div) was at the headquarters of 51 Mtn Corps, just opened at Vedrana (5 km north-west of Budrio); in the afternoon he was on reconnaissance. 90 Pz Gren Div was being organized behind the fighting line, and would take over command in the sector from 98 Inf Div in a day or two. Headquarters 5 Proj Bde and 71 Proj Regt (less one battalion) was en route from 76 Pz Corps to 98 Inf Div. (Vietinghoff told Kesselring: "We have to stick it out today; after that things will be easier".) 1 Para Div received orders to change places with 114 Jg Div; British, Canadian and New-Zealand forces were at the Savio. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 20 Oct 44) In the sector of 26 Pz Div some rear elements were forced to fall back across the Savio to the West. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 401, sit rep Tenth Army, 20 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D286))

The Forcing of the Savio (21 - 23 Oct)

21 Oct

182. 1 Para Corps reported no major attacks for the day, but continued enemy preparations for a large attack were observed in the Futa sector (op cit, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 21 Oct 44). East of the inter-army boundary (98 Inf Div) the Monte Grande had been lost in heavy night fighting; Baade was sealing off about 500 metres further to the North. In the Cesena area pressure was maintained (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 21 Oct 44). Contrary to earlier arrangements 3 Bn 200 Pz Gren Regt (90 Pz Gren Div) had been retained at the Savio front and was fighting just north of the (destroyed) railroad bridge. Comd 51 Mtn Corps sent an angry signal requesting the immediate dispatch of the battalion. Apart from marginal notes of a sarcastic nature, the document bears the notation that the unit would be disengaged during the night 23/24 Oct. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 431, 21 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D301)). At the newly won small Canadian bridgehead west of Martarano



was 2 Bn 9 Pz Gren Regt (26 Pz Div); further north as far as Fieve Sestina was 1 Bn 9 Pz Gren Regt. ~~##~~ (Note: The crossing of the Savio by Canadians in force began in the evening and was reflected in the German reports for 22 Oct (para 189 below) A photostatic copy is being retained of the well-prepared situation map of 76 Pz Corps for 21 Oct 44 (G.M.D.S. - 63426/11, Tenth Army, sit maps 21-30 Oct 44, sit map 76 Pz Corps, 21 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D302)). A situation map of 51 Mtn Corps as of 0600 hrs 21 Oct is also being retained in photostatic form. (Ibid) (Photostat 981A10.(D303))

183. According to the day's telephone conversations Army Group was now considering the placing of three divisions of 1 Para Corps under the command of Tenth Army; Senger to command the right wing of Tenth Army; Schlemm to be given the western wing of Fourteenth Army. This would place the responsibility for Bologna squarely on the shoulders of Tenth Army. Unity of command in the critical area was desirable; unspoken but obvious was the wish to have the situation handled by the most capable commanders (see para 164 above). At the centre of Tenth Army's front 2 Pol Corps was nibbling hard in the area north of Galeata; a further denudation of the centre was out of the question. Heidrich had expressed willingness to grant the temporary loan of 1,000 replacements providing the necessary permission could be obtained from Marshal Goering. Kesselring said: "This would be fine" (see para 172 above). (G.M.D.S. - 63426/5, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 16-21 Oct, Appx 432, tel cons 21 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D286))

22 Oct

184. There were only minor engagements in the area of 1 Para Corps, but a further aggravation of the situation was reported from the extreme right of Tenth Army, where contact with Fourteenth Army had again been lost. Army Group now decided to commit 42 Inf Div astride the inter-army boundary. From the Adriatic sector the forcing of the Savio by Canadians was reported. During the morning 76 Pz Corps received permission to shorten its front by a withdrawal to the line Massarola - Bracciano - Diegaro (on Via Emilia) - S. Andrea in Bagnolo (on west bank of Savio) - Mensa (on

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X South of the railroad (west of Cosena) now was 741 Gren Regt (278 Inf Div), flanked by 721 Gren Regt of the same division, and 114 Recce Bn (114 Jg Div).

XX The Canadian crossing of the Savio in pouring rain was opposed by German elite troops; in his famous exploit at Fieve Sestina in the early morning of 22 Oct, Pte E.A. Smith, V.C., bested an enemy of no mean reputation (op cit, H.S. Report No. 25, para 138).



west bank of Savio).<sup>\*</sup> In order to ensure that withdrawals would be carried out only under pressure, lower echelons were not to be advised of this decision. Counter-attacks however were not to be made. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9; Appx 22-25 Oct, Appx 412, tel cons 22 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))  
In the main War Diary of Tenth Army the forcing of the Savio was reflected by the following entry:

26 Pz Div: In the evening hours of 21 Oct the enemy covers the entire main line of resistance with heaviest drumfire, and thus even at that stage takes a heavy toll of the troops in the main line. After two hours the enemy shifts his drumfire to the artillery position and attacks at the Savio in the divisional sector. Several heavy attacks are beaten off after hard fighting. A renewed attack, accompanied by continuous drumfire, has its focal point 3 km north of Cesena. At several points the enemy succeeds, after severe fighting, in thrusting through the weakened forces still in position. Due to our heavy casualties and the impossibility of committing tanks over the muddy ground, promptly initiated counterthrusts fail to reach their objectives. In the penetration area the enemy reinforces his position and, under cover of more heavy drumfire, forms a bridgehead from which in the morning he again attacks towards the West and Southwest. Subsequent enemy attacks from the bridgehead formed during the night are smashed.

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 22 Oct 44)

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\* This decision was preceded by a telephone conversation which ran in part as follows:

0940 hrs Wentzell - Roettiger

R: This is quite a mess at Crasemann's [26 Pz Div].

W: Yes. I have just been talking with Corps again. It was a fierce artillery shoot there during the night, and contrary to expectations, and in spite of being thrown back repeatedly, the enemy renewed his attacks with a will. He now has a bridgehead, but the thing has been stopped, due to his difficulties in crossing the water with tanks and heavy weapons. We are in difficulties too because in the counterattacks our tanks bogged down.

R: How is the weather?

W: Terrible. It is raining without a let-up. Militarily speaking it is therefore good for us.

R: So he cannot use his Air Force.

W: That he cannot do, and this is in our favour; but during the night he attacked time after time.

R: Then it has to be broken up by the artillery.

W: They are doing it, but they have trouble with ammunition too. 76 Pz Corps has now only 90 tons per day. There must be something wrong with the supply services.

R: We are hoping for an improvement in the situation at the Brenner Pass.

... (Op cit, tel cons 22 Oct 44)



Shift in German Corps Commands. Marshal Kesselring  
in Traffic Accident; Consequent Shifts in Command.  
(23 Oct)

23 Oct

185. The gravity of the situation was undiminished; 94 Inf Div on the right wing of 1 Para Corps, and 29 Pz Gren Div on the left wing lost further ground in very heavy fighting. However, 1 Para Corps, with all its divisions and G.H.Q. troops would be under the command of Tenth Army as of 1800 hrs 24 Oct; in addition the commanders and headquarters staffs of 51 Mtn Corps and 14 Pz Corps would be exchanged; Corps Lombardia (see para 176 above) would come under the command of Fourteenth Army, and Fourteenth Army and Army Liguria would be welded into a new "Army Group Graziani". (G.M.D.S. - 65922/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 23 Oct 44) At the right wing of Tenth Army the situation was equally serious, and it was decided to move 1 Para Div from its two-day stand south and southwest of Cesena to the area between 90 Pz Gren Div and 98 Inf Div. From the Adriatic wing 26 Pz Div reported that enemy forces, which had crossed the Savio west of Borgo di Ronta, had been thrown back across the river (see H.S. Report No. 25, paras 146-148). Fighting had also spread to 114 Jg Div, which had relieved 1 Para Div in the coastal stretch and which had been placed there under the Venetian Coast Command. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 23 Oct 44)

186. The decision regarding the major changes in command relationships had been made, and all headquarters were now working on the necessary arrangements. The day was a busy one for Marshal Kesselring; Reichsminister Speer was with the Army Group, and had called at the headquarters of 76 Pz Corps in order to gain a picture of the ammunition problem; a group of Japanese officers was at the headquarters of Tenth Army, and tactical developments clearly indicated a further increase in the weight of pressure on the right wing of 76 Pz Corps. During the morning the Marshal had visited 26 Pz Div, 1 Para Div and 114 Inf Div; in the afternoon he moved on to the headquarters of the divisions at the critical points, and announced his intention of calling later at the headquarters of 76 Pz Corps or Tenth Army. At 1735 hrs he was at the tactical headquarters of 29 Pz Gren Div, where he gave his verbal consent to necessary local withdrawal of 94 Inf Div and the western wing of 16 S.S. Pz Gren Div. Whether or not he went from there to the headquarters of 90 Pz Gren Div cannot be told from the documents on hand, but at 2002 hrs, unconscious and with a

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~~HE~~ Op cit, tel cons 22 Oct

~~HEK~~ G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 23 Oct 44

~~HEHE~~ G.M.D.S. - 65922/1, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, 23 Oct 44

~~HEHEH~~ At 1830 hrs Wentzell told Roettiger that the Marshal had left a message to be forwarded to Wentzell, according to which everything possible was to be done to move one regiment to the rear of Baade. (Note: "einen Haufen" - at the time being used in these circles as a colloquial code word for "one regiment".) (op cit, tel cons 23 Oct)



fractured skull, the Marshal was reported as being at the casualty clearing station of 90 Pz Gren Div at S. Lorenzo di Gaiano (5km north-north-west of Castel S. Pietro dell' Emilia). (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 22-26 Oct, Appx 475, tel cons 23 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10. (D285))

187. According to the record of Tenth Army's telephone conversations, the first word of the accident reached Army Headquarters at 1955 hrs, when C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps told Wentzell: "Field Marshal in accident; fractured base of skull". Wentzell immediately informed Army Group. At 2002 hrs C. of S. 51 Mtn Corps reported that the Marshal was at the casualty clearing station at S. Lorenzo (para 186 above). According to a conversation later in the evening, Kesselring was moved to Base Hospital No. 200 at Ferrara shortly after 2000 hrs (op cit, tel cons 23 Oct). In the Main War Diary of Tenth Army the following was recorded:

In the evening hours of 23 Oct Tenth Army received word that Marshal Kesselring, who during the afternoon had announced his intention of calling at Army Headquarters for conversations, had suffered a serious accident in a collision with a gun. O.B.SW was first moved to the nearest casualty clearing station; then to Base Hospital No. 200 at Ferrara. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 23 Oct 44)

In the synopsis of conversations the accident was referred to as a traffic accident. Nothing has been found to indicate that the event occurred during an air raid.\* The War Diary of Fourteenth Army does not refer to the occurrence; presumably for reasons of security, after 23 Oct references to the Marshal's condition were omitted from the records of conversations. In addition to the major changes in commands already pending, a shuffle in the top personnel of the Army Group would now be necessary. At 2300 hrs Roettiger told Wentzell:

I have talked with Jodl regarding the temporary replacement. It is of course your chief.  
(Note: Literal translation would distort the meaning)  
(op cit, tel cons 23 Oct 44)

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\* In this connection see also: v. Schramm, op cit, para 128:

On 23 Oct Marshal Kesselring's car drove over a gun in the darkness. O.B.SW was so severely hurt that he had to be taken to the hospital.



76 Pz Corps withdraws to the Ronco (24 - 26 Oct)

24 Oct

188. In the area of 1 Para Corps an attack developed east of the Futa Pass road at the Monte Belmonte (which was lost in the evening). After initial penetrations the situation was stabilized (see para 192). At 1800 hrs 1 Para Corps passed under the command of Tenth Army with the following formations:

94 Inf Div  
16 S.S. Pz Gren Div  
4 Para Div  
65 Inf Div  
29 Pz Gren Div  
362 Inf Div

all G.H.Q. troops with the Corps,  
and, of 42 Jg Div:

142 Recce Bn  
3 Bn 25 Jg Regt  
3 Bn 40 Jg Regt  
(balance to follow)

(G.M.D.S. - 65922/1, Fourteenth Army,  
W.D. 5, 24 Oct 44)

In keeping with its future role, Fourteenth Army was now well on the way towards becoming an aggregation of vastly different complexion and inferior substance.

189. The focal point of action during the day was northeast of M. Grande, where American advanced elements reached Vedriano (less than 7 km from the Via Emilia). After several hours of bitter fighting the units of 90 Pz Gren Div and 98 Inf Div in the area succeeded in sealing off the penetration. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 24 Oct 44). But, while Baade obtained some measure of defensive success, Heidrich would be needed in addition to the present forces. The first elements from 1 Para Div were expected during the night 24/25 Oct.<sup>¶</sup> In the meantime much anti-aircraft artillery had been moved to the support of 90 Pz Gren Div (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 22-26 Oct, Appx 493, tel cons 24 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10. (D285))

190. At the left wing of 76 Pz Corps, 26 Pz Div in the absence of pressure reported heavy harassing fire; 114 Jg Div withdrew as planned. According to the Main War Diary of Tenth Army, the front was now on the following line:

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¶ 4 Para Regt and 3 Bn 200 Pz Gren Regt (90 Pz Gren Div, (see para 192) were then en route to 51 Mtn Corps (ibid, Appx 497).



3 km SW Vergato - 6 km NE Vergato - 6.5 km SE Marzabotto - east slope of M. Adone - 2 km W M. Belmonte (height 407) - M. Belmonte - N Parra. di Vignale - 1 km SW M. della Piana - indefinite to Vedriano - 2 km S Vedriano - 2 km ENE S. Clemente - northern slope M. Spaduro - 1.5 km SE M. Spaduro - NW M. dell'Acqua Salata - unchanged to 1.5 km NE Tontola - S Paolo in Aquilone - 1.5 km SW Bagnale - 1 km S Polonta - road fork 2 km SSE Pertinuoovo - 2.5 km E Forlimpopoli - SW Casemurata - multiple road junction at Borghesò - 5 km E Campiano - thence along the Savio to coast.

Nothing of course was more important at the moment than the freeing of forces for the immediate strengthening of the extreme right wing of 51 Mtn Corps, and in the afternoon the Army commander issued a detailed order for a withdrawal in this connection of 76 Pz Corps and 114 Jg Div (Venetian Coast Command). The main line of resistance was to be taken back to the general line: North-west of Bagno - M. Velbo - northern outskirts of Meldola - bridge north-east of Magliano - railroad bridge 4 km south-east of Forli - 3 km south-west of S. Pietro in Vincoli - road intersection 5 km north-east of S. Pietro in Vincoli - coast at Bocca Bevano. The order contained much relevant additional information, and is being retained in photostatic form. (G.M.D.S. 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 22-26 Oct, Appx 496, 24 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10. (D304))

191. Apart from dealing with the orders for withdrawals to the Bevano and Savio rivers, General v. Vietinghoff, in his new role as interim Army Group commander, now informed Hitler of his intention to carry out a gradual withdrawal of the Army to the line Bologna - Lake Comacchio; a bold suggestion which surprisingly enough seemed acceptable to Hitler (with the usual reservations). This information, however, is not based on original documents, but appears in Major v. Schramm's study:

At 1800 hrs 24 Oct v. Vietinghoff reported the intention of withdrawing Tenth Army during the coming month to a line from the hills south of Bologna - Budrio - Molinella - Argenta - western shore of Lake Comacchio, there passing to permanent defence. ...

(v. Schramm, op cit, para 128)

Thereupon, on 25 Oct, the Fuehrer declared himself in agreement with the further weakening of the Adriatic front, ground however to be yielded only under pressure ...

(Ibid, para 129)

25 Oct

192. In the late hours of 24 Oct 29 Pz Gren Div had lost M. Belmonte. Moderate pressure was reported from all sectors. Armoured reconnaissance groups had followed the withdrawals in the Savio - Ronco area to the road just west of Casemurata, to Campiano and to the Bevano bridge of Route 16. But all attention was focussed on the Vedriano sector, where the fate of the Army was precariously hanging in the balance.



3 Bn 200 Pz Gren Regt had rejoined its division; 4 Para Regt was being built up between 90 Pz Gren Div and 98 Inf Div; the best available troops were in the fight; Heidrich had arrived during the day, and thus the two ace divisional commanders of the Army Group were now in the sector. But needs be, one regiment of 1 Para Div would have to remain at the front south-east of Forli; 26 Pz Div would have to remain on the left wing lest 1 Cdn Corps bypass Ravenna on the West. All that could be done had been done, and if the Allies were in a position to throw additional forces into the fray, a strategical breakthrough could no longer be prevented. Telephone conversations were interlarded with anxious and hopeful exclamations: "If Heidrich fails it means a big withdrawal"; "All our hopes rest on Heidrich"; "Can Heidrich do it?". (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 22-26 Oct, Appx 513, tel cons 25 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

193. At 1800 hrs General v. Senger and the headquarters staff of 14 Pz Corps assumed command over the forces previously commanded by General Feurstein and the headquarters of 51 Mtn Corps (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 25 Oct 44). Both generals were well known and respected in the Army's staff circles. The departure of Feurstein was regretted and ascribed to political considerations (op cit, tel cons 23 Oct 44). Late in the evening the situation in the critical sector seemed to come to hand, and Wentzell was told that the penetrations had been sealed off (op cit, tel cons 25 Oct 44).

#### ALLIED OFFENSIVES HALTED BY MUD AND WATERS

(26 - 31 OCT)

26 Oct

194. Due to uninterrupted heavy rainfall the weather had now become the dominant factor. Traffic across the river Po was paralysed at times by storm and rain; Allied air activity was at a standstill; in most sectors the commitment of armour and heavy weapons had become impossible. Regarding the events in the critical sector, Tenth Army's Intelligence Summary contained a somewhat enigmatic entry: "Due to the continuous rain 94 prisoners were taken in the area of 85 and 88 U.S. Inf Divs" (G.M.D.S. - 63426, Int Summary Tenth Army, 26 Oct 44).<sup>¶</sup> A bridgehead across the Ronco, which had been established during the night 25/26 Oct by 4 Brit Inf Div 4 km south-west of Forlimpopoli, was wiped out during the day, and 264 prisoners were taken (ibid). This German counter-attack was carried out by elements 278 Inf Div supported by Tiger tanks from 508 G.H.Q. Hy Tk Bn. The following units participated: 1 Bn 992 Gren Regt, 7 Coy 993 Gren Regt (i.e. one company of 2 Bn 993 Gren Regt), 2 Bn 994 Gren Regt, 4 Bn 278 Arty Regt

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<sup>¶</sup> These prisoners were taken by 1 Para Regt (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 551, sit rep 26 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D286))



(all from 278 Inf Div), and elements 508 G.H.Q. Hy Tk Bn. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 26 Oct 44)

195. On the previous day concern had been felt regarding a possible intervention of 1 U.S. Armd Div at the critical point. According to Wentzell these fears had proven groundless, and the situation now seemed to justify some measure of optimism:

W: With Heidrich going in, the front might hold.

R: But it is only a temporary solution.

The next problem would be the disengagement of troops for the creation of a new Army Reserve. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/7, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 22-26 Oct, Appx 534, tel cons 26 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285)) In the evening General Schlemm told General v. Vietinghoff on the telephone that in a letter dated 20 Oct he had been informed by General Conrath, Inspector of Paratroops, of the Reichsmarshal's intention of placing General Heidrich in command of 1 Para Corps; Colonel Schulz to command 1 Para Div; Schlémme to be entrusted with the creation of a new Corps. According to Schlemm "this created a difficult situation". v. Vietinghoff told him to wait for official orders (ibid). In view of Vietinghoff's devastating criticism of Schlemm's performance (para 164 above) it may be reasonable to surmise that this development was not unexpected.

27 Oct

196. Pouring rains were drenching the front; heavy fogs shrouded the mountain areas; rivers were in flood; many roads were impassable. No engagements of consequence were reported from any part of the front. General Lemelsen arrived at the headquarters of Tenth Army, and took over command from General v. Vietinghoff, who then moved to Army Group headquarters on the morning of 28 Oct. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 27 Oct 44)

197. According to Wentzell 4 Brit Div had received a marked setback at the Ronco, and had lost almost a whole brigade. This was due to the fact that the Ronco had been crossed at normal water level; whereupon the waters had risen and could not be recrossed when the counter-attack went in. Wentzell told Runkel of a message from the High Command which expressed extraordinary displeasure at the withdrawal [to the Ronco] in the absence of pressure. This meant that in future disengagements for transfer could only be carried out if the opponent were attacking, or if the sector could be bolstered by means of spreading neighbouring formations. (G.M.D.S. - 63426/8, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 27-31 Oct, Appx 553, tel cons 27 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D285))

198. As ever after a critical period it was now necessary to straighten out the formations which had become entangled at difficult moments. Most urgent was the preparation of defence lines in the Bologna area; where the Allied forces might soon resume major operations. Many changes in commands and dispositions were to be made. The composition of Tenth Army on 27 Oct (before the changes began to create a new picture) was as follows:



Tenth Army

(from West to East)

1 Para Corps	94 Inf Div 16 S.S. Pz Gren Div 4 Para Div 65 Inf Div 29 Pz Gren Div 362 Inf Div <sup>██</sup>
14 Pz Corps	90 Pz Gren Div 1 Para Div 98 Inf Div 334 Inf Div 715 Inf Div
76 Pz Corps	305 Inf Div <sup>██</sup> 356 Inf Div 278 Inf Div 26 Pz Div <sup>██</sup>
Venetian Coast Command	114 Jg Div 162 (Turc) Inf Div <sup>██</sup>

(G.M.D.S. - 63426/1, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, 26 and 27 Oct 44;  
63426/11, Tenth Army, sit maps 21-30 Oct, sit map 27 and  
28 Oct 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D305))

The above order of battle is confirmed and enlarged by the  
detailed situation maps of the three Corps for 28 Oct 44:

Photostat 981A10:(D306)	1 Para Corps	Sit Map 28 Oct 44
Photostat 981A10:(D307)	14 Pz Corps	Sit Map 28 Oct 44
Photostat 981A10.(D308)	76 Pz Corps	Sit Map 28 Oct 44

A graphic tabulation of the fighting strength of the Army's  
divisions is also being retained in photostatic form (G.M.D.S. -  
63426/8, Tenth Army, W.D. 9, Appx 27-31 Oct, Appx 561, 27 Oct  
44) (Photostat 981A10.(D309))

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- █ Plus elements 42 Jg Div; balance following
  - ██ Under command of 76 Pz Corps since 25 Oct (Tenth Army,  
W.D. 9, 25 Oct 44)
  - ███ Plus remnants 20 G.A.F. Div
  - ████ In reserve about 10 km north-west of Ravenna (op cit,  
sit map 27 and 28 Oct )



199. In the meantime Fourteenth Army had been largely denuded of formations with a fighting value, and now consisted of:

Army Headquarters

51 Mtn Corps with:

232 Inf Div  
elements 42 Inf Div (gradually moving to  
Tenth Army)  
4 Ital Mtn Div ("Monte Rosa") (elements  
arriving)  
135 Fortress Brigade

Corps Lombardia with:

148 Inf Div  
3 Ital Inf Div ("San Marco")  
2 Ital Inf Div ("Littorio") (en route  
from Germany)

Army Reserve:

Nil

A schematic order of battle of Fourteenth Army on 1 Nov 44 appears as Appendix "Y" to this report. (G.M.D.S. - 65922/2, Fourteenth Army, W.D. 5, Appx 5, Appx 1 Oct - 31 Dec 44, Appx 1075, 1 Nov 44) (Photostat 981A10.(D311))

28-31 Oct

200. During the last four days of October the situation continued to be dominated by the adverse weather conditions. Between the Via Emilia and the sea, east of the Ronco 1 Cdn Corps was withdrawn into Army Reserve; west of the Ronco 3 Para Regt moved off to rejoin its division. 114 Jg Div and 26 Pz Div extended their respective positions to the right. On 29 Oct a deep penetration north of Meldola heralded the beginning of the fight for Forli.

CONCLUSION

201. Due to the surprise achieved by the Eighth Army at the beginning of the Battle of Rimini, the Adriatic portion of the Gothic Line (Green Line I) was not fully manned; neither could it be held by the Germans flooding back to the line simultaneously with the pursuing forces. What had originally been meant to be the Winter Line had thus been lost. By the end of October however, with a skill and determination worthy of a better cause, Army Group "C" had succeeded in ensuring the continuation of the German hold on Northern Italy for another winter. The Allies, now in full ascendancy, were nevertheless the gainers in this campaign of attrition, and many of the enemy's best formations, worn out or pinned down in Italy, were unavailable for other undertakings designed to prolong the existence of the dying Third Realm.



202. At the time of writing, the War Diaries of Tenth Army and 76 Pz Corps for the remainder of the Italian campaign are not in Allied possession, nor is there any certain knowledge of their whereabouts. It is therefore not possible to supply a narrative based on enemy documents for the last four months of Canadian operations in Italy.

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

*A. G. Steiger, Capt.*  
for (C.P. Stacey) Colonel  
Director  
Historical Section (G.S.)



## I

LIST OF APPENDICES

<u>Appx</u>	<u>H.S. Number</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Para</u>
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