

UNIT HISTORY

Combat Command B
6th Armored Division

HORACE W. LENNON

, SC 1687

H. W. LENNON
1st Lt. INFANTRY
GOLDSTAR, N.C. 27530

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

22 August 1944

SUBJECT: Unit History

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256,
U S Army

1. In compliance with letter Hq 6th Armd Div, dated 17 August 1944, the following report on the activities of this combat command is submitted for the period 22 July to 9 August 1944:

Unit History

July 1944

22

Combat Command "B" landed at UTAH BEACH on the CHERBOURG PENINSULA, FRANCE, at 0500B and marched to vicinity FIERVILLE where it went into an assembly area.

28

Combat Command "B" was alerted to move. Troops: 50th Armd Inf Bn, 69th Tk Bn, Co C 603d TD Bn and Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn.

29

Combat Command "B" marched from vicinity FIERVILLE, FRANCE, south in the division zone through LA HAYE de Puits, LESSAY, MONSURVENT and closed in an assembly area in the vicinity of BELLAIS, FRANCE.

30

Combat Command "B", as composed above, moved at 0600B, crossing the SEINNE RIVER with mission of blocking the east, southeast and south exits to the city of GRANVILLE, FRANCE. Tr B, 86th Cav Rcn SqMecz preceded the column by one hour. Enemy demolitions at bridge over SEINNE required use of ford over river, which caused some delay in crossing. Light enemy action caused minor delays in the advance of the column. At 1255B enemy small arms, mortar and artillery from vicinity BREHAL was encountered. It is estimated that the town and vicinity was occupied by an infantry battalion which probably had one battery of four self-propelled 88mm guns plus some smaller caliber anti-tank guns. The town was taken without trouble at 1325B. The enemy was defensively minded and was making every effort to withdraw either to GRANVILLE or to the south. A number of small combat teams were fanned out, but minor rear guard actions prevented the accomplishment of our original mission and the command was ordered into an assembly area in the vicinity of BREVILLE where it closed at about 2300B. Our casualties for the day were light. Approximately 200 prisoners were taken. Our casualties were approximately 2 killed and 10 wounded.

31

Our original mission was modified and the combat command was ordered to march in three columns to assembly areas northwest of AVRANCHES. The combat command marched at 1058B and it started to close in the designated assembly area, orders were received to continue the movement to a new assembly area just north and west of AVRANCHES. At 2200B the command

31 Contd. closed in its assembly area in the vicinity of SOUILLET. During the day there was no enemy action other than occasional small arms fire and light casualties were suffered, approximately 4 wounded. Approximately 70 prisoners were taken in the vicinity of SAINT AUBIN.

August

- 1 Combat Command "B", consisting of 50th Armd Inf Bn, 69th Tk Bn, 25th Armd Engr Bn minus A & C Cos, Co C 603d TDBn and the 128th AFA Bn, was ordered to capture Dinan and instructed to move into an assembly area for the night under the protection of the Reserve Command and to pass through them on our mission at dawn 2 August. Co B 777th AAA Bn was attached and instructed to join our column as soon as possible. There was considerable congestion on the roads into AVRANCHES and south thereof. At 1900B the head of our column passed through AVRANCHES, proceeded south through PONTABAULT and closed in an assembly area just east of PONTORSON at 2215B. Column was strafed by five ME109's at AVRANCHES and two men were wounded.
- 2 Combat Command "B" passed through the RESERVE COMMAND at 0600B, the Div Arty Comd, including the 231st, 83d and 174th FA Bn joining our command at this time. No enemy resistance to speak of was encountered until 1030B just east of DINAN at LANVALLAY. Approaching LANVALLAY the advance guard ran into strong enemy resistance. Outpost of approximately 25 men defeated with 12 enemy being killed. One of our men was slightly wounded. Fire from artillery, AT guns, mortars, bazookas, machine guns and other small arms was received. This was undoubtedly the enemy OPLR for DINAN which was reported strongly held. Enemy tanks were also known to be in this vicinity as we had followed their tracks on the highway for some distance. A patrol had been sent out to locate these tanks, but were prevented by enemy infantry. Our artillery consisting of the Artillery Command, less the 212th AFA Bn, plus the 83d, AFA Bn and the 174 FA Bn Med was placed in position to support the attack. As the 83d AFA Bn was going into position, orders were received attaching it to Combat Command "A" and it proceeded south on its new mission. Medium tanks were placed in direct fire positions, battalion support weapons brought forward and additional infantry brought up to take LANVALLAY, the intermediate objective. Strong patrols were sent to either flank to probe the enemy position, the flanks of which were believed to rest on the RANCE RIVER just east of DINAN. The main highway bridge into DINAN was reported to be heavily mined. As the attack got underway, orders were received not to take DINAN, but to by-pass it and proceed to an assembly area in the vicinity of BECHEREL for the night and to move on BREST the following morning. Since our elements had been committed and as it might have proved costly to break off the attack at this stage, it was decided to take our intermediate objective. This was done at approximately 1500B. During this attack, heavy artillery fire was placed on DINAN and at approximately 1600B some friendly planes in the air, not working with the

- 2 Contd. division, offered to fly missions for us. They were requested to bomb and straff DINAN and then fly tactical reconnaissance to the southwest to report any enemy troops that might interfere with our pending movement. Both these missions were quickly and efficiently handled. During the reorganization, prior to moving out on our new mission, occasional artillery fire was intermittently placed on DINAN in an effort to mask our intentions. At approximately 1800B our command started its movement covered by a rear guard. Two enemy tanks moved in on our left (north) flank and opened fire. They were attacked by friendly air and by an M-7 which took one under direct fire and destroyed it while the other tank withdrew without inflicting any material damage. The command, after marching east and thence southwest, closed in an assembly area in the vicinity of BECHEREL at 2200B. Our losses were 4 medium tanks and 1 assault gun from the 69th Tk Bn. Our casualties were 6 enlisted men killed and 3 officers and 18 enlisted men wounded. All enemy losses could not be ascertained. One 88mm AT gun and one Mark IV tank were known to have been destroyed, and some 30 prisoners were taken. We had 1-L5 destroyed and one pilot killed.
- 3 At 0930B the command marched west on BREST. At BROONS minor resistance was encountered when the advance guard ran into small enemy elements apparently endeavoring to escape to the south. Co B of the 777th AAA Bn, which had been ordered to join us at BROONS, also ran into slight resistance southeast of BROONS which was quickly overcome and they joined our column at that point. The march continued westward without further incident. Eight miles east of LOUDEAC the column was halted by the division commander and instructed to go into an assembly area and await further instructions as there was a possibility that we would be required to move on SAINT MALO. The command closed at approximately 2100B. Three wounded were reported.
- 4 The command was ordered to resume the march on BREST but was somewhat delayed by a blown bridge and mined fords at LOUDEAC. At 1800B the command marched west on CARHAIX and halted at 05023B in march formation with the head in vicinity of LE MOUSTOIR. The command was re-gassed at this time and it was decided to resume the march at dawn.
- 5 It was reliably reported that CARHAIX was strongly held by the enemy so reconnaissance was started at dawn to locate a suitable by-pass to the east. At 0830 the march was resumed and CARHAIX by-passed to the east and north. At 1215B enemy resistance was encountered east of LE CLOITRE. This resistance was reduced without difficulty. One 47 mm gun and several machine guns were destroyed, 15 Germans killed and 5 prisoners captured. Identifications and information from PW's disclosed that we had met the leading elements of the 851st Inf Regt, 343d Inf Div, which was marching east to SAINT BRIEUX. Two of our men were wounded and two $\frac{1}{2}$ ton vehicles and a small captured German truck were destroyed. At 1440B the march was resumed. On reaching LE CLOITRE the advance guard came under light artillery

- 5 Contd. fire and heavy fire from mortars and machine guns. Resistance couldnot be cleaned out prior to dark, therefore the command was ordered in an assembly area for the night in the vicinity of LE CLOITRE. This action resulted in our losing 1 officer and 7 men killed and 30 men wounded. Two medium tanks and one half-track were destroyed. Enemy casualties were approximately 20 killed and 100 taken prisoner.
- 6 Under cover ofdarkness the enemy withdrew and the march was resumed with the idea of by-passing MORLAIX to the south and PLEYBER-CHRIST to the east. At approximately 1015B a strongly defended enemy road block was encountered in a defile six miles south of MORLAIX on Route No.169. Three beetle tanks sent out by the enemy were destroyed by tank fire. Several of our officers and men were wounded by grenades and small arms fire from the high ground on either side of the defile. A new advance guard was constituted and the route through PLEYBER CHRIST was taken and the march resumed to the north. On reaching Highway GC19 near PENHOAT the column turned west again on LESNEVEN where enemy resistance was again encountered at approximately 2000B. An ultimatum was sent to the Germans by a French volunteer demanding their surrender. When no reply was received, the town wasattacked. After artillery shelling and an attack by infantry and tanks, the enemy was driven out and the town taken at 2200B. Three AT guns and 75mm andless were destroyed. Enemy casualties were probably removed before our entry into the town. A large dump of enemy mines and demolitions was destroyed in vicinity of the railroad station. Having been ordered to reach the vicinity of BREST as quickly as possible the march was resumed at 0700B. After the advance guard had cleared LESNEVEN, enemy resistance was again encountered and when a medium tank was destroyed by AT gun fire, it was decided to halt for the night and resume the march at dawn. The command went into an assembly area just east of LESNEVEN. Our casualties were 2 killed and approximately 2 officers and 8 enlisted men wounded.
- 7 At 0800B the command resumed the march and by-passed PLABENNEC to the west. Considerable small arms fire was encountered south of LESNEVEN but otherwise the movement was uneventful until the column reached the intersection with GC26 west of BOURG-BLANC. Elements of theadvance guard were allowed to pass thiscross-road and encountered strong resistance just east of MILIZAC in the form of artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. Near the crossroads a large AA warning system and observation post was discovered. When this installation was attacked and destroyed, enemy fire ceased and was not resumed again in that immediate area. After consultation with the division commander, it was decided to put the command into an assembly area just east of MILIZAC and south of the east-west highway. Units were assigned areas and they began moving into their respective positions. Forward elements to the south were badly shelled from vicinity of BREST and were in view of enemy OP's. When these forward elements were withdrawn several hundered yards, the enemy artillery ceased firing andthe command was eventually closed at approximately 2000B. Our casualties

- 7 Contd. were 1 officer and 1 enlisted man killed and 15 men wounded, but no vehicular casualties. Some enemy were killed in OP but most appeared to have escaped through a deep trench leading westward from the OP.
- 8 This date the combat command was reconstituted and consisted of the following units: 15th Tk Bn, 9th Armd Inf Bn, Co D 69th Tk Bn, Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn, Cos A and C 25th Armd Engr Bn, Btry B 777th AAA Bn and Co C 603d TD Bn. The 128th AFA Bn was in direct support and the 231st AFA Bn was to reinforce the fires of the assembly position in the vicinity of PENHOAT east of GOUSENOU and was preparing to launch its attack in conjunction with the remainder of the division at 090600B on BREST. At 090300B orders were received cancelling the attack and directing the command to withdraw to the north and occupy an assembly area in the vicinity of LANANNEYEN. Considerable harrasing fires were placed by the enemy during the night, but only minor casualties resulted.
- 9 Combat Command "B" moved out at 0600B. As the advance guard neared the OR's at 977110 in the vicinity of LANANNEYEN, strong enemy opposition was encountered. Co's B & C of the 15th Tk Bn and Co B of the 9th Armd Inf Bn launched the attack at 0830B. Succeeding units cleared the road and the 231st AFA Bn was placed in (-) was charged with covering the rear of the command just north of GOUSENOU and the 128th AFA Bn was put in position to support the 9th Armd Inf Bn. Co D 69th Tk Bn was Committed with instructions to make a wide envelopment of the enemy position. Co A and 1 platoon from Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn were committed at 1100 B and Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn was also brought forward at this time. At 1530B, after suffering severe casualties, the enemy ceased his resistance and surrendered with his remaining force. The command then proceeded to its assembly area and closed at approximately 2000B. Our losses during this engagement were 1 officer and 11 enlisted men killed and 3 officers and 35 enlisted men wounded. Vehicular casualties were two medium tanks, Enemy casualties were approximately 230 officers and men killed, 70 wounded and 800 taken prisoner. Some 200 vehicles 20 AT guns or artillery pieces were captured or destroyed. Considerable other booty was also captured or destroyed. This force was identified as elements of 896-897-898 Regiments of the 266th Inf. Div.

Summary of losses during period from 29 July to 9 August 1944:

Personnel casualties:

Killed: 4 officers and 33 enlisted men
 Missing: 1 officer and 13 enlisted men
 Wounded: 9 officers and 122 enlisted men
 Total casualties: 14 officers and 168 enlisted men

Vehicular losses:

105 Howitzers	1
M-7's	2
Medium Tanks	8
Light Tanks	2
1/4 Tons	4
Half Tracks	4
1-Ton Trailers	2
M-10 Trailers	2
3/4 Ton Wpns Carrier	1
3/4 Ton Ambulance	1
2 1/2 Ton Cargo	1
57 mm AT Gun	1
Total	<u>29</u>
1 L5 Plane	1
Total	<u>30</u>

Approximate enemy losses:

45

Personnel:

Killed	325
Wounded	300
Prisoners	<u>1800</u>
Total	2425

Vehicular:

AT Guns	33
Tanks	1
Misc vehicles	230

The command covered 316 miles during this period of the operations.

2. Summary: During this entire period the enemy encountered was defensively minded and was never disposed in much depth or width but was invariably located along routes of advance. Unquestionably we by-passed much greater strength than we ever encountered, especially at DINAN and CARHAIX. What enemy was encountered usually fought stubbornly and well with his available personnel and equipment and our rapid progress was only made possible by our superiority in strength. In most cases, the enemy was retreating into coastal towns and his activities partook of minor delaying actions which he broke off at the first opportunity. On numerous occasions the enemy was encountered unexpectedly and it was apparent that he was unaware of our whereabouts most of the time. In addition, many enemy elements escaped that could have been blocked and

defeated had our mission permitted us time to do so, or had proper enveloping tactics been used. As it was, he held us up and delayed our advance far longer than should have been permitted under the circumstances considering the small forces at his disposal. Repeatedly a handful of men with a few weapons held up the entire command for unreasonable periods. As the movement progressed, however, our units reacted more quickly and knocked out small resistance faster. It was a type of operation we had not trained for sufficiently and although it presented nothing new, it was sometime before the proper technique was employed to defeat tactics of this sort. The experience gained should stand us in good stead in future operations of this nature.

3. Major faults which should be corrected at once were as follows:

- a. Lack of aggressive leadership on the part of subordinate commanders and junior officers and NCO's.
- b. Inability of some of the more senior commanders to employ their forces through the proper chain of command. There was too much tendency to do everything themselves.
- c. Failure of reconnaissance elements to act aggressively and get information back promptly. In many cases they unnecessarily held up the advance guard.
- d. Failure to employ supporting weapons, particularly artillery, to the medium.
- e. Failure to keep information flowing to the rear of sending none at all, which required many officers to go forward to get it personally.
- f. Failure of the advance guard to react automatically and have an SOP method of establishing a base of fire and starting an envelopment instantly. The tendency was for leading elements to keep butting their heads into the enemy.
- g. Failure from the combat command commander down, to start a sufficiently wide envelopment with rearward elements of the column the minute the advance guard was held up.
- h. Too much tendency on the part of everyone to assume that the advance guard action would be over in a moment and therefore to do nothing about it. This resulted in considerable delay.
- i. Everyone was entirely too road bound when the advance guard became engaged. Infantry must get well out to flanks, vehicles must clear roads, flank protection must be established, reconnaissance for alternate routes must start, commanders must be prepared to send out a new advance guard, vehicles must disperse and more thought must be given to continuing the advance in one way or another. As it was, everyone stayed on the road, vehicles jammed up or doubled other vehicles and completely blocked the road. Nothing could get forward or back and although this condition was apparent to every last man and officer, no one did anything about it, except the senior commanders. Such lethargy cannot be tolerated. Infantrymen habitually hid in the ditches along the road instead of getting out two or three hedgerows to hunt down the enemy. They were the hunted, not the hunters and in several instances they permitted the enemy to get on the other side of the same hedgerow. Well placed mortar or artillery fire could have annihilated entire units, yet no one made a move to correct these deficiencies. Every infantry unit must have a bold leader in front and a bold driver behind.
- j. Tanks failed to follow the basic tactical teachings that have been taught for so long. In many instances over-watching, dismounted reconnaissance, bunching and failure to use smoke resulted in unnecessary losses. In some cases they buttoned up the tank and just sat.

k. In several instances, infantry-tank cooperation was poor and in some cases failed completely. Battlefield reorganization by both infantry and tanks was poor. Men and tanks straggled to the rear when the spirit moved them and often several men escorted one lone prisoner. The irresistible will to go forward and close with the enemy was generally lacking in subordinate units. Battalion commanders generally functioned well forward but were slow in some cases to grasp the situation and at times were prone to be overcautious. In many instances battalion staff and liaison officers were not used to good advantage. Casualties and losses at times were grossly exaggerated thereby making the situation appear much more serious. Commanders must be made to realize that a war cannot be fought without casualties and that bold aggressive action, if intelligently applied, will invariably reduce casualties far below those that will result from indecisive vacillating action.

1. Battalion commanders are not forceful enough in eliminating the weak leaders and putting the natural ones in to replace them.

I feel much valuable experience was gained and that future meeting engagements will be more efficiently handled providing the mistakes are properly and forcefully brought to the attention of all officers and men and if the weak leaders are ruthlessly replaced on the spot.

GEORGE W READ JR
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

29 September 1944

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy Report

To : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256, U S Army

1. The following is a report of action against the enemy for the period 10 August - 31 August 1944, as required by AR 345-105, C3. Report for period 1 - 9 August was included in report submitted 22 August 1944.

AUGUST 1944

- 10 The Combat Command consisted of the following units:
15th Tk Bn (-), 9th Armd Inf Bn (-), Co D 69th Tk Bn, Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn, Cos A & C 25th Armd Engr Bn, Btry B 777th AAA Bn & Co C 603 TD Bn with the 128th Armd FA Bn in direct support and the 231st Armd FA Bn reinforcing. Combat Command "B" remained in assembly area north of LANANNEYEN.
- 11 Co D 15th Tk Bn and Co C 9th Armd Inf Bn were released from escort duty with Division Trains and rejoined their respective battalions in our area.
- 12 Orders were received at 2045B for Combat command "B" to march to VANNES with the mission of relieving elements of the 4th Armd Div in that vicinity. Combat Command "B" was composed of the 9th Armd Inf Bn, 15th Tk Bn, 128th Armd FA Bn, Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn, Co C 603d TD Bn, 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-Trs A & E) and Btry B 777th AAA Bn with Co A 128th Ord Maint Bn & Co B 76th Armd Med Bn in support. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Mecz was given the mission of preceeding the column, reconnoitering the route of advance and contacting elements of the 4th Armd Div in our zone.
- 13 Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz moved out at 0635B following a route through PLOUVIEN, LESNEVEN, MORLAIX, CARHAIX, ROSTENNEN, PONTIVY, LOCMINE AND VANNES. The advance guard of Combat Command "B" marched at 0800B. At 1325B, Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz reached the Rj north of LOCMINE, contacted the 4th Armd Div and received work from the 4th Armd Div Comdr for the Combat Command not to move south of the east-west highway through LOCMINE prior to 140600B. The Combat Command commander went forward to Headquarters 4th Armd Div and arrangements were made at that time to relieve elements of the 4th Armd Div in the area north and east of ~~MINN~~ VANNES beginning at 140700B. Combat Command "B" closed in an assembly area approximately two miles north of LOCMINE at 2300B. The move was made without incident. There was no enemy contact and no casualties either vehicular or personnel. This day the Combat Command marched 111 miles.
- 14 At 0700B, Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz with one platoon Co. B 15th Tk Bn moved out to relieve elements of the 25th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz near MUZILAC. Co A 9th Armd Inf Bn with one platoon Co. B 15th Tk Bn moved to relieve elements of Div Reserve 4th Armd Division near AURAY and one platoon Co B 15th Tk Bn relieved elements of Div Reserve 4th Armd Div at MEUCON. The balance of Combat Command B moved at 1245B to go into assembly area just east of VANNES. While enroute south from LOCHINE, the mission of Combat Command B was changed by the Div. Commander and it was ordered to proceed to the vicinity of ARZANO, take over from the 6th Armd Div Reserve Command and relieve elements of Combat

Command B 4th Armd Div. between the SCORFF AND LEITA RIVERS and to contain the enemy in LORIENT within that zone. At this time the 15th Tk Bn with Co A 9th Armd Inf Bn attached, and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-Tr B), were given separate missions by the Division Commander. The Commanding Officer of Combat Command B and the Commanding Officer of Div. Reserve, were given authority to reconstitute the combat command and the reserve command as they deemed necessary. The combat command turned right through GRANDCHAMP and proceeded to an assembly area just three miles south of ARZANO, closing at 2300B. The CO's of the 44th Armd Inf Bn, Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn and the Rcn Co 603d TD Bn contacted elements of the 4th Armd Div on the OPL and arrangements were made to relieve them at 150600B. The Div. Artillery was in general support. As reconstituted, the combat command was composed of the 68th Tk Bn, 44th Armd Inf Bn, 9th Armd Inf Bn (-Co A), Cos A & C 25th Armd Engr Bn, Rcn Co 603d TD Bn and Btry B 777th AAA Bn.

- 15 Combat Command B 4th Armd Div, was relieved at 0600B with 44th Armd Inf Bn on the left, Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn in the center and Rcn Co 603d TD Bn on the right, with the 68th Tk Bn, Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn and 9th Armd Inf Bn (-) in reserve. The entire day was spent in organizing and consolidating the positions. Since our mission was to contain the enemy in Lorient within our sector, it was decided to send out strong dismounted reconnaissance patrols to probe and definitely locate the enemy's positions, each patrol to have an artillery FO with it.

16 See below.

- 17 The units were shifted on the front line to provide a more equal distribution. The 44th Armd Inf Bn with Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn attached, was assigned an area on the OPL from SCORFF RIVER at G710280 to G660320. The 9th Armd Inf Bn (-) with Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn and Rcn Co 603d TD Bn attached, to cover from G-660320 to the LEITA RIVER at G610300. The Rcn Co 603d TD Bn was given the additional mission of assisting the 68th Tk Bn with mounted patrols west of the LEITA RIVER, extending from QUIMPERLE south to the ocean. The 231st Armd FA Bn was in direct support of the 9th Armd Inf Bn and the 212 Armd FA Bn in direct support of the 44th Armd Inf Bn.

18 See below

AUGUST 1944

- 19 See below - Co A 68th Tk Bn attached to 50th Armd Inf Bn in the BREST sector.

20 See below.

- 21 See below - Cos B & C 68th Tk Bn moved out of front line area to the north of ARZANO to permit better maintenance and training.

22 See below

23 See Below

24 See below

25 See below

26 See Below

- 18 - 26 During this period the activities of Combat Command B consisted of outposting the positions and in sending numerous daily patrols forward from the OPL with the mission of locating the enemy and defeating and destroying any personnel or installations. The assault gun platoon of the 68th Tk Bn moved into positions along the west bank of the LEITA RIVER and destroyed several gun and battery emplacements. At first there was no definite enemy OPL in existence, but they gradually build one up until

it was fairly well established. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was very sporadic and all guns seemed to be roving guns. After the enemy pulled out a battalion of Russian Troops in the center and replaced them with German Troops, their resistance increased considerably. Our casualties for the period 18-26 August were: 6 enlisted men killed, 10 wounded and 2 missing. Approximately 125 prisoners were taken and enemy casualties were estimated to be approximately 100 killed and 150 wounded.

- 27 Combat Command "B" was alerted to move the following day to the vicinity of ORLEANS and to make the move in three days. On arrival it was to push maintenance and replacement of tank engines and tracks and to prepare for further action as soon as possible. Troops: 44th Armd Inf Bn; 69th Tk Bn, 212th Armd FA Bn, Btry B 777th AAA Bn, Co C 603d TD Bn, Rcn Co 603d TD Bn, Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn, one platoon 990th Treadway Bridge Co attached, with Co B 76th Med Bn and Co A 128th Ord Maint Bn in support.
- 28 Combat Command "B" moved out by units with Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz moving at 1000B with the mission of reconnoitering the route to REDON. The 69th Tk Bn moved at 1045 B with the balance of the command moving at 1200B going by way of ARZANO, PLOWAY, BUBRY, BAUD, GRANDCHAMP, VANNES and REDON. The move was without incident and the combat command closed in bivouac 4 miles east of REDON at 2045B.
- 29 The original plan was to move from REDON in two columns, but information was received that the only bridge across the SARTHE RIVER, within our zone, was at ANGERS so the combat command continued the march at 0800 B moving in one column in advance guard formation, through GUEIMENE, NOZAY, CANDE, ANGERS and BAUGE. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz proceeded the column by 1 1/2 hours. At 1145B Rcn Co 603d TD Bn was sent south through NOZAY, MOR AND ANCENIS along the LOIRE RIVER to ANGERS and rejoined the column there. No enemy was encountered en route. The combat command closed in assembly area at 2100B just north of PONTIGNE. Bridge and road reconnaissance by engineers was sent out to the south at 2001B. Elements of the 83rd Inf Div were contacted regarding friendly troops and possible enemy troops on the north bank of the LOIRE RIVER. Liaison officers were sent out to check on enemy information at BLOIS and TOURS. A platoon of Rcn 603d TD Bn and a platoon of Rcn 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were sent out to the south to secure information of enemy reported to be in the vicinity of SAMUR.

AUGUST 1944

30

Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was given the mission of reconnoitering to the south from our location in the vicinity of LONGUE, LARONTE AND VERNANTES and to determine the strength and composition of enemy forces north of the river at SAMUR. Rcn 603d TD Bn was given the mission of checking routes and any enemy installations north of the river at SAMUR. Rcn 603d TD Bn was given the mission of checking routes and any enemy installations north of and east along the LOIRE RIVER to TOURS, with the specific mission of checking the enemy situation at CING-MARS LA BILE. The Co's of the infantry battalion, artillery battalion, tank battalion and part of the combat command staff moved to the vicinity of LESROCHES.

to check all possible OP's and positions for artillery and other supporting weapons. One platoon of Co A 44th Armd Inf Bn was sent to outpost and cover the OP. Remainder of combat command was ordered to remain in position and to stress maintenance of weapons and vehicles. The elements of the 44th Armd Inf Bn sent out to cover the reconnaissance of the battalion commanders and staffs contacted FFI at LA RONTE and were informed that the enemy had evacuated the north bank of the river near SAMUR and was believed to have evacuated SAMUR itself the night of the 29th. This was verified by the infantry platoon and a platoon of TR B 86th Can Ren Sq Mecz at 1500B when they actually entered LA CROIX VENTE dismounted, as all entrances were found to be mined. As Free France elements crossed the river into SAMUR, all units of Combat Command "B" were directed to return to their assembly area. Orders were issued at 1900B for the combat command to move at 0730B, 31 August in two columns on ORLEANS, the south column to have the bulk of the combat elements of the command and each column to have a normal advance guard. Owing to reliable reports that the enemy was covering the river road ~~for one of the~~ with roving AT guns, mortar, etc, it was decided not to use this road for one of the columns, but to cover it with reconnaissance elements only. No reconnaissance was sent south of the river since all bridges were reported blown to ORLEANS and no suitable crossings were known to be available. Ren Co 603d TD Bn to move at 310700 B from their bivouac near TOURS, reconnoiter in the zone from the LOIRE RIVER road inclusive to south column route exclusive, through TOURS to ORLEANS. Tr B 86th CAV Ren Sq Mecz to move at 0700B east to SAMUR, reconnoiter within their zone to TOURS and check all bridges. On reaching TOURS it was to follow Ren Co 603d TD Bn to ORLEANS. The two columns were composed as follows:

North Column:

- 44th Armd Inf Bn (-)
- 1 Co 69th Tk Bn
- 1 Btry 212th Armd FA Bn
- 1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
- Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
- Co B 76th Med Bn
- Co A 128th Ord Maint Bn (-)
- Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn (- 1 Plat)
- Att. Gas Trucks
- Ammunition trains of 69th Tk Bn & 212th Armd FA Bn

South Column:

- 69th Tk Bn (- 1 Co)
- 212th Armd FA Bn (-1 Btry)
- 2 Cos 44th Armd Inf Bn
- 1 Plant Btry B 777th AAA Bn
- Co C 603d TD Bn (-)
- Det A 128th Ord Maint Bn
- Hq & Hq Co CCB
- 1 1 Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn.

Routes were as follows: North Route: From vicinity of Pontigne through LELUDE VASS, LACHARTDE, MONTOIRE, VENDOME AND CHARSONVILLE

August 39th Contd.

South Route: NOYANT, CHATEAU LAVALLAIRE, BEAUMONT, CHATEAU, RENAULT, HERBAULT, BLOIS, BEAUGENCY AND MEUNG. Alternate Route "A": From CHATEAU RENAULT north to VENDOME, OUCQUES, MARCHENOIR, BEAUGENCY and MEUNG. Alternate Route "B": HERBAULT, northeast on Route IC 26th to CHAMPIGNY to IC 39, then east to HY N824 then north on Hy GC10 to Marchenoir, then south on Hy N817 to Beaugency, east to Meung to Hy GC3. 6 prisoners and 1 civilian taken by the FFI were turned over to the combat command. 4 were from the 5th Parachute Division, 1 from the 512th Signal Battalion and 1 from the 590th Army Horsepark.

AUGUST 1944

31

At 0730B Combat Command "B" marched east in two columns as planned, from vicinity of PONTIGNE with the mission of clearing north bank of LOIRE RIVER and to go into an assembly area just west of ORLEANS. Because of the probability of enemy fire from the south bank of the river, the south column turned north at CHATEAU RENAULT and proceeded on Alternate Route "A". Just east of BEAUGENCY, as the column arrived on the river road, some small arms and AF fire was received from the south side of the river. Two half-tracks were knocked out, but no casualties resulted. The enemy could not be located and evidently pulled out when tank fire was placed on his suspected position. The two vehicles were towed into bivouac and repaired. Combat Command "B" closed in bivouac 1.9 miles south of BUCY at 2145B. Units were instructed to push maintenance to the utmost of the following day, but orders were received from the Division Commander to proceed through ORLEANS to a new assembly area in the vicinity of LORRIS.

Personnel casualties for the period were:

7 killed
2 Missing
22 Wounded

Vehucular casualties: None.

Approximate enemy casualties:

117 Prisoners
100 Killed
200 Wounded

Considerable small arms and ammunition taken or destroyed. Vehucular losses - unobserved.

GEORGE W READ, JR.
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

1 October 1944

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1 -30 September 1944

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256, U S Army

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-30 September, ~~1944~~ 1944, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

SEPTEMBER 1944

1 Composition of Combat Command "B" was:

44th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
212th Armd FA Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Rcn Co 603d TD Bn
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co A 128th Armd Maint Bn
Co B 76th Armd Med Bn
Det 3803d QM Truck Co

The combat command was in an assembly area just west of ORLEANS. On 31 August orders had been received to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of LORRIS. Clearance was obtained from Third Army Transportation Control Officer for passage through ORLEANS. Rcn Co 603d TD Bn and Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz marched at 1130B with mission of reconnoitering the route and outposting the assembly area. The combat command marched by units with five minute intervals between companies, in order not to congest the main supply route. The move was started at 1200B and the route taken was as follows. BUCY, ORLEANS, CHATEAUNEUF. The march was without incident and the command closed three miles north of LES BORDES at 1800B.

2 Combat Command remained in assembly area. All units were instructed to push maintenance. Members of Combat Command "B" staff visited elements of 35th Infantry Division to advise them of our presence in area and exact location. Orders were received to relieve elements of 35th Infantry Division from ORLEANS, MONTARGIS, inclusive and protect the south flank of the Third Army in that sector.

3 The 44th Armd Inf Bn with Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz attached, was ordered to outpost area ORLEANS, GIEN, inclusive and to maintain contact with elements of 83d Infantry Division west of ORLEANS AND FFI and other friendly troops in area. Rcn Co 603d TD Bn was ordered to vicinity RJ NI40 and N7 and instructed to place one platoon in vicinity of TOUCY and one platoon in vicinity of ST FARGEAU. Their patrols were ordered

- 3 contd. to cover area GIEN, BRIARE, BONNY, ST FARGEAU, TOUCY, AUXERRE, JOIGNY, CHATEAUNARD, MONTARGIS, CHARNY and maintain contact with elements of 35th Infantry Division to the east, as well as with FFI, paratroopers and other friendly forces within zone. Ren platoon 69th Tk Bn was ordered to send patrols to LORRIS, MONTARGIS, SENS and make contact daily in the vicinity of SENS with elements of 35th Infantry Division and also to contact FFI and other friendly troops enroute. Other combat elements were to reconnoiter area for positions, routes, etc, and be prepared to support patrols and outposts on call. Above orders went into effect this date.
- 4 No change.
- 5 No change.
- 6 No change
- 7 No change
- 8 No change.
- 9 Commanding Officer, Combat Command "B" was ordered to report to the Commanding General, Ninth US Army at CHATEAUDUN and received instructions regarding possible use of this command to assist 83d Infantry Division in the surrender of 20,000 Germans south of the LOIRE RIVER. Plans were later made with the 83d Infantry Division for this contingency, but it was never necessary to put them into effect.
- 10 No change.
- 11 Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz ordered to the vicinity of CLAMECY to push reconnaissance to NEVERS, AVALLON, SAULIEU AND AUTUN and to contact elements of the Seventh Army in that area. The Second Dragoons, Second French Armored Division of the Seventh Army was contacted in AUTUN at 1600B.
- 12 Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz continued reconnaissance mission to the south and east while the 44th Armd Inf Bn was relieved by elements of the 83d Infantry Division between ORLEANS and GIEN. At 2130B orders were received for the Commanding Officer to report at once to Third Army Headquarters for instructions.
- 13 Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was ordered back to Combat Command "B" assembly area. Orders from Third Army received at 0803B to move the combat command to an assembly area east of TROYES. Since all units of the combat command were not assembled, the move was delayed until 1630B when units moved out through MONTARGIS, COURTENAY, SENS and went into bivouac just west of VILLENEUVE, closing at 2200B.
- 14 The march was resumed at 0830B, passing through VILLENEUVE, ESTISSAC, TROYES to as assembly area just south of DOSCHES on Hy 108. The command closed at 1831B.
- 15 Given mission by Third Army to patrol the area, SENS CHAUMONT, inclusive. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was ordered to send one platoon to Chateauvillau to patrol from CHAUMONT TO CHATILLON, inclusive. Rcn Co 603d Td Bn was ordered to send one platoon to TANLAY, east of TONNERRE to patrol from CHATILLON to SENS, inclusive. Balance of combat command was ordered to push maintenance.

- 16 Combat Command was alerted to move east to vicinity of NEUFACHATEAU early on the 17th.
- 17 Combat Command (less two reconnaissance platoons on patrol) moved at 0700B via LUSIGNY, VENDEUVRE, LEBAN, JUZENCOURT, BOLOGNE, ANDELAT, NEUFCHATEAU to assembly area 1½ miles SE of MARTIGNY and closed at 2000B.
- 18 Orders were received at 0300B from Third Army to report to Commanding General, XII Corps, west of TOUL, for orders. Ex O went to Corps Headquarters and received orders assigning Combat Command "B" to Task Force Sebree. Combat Command alerted for movement at 0730B and moved out at 0950A with Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz preceding by one hour, to reconnoiter routes and assembly area. The commanding officer and executive went to advance CP XII Corps Headquarters at NANCY, talked to the Corps Commander and CO Task Force Sebree and arranged for movement of Combat Command "B" through NANCY to an assembly area east of NANCY near SAULXURES. Mission of Combat Command "B" was to attack and capture AMANCE HILL in conjunction with the 13th Infantry at 190600 A. Mission was changed by Corps order at 181800A. It released Combat Command from Task Force Sebree and ordered it to relieve elements of 4th Armored Division in vicinity of LUNEVILLE. CO reported to Commanding General 4th Armored Division near AUTHELUP and arrangements were made to effect relief starting at 190930A.
- 19 The relief began at 0930A with the 44th Armd Inf Bn placing three companies on line, two in LUNEVILLE and one to the north of the town. The 691st TD Bn (- 1Co) was in support of Combat Command "B". Co C 603d TD Bn, two platoons Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn, one company plus one platoon of medium tanks and one company 691st TD Bn were attached to the 44th Armd Inf Bn, with the 212th Armd FA Bn in direct support. Rcn Co 603d TD Bn with one platoon 691st TD Bn attached was sent to MAIXIE to protect the bridge and reconnoiter to the north and east and maintain liaison with the second Cavalry Group. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was given the mission of reconnoitering the VITREMONT WOODS and contacting the Sixth Cavalry south of the LA XXXXX VEZOUS RIVER. Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) protected bridges at Rosieres, DAMELEVIERES AND DOMBASLE. Considerable artillery and mortar fire with occasional small arms fire was received throughout the day and night. During these two days one medium tank was destroyed by enemy AT Fire. Six Mark IV Tanks were destroyed by our artillery and TD fire. One officer was killed and 22 enlisted men wounded and one was missing in action. Enemy personnel casualties could not be estimated.
- 20 Orders were received that Combat Command "B" would be relieved by elements of the Cavalry Group and the 695th TD Group and that Combat Command "B" would move to an assembly area in the vicinity FORGET DE GREMECEY. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-) with Co D and AG platoon 69th Tk Bn attached, moved at 1640A to reconnoiter routes to and assembly areas. One platoon Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and one platoon Rcn Co 603d TD Bn, which had been left west of CHAMONT were released by Third Army and rejoined their units.
- 21 Combat Command marched at 0822A via DOMBASLE, VARANGEVILLE, HARACOURT, GELLENCOURT, REMERVILLE, ERBEVILLER, SORNEVILLE, MONCEL, PETTENCOURT and GREMECEY to assembly area in FORGET DE GREMECEY and closed at 1600A CP located at U028254. At 1030A message was received from XII Corps assigning the combat command to 35th Infantry Division.

The Combat Command CO reported to the Commanding General, XII Corps, at ESSEY-LES-NANCY for instructions and then reported to the Commanding General, 35th Infantry Division in vicinity of REMERVILLE for orders. Mission of Combat Command "B" was to move at daylight on the 22d to initial attack positions southwest of LANFROICOURT and attack and capture AMANCE HILL in conjunction with an attack from the south and southeast by the 35th Infantry Division and an attack from the west by the 80th Infantry Division. H hour was tentatively set for 221100A.

- 22 The Combat command moved in two columns at 0700A. One column (south) to move through ALINCOURT, ABONCOURT, SUR SEILLE, MANHOUE, LANFROICOURT. The other column (north) to move through Han and ARMAUCOURT. At 0723A contact was made with the enemy at ARMAUCOURT by the north column where stiff AT, tank and infantry resistance was finally overcome and the column proceeded to its attack position, arriving at 1245A. The south column also met stiff enemy resistance south at MANHOUE where the enemy finally withdrew, blowing the bridge. This made it necessary to detour the south column to the north route behind the reserve elements as no other suitable crossings could be found. As the combat command reserve entered ARMAUCOURT, strong enemy resistance was again encountered. Co D 69th Tk Bn, one platoon Co C 603d TD Bn and one platoon Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn overcame this, capturing over 500 prisoners, killing or wounding 250, and capturing or destroying approximately 200 vehicles, as well as considerable other equipment, arms, ammunition, etc. The combat command, less two batteries of the 212th Armd FA Bn which were left on the north side of the river, closed at 1950A. Our casualties for this action were: 9 killed, 40 wounded and 5 medium tanks, 3 half-tracks, 2 trailers, 1 light truck and 3- 1 ton trucks destroyed. During the night considerable enemy movement to the north was underway. Our attempt to block the main road with Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was unsuccessful and they were driven in by enemy infantry and tanks. A request for air was denied, but Corps artillery did interdict the road. Our action against one small group trying to escape resulted in our getting back one officer from the 134th Infantry Regiment, who had been captured the night before.
- 23 At 0715A word was received that our attack on AMANCE HILL was cancelled since the pressure caused by our movement down from the north enabled the 35th Infantry Division to attack the hill at dusk on the 22d and capture it without difficulty. We were then ordered to move a force in to LEYR, capture the town and block off any movement to the north and east by the enemy. The 44th Armd Inf Bn (- Rifle Cos) with Rcn Co 603d TD Bn, one medium tank co, one light tank platoon and one TD platoon moved out and attacked the town at 1245A. At 1415A the town was captured and outposted. Civilians reported that approximately 200 enemy with some American prisoners withdrew to the west. Another force consisting of Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, one medium tank company, one light tank platoon and one platoon Co C 603d TD Bn was ordered to move to the vicinity of ARRAYE-ET-HAN and block the highway west of there. This force was driven back out of the town by intensive artillery and mortar fire and established

23 Cont'd.

a defensive line on the high ground between ARMAUCOURT and ARRAYE-ET-HAN. At 1845A an enemy counter-attack on LEYR was repulsed without loss. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was placed on all our positions throughout the night.

- 24 At 1600A the task force in LEYR was relieved by elements of the 35th Infantry Division and returned to assembly area southwest of LANFROICOURT. A strong enemy counter-attack was launched by the enemy on the position north of ARMAUCOURT. One company of infantry was brought up to help repulse this attack, which was beaten off at 2000A. Enemy artillery continued active throughout the day and night.
- 25 At 0645A another counter-attack by three tanks and approximately 200 infantry on the position north of ARMAUCOURT was repulsed. Two assault guns and one medium tank were knocked out by enemy fire, but were towed back out of the line and can be repaired. One armored car and three $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks were knocked out by artillery fire. The Commanding Officer, 69th Tank Battalion was sent up with his headquarters section to this position to take command because of lack of sufficient communication facilities in Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. At 1500A orders were received from XII Corps, through the 6th Armored Division Commander, for the Commanding Officer, Combat Command "B" to meet representatives of the 80th Infantry Division in LEYR and that Combat Command "B" would make an attack on MOIVRON in conjunction with the 317th Infantry Regiment, 80th Infantry Division, at 260800A. The 44th Armd Inf Bn with one medium tank company, Rcn Co 603d TD Bn, one platoon Co C 603d TD Bn and one light tank platoon attached, moved to the vicinity of LEYR to hold the north-south road and tie in with the 80th Infantry Division on the left and the right, which had just relieved the 69th Tk Bn (-) north of ARMAUCOURT. This was accomplished at 1845A. The 212th Armd FA Bn was to support the attack. CP was to remain at LANFROICOURT.
- 26 From 0745A until 0800A the 212th Armd FA Bn placed a concentration on MOIVRON while the medium tank company and TD platoon placed direct fire on the town. At 0800A the attack jumped off with the 2d Bn 317th Infantry Regiment coming through LEYR and attacking MOIVRON from the southeast. The medium tank company, 69th Tk Bn was to move up under cover of the infantry and be prepared to counter-attack or support the attack with more direct fire. The 44th Armd Inf Bn was to move up after the attack jumped off and extend the line from MOIVRON to RJ at 942264. Strong enemy infantry action and heavy artillery and mortar fire prevented the 2d Bn 317th Infantry Regiment from occupying the town of MOIVRON and it was necessary for the 44th Armd Inf Bn to take up a defensive position north of LEYR when the infantry of the 317th Infantry Regiment withdrew through our lines. Boggy condition of terrain prevented proper maneuver of tanks across country. Two medium tanks hit mines on the road just south of MOIVRON and four medium tanks got mired down in the mud at the edge of town. All six tanks had to be abandoned when the infantry withdrew. These tanks were later destroyed by the enemy.

27 44th Armd Inf Bn continued to hold ground north of LEYR awaiting resumption of the attack of the 80th Infantry Division or relief by elements of that division. A heavy artillery shelling of Combat Command "B" CP south of LANFROICOURT at 1125A, which unquestionably was observed fire, caused by CP to be moved to the vicinity of RJ N74 and AMANEE ROAD, with the balance of Combat Command "B" moving to assembly areas in the same general vicinity. Considerable artillery and mortar fire with some small arms fire continued on the positions held by the 44th Armd Inf Bn. Rcn Co 603d TD Bn reverted to battalion control except for one platoon which was attached to Co C 603d TD Bn. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was relieved except for one platoon which remained under combat command control.

28 No change.

29 No change.

30 Co A 76th Armd Med Bn replaced mm Co B 76th Armd Med Bn in support.

Our casualties for this period were:

Personnel

34 Killed
16 Missing
124 Wounded
38 Battle exhaustion cases.

Vehicular

10 Medium Tanks
1 105 Assault Gun
1 M8 Armored Car
4 M3 Half-Tracks
6 $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks
2 Trailers

Enemy casualties were

700 prisoners
200 Known Killed
300 Additional estimated killed in counter-attacks
400 estimated wounded.

Approximately 200 vehicles including at least 6 Mark IV Tanks were captured or destroyed. Large quantities of ammunition, rations, small arms and quartermaster supplies were also captured or destroyed.

GEORGE READ JR
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S Army

1 November 1944

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1-31 October 1944

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256, U S Army.

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-31 October 1944, as required by AR 345-105, 03.

OCTOBER 1944

- 1 The first of the month found the combat command on a defensive mission between the 80th and 35th Infantry Divisions in the vicinity of LEYR. The composition of the combat command was as follows:

44th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
212th Armd FA Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn, plus 1 Plat Ren Co 603d Td Bn
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Tr B 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co A 128th Ord Maint Bn (In support)
Co A 76th Armd Med Bn (In support)

The 44th Armd Inf Bn, with one medium tank company and one tank destroyer platoon attached, continued to hold an east-west line north of LEYR. The 134th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div, was on the right flank and the 317th Inf Regt, 80th Inf Div, was on the left flank. Combat command continued to hold. CP located vicinity of AMANCE and reserve in same vicinity. (There were 3 men wounded and 4 battle exhaustion cases).

- 2 Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, visited Combat Command "B" CP at 1000A to award Bronze and Silver Star medals to several members of the command. He also gave instructions that some of the personnel could be sent back to billets for 24 hours in order to secure showers, etc. The Commanding Officer & S-3 visited Division Headquarters and units in the rear during the afternoon. (1 enlisted man was wounded during the day).
- 3 Commanding Officer was called to Division Headquarters for a meeting at 1030A to discuss future plans. 44th Armd Inf Bn destroyed enemy dump of 1000 gallons of diesel fuel and gasoline at 929250.
- 4 Commanding Officer and S-3 had conference with Commanding General, 80th Inf Div and Commanding General, 6th Armd Division, in LEYR at 1000A to discuss future operations. G-1 called cancelling all passes to NANCY until further notice.
- 5 Commanding Officer & S-3 visited Division Headquarters during the morning. Commanding General, 6th Armored Division visited CP at 1430 A to discuss planned combined attack of Combat Command "B" in conjunction with the 80th Infantry Division and 35th Infantry

- 6 Unit commanders meeting was held at 1500A to outline attack to take place on 8 October. The command was split into four task forces and verbal orders were issued at that time. These orders were to be confirmed by written orders the following day.
- 7 Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, visited CP at 0830A to discuss attack to take place on 8 October. Chief of Staff, 6th Armored Division, visited CP during the morning. FO #31 was issued to all units concerned. Reconnaissance was made of forward assembly areas and routes by unit commanders and members of the staff during the morning. Meeting at 1600A of the task force commanders to discuss any last minute details and the detailed plan of the task forces on the attack. Crossings of the river were prepared at night and bridges were protected. Units moved to initial assembly areas under cover of darkness to prepare for the attack. Liaison from this headquarters was made with the 134th Infantry Regiment. (1 enlisted man was killed during the day).
- 8 Combat Command "B" was composed of the following troops:

69th Tk Bn
15th Tk Bn (- 1 L Tk Plat)
50th Armd Inf Bn
9th Armd Inf Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn, reinf
Co C 603d TD Bn, reinf
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The four task forces were composed as follows:

TF #1 (FORREST)

69th Tk Bn (-1 M Tk Co & 1 L Tk Plat)
Cos A & C 9th Armd Inf Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn (- 1 Plat)
1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
3 Sections Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #2 (LAGREW)

15th Tk Bn 9- 1 L Tk Plat)
Cos A & C 50th Armd Inf Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn (-1 Plat)
1st Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (- 5 Sections)

TF #3 (WALL)

50th Armd Inf Bn 9 - 2 Rifle Cos)
Co A 69th Tk Bn
Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn
Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
2 Sections Btry B 777th AAA Bn
2d Platoon Co " 25th Armd Engr Bn

October 1944
8 (Contd)

TF #4 (GODFREY)
9th Armd Inf Bn (- 2 Cos)
Plat Co B 603d TD Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) -
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)

Combat Command "B" attacked at 080615A to seize ARRAYE-ET-HAN, AJONCOURT, JEANDELINCOURT, MOIVRON and to clear the BOIS de BRASQUIN and BOIS de AJONCOURT. TF #1 was to seize and hold ARRAYE-ET-HAN and AJONCOURT until relieved by the 134th Inf Regt and protect the northeast flank of the combat command. TF #2 was to clear BOIS de BRASQUIN and BOIS de AJONCOURT, seize and hold JEANDELINCOURT until relieved by the 317th Inf Regt and protect the north and northwest flank of the combat command. TF #3 was to seize and hold MOIVRON until relieved by the 317th Inf Regt. TF #4 was prepared to move on combat command order. Division Artillery, reinforced, supported the attack. 212th Armd FA Bn and Co A 86th Cal Bn were in direct support of TF #1. 231st Armd FA Bn was in direct support of TF #2. 696th FA Bn was in direct support of TF #3. 128th Armd FA Bn and 752d FA Bn were in general support. Mine roller platoon was to clear MSR and other roads on call. The attack jumped off on schedule and progressed successfully against medium enemy resistance mainly consisting of small arms and mortar fire. Enemy artillery fire was very light. MOIVRON was taken at 0800A and was turned over to the 317th Inf Regt at 1323A. At 0845A units of TF #2 reached initial objective while remainder of this force turned west toward JEANDELINCOURT. TF #2 encountered heavy resistance in the BOIS de BRASQUIN and BOIS de AJONCOURT and Co B 9th Armd Inf Bn, from TF #4, was moved forward to assist. At 1206A, Co A 9th Armd Inf Bn was relieved from TF #1 and sent forward to TF #2. Mopping up operations by TF #2 were completed at 1400A. JEANDELINCOURT was reached at 0920A and at 1130A it was surrounded on three sides. The force attacking ARRAYE-ET-HAN was slowed up considerably by the heavy fog which made observation almost impossible, however by 0935A this town was under attack. At 100A, ARRAYE-ET-HAN was occupied and turned over to the 134th Inf REGT. The 134th Inf REGT entered AJONCOURT at 1240A. At 1300A JEANDELINCOURT was taken by TF #2 and the 319th Inf Regt, 80th Inf Div, moved in and took over. TF #1 was further ordered to take the town of CHENICOURT, but due to extremely heavy AT & artillery fire from the high ground north and east and the inadvisability of holding the town after it was taken due to its location in a valley, this attack was not launched and the town was covered by intense artillery and direct fire only. TF #2 was further ordered to clear the enemy from BOIS de CHENICOURT. This was done just before dark. All ground gained was organized and an all around defense was tied in between the 80th Inf Div on the west and the 35th Inf Div on the east, at AJONCOURT.

TF #4 covered the left (northwest) flank and TF #1 covered the right (northeast) flank for the attack by Combat Command "B" with the mission of clearing the enemy from the BOIS de TRAPPES and BOIS de AULNOIS. The 9th Armd Inf Bn reverted to Combat Command "A" upon being passed through by them at 0800A. Remaining units of TF #4 and TF #3 reverted to Combat Command "B" reserve. As elements of the 318th Inf REGT moved up through the BOIS de FOURASO and the 317th Inf Regt moved through behind Combat Command "A", TF #2 was relieved from mission of covering the left flank. TF #3, less Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn which reverted to TF #1 was ordered to return to billet area east of NANCY and TF #2 was to follow. As soon as TF #1 was relieved by the 3d Bn 317th Inf Regt on the right flank, it was also ordered to return to billet area. TF #2 and #3 moved out at 1600A. Relief of TF #1 ~~8-9 October~~ ~~were as fell~~ was not completed this date. Our losses for the period 8-9 October were as follows:

October 9th contd.

Personnel Casualties

22 Killed
74 Wounded

Vehicular Losses

2 2½ Ton Trucks
6 Medium Tanks
1 105 Assault Gun
(All recovered and repaired except one
medium tank and one 2½ Ton Truck)

Enemy losses were as follows:

Personnel

868 Prisoners
400 Killed (Estimated)
300 Wounded (Estimated)

Vehicular

17 AT Guns
2 Mk IV Tanks
13 Misc Vehicles

- 10 Relief of TF #1 was completed at 0900A by 3d Bn 317th Inf Regt, 80th Inf Div. Units moved back to area east of NANCY into permanent type billets. Combat Command "B" Headquarters moved to billet area in the airport at ESSEY-LFS-NANCY. General George Marshall, Chief of Staff, U S Army spoke to a few officers of the 6th Armored Div. in BOUXIERES at 0945A. The Commanding Officer, Executive Officer and battalion commanders attended. The composition of the combat command now is:
- 15th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn (reinf)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Tr B 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz (reinf)
- 11 Remained in billet area vicinity of NANCY. Commanding Officer attended unit commander's meeting at Division Headquarters at 1600A.
- 12 Orders issued by the Commanding General, 6th Armd Div. to prepare plans for movement to several possible locations prepared for action in the event of a counterattack by the enemy on the XII Corps front.
- 13 Plans for above were discussed with unit commanders and road and bridge reconnaissance was pushed.
- 14 No Change.
- 15 A retreat parade was held at 1600A at the CR at 903136 under supervision of this headquarters. The following units participated: 15th Tk Bn, 69th Tk Bn, 128 Ord Maint Bn, Hq Co CC "B" and MP Platoon. Awards of decorations were made by the Commanding General, 6th Armored Division.

October 1944 Contd.

- 16 The 15th Tk Bn was relieved from Combat Command "B" and the 68th Tk Bn was assigned.
- 17 The 50th Armd Inf Bn was relieved from Combat Command "B" and the 9th Armd Inf Bn was assigned. 68th Tk Bn closed in area at 0905A. 9th Armd Inf Bn closed in area at 1420A. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was relieved from assignment to this command.
- 18 Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn and Co B 603d TD Bn were relieved at 0900A and Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn and Co C 603d TD Bn were assigned. The composition of Combat Command "B" on this date is now:

68th Tk Bn
9th Armd Inf Bn
Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn (reinf)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

There was a unit commander's meeting at Combat Command "B" Headquarters at 1100A to discuss proposed plans.

- 19 Co C 603d TD Bn (reinf) was relieved from Combat Command "B" control and was replaced by Co A 603d TD Bn (reinf). Btry B 777th AAA Bn was relieved from assignment to the combat command at 1400A and Btry A 777th AAA Bn was assigned.
- 20 for
Parade scheduled for today ~~was~~ awards of decorations by Commanding General, 6th Armd Div, to the 68th Tk Bn and 9th Armd Inf Bn was postponed until 211600A.
- 21 Marlene Dietrich and her supporting cast were guest of Hq Co CC "B" for dinner. A retreat parade, under supervision of this headquarters, was held at 1600A for the 68th Tk Bn and 9th Armd Inf Bn. Commanding General, 6th Armd Div, made awards and presentations of medals and Certificates of Merit.
- 22 No change.
- 23 Commanding Officer, Combat Command "B" given responsibility of Operating range for practice firing of the rifle grenade launcher and the carbine grenade launcher for the division.
- 24 No change.
- 25 No change.
- 26 No change.
- 27 No change.
- 28 No change.
- 29 No change.
- 30 Commanding General, 6th Armd Div. visited this headquarters to discuss future operations of this combat command.
- 31 No change.

October 1944 Contd.

31st Contd.

Our casualties for the period 1-31 Oct 44 were:

Personnel

23 Killed
75 Wounded

Vehicular

2 2½ Ton Trucks
6 Medium Tanks
1 105 Assault Gun (All recovered and repaired
except one medium tank and one 2½ ton Truck.)

Enemy casualties were:

Personnel

868 Prisoners
400 Killed (Estimated)
300 Wounded (Estimated)

Vehicular

17 AT Guns
2 Mk IV Tanks
13 Misc Vehicules

GEORGE W READ JR
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256m Y S ARMY

1 December 1944

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the period 1-30 November 1944

TO: Commanding General 6th Armored Division, APO 256, U S Army

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-30 November 1944, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

November 1944

- 1 The units of the Combat command were still in permanent type billets in the area east of NANCY on one hour alert status prepared for commitment at any time on the Corps front. The composition of the combat command was as follows:

68th Tk Bn
9th Armd Inf Bn
Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co B 603d Td Bn (reinf)
Btry A 777th AAA Bn

Commanding Officer attended a meeting at Division Headquarters at 1930A. At this meeting he was given the responsibility of operating a range for the three tank battalions to test fire new weapons and train new gunners.

- 2 The range site was picked out at LAY ST CHRISTOPHER for the firing to be conducted on 5-6-7 November.
- 3 The composition of the combat command was changed as follows:

15 Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn(reinf)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn, with 1 Plat
990th Tr Bn Co atchd
86th Ca v Ren Sq Mecz (-Trs A & C)

Commanding Officer attended a meeting at Division Headquarters.

- 4 Combat Command "B" Headquarters moved from Airport ESSEY-BES-NANCY to stadium at ST MAX and closed there at 1045 A. Unit commander's meeting was held at 1500A. Commanding Officer attended a meeting at Division Headquarters to discuss plans for future operations.
- 5 A reconnaissance of routes to development areas was made by the S-3. A unit commanders' meeting was held to discuss proposed operation. At this meeting the task forces were constituted and initial plans were made.

November 1944

- 6 The CO and Field Officers of Combat Command "B" staff attended a talk by the Army Commander. The staff continued working on and formulating plans. Commanding Officer attended a meeting at Division Headquarters at 1900A.
- 7 Combat Command continued work on plans for the coming attack.
8. D-Day for the attack By the division. The composition of the task forces organized within the combat command was:

TF #1 (LAGREW)

TF # 2 (WALL)

Co C	15th Tk Bn (-1 M Tk Co & 1 L Tk Co.)	50th Armd Inf Bn (-1 Co)
	50th Armd Inf Bn	Co C 15th Tk Bn
	E 3d Plat Co C 603d TD Bn	1st Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
	3d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn	1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
	Secs 1 & 2 Btry B 777th AAA Bn	Secs 3 & 4 Btry E 777th AAA Bn

TF #3 (BRINDLE)

CC "B" RESERVE

86th Cav Rcn Sq Mexa (-Trs A & C)	Co C 603d TD Bn (-)
Co D 15th Tk Bn	Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) with Det
2d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn	990th Tr Br Co Atchd
2d Plat Co C 603d TD Bn	Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Secs 5 & 6 Btry B 777th AAABn	

The plans was as follows: TF#3 to attack at H-Hour in two columns to seize and secure crossing of NIED FRANCAISE RIVER in combat command zone, protect the north flank of combat command by blocking roads to north leading from METZ and be prepared to resume the attack to east on order. TF #1 to advance in south portion of zone, support elements of TF #3 in securing crossing of NIED FRANCAISE RIVER and be prepared to attack east and seize final objective (high ground northeast of FALQUEMONT). TF #1 to advance in north portion of zone, support elements of TF #3 in securing crossings of NIED FRANCAISE RIVER and be prepared to attack east and seize final objective. FA Group Riley to support Combat Command "B" as follows: 128th Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF #1; 696th FA Bn in direct support of TF # 2 and 212th Armd FA Bn initially in direct support of TF #3, thereafter in general support. Ond Corposengineer comapny (Co A 167th Comb Engr Bn) in support. The order of march was as follows: TF#3 TF #1, Hq CC "B" (-) & TF #2. The artillery command was in position west of PONT-SUR-SEILLIE reinforcing the fires of XII Corpos artillery. The commanding Officer briefed all officers and men on situation and reason for the attack. The offensive was to be resumed and the plan envisioned the destruction of German forces west of the RHINE by 1 December 1944 and the elimination of the Germans from the Was by Christmas. Plans were discussed in detail. The 6th Armored Division was to spearhead attack of the Third Army to the RHINE RIVER and any stops made on the way were merely to be pauses for reorganization. The first major objective for Combat Command "B" was to be the hill mass northeast of FALQUEMONT. Grouzers were to be on all light tanks, chains on all wheel vehicles and uck-bills on medium tanks, also all combat vehicles were to carry logs and ~~wire~~ wire matting to corduroy stam crossings. The command was prepared to move to a development area in the vininity of ALEMONT.

NOVEMBER 1944

- 9 At 0500A, leading elements of Combat Command "B" were to reach IP at ST MAX, march north and cross the Seille River at PORT-SUR-SEILLE, EPLY, just north of Raucourt, then north through ST JURE to development area vicinity of ALEMONT. However, due to the flood stage of the MOSELIE RIVER, considerable difficulty was met in completing initial movement; therefore, crossing of the SEILLE RIVER at PORT-SUR-SEILLE was not completed this date. TF #3 was ordered to ~~help TF #3~~ ~~enlarge~~ cross at 1530A, followed by TF #1 & 2. TF #1 was ordered to help TF #3 enlarge the bridgehead. 212th Armd FA Bn was to cross next with TF # 2 moving into a position ready to cross. TF # 3 crossed and encountered enemy AT guns at UO 91425 (west of ALEMONT). One gun was destroyed and another probably destroyed. At this time TF # 3 reported that the bridge just north of EPLY had been blown and plans were made to place a treadway bridge under cover of darkness. At 1745A, TF# 1 and TF #3 began tying in night security, although TF #1 had only part of their task force across the river, due to heavy traffic both ways across the bright by Army, Corps and Division elements. There was little or no traffic control on bridge and this situation was reported to division by radio. At 1830A, remainder of TF # 1 crossed the bridge. The CP of Combat Command "B" Headquarters was located in a farm house south of PORT SUR SEILLE. Unit commanders' meeting was held at 1900A to discuss plans for the attack on 100700A. At this meeting the liaison officer from the 3d Inf Regt 5th Inf Div was given plans for the attack. At which time he departed for parent unit to bring plans of the 2d Inf Regt to this headquarters. At 092000A, oral orders were issued for attack at 100700A. At 2020A, both TF # 1 and TF # 3 had completed the crossing and established security for the night. Plans were made for the remainder of the command to cross in the following order beginning 100500A: 212th AFA Bn, Hq " " "B", Hq Div Arty, TF # 2, 696th AFA Bn and Co A 167th Comb Engr Bn from XII Corps with Trains to cross last.
- 10 At 0500A, crossing was started, but was slow due to heavy traffic in the bottleneck and mud. Small bridges and culverts were out which necessitated construction work by engineers. At 0855A, TF#1 jumped off across country to attack VIGNY. About three hours were required to construct a bridge across a railroad overpass east of LUVIGNY which had been blown. At 1230A, TF#1 had secured its first objective and was instructed to continue the attack but not go beyond BUGHY. This objective was reached at 1430A and by 1630A was securely in our hands. During the afternoon TF#1 observed, for the first time, cardboard dummy tanks in positions along the high ground between VIGNY and BUCHY. Column was shelled by enemy between those towns and considerable enemy fire was placed on both towns. At 1630A, TF#1 was instructed to go into development area in vicinity of BUCHY and west of BEUX, ready to attack east on the morning of 11 November. The advance CP CC "B" closed at BUCAY and ~~west of BEUX, ready to attack east on the morning~~ after moving in 41 PW's were captured in CP location. Other elements of the command were closed in this area and security established for the night. CP's of the TF's and artillery command were in BUCHY. At 1200A,

10 (Contd)

11

11

field. The mine field was bypassed across country and finally upon arrival at REMILLY the bridge was found to be blown. At 1100A, a Corps serenade was fired on REMILLY to commemorate Armistice Day and for tactical purposes as well. At 1445A, TF #2 was instructed to send one rifle company and TF #3 to send one reconnaissance troop to TF #1 to assist in holding and securing the bridgehead in vicinity of SANRY-SUR-NIED. Considerable artillery and mortar fire was received all day and night, with most of the artillery coming from forts on high ground

NOVEMBER 19 44

11 (contd)

in vicinity of SORBEY. TF #2 stayed in position ready to support TF #1. At 1700A, the advance CP CC "B" closed at DAIN-on-SAULNOIS at 1830A, the CO and S-3 went to Division Headquarters for orders. The 2nd Inf. Regt. 5th Inf. Div. moved abreast on our left flank and also followed behind and helped materially in mopping up and outposting our positions.

12

At 0700A, a unit commanders meeting was held. The mission of the combat command was changed to seize the high ground south and east of FAULQUEMONT in the vicinity of CHEMERY. The composition of the task forces was changed as follows:

TF #1 (LAGREW)

15th Tk Bn (-1 M Tk Co)
2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co A 50th AIB
1 Plat 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Engrs (Combat)

TF #2 (WALL)

50th AIB (-1 Rifle Co)
Co B 15th Tk Bn
2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn
1 Plat 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Engrs
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz

TF #3 (BRINDLE)

2 Trs 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
Tr E 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
1 Plat 603d TDBn
1 Plat Engrs

TRAINS

2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The command was to cross the river in order as follows:

Remainder of TF #1, Hq CC "B", 212th AFA Bn, & TF #2.

TF #3 was to initially place road blocks and protect the north flank while the command passed and then fall in at the rear of the column as rear guard. TF #1 attacked towards BAZONCOURT meeting strong resistance all the way and operations were also hampered by mines and weather. However, at 1600A, TF #1 had taken BAZONCOURT and VAUCREMONT and the RF 2 kilometers west of CHANVILLE. The area was outposted for the night and security was established. Engineers from TF #2 were sent forward to assist on making a by-pass for the column on the road to BAZONCOURT which had been badly cratered and mined. These operations took all night and impeded resupply. At 1730A, CP CC "B" closed at AUBE. Heavy artillery fire continued throughout the period. The 2d Inf. 5th Div again assisted in mopping up operations and in posting security elements on our flanks.

13

A heavy snow fell during the night. Co A 50th Armd Inf Bn with TF #1 was so depleted by losses that Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn was sent to TF #1 from TF #2. At approximately 0815A, the reconnaissance troop received a counter-attack from the north from the vicinity of BERLIZE and also heavy artillery fire which forced the troops to withdraw. The commanding Officer instructed Co TF #3 to re-establish the road block and regain control of the situation. The counter-attack was finally repulsed and the enemy driven back into BERLIZE. The attack of TF #1 was still held up by large craters and mines in the road. At 0945A, the mission of the command was modified and instructions received not to pass any more troops through the bridgehead, but to cross the remainder of the command at ANCERVILLE. Bridging operations by the 5th Division were so slow at this point that the Division Commander decided to build a bridge at REMILLY.

NOVEMBER 1944
13 (Contd)

This was done and the bridge was completed at about 1630A. TF #1 moved down the east side of the river and TF #2 sent one company of infantry across at REMILLY to outpost area for TF #1 as well as the bridging operations. The route of TF #1 was through ANCERVILLE, south to RJ east of REMILLY, thence east to VOIMHAUT and VITTONCOURT. VOIMHAUT and VITTONCOURT were taken and the area was secured for the night. At 1320A, the reconnaissance troop holding the roadblock in the vicinity of the bridge south of SANRY-SUR-NIED received a counterattack, but it was repulsed. CP CC "B" moved to BECHY closing there at 1700A. TF #2 stayed in position west of REMILLY. TF #3 moved to combat command reserve in the vicinity of BECHY, however, before TF #3 discontinued the roadblock in the vicinity of the bridge south of SANRY-SUR-NIED, the battalion commander of the 2d Inf Regt was notified that TF #3 was ordered to move out and that the 2d Inf would have to secure bridge. The following was the composition of the task forces at the end of the period:

~~TF #1 (LAGREW)~~

~~15th Tk Bn~~

15th Tk Bn (-1M Tk Co)

Cos A & C 50th AIB

2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn

2d & 3d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr

Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

TF #2 (WALL)

50th AIB (- 2 Rifle Cos)

1 M Tk Co 15th Tk Bn

2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn

1 Plat Co F 86th Cav Ren

1 Plat 603d TD Bn

TF #3 (BRINDLE)

86th Cav Ren Sq Mocz (-)

14

TF #1 was in position east of NIED FRANCAISE RIVER vicinity of VITTONCOURT. TF #2 was in position west of REMILLY with one company across river vicinity VOIMHAUT. TF #3 was in the vicinity of BECHY. CP CC "B" was located at BECHY. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1030A. Orders were issued for TF #1 to develop south of HERNY, TF #2 south of TF #1 and just east of VATIMONT and TF #3 just south of HERNY. The task forces were to be prepared to attack to the east. At 1400A, TF #2 moved to area vicinity south of HERNY, followed by TF #3. At 1645A, the combat elements of Combat Command "B" closed east of the NIED FRANCAISE RIVER. The CP CC "B" closed at VATIMONT at 1730A. At 1800A, a unit commanders' meeting was held to discuss the coordinated attack on 15 November at 1200A, with the 80th Infantry Division. At 2100A, CG 6th Armd Div. Co CCA, Co CCB, CC Res Comd and CO Artu Comd met at VATIMONT to discuss attack on the 15 November. At 2130A, a unit commanders' meeting was held and oral orders were issued at the time. The new composition of the task forces for the attack of 15 November was as follows:

TF #1 (LAGREW)

~~15th Tk Bn~~

15th Tk Bn

Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

2d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #2 (WALL)

50th Armd Inf Bn

Plat Co C 603d TD Bn

Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq (reinf)

1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

2 Sees Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #3 (BRINDLY)

86th Cav Ren Sq Mocz (-)

1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

NOVEMBER 1944

15

All trailers and non-essential vehicles were to be sent to train service park in the vicinity of HERNY, to be picked up later.

The 128th Armd FA Bn was to be in direct support of TF #1, 212th Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF #2 and 96th Armd Armd FA Bn in general support. Fires were to be placed on all towns in the zone of the attack and smoke missions were to be fired on call. A preliminary terrain reconnaissance was to be made before the attack. At 0850A, the plans were again modified by order of the CG, 6th Armd Div. The command was to continue making preparations, for the attack but not to put them into effect until further orders. At 1230A, TF FORREST FROM CC "A" was assigned to CC "B" to permit better coordination during the attack. At 1345A, TF FORREST reverted to CC "A" control when plans were modified. At 1245A, the attack was cancelled and CC "B" was ordered to remain in position and wait further orders.

16

CP CC "B" still located at VATIMONT, TF #2 at HERNY and TF #3 at HERNY, all prepared for ~~888,8888~~ commitment on one hour's notice. At 0830A, TF #3 sent one troop to HAN-SUR-NIED and one troop to REMILLY to guard bridges. Contact was made with the 5th Division. XX Corps. on the north. At 1600A, CG, 6th Armd Div. stopped at CP and stated that the division was to go into XII Corps Reserve. Enemy artillery fell in the vicinity of HERNY and MANY all night and caused some casualties.

17

The division did not go into XII Corps Reserve as previously planned. At 1500A, the combat command was given the following mission: To follow and support the 137th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div, during the attack east and be prepared to repel or assist in case of any counterattack or to pass through the 137th Inf Regiment and continue the attack east. Troops were as follows:

15th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mec2

86th Cav Ren Sq Mec2 (-) reverted to Reserve Command control. Combat Command "B" was to go into development area vicinity DESTRY and MORHANGE after the 137th Combat Engineers (Corps Engineers) supporting CC "B", were released at 1800A. At 1500A, TF #2 received 16 rounds of 105mm artillery in the vicinity of HERNY, also 2 ME 109's strafed TF #2 elements.

18

Combat Command "B" moved to vicinity of MORHANGE, closing there at 1700A with the 15th Tank Battalion on the east side of town and the remainder of the combat command on the west side. The CP CC "B" was located at MORHANGE. At 1730A, a unit commanders' meeting was held to discuss plans for the attack on 19 November. Task forces were composed as follows:

TF #1 (LAGREW)

15th Tk Bn
Co C 50th AIB
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #2 (WALL)

50th AIB (-1 Co)
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mec2
1 Plat Co C 603d Td Bn
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

NOVEMBER 1944
18 (CONTD)

CCB RESERVE

Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Ren Plat 603d TD Bn
Security Plat 603d TD Bn

TRAINS

2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The 128th Armd FA Bn was to be in direct support of TF #1, 696th Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF #2 and the 212th Armd FA Bn in general support.

19

The leading elements of Combat Command moved through the 137th Infantry Regiment on H74, northeast towards PUTTELANGE, TF #1 leading. As TF #1 started moving, heavy enemy artillery fire was put down on them at the RJ northeast of MORHANGE, however TF #1 continued to advance until about 0900A to about 500 yards east of BERIG-VINTRANGE, where the leading elements found an AT ditch, covered by heavy AT fire, Machine gun and SA fire from the woods just northwest of BERTRING. Time fire was placed on enemy positions and firing ceased. At 1020A, the leading elements were deployed between BERIG-VUBTRABOE and BERTRING in position to reduce the concrete block houses in the vicinity of BERTRING. At 1130A, TF #1 was still held up by the AT ditch. About this time six enemy tanks were located in the area and two were knocked out with the 4 other four withdrawing toward BERTRING. At 1255A, two ME 109's came over elements of Combat Command "B", but did not attack probably due to our anti-aircraft fire. The AT ditch was breached at 1400A and one tank platoon was in BERTRING at 1435A. About 1630A, TF #1 took Hill 265 southwest of BERTRING, which relieved enemy pressure somewhat. Very little opposition was met at BERTRING so elements pushed on and by 1630A had taken GROS-TENQUIN which was outposted, with the assistance of elements of the 137th Infantry, for the night. Well knowing that there was another AT ditch about two kilometers east of GROS-TENQUIN which would impede our advance, TF #1 pushed out reconnaissance, located the AT ditch and secured a crossing before it could be blown. A strong bridgehead protected this crossing during the night. At 1600A, the Commanding Officer called the CG 6th Armd Div and requested an additional battalion. This request was approved and the 69th Tank Battalion with one plat TD's and two Secs AAA was assigned to combat commanders as follows: Task forces were composed as follows:

TF FORREST

69th Tk Bn
Co B 50th AIB
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn
2 Secs Btry A 777th AAA Bn

CCB RESERVE

15th Td Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn (-)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)

TF WALL

50th AIB (-61 Co)
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mec2
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TRAINS

Security Plat 603d TD Bn
Ren Plat 603d TD Bn
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The 212th Armd FA Bn was to be in direct support of TF FORREST,

NOVEMBER
19 (contd)

696th Armd TF Bn was to be in direct support of TF WALL and 128th Armd FA Bn in general support. TF FORREST was to attack 200900A passing through TF LAGREW and continue attack to the east.

20 At 0845A, TF LAGREW was ordered to have one medium tank company alerted and ready to go to TF WALL if necessary. At 0910A, TF FORREST started moving through TF LAGREW. As the move started, heavy artillery fire was placed on the column, coming from the east of GROS-TENQUIN. When leading elements reached RJ about 2 1/2 kilometers east of GROS-TENQUIN, direct AT fire was encountered. The opposition was overcome and the column continued to advance east into the forest where an extensive mine field was encountered. This mine field was protected by direct fire, as well as artillery and mortar fire by the enemy. The mines were cleared on the road and the column advanced about 3 kilometers. By nightfall, elements were deployed on the high ground in this vicinity. At 1630A, TF FORREST was ordered to tie in security for the night and TF WALL ordered to move to assembly area in the vicinity of BERTRING ready to attack FREYBOUSE, at 210800A. He was to move north through GROSTEUM and FREYBOUSE, attack FREMESTROFF and be prepared to attack HELLIMER from the north, if necessary. TF FORREST was to continue the attack east on HELLIMER. TF LAGREW was to remain in reserve.

21 TF WALL moved at 0800A, turning north at GROS-TENQUIN. About 0815A TF WALL was 3 kilometers north of town when some SA fire was placed on the column from the woods northeast of GROS-TENQUIN. TF FORREST moved at 0800A meeting AT and SA fire from high ground northwest of HELLIMER. Hill 328 was strongly defended by dig-in infantry and direct fire weapons. At 1030A, artillery fire was placed on Hill 328 and enemy started withdrawing. This fire was very effective. Enemy pillboxes west of HELLIMER were reduced and fire was directed on HELLIMER at 1100A. However, heavy artillery and mortar fire was still received from the direction of HELLIMER. A battalion of the 137th Infantry took FREYBOUSE by 1200A and at 1230A TF WALL was ready to attack FREMESTROFF. At 1315A, TF WALL, with assistance from the 137th Infantry, moved out and advanced north receiving mortar and artillery fire. About 300 yards south of FREMESTROFF the bridge was blown and column had to construct a bypass across the stream, which caused considerable delay. Terrain was very boggy and many vehicles were immobilized. TF FORREST, upon reaching HELLIMER, discovered two enemy tanks in HELLIMER. One was knocked out and the other withdrew, running around town, firing at different intervals from various positions and causing considerable trouble. By 1635A TF FORREST had secured HELLIMER and outposted it for the night with help from the 137th Infantry, but did not secure DIFFENBACH as instructed. At 1730A, there was a unit commanders' meeting at the CP CC "B" at GROS-TENQUIN. TF LAGREW was ordered to attack 220700A in two columns; one column (south) passing through TF FORREST advancing on PUTTELANGE on road N74, the other column (north) going through ALTRIPPE, LEYVILLER and east to ST JEAN-ROHRBACH. TF FORREST was to move into position just east of HELLIMER and to give TF LAGREW's south column a base of fire while passing through. A large crater in the road west of HELLIMER had to be repaired before TF LAGREW could pass through. This point was under constant fire from the enemy and engineers had to wear flak suits while repairing the road.

22
22

At 0900A, TF LAGREW's south column was held up by blown bridge between HELLIMER and DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER. A by-pass was made and the column continued the advance east to the RJ just east of town when column came under direct AT fire from woods 1 1/2 kilometers northeast of DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER. This town had not been taken and secured as reported and enemy infantry and tanks caused considerable trouble until cleaned out

NOVEMBER 1944
22(contd)

About 1045A TF LAGREW's south column had DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER surrounded and had knocked out three enemy tanks while losing two of their own. The leading elements continued to receive direct fire from the high ground northeast of DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER. TF LAGREW's north column by 1045A was clearing the high ground north of HELLIMER and by 1100A was 1000 yards north of HELLIMER. At 1140AM the column had reached th RJ south of ALTRIPPE. There was very little opposition and the column continued northeast to LEYVILLER and by 1345A the town was clear and the column continued towards ST JEAN-ROHRBACH. At 1515A, the leading elements of the north column were 200 yards from objective AND READY to go into town. AT fire and SA fire was received as column went into town, but by 1700A the town was taken as well as ty bridge just west of town. The south column continued to receive direct AT and SA fire from the woods about two kilometers to the front. The south column could not advance owing to blown bridges and was ordered to establish security for the night. AT 1400A, TF FORREST reverted to CC "A" control for another mission.

23 TF WALL sent a force to clean out the woods 3 kilometers northeast of DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER. The force moved out at 0800A and went through the woods meeting no opposition at all, apparently any remaining enemy had moved out during darkness. The remainder of the command plus attached elements of the 134th Infantry CT reorganized and prepared to continue the attack on 25 November. The composition of the command was as follows:

737th Tk Bn
1st Bn 134th Inf Regt
3d Bn 134th Inf Regt
15th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
1 Plat Co A 60th Engr Bn
Det 990th Treadway Br Co

At 1500A, FO #46 was issued for the operation on 24 November. Task forces were composed as follows:

TF #1 (KROSCHER)

~~888888~~ 737th Tk Bn
1st Bn 134th Inf Regt
Co B 603d TD Bn
1st Plat Co A 60th Engr Bn

1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (reinf)
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #3 WALL)

50th Armd Inf Bn
Co F 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Sec Btry B 777th AAA Bn

TF #2 (LAGREW)

15th Tk Bn
3d Bn 134th Inf Regt
Co C 603d TD Bn (-1 Plat)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
(- 1 Plat)

CCB RESERVE

Security Plat Co C 603d TD
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Det 990th Treadway Br Co

FA Group RILEY to support as follows: 161st FA Bn in direct support

NOVEMBER 1944

23 (Contd)

of TF #1, 128th Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF #2, 696th Armd FA Bn in general support and reinforcing fires of 161st FA Bn and in direct support of TF #3 when committed and the 212th Armd FA Bn in general support reinforcing fires of the 128th Armd FA Bn. The combat command was to attack at H-Hour 24 November in two columns to seize PURRELANGE and REMERING. TF #1 to take REMERING and TF #2 to take PUTTELANGE with TF #3 following TF #2 on order, ready to support either task force or occupy objective. The assembly area to be in the vicinity just west of HILSPRICH. During the night the enemy drove elements of the 137th Infantry, 35th Infantry Division from HILSPRICH which caused plans to be delayed due to the fact that HILSPRICH had to be retaken before units could assemble for the initial jump-off. Therefore, TF #1 was ordered to move to attack position and take HILSPRICH on 24 November and TF #2 at CO's request was permitted to make a limited objective attack to secure the CR 2000 yds east of ST JEAN-ROHRBACH so that a bridge could be installed over the AT ditch in that vicinity.

24 TF #1 started moving to attack positions at 1030A. The attack was delayed until 1300A because difficult terrain prevented them getting into initial attack position. At 1410A, the leading ~~1st~~ elements of TF #2 were just west of the CR while the elements of TF #1 were receiving fire from vicinity of HILSPRICH. At 1450A, TF #2 was progressing satisfactorily and was about one-half way through the forest going towards the CR. They were receiving moderate S/A fire. At 1515A, the leading elements of TF #1 were in west edge of HILSPRICH and were receiving some fire. Other elements of TF #1 were 400 yards north of HILSPRICH. At 1520A, elements of TF #2 had crossed the AT ditch west of the crossroads and had established a bridgehead to cover bridging operations during the night. At 1545A, elements were reported to be entering HILSPRICH and by 1615A the town had been cleared of the enemy. The CP remained in HELLIMER AND plans were made for a continuation of the attack on the following day. During the night a Bailey bridge was placed across the AT ditch.

25 The attack on PUTTELANGE and REMERING jumped off at 1000A. And at 1045A TF #2 was held up by large crater in road east of AT ditch. As the leading tank company deployed and started around the crater they came under exceptionally heavy artillery and mortar fire as well as direct fire from large caliber guns, believed to be 150mm. Two tanks received direct hits and three tanks became mired in the mud. The remainder of the tanks withdrew to defiladed positions. The infantry could not advance east of the crossroads because of heavy fire and moved southeast towards REMERING and assisted TF #1 in taking their objective. TF #1 was in southeast edge of woods east of HILSPRICH going towards their objective, and everything went smoothly until 1130A when they began receiving heavy artillery fire. At 1145A, they were held up by mines in the woods northeast of HILSPRICH. At 1240A, they were receiving heavy fire from pillboxes in the vicinity of BETTERING and HOLVING and were slowly working their way through the minefield. At 1305A, TF #1 had two companies of infantry moving into REMERING and had one company of tanks covering the CR at RICHELING by fire. The CP CC "B" moved to the barracks at ST JEAN ROHRBACH.

26 The combat command's mission was changed to one of a defensive nature owing to the water barriers opposing us. TF WALL, with one Sec Co C 603d TD Bn, to occupy the line from 1000 yards northeast of ST JEAN ROHRBACH, through CR 2000 yards northeast and around to include REMERING tying in with CC "A" on the north. TF BROWN with one platoon of medium tanks 15th Tank Battalion and one Section Co C 603d TD Bn to occupy the the line from south edge of REMERING through HIRBACH and southwest about

NOVEMBER 1944

26 (Contd)

2000 yards, tying in with elements of the 320th Infantry on the south. The remainder of the combat command to remain in reserve at ST JEAN ROHRBACH prepared to reinforce either task force with tanks or TD's as required. The CP CC "B" remained in its present location.

- 27 Maintenance was stressed throughout the command while the division remained on the defensive. The 737th Tank Battalion, the two infantry battalions, 161st FA Bn and one plat Co A 60th Engineer Battalion which were attached to the combat command, were relieved but remained in position awaiting movement orders. The 44th Armd Inf Bn with Co C 68th Tk Bn, 1 Plat Co D 68th Tk Bn, 2 Plats Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, 2 Plats Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn, Co A 603d TD Bn (-2Plats) and 2 Secs Btry A 777th AAA Bn was attached to the combat command. The composition of the command is now:

15th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn (-1 Co) (Plus attachments)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Co F 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz

Patrols were sent out during the night to feel out the enemy strength along the front.

- 28 Co C 68th Tk Bn, which had been with the 44th Armd Inf Bn, returned to the 68th Tank Battalion. Reorganization and maintenance continued throughout the combat command. Patrols were again sent out during the night. The 737th Tank Battalion moved out of our area. Artillery fell in the vicinity of the CP CCB during the night.

- 29 Co C 44th Armd Inf Bn, which had been with CC "A", rejoined the 44th and the balance of the attachments which came with the 44th were released. Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn was relieved and Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn was attached to the combat command as of 28 November. The remaining elements of G1 134 completed their move out of our area. TF WALL EXTENDED HIS LINE to the north by moving one company to DIFFENBACH-LES-PUTTELANGE, after patrols had found the town completely free of enemy the night before. This move was made dismounted because of a blown bridge and craters in the road leading into the town from the south. Patrol activity continued to the east after dark to probe the enemy positions, determine their strength and location. Maintenance of vehicles, care and cleaning of equipment and rest of personnel continued to be stressed. Enemy artillery was light and sporadic in all areas.

- 30 No change, except that enemy artillery increased late in the afternoon. Our Casualties for month: Personnel: KIA 41 EM 4 OFF
WIA 241 EM 3 Off
MIA 18 EM

<u>Vehiculars:</u>	<u>Knocked Out</u>	<u>Recovered & Rep</u>	<u>Total Lost</u>
AG's	3	1	2
M Tks	24	16	8
L Tks	8	6	2
TD's	6	3	3
1/4 Tons	6	2	4
HT's	5	3	2

November 1944

30

<u>Vehicular:</u>	<u>Knocked Out</u>	<u>Recovered & Rep</u>	<u>Total Lost</u>
2½ Ton Trs	2	0	0
Trailers	1	1	0

Enemy Casualties:

Prisoners of War.....502
Killed and Wounded.....Unknown
12 Mk 4 and Mk 5 Tks Known
17 AT Guns.....Known
1 SP AG....."
Misc Veh.....7 Known

GEORGE W READ JR.
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: ACTION Against the Enemy for the Period 1-31 December 1944

1. Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-31 December, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

DECEMBER 1944

1 The beginning of the month found Combat Command "B" in a defensive position southwest of PURRELANGE, with TF BROWN HOLDING A SECTOR ON THE south and south east flank of the combat command zone, maintaining contact with elements of the 26th Infantry Division. TF WALL continued to protect the north sector of the command, maintaining contact with elements of Combat Command "A" and aggressively patrolling its sector. The remainder of the combat command remained in reserve at ST JEAN ROHRBACH prepared to reinforce either task force with tanks or tank destroyers, as required. The CCB CP remained in its present location in the barracks at ST JEAN ROHRBACH. The command continued to stress maintenance and rest of personnel. Enemy artillery increased during the day. The combat command was composed of the following troops:

15th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co B 603d TD Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Co F 86th Cav Rcn SqMecz
Btry B 777th AAA Bn Mees

2 On the night of 2-3 December, elements of the 134th Infantry Regiment and elements of the 320th Infantry Regiment relieved elements of the combat command holding the line, vicinity of DIFFENBACH on the north to ROTHFELD on the south. The 134th Infantry Regiment relieved elements of the 50th Armd Inf Bn and the 320th Infantry Regiment relieved elements of the 44th Armd Inf Bn. Upon relief, the 44th Armd Inf Bn and the 50th Armd Inf Bn reverted to Combat Command "A" for future operations.

3 Combat Command "B" remained in its present location prepared to move through the 35th Infantry Division zone to the northeast and attack Division objective from the south. In this event additional troops would be assigned. The combat command consisted of the 15th Tk Bn and Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-1 Plat). CCB CP remained at the ~~the~~ barracks at ST JEAN ROHRBACH. Co C 603d TD Bn and Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn reverted to Reserve Command in place.

4 No change.

5 The Commanding Officer was called to Division Headquarters at 1100A to discuss future operations of the combat command. Combat Command

December 1944

5 (Contd)

"B" Headquarters with Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-1 Plat) moved from from ST JEAN ROHRBACH through DIFFENBACH-LES-HELLIMER then north through LEYVILLER, VALETTE to HY N56, then west to BARST-MARIENTHAL, closing there at 1300A. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was attached to the combat command and began making reconnaissance preparatory to the relief of elements of the Second Cavalry Group on the north of the XLL Corps zone.

6

S-3 and S-4 visited Division Headquarters during the morning to work out arrangements for billets and service parks and for the movement of the 15th Tk Bn. The Commanding Officer and S-3 visited Division Headquarters during the day. The S-3 accompanied G-3 to the CP of the 5th Infantry Division and the Sixth Cavalry Group to discuss plans for the relief and tie-in of elements on the north flank. The 15th Tk Bn moved from ST JEAN ROHRBACH to HENRIVILLE. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz continued with reconnaissance of the area for future movement to relieve elements of the Second Cavalry Combat-command Group. Co C 691st TD Bn was attached to the combat command. Co F 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz reverted to squadron control. Plans were made for relief of elements of the 80th Infantry Division and the Second Cavalry Group by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and the 44th Armd Inf Bn. Relief was to be made effective during the day of 7 December. Plans for artillery fires were discussed with the artillery commander.

7

The 44th Armd Inf Bn was attached to the combat command. Elements of the Second Cavalry Group were relieved by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz in its zone, a portion of which was in Germany proper, and elements of the 80th Infantry Division were relieved by the 44th Armd Inf Bn in its zone. The mission of Combat Command "B" was to contain SAARBRUCKEN in the sector extending from EMMERSWEILER south through ROSBRUCK, MORSBACH COCHEREN and THEDING, with the 44th Armd Inf Bn (reinf) on the right (south) flank and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were each reinforced with one platoon Co C 691st TD Bn and the 44th Armd Inf Bn by one reconnaissance platoon 691st TD Bn. Co C 691st TD Bn (-) was attached to the 15th Tk Bn. (-) The 15th Tk Bn moved from HENRIVILLE to FAREBERSVILLER. A reconnaissance was made for firing positions and routes and one medium tank company was placed in direct support of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz at ROSBRUCK with one medium tank company in direct support of the 44th Armd Inf Bn at THEDING. The 183d FA Group was in direct support of the combat command. The other medium tank company and the light tank company were to remain in the vicinity of HENRIVILLE. The S-3 made contact with the Second and Sixth Cavalry Groups in regard to the relief and tie-in by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. The Ex visited elements of the 80th Infantry Division in regard to the relief and tie-in by the 44th Armd Inf Bn. Plans were made for the movement of the CP from its present location on the morning of 8 December to FAREBERSVILLE

8

CC "B" CP moved from BARST-MARIENTHAL east on Hy 56 turning north through CAPPEL, HENRIVILLE to FAREBERSVILLER, closing there at 1000A. On this move the combat command passed through the main defensive positions of the MAGINOT LINE. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1300A. The following points were brought out at this meeting: Medium tank elements of the 15th Tk Bn were not to be used unless cleared through Combat Command "B". The mortar platoon, 15th Cav-Sq-Mecz--The assault gun-platoon, 15th Command Tk Bn was to be attached to the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. The assault gun platoon, 15th Tk Bn was to be coordinated with Artillery Command if needed. A minimum number of men were to be on line and a maximum number in billets. Also, maintenance and training of new men was to be stressed; sanitation to be watched also a strict

DECEMBER 1944
8 (Contd)

policy of nonOfraternization with civilians. Day and night patrolling to be aggressive with as many new men being trained as possible. Preparation and proper briefing of patrols to be emphasized. All defensive fires to be tied in. Patrol activities to be reported to this headquarters for coordination with units on the right and the left. The CG 6th Armd Div visited the CP during the afternoon to discuss the tie-in of the outpost line and to make awards. During the day, the Commanding General made awards to officers and men of the 15th Tk Bn, 44th Armd Inf Bn and 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. The following PW's and displaced personnel were evacuated:

86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz

2 French
2 Spaniards
2 German Soldiers
1 Italian Deserter

44th Armd Inf Bn

3 Serbians
4 Russians
3 Yugoslavians

9 No change.

10 S-3 visited the Reserve Command to discuss the tie-in of the 44th Armd Inf Bn. The Command Officer attended a unit commander's meeting at Division Headquarters at 1500A.

11 No change.

12 A conference was held with the CG 6th Armd Div and Co Second Cavalry Group this morning. Orders were received from the CG 6th Armd Div that the 44th Armd Inf Bn would be relieved on 15 December by elements of the Second Cavalry Group. At the same time the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz would be attached to the Second Cavalry Group.

13 No change.

14 The Commanding Officer and the S-3 attended a meeting the CG 6th Armd Div, at which time it was announced that the Second Cavalry Group would now relieve elements of the 6th Armored Division on the front. Also, effective immediately the entire sector would be turned over to Reserve Command with the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, 9th Armd Inf Bn and the 69th Tk Bn being used on the line. The 44th Armd Inf Bn reverted to Combat Command "A" and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and Co C 691st TD Bn reverted to Reserve Command, while the 68th Tk Bn reverted to Combat Command "B" control. The combat command was composed of the following troops:

15th Tk Bn
68th Tk Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-1 Plot)

The relief of elements by the Reserve Command would be effective 15 December. At this meeting it was also announced that the 6th Armored Division would be placed under the LLL Corps, with the mission of containing SAARBRUCKEN. The effective date of release from LLL Corps was not announced. The 15th Tk Bn moved its Cp from FAREBERSVILLER to MACHEREN. Co D and service elements of the 15th Tk Bn moved from HENLIVILLE to the same vicinity. The CP of the 68th Tk Bn moved from

DECEMBER 1944

14 (Contd)

DIEBLING to the vicinity of LANING, with other elements of the 68th Tk Bn moving to MAXSTADT and VAHL-EBERSING. Maintenance of vehicles, rest of personnel, training of new men and test firing of new weapons was to be stressed.

- 15 The combat command was relieved of its mission of protecting the north flank of the Division zone. The 68th Tk Bn being relieved within its seater by the 69th Tk Bn. Upon relief the 68th Tk Bn moved to its new location. The Commanding Officer attended a meeting at Division Headquarters and was given the responsibility of preparing a demonstration of an attack on a fortified position. The S-3 Air left for Etain, France to spend a few days with the 362d Fighter Group in order to become more familiar with the methods of air support during operations.
- 16 The 68th Tk Bn was relieved from the combat command and the 44th Armd Inf Bn was assigned. The 44th Armd Inf Bn remained in its present location. The platoon from Battery B 777th AAA Bn rejoined its battery and the battery reverted to battalion control.
- 17 The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-Tr A) and Co C and two reconnaissance platoons Hq Co 691st TD Bn Towed were assigned to the combat command. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-) was reinforced with Co C 691st TD Bn (-1 Plat) and one platoon of reconnaissance from 691st TD Bn. The 44th Armd Inf Bn was reinforced with one platoon Co C 691st TD Bn and one platoon of reconnaissance from 691st TD Bn. The combat command went into the line it held earlier in the month with its troops in the same location they occupied previously, ie, 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz on left, 44th Armd Inf Bn on right and 15th Tk Bn in support. The 696 Armd FA Bn was in direct support of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and the 276th Armd FA Bn was in direct support of the 44th Armd Inf Bn. FA #35, Hq 6th Armd Div, received confirming the 6th Armd Div transfer from the XII Corps to the LLL Corps effective 16 December.
- 18 A platoon Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn, which was to remain with its battalion but be ready on call, was attached to the combat command. Co C 603d TD Bn (relief) was also attached to the command while Co C 691st TD Bn Towed and two reconnaissance platoons of Hq Co ~~line-was-to-take-place~~ 691st TD Bn were relieved. The relief on line was to take place under cover of darkness. One platoon Co C 693d TD Bn was attached to the 44th Armd Inf Bn and the company minus was attached to the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. The Commanding Officer was called to Division Headquarters to discuss with representatives of the 42d Infantry Division arrangements for their relief of Combat Command "B" on line. The discussion was primarily about billeting arrangements and also to insure that the 42d Infantry Division get in properly and to facilitate their movement in any way possible. Artillery and mortar activity increased considerably in the vicinity of MORSBACH. During the hours 1200A-1600A this area received 182 rounds of mortar fire. No casualties were reported. Other front line areas in our sector received only light sporadic artillery. 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz picked up two deserters in the vicinity of MORSBACH.
- 19 The S-3 left for Etain, France to spend a few days with the 362d Fighter Group in order to become more familiar with the methods of air support during operation. The 6th Armored Division reverted To XII Corps. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and the 44th Armd Inf Bn sent out patrols of platoon strength with the following missions: (1) to determine the strength of the enemy in vicinity of OETTING and FORBACH (2) capture prisoners (3) reconnoiter possible routes of approach and suitability

DECEMBER 1944

19 Contd.

of Terrain in event we are ordered to attack in this area. The results of these patrols were as follows: (1) Enemy occupies trenches in vicinity of OETTING & FORSBACH in approximate company strength with one man every five meters (2) no prisoners captured (3) approaches to OETTING & suitable for tank employment providing tanks stay on ridges and move slowly. Half-tracks and wheel vehicles would find movement difficult if not impossible (4) 44th Armd Inf Bn lost one man who was wounded and presumed captured by the enemy. Enemy operations consisted mainly of sporadic artillery fire on front line troops and the towns of MORSEBACH, FOLKLING and GUABLING. Enemy in trenches on western outskirts of OETTING and FORBACH engaged our patrols with S/A and mortars. Late in the evening considerable vehicular movement in the vicinity of OETTING seemingly moving towards MORSEBACH. Friendly artillery shelled suspected area and vehicular activity ceased. 12 civilians were evacuated by the 44th Armd Inf Bn from the town of GUABLING. Nine of these civilians were formerly members of the German Army, but had no information of value.

- 20 Orders were received that the 6th Armored Division had been placed in the XV Corps of the Seventh Army. There was a marked decrease in enemy artillery activity. A few rounds of artillery landed in vicinity of FOLKLING, vicinity of MORSEBACH and in area north of ROSBRUCK. Vehicular activity was heard after dusk between MARINEAU and FORBACH. Eight white flares were observed in the vicinity of FORBACH during the night.
- 21 Notice was received that the 6th Armored Division had been placed in XX Corps of the Third Army. At a conference with unit commanders of this command plans were made, to be carried out under cover of darkness tonight, to straighten the MLR and OPLR to effect a better coordination between units and to lessen the number of personnel in front line positions. Enemy artillery remained light and sporadic throughout the area. Vehicular activity was again heard in the vicinity of FORBACH. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz sent out patrols at 2400A to determine enemy strength southeast of FORBACH and secure enemy identifications.
- 22 Patrols were sent out by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and returned without enemy contact. At 2200A, six-man enemy patrol approached OPLR in the 44th Armd Inf Bn zone and the patrol was driven back. Two of our men were wounded, while the enemy casualties were unknown.
- 23 Units of Combat Command "B" continued to hold the line with limited aggressive patrol activities. The enemy maintained a defensive attitude. Assistant Division Commander, General Pierce, of the 103d Infantry Division, contacted CO CCB in regards to relieving our elements by elements of the 411 Infantry Regiment. At 1500A, Colonel Ule and members of his staff contacted our Commanding Officer and made plans for relief of our elements the following day. The unit commanders attached to Combat Command "B" attended this meeting and were acquainted with plans for relief of their respective units on 24 December. On the night of the 23d the enemy fired harrassing fires in the vicinity of CCB CP. The Division had been ordered into an assemble area in the vicinity of METZ..
- 24 Relief of our elements commenced as scheduled. Tr D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz commenced its movement to METZ at 1015A. Hq & Hq Tr 86th Cav Rcn Sq MECZ commenced its movement at 1115A. Hq & Hq Co CC "B" moved out at 1200A to METZ via ST AVOLD on Hy N3, west through LONGEVILLE LES ST AVOLD, BOINVILLE-SUR-NIED, COUROELLES-CHAUSSAY to METZ. The 44th Armd Inf Bn was completely relieved at approximately 1410A, 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz's relief was finished at 1500A. The units moved to METZ by infiltration. The S-3 preceded the units with billeting parties from the 86th Cav

DECEMBER 1944

24 contd

Rcn Sq Mecz and the 44th Armd Inf Bn with the purpose of securing billeting areas for the troops. Guides from billeting parties met units and took them into their areas. CO CCB and his staff remained at FAREBERSVILLER until the relidf was completed. They left for METZ at 1600A. The 13th Tk Bn was left behind in Division Reserve to support the 411th Infantry Regiment in case of necessity. Upon arrival in METZ the combat command was to be constituted as follows;

9th Armd Inf Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz

The last of the Combat Command "B" units closed in METZ at 2030A.

25

Commanding Officer received word from the Commanding General of the possibility of moving north late in the afternoon or early on the morning of the 26th. At 1445A, Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, which had been attached to Division Reserve, closed in at METZ. Division had made arrangements for spare signal crews to establish bogus nets supplied with filler traffic to take over nets when silence was imposed to deceive the enemy as to our movement. At 1700A, the Commanding Officer and S-3 were called to the Division CP for orders. The new composition of the combat command was as follows;

86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-Tr C)
50th Armd Inf Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
- Co A 5th Armd Engr Bn-
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn, reinf

The 128th Armd FA Bn and the 212th Armd FA Bn were in general support. The command was to march 260745A December from METZ to vicinity of MERSCH, LUXEMBOURG, north of LUXEMBOURG CITY to an assembly area in the vicinity of the 10th US Armored Division. The IP was to be at RJ GC10 and GC11 east of METZ then north through LUXEMBOURG CITY to the assembly area. The order of march was to be as follows: 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-Tr D), 2 Secs AA, Co A 5th Armd Engr Bn, Co C 603d TD Bn, reinf, 2 Secs AA, 50th Armd Inf Bn, Hq CC "B", Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-), 44th Armd Inf Bn, 2 Secs AA and 69th Tk Bn. 60 yards interval to be maintained between combat vehicles with 5 minute interval between march serials. Division Artillery minus 131st Armd FA Bn to follow CC "B". Liaison was to be maintained from rear to front. Units preceeding CC "B" Headquarters will keep liaison officers with them. Those units in rear of this headquarters will send liaison officers to this headquarters. Billeting details will leave at 260600A with CO & S-3 of this headquarters. They will be prepared to meet units on road and guide them to billeting area. Complete radio silence will be maintained except radios will be monitored and in case of enemy air attack, "flash" system will be used. Cerise panels will be displayed. Upon arrival in assembly area, report will be made to this headquarters when units reached IP, cleared IP, reached assembly area and closed in bivouac.

26

6th Armored Division reverted to XII Corps. CO & S3 billeting party left METZ FOR MERSCH, LUXEMBOURG and made contact with the Commanding General at that point. Instructions were received that CC "B" was to relieve the 109th Infantry Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division and the 90th Cavalry Rcn Sq Mecz of the 10th US Armored Division. The CP's of the 109th Infantry Regiment and 90th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were located

DECEMBER 1944

26 contd.

in STEGEN, LUXEMBOURG. The regimental and squadron commanders were contacted by the CC & S3 and arrangements were started immediately for their relief as soon as possible by elements of the combat command. Billeting parties were briefed as to the sectors that their individual units were to take over. Elements of Combat Command "B" made contact with corresponding elements that were to be relieved. Guides were sent back to bring the units into their respective areas. Combat Command "B" took over the area unit by unit and the same disposition that was held by corresponding units that were on line. Combat Command closed in its area at 1830A with the advance Combat Command CP located at STEGEN. The entire sector was given to the 44th Armd Inf Bn and the 50th Armd Inf Bn with elements of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, tanks and tank destroyers attached. The 44th Armd Inf Bn was on the left and the 50th Armd Inf Bn on the right. Relief was to be made as soon as practicable. During the night considerable enemy artillery fell in the vicinity of CCB CP. There were several vehicular casualties.

27 Relief of the 109th Infantry Regiment and the 90th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz effected. Combat Command "B" assumed responsibility of the sector at 0745A. Unit commanders meeting was held at 1200A at which time the sector was 43-organized as follows: 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (- Tr D) with one Plat Co C 603d TD Bn attached on the left and the 44th Armd Inf Bn with one medium tank company of the 69th Tk Bn and one platoon Co C 603d TD Bn, in the center and the 50th Armd Inf Bn with one medium tank company of the 69th Tk Bn attached, on the right flank. The 18th Armd FA Bn was in support of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and 44th Armd Inf Bn while the 112th Armd FA Bn was in support of the 50th Armd Inf Bn. Fires of these two artillery battalions were supported by the 183d FA Group. Changes in composition and sector put into effect during the afternoon and night. Remainder of the Combat Command "B" Headquarters moved to STEGEN. During the night approximately 150 rounds of artillery fell in sector held by the 50th Armd Inf Bn. The sectors held by the 44th Armd Inf Bn and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were quiet with no enemy activity.

28 During the morning harassing enemy artillery fire continued to fall in the sector held by the 50th Armd Inf Bn. Contact was made at our CP by elements of the 5th Infantry Division, which were to relieve our elements on the line. Two battalions of the 10th Infantry Regiment were to relieve elements on our right sector. One battalion of the 2d Infantry Regiment was to relieve the 44th Armd Inf Bn. Elements of reconnaissance 80th Infantry Division to relieve the sector on the left held by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. Billeting parties from units sent to reconnoiter positions and assembly area at 1330A. Commanding Officer was called to Division Headquarters at 1600A for a conference. Elements of the 5th Infantry Division started relieving elements of Combat Command "B" at 1430A with the relief to be completed by 290500A. Commanding Officer was informed of a meeting to be held at Division Headquarters at 290800A, new composition of the combat command would be given for their new mission. All elements of Combat Command "B" alerted to move to new assembly area by 291200A.

29 The division was to move to its new assembly area in BELGIUM by three combat commands. Combat Command "B" was to march via STEGEN, MEDERNACH, LAROCLETTE, MERBACH, ARLON, BELGIUM, HABAY-LA-NEUVE, BEHNE, LEGLISE, BELGIUM. The composition of the command was as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
68th Tk Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

DECEMBER 1944

29 contd.

Btry B 777th AAA Bn

Co C 603d TD Bn

212th Armd FA Bn in direct support of the command. The order of march to be as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn

68th Tk Bn

Hq CC "B"

Co C 603d TD Bn

✓ Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

212th Armd FA Bn

Two sections AA with the 50th Armd Inf Bn, two sections AA with 212th Armd FA Bn and two sections with 68th Tk Bn and Btry B (- 6 Secs) with Hq CC "B". SPC on air attacks. Minimum radio traffic to be used on the move. IP at 831289 on the road from MEDEMBACH to MERSCH. The 50th Armd Inf Bn to reach the IP at 1200A. Liaison to be maintained from rear to front. Reports to be sent in by units: When head reaches IP, ARLON and when closed in assembly area. The 6th Armored Division went over to III Corps control. The command closed in its assembly area at 1750A. CCB CP located at LEGLISE, BELGIUM.

30

The Commanding Officer, Ex O and unit commanders made a reconnaissance of the development areas and route thereto and also contact with elements that the combat command was to pass through. The Commanding Officer and Ex O attended two meetings at Division Headquarters during the day. A unit commanders' meeting was held at CCB CP at 1800A. FO #78 was issued by the combat command showing the command attacking on the morning of 31 December to the northeast through elements of the 101st Airborne Infantry Division with two task forces abreast, TF DAVALL on the right and TF WALL on the left. Combat command "A" was to attack on the right of Combat Command "B" and the 35th Infantry Division on the right of the division. The composition of the combat command was as follows:

68th Tk Bn

50th Armd Inf Bn

Co C 603d TD Bn, relief

✓ Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

The following is the composition of the task forces:

TF DAVALL

68th Tk Bn (-1M Tk Co)

Co B 50th Armd Inf Bn

1st Plat Co C 603d TD Bn

3d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

TF WALL

50th Armd Inf Bn (- 1 & 3 Co)

Co E 68th Tk Bn

2d Plat Co C 603d TD Bn

✓ 1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

CCB RESERVE

Hq & Hq Co CCB

Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)

Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

CCB TRAINS

2 Secs Btry B 777th

AAA Bn

FA Group RILEY was to support the attack.

DECEMBER 1944

31

Leading elements of Combat Command "B" were late reaching the IP due to the snow and icy condition of the road. After T1 WALL had cleared the IP, two suitable by-passes were found which enabled the combat command to proceed on its mission, although late. After clearing the IP, leading elements were blocked by elements of the 11th US Arm'd Division, therefore the combat command was unable to proceed to the development area in time to resupply and launch the attack as scheduled. The Commanding Officer and S-3 went forward to expedite the movement of the command. The Commanding Officer made contact with the Commanding General and it was agreed to move the combat command to an assembly area southwest of the development area, at which time the units were resupplied. This was done and the combat command closed in this area at 1430A. Contact was again made with the Commanding General. Due to the hour and necessary time for resupply, Combat Command "B" was directed to infiltrate the command to a development area under the cover of darkness and be prepared to launch an attack coordinated and in conjunction with Combat Command "A" on 1 January 1945. Combat Command "B" forward CP moved to BASTOGNE. Leading elements of the command started moving forward to the development area at 1930A. CCB CP received a few rounds of artillery during the night, with a few vehicular casualties resulting.

Our casualties for the month were:

Personnel:

KIA.....1
MIA.....2
WIA.....15

No vehicular losses.

Enemy casualties:

Personnel:

Prisoners of War.....9
Killed & wounded (Est).....52

Vehicular:

Misc Vehicle.....1

GEORGE W READ JR.
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

1 February 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1-31 January 1945

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-31 January, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

2. The beginning of the month found Combat Command "B" closed in an assembly area just northeast of BASTOGNE. Orders had been issued for an attack at 0800A, 1 January 1945. The plan was to attack through elements of the 501st Parachute Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division, then holding a line generally north and south through BIZORY, and seize the high ground generally east of MICRANPS, CUBOURCY and AYLONCOURT. Elements of the 101st Airborne Division were to attack on our left (north) flank and Combat Command "A", 6th Armored Division, on our right (south) flank.

3. The composition of Combat Command "B" on 1 January 1945 and the breakdown into task forces was:

68th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn, relief
✓ Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

TF DAVALL

68th Bn (- 1 M Tk Co)
Co B 50th Armd Inf Bn
1st Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
3d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

TF WALL

50th Armd Inf Bn (- 1 R Co)
Co B 68th Tk Bn
3d Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr

CCB RESERVE

Hq & Hq Co CCB
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)
Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

CCB TRAILS

2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

PA Group RILEY was to support the attack.

4. Chronological events for the month were as follows:

JANUARY 1945

1. The attack jumped off as scheduled at 0800A and at 0910A leading elements were passing through the 101st Airborne Division. TF WALL initially met no difficulty, but TF DAVALL encountered machine gun fire in the vicinity of BIZORY, which by 0940A had been overcome. At 1000A, TF WALL was receiving S&A fire from woods south of railroad. At 1030A, TF DAVALL was through BIZORY and was overlooking MAGERET. Both task forces began receiving direct fire from the woods northwest of MAGERET. At 1100A, TF DAVALL jumped off an attack on MAGERET. At 1115A, elements of TF WALL were at P602603. At 1200A, after securing MAGERET, TF DAVALL was re-organizing and consolidating ready to push on to objective. This re-organization was made difficult by fire received from dug-in AT gun northwest of MAGERET. As TF WALL passed through the woods about one kilometer northeast of BIZORY, they encountered extremely stiff re-

JANUARY 1945

1 contd.

sistance consisting of intense small arms, mortar and artillery fire. Captured 78th Regiment of the 26th VG Division. It was observed that the enemy rushed up reinforcements consisting of infantry and tanks to strengthen the line. TF WALL continued to press the attack, but made very little progress. At dusk they withdrew to the edge of the woods and consolidated their positions for the night. TF DAVALL completed the reorganization of his forces on the outskirts of MAGERET. He tied in for the night with TF WALL. A unit commanders' meeting was called for at 1900A, during which time the Commanding Officer was informed by the Commanding General that he would absorb TF KENNEDY from Combat Command "A" and continue the attack to the northeast. It was decided that task force commanders would jump off their attacks as soon as they had completely reorganized, but not later than 1000A. The plan of attack was coordinated with 101st Airborne Division and Combat Command "A". Tr A 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz was assigned to the combat command at 1800A but was not committed. 171 prisoners were taken during the day and an estimated 75 enemy killed or wounded. 5 AT guns (75mm or 88mm) were destroyed.

2

During the night of 1 January enemy air was active. The 50th Armd Inf Bn, 68th Tk Bn and the 112th Armd PA Bn were bombed and strafed during the night. At 0400A, January, the enemy launched a counter-attack against the 68th Tk Bn in MAGERET. Some enemy troops succeeded in infiltrating into the town. The attack was successfully repulsed with the assistance of our artillery (and with the cooperation of the German Air Force which bombed and strafed their own troops). Strength of the counter-attack was estimated to be a reinforced company, later revealed to be the 1st Co 340th Fusilier Bn, 340th VG Div reinforced by a heavy weapons platoon and one assault platoon. The 50th Armd Inf Bn received a minor counter-attack early on the morning of 2 January. This was made by one platoon from the 1st Co 340th Fusilier Bn. This attack was also repulsed. PW's from these two attacks were the first indication that a new division had come into the line against the combat command. The composition of the combat command for the attack on 2 January was as follows:

- 50th Armd Inf Bn
- 68th Tk Bn
- 69th Tk Bn (- Co B)
- Co A 44th Armd Inf Bn
- Tr A 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz
- ✓ Co A 15th Armd Engr Bn
- 2d Plat Co C 15th Armd Engr Bn
- 1 Sec 996th Tdwy Br Co
- Co C 603d TD Bn
- 3d Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
- Btry B 777th AAA Bn (*)
- 2 Secs Btry A 777th AAA Bn
- Co B 178th Engr C Bn (direct support)

The composition of the three task forces was as follows:

TF WALL

- 50th Armd Inf Bn (-)
- M Tk Co 68th Tk Bn
- 2d Plat Tr A 86th Cav Ren Sq
- 2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn
- Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
- ✓ Sec Co A 15th Armd Engr Bn

TF DAVALL

- 68th Tk Bn (-)
- Co 50th Armd Inf Bn
- Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
- 1 Sec Co A 15th Armd Engr Bn
- 2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA
- 231st AF Bn, direct support

TF KENNEDY
69th Tk Bn (- Co B)
Co A 44th Armd Inf Bn
1 Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
2d Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
253d AFA Bn, direct support

In accordance with the Commanding Officer's orders, TF WALL jumped off the attack at 1000A. Progress was good until the latter part of the day. The town of OUBOURCY was captured and MICHAMPS entered at about 1500A. About this time TF WALL again received considerable direct AT fire and artillery and mortar fire from the vicinity of BOURCY, from the railroad embankment southwest of the town and from the woods due east thereof. PW's revealed that TF WALL was opposed by remnants of the 26th VG Div supported by an assault gun from the 3d Pz Regt, 2 Pz Div, as well as the 695th Regt of the 300th VG Div. During the attack, TF WALL DAVALL gave direct fire support to the right flank of TF WALL. TF KENNEDY cleaned out the large woods east of MAGERET without much difficulty. TF DAVALL advanced towards ARLONCOURT, ARLONCOURT, they were subjected to intense direct fire from enemy tanks and AT guns (which were well camouflaged with white paint) as well as small arms fire from enemy infantry camouflaged with white snow caps. These leading elements took severe punishment and although supporting artillery put heavy concentration on the town, they were unable to secure a foothold and were forced to withdraw to the high ground west of town. At dusk, TF KENNEDY outposted the ground gained during the day and tied in with Combat Command "A" on the right and tied-in with TF DAVALL on the left. TF DAVALL (on the high ground west of ARLONCOURT) established his outpost line for the night, tying in with TF WALL on the left. TF WALL withdrew from the area in the vicinity of MICHAMPS and OUBOURCY and tied in his left flank with the 501st Parachute Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division. Excellent air support was received which was very effective. Tr A 86th Cav Ren Sq Mecz was attached to TF WALL to reinforce his left flank and maintain contact with the 101st Airborne Division. Total prisoners for the day's operation were 157. There were 4 CW's WIA and an estimated 60 enemy killed or wounded. Enemy vehicular losses were: 3 Mk IV Tks and 4 AG's destroyed.

3 Other than sporadic artillery and mortar fire, there was no enemy action during the night. In accordance with the Commanding General's plan, units on line spent the day consolidating their positions and organizing their defenses. About 1600A enemy artillery increased to a large degree. TF WALL was subjected to Nebelwerfer fire. At the same time the 501st Parachute Regiment was subjected to a counter-attack which drove in their flank and caused Co A 50th Armd Inf Bn to withdraw. The counter-attack was beaten off and Co A restored its original position. 3 PW's cleared through medical channels.

4 With the exception of sporadic artillery and mortar fire, the enemy was inactive until about 0730A. At about 0730A, the Germans again counter-attacked with an estimated two companies of infantry, supported by 6 tanks, from the vicinity of BOURCY astride the railroad and hit our lines at the point where they were tied in with the 101st Airborne Division. The counter-attack was beaten off and had subsided by 0800A. A large number of casualties were inflicted upon the enemy. After a slight withdrawal the enemy returned with an estimated battalion of infantry supported by 8 tanks and continued to exert strong pressure at the same point. The brunt of this attack was borne by the 501st Parachute Regiment. The enemy subjected the front line troops especially those of TF WALL to heavy time and Nebelwerfer fire. It was decided, due to the depleting strength of the front line troops, to shorten our front lines by falling back slightly to a better and more secure position.

JANUARY 1945

4 contd.

The 101st Airborne Division agreed to this and the line agreed upon ran generally from FOY, southeast to the railroad, then just east of BIZORY AND ALONG THE HIGH GROUND WEST OF MAGERET thence south to tie in with Combat Command "A". Elements of the 101st Airborne Division assisted in covering the withdrawal of the infantry elements of TF WALL while the tank elements, also assisting, completed their withdrawal at dusk. This placed our front lines generally in the same area as when we jumped off, except for a much more favorable position in vicinity of MAGERET. At a conference between the Division Commander and the Commanding Officer, it was decided that attempts would be made to pull out a division reserve. Battalion commanders were called to the CP and told to organize as strong a defensive position as possible and to use mines and demolitions for defense. During the remainder of the night enemy activity was very slight. Known enemy vehicular losses; 2-74mm AC's and 4 MG IV or V tanks knocked out.

5

Other than sporadic shelling, the sector was rather quiet until about 1700A, at which time enemy infantry estimated to be approximately a battalion accompanied by tanks, were observed coming through the woods at P603604, turning south towards P609595 and thence along our front lines. TF KENNEDY's tanks fired direct fire at the enemy column, knocked out two tanks and inflicted severe casualties on the enemy infantry. Artillery fire was highly effective in knocking out two more tanks and inflicting severe casualties which caused the enemy to withdraw. Later a PW stated this attack was made by the 2d Bn 16th PG Regt, 12 SS (Hitler Jugend) Div. Our casualties were light. About 1820A, another enemy column of tanks, half tracks and infantry (approximately two companies) were observed moving on the west side of MAGERET going southwest along our front. Tanks took them under fire and artillery concentrations were placed on the column. Heavy casualties were inflicted, several vehicles were set on fire and the enemy forced to withdraw to the east. During the latter part of the afternoon there was a steady increase of artillery and mortar fire along the front lines and in the vicinity of the combat command CP. At 1950A, the situation was well in hand and other than enemy patrols and artillery activity, the sector was reasonably quiet. Enemy infantry was observed in vicinity of P-607595 P607604 and four enemy tanks in vicinity of P600595 at 2020A. There seemed to be a definite build-up of enemy troops in the vicinity of the above two coordinates. The town of BIZORY, occupied by TF WALL, received intense artillery and mortar fire all afternoon. A patrol from the 69th Tk Bn reported observing two Tiger tanks and one AT gun knocked out and an estimated 100 dead Germans in MAGERET. After these initial enemy attacks, TF's WALL and KENNEDY reported intense enemy patrol activity up to approximately 060015A. At that time strong aggressive probing thrusts were made by infantry, supported by several tanks, repeatedly all along the front. Initially, these thrusts were made on the left of TF DAVALL, then worked to his right flank, then again to his left flank and back to the right. Finally the enemy side-slipped towards the right flank of TF DAVALL where their objective seemed to be Hill 513 (P598595). All units were engaged in intense and heavy fighting throughout the night and committed all their reserves in order to hold their positions. Several times the enemy succeeded in infiltrating behind our lines, but were finally mopped up or driven out. The enemy's objective, Hill 513, was well controlled by TF KENNEDY's troops. His light tanks counter-attacked and killed or captured what was estimated to be an entire enemy infantry company from the 340th Fusilier Bn. Through Combat Command "A" TF LAMARK sent one engineer platoon to the assistance and also covered his right flank with direct tank fire. At about 060800A the enemy finally withdrew while our troops finished mopping up. PW's for the day; 38; PW's cleared through medical channels; 16;

JANUARY 1945

5 contd.

Estimated enemy killed or wounded: 120. Known enemy vehicular losses: 4 Mk IV tanks, 1 H/T and 7 AG's (75mm or over).

6 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt, 35th Infantry Division, was assigned to the combat command and directed to close in our area and await further instructions. By 1200A the units on line had completed consolidating their positions and had made the necessary re-adjustments. Other than sporadic artillery and Nebelwerfer harrassing fires, the sector was generally quiet. At 1600A, air observation spotted enemy infantry assembling in the north-east sector of BOIS de JACQUES and our artillery placed a TOT on this target. Later, at about 2000A, a night patrol from the 69th Tk Bn picked up two prisoners who stated that the 694th Regiment had planned to attack that afternoon, but that our TOT inflicted such heavy casualties, the attack was canceled. TF DAVALL sent out a night patrol northeast of BIZORY and they intercepted and dispersed a four-man German patrol about 1500 meters northeast of BIZORY after which they returned to their lines. That was the only contact made with the enemy during the night. Up to 1100A the sector remained generally quiet. Commanding officer called a meeting of battalion commanders and tentative plans were discussed for relief and rotation in the combat command sector. The platoon of Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn furnished by Combat Command "A", reverted to them ~~during~~ during the day. There were 2 PW's captured and 2 Mk IV Tanks destroyed.

7 Eight medical prisoners were captured with two ambulances during the night of 6-7 January and one half-track was destroyed. During the day our artillery positions received considerable counter-battery fire. At 1630A, TF KENNEDY reported about 100 enemy infantrymen assembling in the small woods due northeast of BIZORY. At 1700A, they were observed moving towards the high ground southwest of MAGERET and were supported by several tanks. Artillery and direct tank fire, as well as automatic weapons' fire, dispersed this attack and drove it back. At about the same time another attack was launched by the enemy at the juncture between TF KENNEDY's right flank and TF LAGREW's left. This attack came up along the railroad towards NEFFE. Combat Command "A" reported two other counter-attacks in their sector. The enemy succeeded in penetrating TF LAGREW's lines and occupied the woods generally east of NEFFE which produced a definite threat to TF KENNEDY's right flank. During a meeting among division Commander, CC "A" and CC "B", it was decided to contain the enemy in these woods until dawn when Combat Command "A" would attack and re-establish the line. In the meantime, elements of TF KENNEDY were harrassed by several Tiger tanks which had worked up near their forward positions and were shooting direct fire into our lines. The 68th Tk Bn cooperated with the 69th Tk Bn in trying to stalk down these tanks and eliminate them. Finally tank destroyers attached to the 69th Tk Bn succeeded in knocking out one tank and driving off the others, but not until the enemy had succeeded in destroying three tanks of the 68th Tk Bn. Total enemy losses for the day were as follows:

2 - PW's cleared through Med channels
9 - PW's
20 - Enemy killed or wounded (est)

Known enemy vehicular losses:

5 - Mk IV or V Tanks
1 - half-tr track destroyed
2 - Ambulances captured.

8 At 0815A the 69th Tk Bn reported a tank attack of unknown strength which artillery and direct fire from our tanks broke up. However, several tanks continued to harrass our front lines and it was some time before our

JANUARY 1945

8 artillery, firing on probable locations, was able to force their withdrawal. Combat Command "A" attacked and restored their line by retaking the woods east of NEFFE. Battalion commanders were called to Combat Command "B" CP for a meeting in conjunction with plans for reorganization of our front. It was decided to divide the front into two equal sectors. The right sector was to be under the command of CO 69th Tk Bn whose task force was to be composed of the following troops:

69th Tk Bn (- Cos A & B)
Co K 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt
Tr A 86th Cav Hqn Sq Recz
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 693d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
253d AAA Bn in direct support

The left sector was to be under the command of the Co 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div and composed of the following troops:

3d Bn 320th Inf Regt (- Co K)
Co A 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
212th AAA Bn, direct support

Combat Command "B" reserve to be composed of:

Co B 69th Tk Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn (-)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
776th AAA Bn, gen support of the command.

Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-) was given missions as follows:

2 Secs with CCB Trains
Btry B (-) to guard bridges

Co 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt was directed to initiate reconnaissance at once and to effect the relief of elements of the 68th Tk Bn and 50th Armd Inf Bn as quickly as possible as both these units were ordered into Division Reserve. At 1230A, the relief of the 50th Armd Inf Bn commenced and by 1715A it was completed. Combat Command "B"'s mission for the present was an aggressive defense. There were 2 PW's cleared through medical channels throughout the day.

9

The sector remained quiet during the night of 8-9 January. By approximately 1340A readjustment of the line was completed and all elements of the ~~line~~ 68th Tk Bn had been taken off the line. With the exception of a little sporadic artillery and mortar fire, the forward areas remained quiet. Late in the afternoon a conference was held with commanders of the 4th Armored Division and arrangements were made for their elements to attack through our lines the following morning. Combat commanders and battalion commanders from the 4th Armored Division met our task force commanders and they made a reconnaissance of the front lines. TF KENNEDY was to assist Combat Command "A", 4th Armored Division in protecting their right flank, by direct fire from all weapons if necessary. The composition of the combat command was as follows:

69th Tk Bn
3d Bn 320th Inf Regt (attn)
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn

JANUARY 1945

9 contd

Co C 603d TD Bn, reinf
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (- 1 Plat)
Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Det 996th Tdwy Br Co

There was one PW cleared through medical channels.

- 10 Other than harrassing fires from Nebelwerfer, artillery and 120mm Mortars, the night of 9 January was relatively quiet. 4th Armored Division units passed through our lines as scheduled, beginning at 0900A, and launched their attack. The Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, came to our CP and told our Commanding Officer that in conjunction with the 4th Armored Division's attack, we would attack at approximately 1400A and seize MAGERET and the woods east thereof. At approximately 1300A, the Commanding General informed us that orders had been changed and that the 4th Armored Division would discontinue their attack and withdraw through our lines and that we would re-occupy our former positions, with the exception of maintaining an OPLR, 800 meters further to the front, tying in with the 501st Parachute Regiment. This OPLR was merely for warning in case of enemy attack, when it would withdraw to MLR. TF ALEXANDER and TF KENNEDY were given their orders to re-establish their line and effect the tie-in with the 501st Parachute Regiment. 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt took 5 prisoners during the day's operations and we took 38 other prisoners off the hands of 4th Armored Division units and evacuated them. TF KENNEDY knocked out one AT gun, and blew up an ammunition dump, with assault guns, in the northern tip of the BOIS ST LAMBERT. Other than harrassing fires from 120mm mortars and sporadic artillery, enemy activity remained negligible. One company from the 50th Armd Inf Bn was attached to TF ALEXANDER during the day since his elements were over-extended. 1 PW cleared through medical channels.
- 11 During the day, eight tanks appeared on our left flank. Supporting artillery knocked out two of these tanks and the remainder withdrew. Otherwise the sector remained quiet, except for sporadic artillery fire. 2 PW's were cleared thru medical channels.
- 12 At 1130A, an order was received from the Division Commander to attack, on our left flank, to the immediate front and maintain contact with the 501st Parachute Regiment on our left. The 50th Armd Inf Bn was re-assigned and the combat command was organized into three task forces as follows:

TF ALEXANDER

#D 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt (-1 R Co)
Co A 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 R Co 50th Armd Inf Bn

TF KENNEDY

69th Tk Bn (- 1 M Tk Co)
Co K 3d Bn 320th Inf Regt
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz

TF WALL

50th Armd Inf Bn (- 1 R Co)
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn

CCB RESERVE

Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

TRAINS

2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The plan of the combat command was as follows: TF ALEXANDER to attack to immediate front and maintain contact with the 501st Parachute Regiment, TR KENNEDY TO REMAIN IN position and support the attack by fire. TF WALL to occupy MLR formerly held by TF ALEXANDER and tie-in with TF ALEXANDER and TF KENNEDY for the night prepared to pass through TF

ALEXANDER on order. 212th Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF ALEXANDER with the 253d Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF KENNEDY. The attack by TF ALEXANDER was launched at 121400A and TF ALEXANDER's main opposition was small arms and automatic weapons fire with some artillery fire. ~~from~~ direction TF KENNEDY received some artillery fire ~~from~~ direction of MAGERET. At approximately 1800A TF ALEXANDER had reached his objective. late in the day, the Commanding General arrived at the CP with new plans. The Division objective was to be the high ground in the vicinity of LONGVILLY. The general plan of attack for Combat Command "B" was as follows: TF WALL to pass through TF KENNEDY and take MAGERET and high ground north-east of town. TF KENNEDY to support TF WASS's attack by fire and cover the west edge of the woods with direct tank and AG fire. When the initial objective was taken, TF KENNEDY was to attack and seize ARLONCOURT. Upon seizure of ARLONCOURT, both TF WALL and TF KENNEDY were to move onto the final objective of the Division. They were to seize the BOURCY-LONGVILLY ROAD with TF KENNEDY on the north and TF WALL on the south. Upon seizure of the final objective, task forces were to consolidate their positions and be prepared to repulse any counter-attack. The composition of the task forces was as follows:

TF KENNEDY

4TH 69th Tk Bn (- 1 M Tk Co)
Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr ✓
253d AFA Bn, direct support A

TF WALL

50th Armd Inf Bn (-1 R Co)
Co A 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
Armd Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
231st AFA Bn, direct support.

CCB RESERVE

Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) ✓
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

TRAINS

2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA

Of our previous attachments, Tr A 86th Cav Tcn Sq Mecz and Co C 603d TD Bn (- 1 Plat) and 1st Bn 320th Inf Regt were taken away by Division. There were 19 PW's and 1 PW cleared through medical channels.

13 At 0800A, oral orders were issued by the Commanding Officer for the attack to take place during the day. Written orders, FO #15, was issued later in the morning, confirming the previously issued oral orders. At 1245A, CT BYRNE (320th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div) Jumped off. At 1345A, TF WALL JUMPED OFF AFTER CT BYRNE had cleared, to make an attack on MAGERET. At 1415A, TF WALL was receiving moderate artillery fire, but upon reaching town some two hours later, artillery fire was greatly intensified. At 1930A, TF WALL was still mopping up MAGERET, which contained considerable enemy infantry armed with bazookas in well concealed positions. Stubborn resistance of the enemy caused considerable losses to our infantry and tanks and the town was not completely cleared until the following morning. TF KENNEDY on the right flank furnished supporting fire for TF WALL, also for TF LAGREW, of Combat Command "A", on the south flank. The Army, III Corps and Division Commanders visited the CP during the afternoon. There were 32 PW's for the day and an additional 3 PW's cleared through medical channels.

14 Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn reverted from TF KENNEDY to TF WALL because of the heavy losses sustained by TF WALL during the attack on MAGERET the previous night. TF WALL jumped off at 1035A to clear the woods and secure the high ground directly east of MAGERET. Initially, TF WALL met very little opposition, but as he progressed, the opposition increased. TF WALL's attack was supported by fire from TF KENNEDY. TF KENNEDY remained in position and he tied in for the night with CT BYRNE. 69 PW's were taken during the day and 6 PW's cleared through medical channels.

JANUARY 1945

15 The Objective of the combat command for the day was to cut the north-south highway from BOURCY to LONGVILLY, with TF KENNEDY on the north and TF WALL on the south. TF KENNEDY was to maintain contact with CT BYRNE on the north and TF WALL was to maintain contact with Combat Command "A" on the south. TF KENNEDY was composed as follows:

69th Tk Bn (- 1 M Tk Co)
Co A 50th Armd Inf Bn
Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-)
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓

TF WALL was composed as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn (- 1 R Co)
Co A 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓ - HWC, 1st platoon

TF WABE jumped off at 0830A and met light opposition until reaching the woods about 1½ km east of MAGERET, where he was stopped by direct fire, artillery, AT and heavy small arms fire. TF KENNEDY jumped off at 0920A and by 1130A he was in the woods south of ARLONCOURT. Two Tiger Royal tanks were knocked out in the woods. By 1230A, TF KENNEDY was in ARLONCOURT. Heavy small arms, artillery, AT and mortar fire were received in the ARLONCOURT. Six Tiger tanks were known to be in the woods northeast of ARLONCOURT. During the day 91 PW's were taken and 19 were cleared through medical channels. There was an estimated 75 enemy killed or wounded. 3 Tiger tanks, 2 SP 88mm AG's, 3-75mm AT guns and 2-20mm AA guns were destroyed. Combat Command advance CP moved to MAGERET during the morning.

16 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt was attached to the combat command. The combat command was to attack at 0930A within its zone, to seize objective astride BOURCY-LONGVILLY ROAD, initially in column of task forces. TF WALL was to make the initial assault to take combat command 1st objective, which was the woods east of ARLONCOURT, and to be passed through by the 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div, which would continue on to final objective. TF WALL was composed as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
2 Plats Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓ - HWC, 1st platoon

TF CRAIG consisted of the 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt. All tanks were to be under the control of TF KENNEDY with the mission of giving support to the infantry in their attack as required. TF KENNEDY was composed as follows:

69th Tk Bn
Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-)
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓ 3rd platoon

CCB RESERVE

Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

ARTILLERY

TF WALL - 231st AFA Bn
TF KENNEDY - 253d AFA Bn

TF WALL jumped off at 0930A, as scheduled. At 1330A, TF WALL had cleared the woods and consolidated his position prepared for further attack.

JANUARY 1945

16 contd

After TF WALL had taken intermediate objective about one kilometer northeast of ARLONCOURT, the 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt moved up into position prepared to resume attack and jumped off at 1445A, advancing against small arms and direct AT fire to about one kilometer short of the RUISSEAU de MICHAMPS, halting and consolidating for the night on the right of TF WALL. 14 PW's were taken and 7 PW's were cleared through medical channels. The enemy vehicular losses were: 1-75mm AG destroyed and 3-75mm AT towed destroyed. Combat Command advance CP moved to ARLONCOURT during the morning.

17

The combat command was to attack within zone to seize objective astride BOURCY-LONGVILLY ROAD. TF WALL was composed as follows:

- 50th Armd Inf Bn
- 1 Plat Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
- 1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
- 1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
- 1 Plat M Tks (69th Tk Bn)

TF CRAIG was composed as follows:

- 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt
- 1 Plat Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
- 1 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
- 1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
- 1 Plat M Tks (69th Tk Bn)

TF KENNEDY WAS COMPOSED AS FOLLOWS:

- 69th Tk Bn (-)
- Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-)
- Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) ✓

CCB RESERVE:

Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

ARTILLERY:

- TF WALL - 231st AFA Bn, direct support
- TF CRAIG - 253d AFA Bn, direct support

Both TF WALL and TF CRAIG jumped off at 0830A, with TF WALL on the left and TF CRAIG on the right. Considerable difficulty was encountered in south portion of combat command zone, with direct AT fire, tank fire, small arms and sporadic artillery. Contact was maintained with Combat Command "A" on the right flank and at 1015A contact was established on the left flank with the 320th Inf Regt, 35th Inf Div, one kilometer from objective. At 1130A, both task forces were about 500 yards from final objective. Both task forces were supported by fire from TF KENNEDY. By 1500A, elements were just short of the objective and positions were consolidated and dug-in for the night. There were 13 PW's taken and 1 PW cleared through medical channels. Enemy vehicular losses were: 1-75mm AT Gun (towed) destroyed, 2 Tiger tanks knocked out and 1 Sherman tank (captured) knocked out.

18

Beginning at daylight the command was relieved by elements of the 35th Infantry Division. By 1100A, the relief was completed. Troops other than the 69th Tk Bn and 50th Armd Inf Bn, reverted to parent

JANUARY 1945

18 contd.

organization and the 69th Tk Bn and 50th Armd Inf Bn went into an assembly area southwest of BASTOGNE for refitting and reconditioning. Combat Command "B" advance CP returned to BASTOGNE.

19 No change.

20 The Commanding General visited the CP at 1400A to make plans for an attack to the northeast by the division on 21 January. Combat Command "B" was to attack in columns of task forces on division order, pass between CT MILTONBERGER and Combat Command "A" and seize objective in zone. The Command was composed of the following troops:

69th Tk Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
1st Bn 134th Inf Regt (atahd)
Co B 603d TD Bn, reinf
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn

The task forces were composed as follows:

TF KENNEDY

69th Tk Bn (-1 M Tk Co)
Co A 50th Armd Inf Bn
1 Plat Co B 603d TD Bn
1 Squad Co C 25th Armd Engr

TF ROOT

50th Armd Inf Bn (-1 R Co)
Co B 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co B 603d TD Bn
~~1-Plat-Co-B-603d-TD-Bn~~
1 Squad Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn

TF CRAIG

1st Bn 134th Inf Regt

CCB RESERVE

Co C 25th Armd Engr
Engr
Btry B 777th AAA Bn(-)
Co B 603d TD Bn (-)

CCB TRAINS

2 Secs Btry
B 777th AAA

The plan was as follows: TF KENNEDY to attack on combat command order on right of combat command zone and seizes objective. TF ROOT initially to follow TF KENNEDY then moves to left of combat command zone and seizes objective. TF CRAIG initially in reserve to move on combat command order. 253d Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF KENNEDY and the 231st Armd FA Bn in direct support of TF ROOT. FO #16 was issued at 200A confirming previously issued oral orders.

21 Combat Command "B" advance CP moved to MICHAMPS early in the morning. At 0930A, TF KENNEDY jumped off and encountered a mine field shortly thereafter. At 1050A, TF ROOT jumped off in rear of TF KENNEDY. Both task forces met no opposition during the day, but the advance was slow due to terrain difficulties, weather and some scattered mines. TF KENNEDY took his objective at 1245A and continued attack to vicinity of HOFFELT, LUXEMBOURG and took up defensive position for the night north of HOFFELT. TF ROOT took the high ground north of TROINE, LUXEMBOURG and then went on to take the high ground to the north of HACHIVILLE. TF ROOT tied in on the left with the 11th Armored Division and with TF KENNEDY on the right for the night, while TF KENNEDY tied in with TF LAGREW on his right. TF KENNEDY lost one medium tank and one $\frac{1}{4}$ ton truck and had five men wounded due to mines. Advance CP Combat Command "B" closed in at TROINE, LUXEMBOURG during the afternoon. TF CRAIG was in reserve during the day and closed in at TROINE at 2115A. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was assigned to the combat command.

JANUARY 1945

- 22 The combat command continued its attack to the northeast early in the morning. Both task forces jumped at 0815A. The going was difficult because of snow, streams and mine fields. At 1115A, TF ROOT had run into a dead-end trail and was reconnoitering for another passable trail. At 1135A, TF KENNEDY ran into a mine field 1200 meters southwest of the objective. At 1145A, leading elements of TF KENNEDY encountered enemy infantry. By 1235, TF ROOT had found a new route and was moving up to give support to TF KENNEDY. At 1255A, Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was sent to the north to make contact with elements of the 11th Armored Division and 17th Airborne Division. At 1600A, the task forces were advancing on their objective, BASBELLAIN. One infantry company from TF ROOT and one infantry company from TF KENNEDY moved in on objective, but stream crossings and terrain prevented moving sufficient tanks and tank destroyers for necessary support. It was necessary to withdraw the infantry from the town, with the exception of patrols which were to remain and make reports of any developments. No enemy was encountered in BASBELLAIN, but there were booby traps and mines. All bridges across the streams and railroad short of the objective were reported to be blown. Reconnaissance elements from TF KENNEDY were sent south to make contact with TF LAGREW, Combat Command "A". TF CRAIG remained in reserve and moved to HACHIVILLE during the day. Combat Command "B" CP moved to HACHIVILLE. There were 6 PW's taken during the day's operation.
- 23 During the morning, CO 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt, his company commanders, CO 69th Tk Bn and CO 50th Armd Inf Bn reconnoitered the terrain on the enemy's front, in order that all task force commanders might be familiar with the problems facing them. The engineers made further reconnaissance of routes and conditions of crossings to insure that every effort be made to have a crossing for tanks available. They completed constructing a trestle bridge by 1600A and discovered one other bridge in existence. The task forces of Combat Command "B" held their positions for the day prepared to continue the attack on order. CT MILTONBERGER passed through Combat Command "B" at 1300A to resume attack to east to seize town of BASBELLAIN and high ground to south and east. There was 1 PW for the day.
- 24 TF CRAIG was relieved from Combat Command "B" and attached to Combat Command "A" for the day's operations. The platoon Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was recalled from its contact mission with the 17th Airborne Division and rejoined its troop. TF ROOT and TF KENNEDY pulled back from their positions to an assemble area in the vicinity of HACHIVILLE prepared to attack to the east the following morning, through elements of Combat Command "A". 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt reverted to Combat Command "B" at 250800A. This change in direction caused by change in Corps boundary. One company each 50th Armd Inf Bn and 69th Tk Bn sent to vicinity of WILWERDANGE to relieve elements of Combat Command "A", to be in position when elements of task forces move up to launch attack. The advance CP CCB MOVED to TROISVIERGES closing there at 2100A.
- 25 The composition of the task forces for the day's operations was as follows
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>TF ROOT</u> | <u>TF CRAIG</u> |
| 50th Armd Inf Bn | 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt |
| Co B 69th Tk Bn | Co A 69th Tk Bn |
| Plat Co B 603d TD Bn | Plat Co B 603d TD Bn |
| Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn | Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn |
| Squad Co C 25th Armd Engr | Squad Co C 25th Armd Engr |
| 231st AFA, direct support | Plat Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq |
| | 253d & 161st AFA Bns, direct support |
- RESERVE
69th Tk Bn (-)

JANUARY 1945
25 contd.

Co B 603d TD Bn (-)
Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)

The attack was to be launched at 0900A to seize WEISWAMPACH and to cut the SKY LINE HY east of town. TF CRAIG was to attack on the right and TF ROOT on the left. TF ROOT moved to development area in the vicinity of WILWERDANGE during the hours of darkness early 26 January. The attack was launched at 0900A and at 0950A both task forces were on line approximately one kilometer east of jump off point. Both task forces advanced slowly over difficult terrain and by 1230A were some 2 kilometers from objective. By 1650A, TF CRAIG was 1000 yards from objective where moderate to intense mortar, small arms, direct AT fire and artillery was met. By dark TF CRAIG had tanks within 400 meters of town. TF ROOT was approximately on a north-south line abreast of TF CRAIG. Due to terrain ~~and~~ difficulties and enemy reaction, the town was not entered and TF CRAIG pulled back about 1000 meters and consolidated for the night, tying in with TF ROOT on the north. TF KENNEDY made contact with elements of the 17th Airborne Division on his left flank. TF CRAIG tied in with elements of Combat Command "A" on the right. There were 47 PW's for the day, indentifying elements of the 15 Pz Div. Before we had been opposed largely by elements of the 340th VG Div. Patrols from both task forces tried to enter the town during the night, but were driven off by enemy fire.

26 Combat Command "B" attacked at 0600A with TF ROOT and TF CRAIG to secure its objective, which was WEISWAMPACH and the area to the north and east. TF ROOT attacked on the left and TF CRAIG attacked on the right. By 0900A, the town of WEISWAMPACH and the high ground to the east and the area to the north, had been secured. TF DENNEDY established contact with patrols between TF ROOT AND elements of the 17th Airborne Division. Upon taking its objective, the command was relieved from its front line positions by the 2d Bn 358th Inf Regt, 90th Infantry Division. The command, upon relief, displaced to assembly areas vicinity of LULLANGE, DONNAGE and DIEFEIT in preparation for its relief of CT 328 (HAMILTON) of the 26th Infantry Division within their zone. Upon relief, and for the move, all platoons reverted to their companies and all companies to battalion control. There was total of 26 PW's for the day.

27 The composition of the combat command was as follows:
50th Armd Inf Bn
1st Bn 134th Inf Regt (atchd)
69th Tk Bn
Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Det 996th Tdwy Br Co (- 1 Plat)
Co B 603d TD Bn (- 1 Plat)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

The following were the task forces:

TF ROOT

50th Armd Inf Bn
1 Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co B 603d TD Bn
1 Plat M Tks 69th Tk Bn
231st AFA, direct support 212th AFA, direct support

TF CRAIG

1st Bn 134th Inf Regt
1 Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co B 603d TD Bn
1 Plat M Tks 69th Tk Bn

RESERVE

JANUARY 1945
27 contd.

Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Det 996th Tdwy Br Co (- 1 Plat)
Co B 603d TD Bn (- 1 Plat)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

The following were the task forces:

TF ROOT

TF CRAIG

on 6666 page before this one

RESERVE

69TH Tk Bn (-)
Co B 603d TD Bn (-)
Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz

Early in the morning Combat Command "B" CP moved to vicinity north of CLERVAUX. During the day the command relieved elements of the 26th Infantry Division as mutually agreed upon with CO 328th Inf Regt and carried out the division mission within its zone. TF CRAIG relieved 1st Bn 328th Inf Regt, relief completed at 1430A. TF ROOT relieved 3d Bn 328th Inf Regt, relief completed at 1530A. The command assumed responsibility of the sector at 1530A. The combat command was to organize the ground along the line of the SKY LINE DRIVE for defense. The positions were to be organized in depth with every attention paid to rehabilitation of personnel and equipment. 50th Armd Inf Bn was on the right sector with the 17th Airborne Division on its right, while the 1st Bn 134th Inf Regt was on the left sector with CT MILTONBERGER on its left. Both battalions were to send out aggressive patrols to the east. Total PW's for the day were 9, identifying the 340th VG Div once again and identifying elements of the 15th Regt, 5 Para Div.

- 28 The combat command maintained a defensive setup and tied in with CT MILTONBERGER on the north and the 17th Airborne Division on the south. Positions were organized during the day. TF ROOT and TF CRAIG each had one platoon Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz attached to them for reconnaissance missions. Both task forces sent patrols to their immediate front. Contact was made by patrols from TF CRAIG who encountered a small German patrol which was driven off. All patrols returned without losses. A patrol from TF ROOT discovered kitchen and ordnance shop abandoned one kilometer to their front beyond the OPL and found hasty dug-in positions some 2½ kilometers beyond the OPL, but not manned. Nothing was found along the north sector of TF ROOT.
- 29 Both TF CRAIG and TF ROOT sent patrols to the river during the night, but no enemy was contacted. (A patrol from TF ROOT heard American voices and believed it to be another American patrol). The patrols found the OUR RIVER to be very shallow at the points they reached with a soft muddy bottom which would not permit vehicles to ford. The river was estimated to be 100 feet wide at these places, but very shallow.
- 30 Patrols were again sent out, being furnished by Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz under control of Combat Command. Their mission was to make a detailed reconnaissance of river fords on the OUR RIVER at 839635, 849648, 847649 and 844656, also to note any recent enemy activity and routes for resupplying possible OP's. The patrol sent out at 1900A reported it would be difficult to resupply any OP's established in proximity of river, due to depth of snow and steepness of grades. It was unable to make any detailed reconnaissance of the river at any point due to snow drifts, and steepness of river banks. There was no sign of the enemy. The patrol sent out

JANUARY 1945

30 contd

at 1900A reported it would be difficult to resupply any OP's established in proximity of river, due to depth of snow and steepness of grades. It was unable to make any detailed reconnaissance of the river at any point due to snow drifts, and steepness of river banks. There was no sign of the enemy. The patrol sent out at 2200A found the trail on their route to be passable part way by half-tracks or weasels and believed that an OP could be resupplied at night. The approach to the ford was very steep and not suitable for vehicles. One ford sight was muddy and soft and not passable without considerable engineer work. There were no other likely fording places located either up or down stream. 50 enemy personnel were seen by the patrol at 0130A, at P839635, walking single file and following the west bank moving north. The surrounding terrain, especially in vicinity of ford, showed no signs of recent traffic or enemy shelling. The trail to the ford showed no signs of recent movement.

31

The combat command was completely relieved by 1650A by the Reserve Command. TF CRAIG and TF ROOT were relieved by the 9th Armd Inf Bn in their entire zone. Upon being relieved from the line, TF CRAIG reverted to parent organization. 50th Armd Inf Bn displaced to WEICHERDANGE. The new composition of the combat command was as follows:

- 50th Armd Inf Bn
- 603d TD Bn (-)
- 25th Armd Engr Bn (-)
- 996th Tdwy Br Co (-)
- 777th AAA Bn (-)

The combat command was to be ready to support Reserve Command in an emergency.

5. Vital statistics during the above period were as follows:

a. Own casualties:

(1) Personnel

- KIA - 96
- MIA - 44
- WIA - 298

(2) Vehicular

- 26 - Medium Tanks
- 2 - Light Tanks
- 1 - Tank Destroyer
- 2 - Half-tracks
- 2 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks
- 1 - $\frac{1}{4}$ Ton Trucks

b. Enemy casualties:

(1) Personnel

- PW's - 709 plus 38 from 4th Armd Div
- PW's evacuated through medical channels - 68
- Estimated Enemy killed or wounded - 350

(2) Vehicular

- 13 - AT Gnd 75mm or over
- 2 - AA Guns 20mm
- 2 - Half-tracks
- 1 - Sherman (German) Tank
- 9 - Mk IV Tanks
- 9 - Mk IV or V Tanks
- 2 - Mk V Tigers
- 3 - Mk VI Tiger Royal
- 2 - Ambulances (captured)

GEORGE W READ JR
Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1-28 February 1945

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-28 February 1945, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

2. The beginning of the month found Combat Command "B" in division reserve in an assembly area in the vicinity of CLERVAUX, LUXEMBOURG.

3. The composition of the combat command on 1 February 1945 was as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
603d TD Bn (-)
25th Armd Engr Bn (-) ✓
996th Tdwy Br Co (-)
777th AAA Bn (-)

4. Chronological events for the month were as follows:

FEBRUARY 1945

- 1 The combat command remained in reserve prepared to support Reserve Command in case of an emergency. CC "B" CP remained at CLERVAUX.
2. No change.
- 3 No Change.
- 4 At 1400A the commanding officer attended a meeting of unit and company commanders at Division Headquarters.
- 5 On Corps order, through Division, the combat command was given an area, in connection with the salvage drive, in an attempt to recover all serviceable material, such as artillery cases, small arms, gas cans, wire reels, clothing and equipment, etc. Live ammunition was not to be picked up. The area was broken down and assigned to units under the command. All serviceable materials were to be turned in to Division Quartermaster, Ordnance and Signal Officers.
- 6 Combat Command "B" remained in present position prepared to assume command of troops east of the OUR RIVER after establishment of a bridgehead by Reserve Command, Composition of troops - no change. The 50th Armd Inf Bn and one company 603d TD Bn were placed on alert status prepared to pass to command of Reserve Command and cross the river any time after daylight on 7 February. One company 603d TD Bn was to be attached to the 17th Airborne Division effective 7 February. 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) was to be in direct support of Reserve Command. Due to the secrecy of the crossing of the OUR RIVER, no information was given out to any of our personnel until after the jump-off when all officers and key NCO's were briefed as to the situation.
- 7 The combat command continued its preparation for relief of Reserve Command upon its establishment of a firm bridgehead across the OUR RIVER.

FEBRUARY 1945

- 8 No change.
- 9 The command continued reconnaissance and preparation for relief of Reserve Command, relief to become effective the morning of 10 February. The 50th Armd Inf Bn moved to the vicinity of HEINERSHEID after dark prepared to move across the OUR RIVER before dawn 10 February, to effect relief of the 44th Armd Inf Bn in their sector. Co 284th Engineer Combat Battalion (Attached to Combat Command "B" during the day) reported to combat command headquarters at 1500A. He was given instructions to move his unit from WILTZ to WEICHERDANGE on the morning of 10 February and be prepared to relieve the 9th Armd Inf Bn in its zone on combat command order.
- 10 The combat command CP moved to HUPPERDANGE, opening there at 1000A. By 1300A the 50th Armd Inf Bn had completed their relief of the 44th Armd Inf Bn in its zone. CO Combat Command "B" assumed responsibility from Reserve Command of the entire sector at 1545A. Our mission was an aggressive defense. Upon assuming responsibility of the sector, the 9th Armd Inf Bn, east of the OUR RIVER in the right sector of the combat command zone, and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz on the left of the sector, came under the control of the command. The 9th Armd Inf Bn's right flank tied in with the 17th Airborne Division by patrols at approximately P845643 with the line extending northeast to P857643 with the line extending northeast to P845643 with the line extending northeast to P857652 then in a northwest direction on the ~~max~~ reverse side of the high ground to tie-in with the 50th Armd Inf Bn at P850662. The 9th Armd Inf Bn was supported by one platoon of medium tanks 69th Tk Bn and one platoon 603d TD Bn on the west bank of the OUR RIVER. The 50th Armd Inf Bn, with two companies east of the OUR RIVER, were supported by one platoon medium tanks 68th Tk Bn and one platoon Co A 603d TD Bn on a line generally as follows: From a tie-in point on the right flank with the 9th Armd Inf Bn north some 300 yards and then generally east and around the high ground to within about 400 yards of FRIEDRICHSEIF, thence northwest to approximately P858678 to tie-in with elements of approximately P858678 to tie-in with elements of ~~approx~~ the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz on our north (left) flank. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz had two troops east of the river, tying in with the 50th Armd Inf Bn on the south (right) flank and then north to P860687 then west to the OUR RIVER. Contact ~~to~~ P860687 was established by the 86th CAV Rcn Sq Mecz with the 11th Armored Division, VIII US Corps, on the north flank at the junction of LUXEMBOURG and GERMAN border just west of the OUR RIVER. Contact was maintained with the south elements across the river by patrols to P855685. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz established a strong point at P853711 and an OP some 300 yards southwest of the strong point. A class 40 Bailey Bridge across the OUR RIVER at P850673 collapsed during the day. At 2030A an enemy patrol approached the 9th Armd Inf Bn area, but was driven off. There were 2 PW's for the day. The new composition of the combat command was as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
9th Armd Inf Bn
68th Tk Bn
284th Engr C Bn (atchd)
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co A 603d TD Bn
Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
128th AFA Bn in direct support

FEBRUARY 1945

- 11 The Bailey Bridge at P850673 was constructed by the 178th Engr C Bn and opened for traffic at 1500A. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1500A to discuss plans for reshuffling of troops and to continue maintenance and rehabilitation of personnel. Reconnaissance was completed and preparations were made to relieve the 9th Armd Inf Bn with the 284th Engr C. Bn. Enemy reaction was negligible during the day. There was very little small arms and mortar fire throughout the period. The 6th Armored Division was relieved from III US Corps and assigned to VIII Corps this date.
- 12 Enemy action increased during the day to a definite buildup of artillery, mortar and small arms fire. Dismounted enemy personnel were observed on the high ground east of the 50th Armd Inf Bn, but they were dispersed by artillery fire. At about 1600A, one OP of the 50th Armd Inf Bn was withdrawn some few yards due to enemy action, but the OP was later re-established. All enemy fire was believed to be unobserved. During the day the 9th Armd Inf Bn was relieved east of the OUR RIVER by the 284th Engr C Bn in the south zone of the combat command. The relief was completed by 1420A. Upon relief, the 9th Armd Inf Bn moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of WEICHERDANGE. Relief of elements of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was commenced by elements of Combat Command "B", 11th Armored Division, west of the OUR RIVER and north of the division bridgehead. This relief was completed by 2300A.
- 13 No change.
- 14 At 0430A, upon relief from the line in Combat Command "A"'s sector, the 44th Armd Inf Bn came under the control of Combat Command "B". The battalion moved from MARNACH to BOXHORN, closing there at 1200A. Orders were received from Division Headquarters during the day to relieve the 284th Engr C Bn on the line. The relief was to be made by the 9th Armd Inf Bn prior to 150200A. Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn completed construction of a footbridge at 1800A, vicinity of P845630. There was no enemy contact during the day. One PW was taken by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz.
- 15 The last elements of the 284th Engr C Bn were relieved by the 9th Armd Inf Bn on line at 0740A. At 0800A the 284th Engr C Bn crossed the IP at WILTZ and cleared the IP at 1425A.
- 16 The combat command continued to hold and defend bridgehead. CG Combat Command "B" attended a conference with the CG 6th Armored Division and Asst Div Comdr 90th Infantry Division from approximately 1400A to 1700A. The 44th Armd Inf Bn closed in a forward assembly area in the vicinity of HEINERSCHIED and DALBORN at 1830A. At 1845A there was a unit commanders' meeting to discuss future plans and operations. There were 6 PW deserters during the day.
- 17 The 44th Armd Inf Bn completed relief of the 50th Armd Inf Bn in the north zone of the combat command sector by 0830A. After being relieved, the 50th Armd Inf Bn pulled back into an assembly area in the vicinities of DONNANGE, LULLANGE and DEIFELT, closing in this area at 1215A. During the morning the 44th Armd Inf Bn received some small arms fire in their area. At 1400A, there was a unit commander's meeting to discuss future plans. During the day there were 13 PW deserters.

FEBRUARY 1945

- 18 The combat command continued to hold its bridgehead across the OUR RIVER. Enemy artillery was negligible throughout the day. At 1810 A the 44th Armd Inf Bn received some small arms fire in its sector. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1630A to discuss future operations of the command.
- 19 FO #32, confirming previously issued verbal orders of 17-18 February, was issued during the day. The plan of the combat command was as follows: An attack was to be made on the main defenses of the SIEGFRIED LINE to secure the high ground in the vicinity of DAHNEN, DALEIDEN and DASBURG and prepared to continue the attack to the east to secure the towns of IRRHAUSEN and OLMSCHIED on order. The attack was to jump off at 0715A on 20 February and was to be preceded by an artillery preparation. The command was composed of the following troops:

9th Armd Inf Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn
38th Tk Bn
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co A 603d TD Bn, reinf
Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

The following were the task forces as organized:

TF BRITTON
9th Armd Inf Bn
1 Co M Tks (-1 Plat)
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co B 25th Armd
Engr Bn

TF BROWN
44th Armd Inf Bn
1 Co M Tks (-1 Plat)
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co B 25th Armd
Engr Bn

TF WARD
50th Armd Inf Bn
1 Co M Tks
1 Plat Co A 603d TD Bn
1 Plat Co B 25th Armd
Engr Bn

TF BRINDLE
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
2 Plats M Tks
1 Engr Sqd Co B 25th
Armd Engr Bn

TF DAVALL (Res)
68th Tk Bn
Co A 603d TD Bn (-)
Co B 25th Armd Engr Bn reinf (-)
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)

CCB TRAINS
2 Secs Btry E 777th
AAA Bn

ARTILLERY GROUP BRUCE:

- (1) 128th AFA Bn - D/S TF BROWN & TF BRINDLE
 - (2) 231st AFA Bn - D/S TF BRITTON & TF WARD
 - (3) 257th FA Bn - General Support
- VIII Corps Arty reinforcing fires of Group BRUCE

TF BROWN was to attack at H-hour to seize Objs 2 & 3; TF BRITTON attacks H-hours to seize Objs 1 & 4 and TF BRINDLE initially supports attack of TF BROWN by fire. After Objs 1 & 2 are secured, TF BRINDLE will move to Objs 1 & 2 prepared to relieve TF BROWN on Obj 3, protect MSR and main-

FEBRUARY 1945

19 Contd.

tain contact with the 11th Armored Division on the north. TF WARD will move on order to vicinity of LANGFUHR prepared to seize Objs to move on combat command order. TF DAVALL (Res) to move on combat command order. During the day, enemy artillery and mortar fire increased. At 1500A, there was a unit commanders' meeting to discuss the proposed attack and to make last minute preparations.

20 From a bridgehead east of the OUR RIVER, Combat Command "B" launched an attack on the SIEGFRIED LINE defenses at 0715A. This attack was preceded by a twenty-minute artillery preparation over the entire front, then a lull of ten-minutes in an effort to get the enemy to man his open field defenses to meet our attack. This was followed by an intense one-minute TOT by every available artillery piece on the small areas of Objs 1 & 2. The attack made good progress meeting light opposition from pillboxes. The main difficulties were mines, booby traps and enemy demolitions. Artillery was light to medium, increasing in intensity later in the afternoon. The first pillboxes were taken by TF BRITTON at 0830A. Supporting tanks and tank destroyers were brought up as quickly as routes were swept of mines and they covered the advance of the assault parties. Opposition continued light and by 1000A six pillboxes had been taken. Several prisoners were taken and only about two-thirds of the pillboxes seemed to be manned. TF BRITTON halted some 300 yards north of DAHNEN and sent a strong patrol into town. TF BRINDLE on the north placed tank fire on pillboxes in his sector and moved up assault parties to assist in clearing the north sector of the combat command zone. Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn began clearing MSR east of the OUR RIVER behind our advancing troops. By 1200A, 17 pillboxes had been taken with about 45 PW's. As TF BRINDLE approached the ridge east of the OUR RIVER, his supporting tanks came under heavy observed artillery fire, but the advance continued. TF BRINDLE had two medium tanks knocked out by direct AT fire during the day. By 1800A, a total of 40 pillboxes had been taken, two 88mm AT guns destroyed and our forces were entirely through the heavies portion of the SIEGFRIED LINE defenses in this sector. TF BROWN advanced east and northeast to vicinity of LANGFUHR. halted and dug in for the night and sent patrols to the northeast to investigate pillboxes. Late he readjusted his lines to occupy those pillboxes found evacuated by the enemy. TF WARD infiltrated units through KALBORN and across the bridge to reverse slope of hill just west of line of pillboxes during the night and closed in assembly area at 210130A, prepared to launch attack on REIPENDINGEN early on the morning 21 February. TF BRITTON tied-in with Combat Command "A" at P843651 and TF BROWN at P865665. TF BRINDLE tied-in with Combat Command "B", 11th Armored Division on the north at P853684 and with TF BROWN on the south at P869671. Plans were made for continuing the attack to the east at 0800A on 21 February. Throughout the day only two of our men were killed and other casualties were very light. Total PW's for the day were 103, along with 4 civilians and 3 PW's cleared through medical channels. The initial gains on the SIEGFRIED LINE was approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ km in depth and 3 km in width. The combat command moved an advance CP to KALBORN during the day. Our vehicular casualties were: 2 medium tanks destroyed by AT fire, 1 medium tank disabled by an AT mine, 1 light tank destroyed by mines, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck destroyed by a mine and 1-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck destroyed by artillery fire. One pillbox (No 9) held out all day and night, was finally blown 21 February with 450 pounds of TNT. 1 Officer and 11 EM were dragged out in a stunned and dazed condition.

1945
FEBRUARY 1944

- 21 TF BRITTON resumed attack at 0400A, took DAHNEN and continued south. By 1050A, elements were in DASBURG and the town secured by 1700A. TF WARD passed through south elements of TF BROWN and launched an attack on REIPENDINGEN at 0845A taking the town against light opposition about 1200A, continuing attack southeast on DALEIDEN and seized objective at 1620A. After DALEIDEN fell, TF WARD sent a strong patrol southwest of town to block and prevent any escape of enemy from DASBURG. Bridge on main highway from DASBURG to DALEIDEN had been blown by the enemy. All combat elements were to be moved across the OUR RIVER this date. The enemy sent a ten-man patrol to DAHNEN and this patrol was captured by TF BRITTON at about 0700A. 208 PW's for the day with 23 PW's cleared through medical channels and 4 civilians.
- 22 The activity for the day was planned as follows: TF BROWN to slip lightly to the south and tie in with TF WARD and TF BRINDLE to keep contact with TF BROWN on the north flank and maintain contact with the 11th Armored Division. TF BRINDLE to send one troop to clean up woods on his south. TF BRITTON leave one company on south of DASBURG and clean up woods between DASBURG and DAHNEN, later when Combat Command "A" relieved company of TF BRITTON, he was to close in DAHNEN. While this was in process, the situation dictated immediate movement to east and this was accomplished by TF BROWN, jumping off at 1300A, also TF WARD pushed east and secured a bridgehead across the IRSEN RIVER southeast of DALEIDEN at 1100A. By 1530A, the bridge at IRRHAUSEN was taken intact by TF BROWN. In the meantime, TF WARD was also pushing south and southwest, to clear MSR of direct fire and met heavy opposition. Two Tiger tanks were engaged and one destroyed by artillery fire southeast of DALEIDEN. It was decided to keep pushing to the division objective (OLMSCHIED and JUCKEN) and by 2000A, TF WARD occupied OLMSCHIED. TF BROWN secured bridgehead east of IRRHAUSEN and by 2100A was pushing on southeast to final objective. Contact with the 11th Armored Division was made by the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz at 2315A northwest of IRRHAUSEN. Advance CP CCB moved to DAHNEN, GERMANY during the afternoon. During the day there were 269 PW's, 1 civilian and 5 PW's cleared through medical channels.
- 23 TF WARD continued to take high ground southeast of DALEIDEN on DASBURG highway securing same at 0430A, thus opening the DALEIDEN-DASBURG Highway, which was to be the VIII Corps MSR. In the meantime, TF BROWN reached final objective by 0230A. TF BRINDLE made contact with elements of the 90th Infantry Division east of IRRHAUSEN at P928658 at 0045A. At 0025A, TF BRITTON moved east from DAHNEN towards OLMSCHIED and passed through TF WARD at 0220A. At 0730A, JUCKEN, the final objective, was taken by TF BRITTON. Tr D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, reinf, was given the mission of moving south through JUCKEN, occupy the high ground south thereof and reconnoiter to the south and east. TR D moved out at 1200A. The remainder of the day was spent in reshuffling troops and readjusting of our positions. At 1300A, orders were received to continue operations to southeast to contact elements of XII Corps. TF DAVALL was immediately organized and composed as follows: 68th Tk Bn (2 M Tk Cos), 1 Co 44th Armd Inf Bn, Tr D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, reinf, 1 Flat TD's and 2 Engr Squads to be assembled at JUCKEN as quickly as possible and move south to contact XII CORPS at crossroad just north of OBERGECKLER. At 1630A, TF DAVALL moved out. TR D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (already south of JUCKEN) met some opposition at

FEBRUARY 1945

23 Contd

KARLSHAUSEN which was reduced and the advance continued. The greatest delay was caused by mine fields and darkness. CP CCB moved from DAHNEN to DALEIDEN, closing there at 1700A. There were 252 PW's for the day and 7 PW's cleared through medical channels. 2 Mk V or Mk VI tanks and 3-75mm (or over) artillery pieces were destroyed.

- 24 The column proceeded along route to OBERGECKLER and sent patrols to the southwest to MUXERATH to contact elements of the 4th Armored Division, who were reported to have taken that town. No contact was made with either friendly or enemy elements. Another patrol to KOXHAUSEN contacted elements of the 4th Armored Division at 240700A. The column continued southeast and contacted elements of the 80th Infantry Division 1200 yards north of OBERGECKLER at 0750A. Another patrol into NEUERBURG ran into dug-in enemy positions 400 yards west of that town at 0800A. TF DAVALL organized strong combat patrols to move in on this at 1145A. Opposition was light and the town was taken at 1300A. One bridge was found intact and the patrols were relieved by the 6th Cavalry Group at 1415A. TF DAVALL assembled in the vicinity of LEIMBACH awaiting further orders. at 1400 A orders were received from division to relieve the 90th Infantry Division in their sector on the PRUM RIVER between WAXWEILER and PRONSFELD, with Combat Command "B" on the north and Combat Command "A" on the south, and to be prepared to attack to the east on Corps order. Troops were as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (- 1 Tr)
Co A 603d TD Bn reinf
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
Btry B 777th AAA Bn
231st AFA Bn in direct support

Relief to take place on the afternoon and night of 25 February. Reconnaissance by battalion and company commanders was instituted immediately. All units reverted to parent organizations and batalions were assembled prepared for movement. Plans were completed for the relief. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 2100A to discuss the movement of the combat command. There were 61 PW's for the day and 8 PW's cleared through medical channels. A total of 939 prisoners were taken during the past five days' operations against the SIEGFRIED LINE.

- 25 The combat command was broken down into three task forces for the movement to the new assembly area. TF BRINDLE, consisting of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (- 1 Tr), 1 Plat M Tks and 1 Plat TD's marched from vicinity of DALEIDEN reaching IP at IRRHAUSEN at 1000A, northeast to ARZFELD, north to LICHENBURG, to assembly area in vicinity of REHBOSCH, closing at 1235A, prepared to effect relief of elements of 359th Inf Regt, 90th Inf Div. in north portion of combat command zone. This relief started at 1730A and was completed at 2045A. TF BRINDLE to maintain contact with the 4th Infantry Division on north flank. TF WARD, consisting of the 50th Inf Bn, 1 Plat M Tks and 1 Plat TD's marched from vicinity of DALEIDEN, reached IP at 1300A, passed through ARZFELD to vicinity of EUSCHEID and closed at 1530 A, prepared to effect relief of elements of 359th Inf Regt, 90th Inf Div in south portion of combat command zone. TF WARD to maintain contact with Combat Command A on right flank. This relief

FEBRUARY 1945

27 Contd

of not less than fifteen men each. There would be no firing unless necessary.

- 28 TF WARD jumped off at 0430A to establish a bridgehead across the PRUM RIVER and by 0730A all the infantry elements of TFWARD were across the river. This operation required fording of the river as no bridge was intact. One company secured MERLSCHIED by 0810A and by 0955A LIERFELD had been taken. Opposition was light, consisting mostly of small arms and artillery fire. The third rifle company, after crossing to the east side reversed directions and attacked LUNEBACH from the east, taking the town by 1220A. On the north flank TF KENNON jumped off between LUNEBACH and PRONSFELD to take Obj 3, which was the high ground about 800 meters northeast of LUNEBACH. This force met a considerable amount of small arms, mortar and artillery fire which caused slow going, however, by 0815A, the objective had been taken. PRONSFELD was by-passed to the south. A strong combat patrol was sent to PRONSFELD and was in the town at 1700A, but the town was not occupied for the night due to considerable booby traps. PRONSFELD was outposted by TF KENNON for the night and would be seized early on the morning of 1 March. Bailey Bridge construction at LUNEBACH started at 1400A. During the day's operations there were 120 PW's and 1 PW evacuated through medical channels.

5. Vital statistics during the above period were as follows:

a. Own casualties:

(1) Personnel

KIA - 24

WIA - 225

MIA - 14

(2) Vehicular

3 - Medium Tanks (1 recovered)

1 - Light Tank

1 - $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Truck

1 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Truck

b. Enemy casualties:

(1) Personnel

PW's - 1037

PW's evacuated through medical channels - 48

Killed & wounded - Unknown

(2) Vehicular

3 - Mk V or Mk VI Tanks

3 - Arty Pieces (75mm or over)

2 - 88mm AT Guns

HARRY F HANSON
Colonel Infantry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

21 April 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1 - 31 March 1945

TO : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-31 March, as required by AR 345-105, C3.

2. At the beginning of the month Combat Command "B" was in the process of expanding its bridgehead over the PRUM RIVER in the vicinity of LUNEBACH south of PRUM.

3. The composition of the combat command on 1 March 1945 was as follows:

50th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (- 1 Tr)
Co A 603d TD Bn, reinf
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

4. Chronological events for the month were as follows:

MARCH 1945

1. The night was generally quiet, except for sporadic artillery and mortar fire on front line elements on the north flank. A reported counter-attack was later determined to be a local clash between patrols of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and the enemy patrol trying to operate in our area. This action took place about 2300A on 28 February and was repelled some few minutes later. The construction of a Bailey Bridge at LUNEBACH permitted peeps to cross at 010050A March and by 0500A the crossing of division loads was permitted. One significant and noticeable incident was the construction of this bridge without any enemy reaction. At about 0230A patrols of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were fired on in the vicinity of L016738, but no casualties were inflicted. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz jumped off at 0630A and by 0820 Tr C was just short of the proposed extent of the division bridgehead when they were pinned down by very heavy machine gun fire. By 1030A Tr C was in the vicinity of the cross-road at L018738, where the enemy dropped a shower of artillery on their position. This caused their shifting to the east for a better position. Later in the day Tr C pulled back to position in the vicinity of L015735, extending generally north to L016741, where a tie-in was made with Tr B. Tr D advanced to the vicinity of L019737, where they came under a murderous artillery barrage, direct and indirect, coming from the immediate front. Tr D pulled back to original position for reorganization and remained in that vicinity until later in the day when another attempt was made to scale the high ground. Due to the excellent observation afforded the enemy by the high ground troops brought down a shower of artillery upon them. At about 1515A the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was ordered to improve their positions and dig-in for the night and keep probing the enemy positions. The 50th Armd Inf Bn jumped off at 0700A meeting moderate small arms and mortar fire. By 0900A tanks and tank destroyers were well forward and in firming positions. The advance of the 50th Armd Inf Bn was made with caution due to the enemy situation in the vicinity of L025742. At 1605A the town of MATZERATH was taken and outposted

MARCH 1945

1 Contd

for the night. Strong patrols were sent to the east. TF KENNEDY started movement from the vicinity of BINSCHIED about 1645A to an assembly area east of the PRUM RIVER between LUNEBACH and MERLSCHIED, closing there at 1940A. Elements of the 68th Tk Bn began relief of elements of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz on the combat command's north flank about dark. This relief was completed at 2330A. During the day Tr A 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz rejoined parent unit and moved into Combat Command "B"'s area. At the end of the day the combat elements across the river were: 50th Armd Inf Bn, less half-tracks from two companies, 69th Tk Bn, Trs B, C & D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and Co A 603d TD Bn. The advance CP CC "B" closed at EUSCHIED at 011330A March. There was a total of 73 PW's for the day and an additional 3 PW's were evacuated through medical channels.

- 2 The night was unusually quiet with no artillery being reported in the combat command area. All units sent strong patrols forward of positions during the night, but no contact with the enemy was made, except approximately 30 dismounted enemy were seen by a pk patrol from the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz in the vicinity of LO19745 at 020315A. At about 020250A an enemy patrol of 12 men attempted to enter MATZERATH from the southeast. Of this patrol, 2 men were killed, 2 wounded and the remaining 8 men made their escape. During the day the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz CP closed at PRONSFELD at 1020A. At 1045A orders were received to attack to the east and seize the division intermediate objective as soon as possible. Task forces were constituted as follows:

TF KENNON (86 CAV Rcn Sq Mecz)

86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
1 Plat Co A 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co A 603d Td Bn

TF KENNEDY (69th Tk Bn)

69th Tk Bn (-1 M Tk Co & 1 Tk Plat)
Co A 50th Armd Inf Bn
Co A 603d TD Bn (-2 Plats
1 Plat Co a 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓

TF WARD (50th Armd Inf Bn)

50th Armd Inf Bn (-1 R Co)
Co B 69th Tk Bn
1 Plat Co A 603d Td Bn
1 Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓

Btry B 777th AAA Bn maintained protection of CC "B" Trains and the bridge at LUNEBACH. The attack was launched at 1430A with TF KENNEDY on the left (north) flank and TF WARD on the right (south) flank, to seize objective. TF KENNEDY jumped off from vicinity of MATZERATH, advanced and took objective without opposition. Upon seizure of the objective by TF KENNEDY, the enemy fired direct and indirect artillery fire on our position from the northeast. The advance of TF WARD was somewhat slower due to terrain but his objective was taken at 1725A. Opposition was light during the entire operation. On the north flank the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz had trouble with road craters and road blocks. Dismounted patrols were LO33755 without making contact with the enemy. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz pushed on northeast to OBERLAUCH and entered the town when no enemy was found there. Due to faulty communications our elements withdrew, but they were ordered back, and by 2230A the town was secured. Two platoons TR C (mounted) moved south of the woods to OBERLAUCH and the other platoon of Tr C moved to ORLENBACH. After securing their objective, patrols were sent to DINGDORF and NIEDERLAUCH by TF KENNEDY and TF WARD, respectively. Upon entering DINGDORF at 2110A no opposition was met, except some mortar fire. The town was secured and outposted for the night. During the morning observation was from good to

MARCH 1945

2 Contd

- zero. In the afternoon there were intermittent snow flurries and by nightfall the ground was blanketed by snow. The 161st Smoke Chemical Co was attached to the combat command for operations on 3 March. An advance CP CC "B" moved to MATZERATH in the evening. The total PW's taken during the day's operation was 58.
- 3 Tanks of TF KENNEDY moved to and forward assembly positions at 0520A and by dawn were prepared to support the attack of either combat command to the east. Enemy artillery fire was intermittent, the bulk of which came from the high ground in the vicinity of LO98774. The task force supported the attack throughout the day and prepared to move west to assembly area upon relief by elements of the 90th Infantry Division. TF WARD moved from his forward area in the vicinity of NIEDERLAUCH. The task force attacked at 0630A due east to cross the NIMS RIVER, between its junction with the SCHOLKEN RIVER and SCHONECKEN. The task force on its approach encountered heavy artillery and rocket fire, the rockets sometimes coming down in battery concentrations. By 1500A, two companies of infantry were across the river where they consolidated positions and established a tie-in with Combat Command "A" at L100738. Late evening was devoted to relief by elements of the 90th Infantry Div and preparation to move west to the battalion assembly area. TF KENNON was given the mission of blocking to the north and capturing the town of GIESDORF. Contact was made with the 12th Infantry Regiment at 1300A on the north in the vicinity of ELIWERATH. Elements of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz captured GIESDORF at 1700A after stubborn enemy resistance. Enemy artillery was very heavy throughout the day and numerous mines were encountered. Trs A & D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz completed the clearing of the woods between coordinates 74-76 and coordinates 02-06 at approximately 1230A. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was completely relieved and out of the line by 2130A. Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn continued sweeping of mines and maintenance of roads within the combat command zone until dark. The company closed in its area at 2400A. The 50th Armd Inf Bn was relieved by elements of the 1st and 3d Bns, 357 Inf Regiment, 90th Inf Div at 2200A. The combat command was completely relieved by the 90th Inf Div at 2300A. Btry B 777th AAA Bn closed in its new area at 2335A. There were 59 PW's for the day, and 3 PW's were evacuated through medical channels.
- 4 During the night and early morning the units of the combat command closed in their new assembly areas. At 0030A the 69th Tk Bn closed in an assembly area in the vicinity of BINSCHIED, HALENBACH and HOUF. At 0405A the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz closed in its assembly area in the vicinity of SEVENIG and HARSPELT. The 50th Armd Inf Bn closed in an assembly area in the vicinity of LUTZKAMPEN & ESCHFELD. The advance CP CC "B" moved from EUSUNHEID back to NIEDER UTTFELD at 1030A. Co A 603d TD Bn was released from Combat Command "B" to battalion control at 1130A. Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn also reverted to Bn control during the day.
- 5 The day was devoted to cleaning of weapons, training of replacements, maintenance of vehicles and rest of personnel. The commanding officer attended a unit commanders' meeting at Division Headquarters at 1630A. The 161st Smoke Chemical Co was relieved from the combat command.
- 6 The combat command continued its program of rehabilitation of personnel, training of replacements and maintenance of equipment. The command was given an area in which to search and recover all salvageable

MARCH 1945

6 Contd.

material, therein, Items to be recovered were all QM items, artillery shell cases, small arms, gas cans, wire reels, etc. German ammunition in original containers and US ammunition would be evacuated to the Div ASP at IRRHAUSEN. Loose German ammunition to be reported to the Div Ordnance Officer who would destroy it in place or evacuate it to an area where it could be safely destroyed. All salvageable items were to be turned in to the Div Branch Supply office concerned.

7 No Change

8 The division was relieved from the Third Army and attached to the Seventh Army effective this date. The CO & S-3 CC "B" were notified to proceed to Hq Seventh Army at LUNEVILLE, FRANCE, to meet the CG 6th Armd Div, and to make arrangements and selection of assembly areas for the units of the combat command, prior to their movement to the south.

9 The combat command was alerted to move anytime after 0800A to an assembly area in the vicinity of DIEUZE, FRANCE. A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1000A to give the units instructions on the move and to make all final arrangements.

10 The combat command, composed of the:

86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
50th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

marched from the vicinity of NIEDER UTTFELD, GERMANY, at 1000A. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, the first unit to march, reached the IP at DASBURG, GERMANY at 1000A, followed by Hq & Hq Co CC "B", then the 50th Armd Inf Bn and the 69th Tk Bn, with Btry B 777th AAA Bn interspersed throughout the column. The 69th Tk Bn cleared the IP at 1335. The march was made through LUXEMBOURG CITY, south to THIONVILLE, METZ, south to PONT-A-MOUSSON and then east to vicinity of DELME, FRANCE. CP CC "B" closed in DELME, FRANCE at 2130A. The command marched 138 miles closing at 2350A.

11 The combat command, in its new assembly area, continued its program of rehabilitation of personnel, training of replacements, maintenance of vehicles and cleaning of weapons.

12 The commanding officer attended a meeting at Div Hdq at 0815A. At 1500A there was a unit commanders' meeting to make plans for future operations. The 50th Armd Inf Bn and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz were relieved from the combat command during the day. The new composition of the combat command was as follows:

60th Tk Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-2 Sections)
Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co C 603d TD Bn
128th AFA Bn in direct support

13 The day was spent formulating plans for future operations.

MARCH 1945

14 FO # 44, confirming previously issued oral orders, was issued during the day. The plan of the combat command for the attack was as follows: The combat command, on division order, would move to a forward assembly area in the vicinity of DEHLINGEN, FRANCE; pass through the 3d Infantry Division; attack to the north-east and secure division Objectives 2 & 3, which were the towns of GRUNSTADT & BADDURKHEIM, GERMANY, respectively, with part of the command until relieved; continue the attack to the northeast to seize west bank of the RHINE RIVER in zone and secure a bridgehead across the river. The command was broken down into the following combat teams, which were composed as follows:

CT 69

69th Tk Bn (-)
Co A 44th Armd Inf Bn
1st Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn ✓
1st Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

Rcn Detachment - CT 69

Co D 69th Tk Bn (-)
1 Plat Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
1 Sec Co C 603d TD Bn

CT 44

44th Armd Inf Bn (-)
Co C 69th Tk Bn
3d Plat Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
2 Plat Co C 603d TD Bn
2 Secs Btry B 777th AAA Bn

Rcn Detachment - CT 44

Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-)
1 Plat Co D 69th Tk Bn
1 Sec Co C 603d TD Bn

Combat Command Reserve

Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) ✓
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-)
Co C 603d TD Bn (-)

The plans for the combat teams were as follows: CT 69 would attack northeast and secure division Objective #2 with part of the command until relieved; block eastern exits to the RHINE PLAIN; advance and seize the west bank of the RHINE; capture the bridge at WORMS; cross and secure a bridgehead. CT 44 would attack northeast prepared to assist CT 69 in securing division Objective No. 2, continue the attack to the south to secure division Objective No 3 with part of the command until relieved; continue attack to the northeast and east to seize the west bank of the Rhine RIVER; capture the bridge at MANNHEIM, cross and secure a bridgehead. The 128th Armd FA Bn to be in direct support of the combat command. The command would by-pass resistance in order to secure Objectives 2 & 3 with maximum speed. The order of march to the forward assembly area would be as follows: CT 44, Hq & Hq Co CC "B", Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-), Co C 603d TD Bn (-), Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) and CT 69. The IP to be at MAIZIERES LES VIC. A reconnaissance of routes and forward assembly area was made by representatives from Combat Command "B" Headquarters, CT 44 and CT 69.

15 A unit commanders' meeting was held at 0930A to discuss future operations of the combat command. The combat team's commanders established liaison with regiments of the 3d Infantry Div through which they would pass. All units of the Combat Command attended a Div Bown formation at 1430A at U995342, at which time a memorial service was held for those who had fallen since the last bowl formation; awards were presented to several officers and enlisted men of the division and the "Big Picture" of the forthcoming attack was discussed by the Div Commander.

16 The command continued its preparation for future operations, by its program of rehabilitation of personnel, maintenance of vehicles and cleaning and test firing of weapons. The commanding officer attended a unit commanders' meeting at Div Headquarters at 1300A.

MARCH 1945

- 17 Orders were received at 1630 A for movement of the combat command to a forward assembly area, the leading elements to cross the IP at DIEUZE at 180900A.
- 18 Combat Command "B" marched from the vicinity of DELME with the first elements of the command crossing of the IP at DIEUZE at 0855A. The command cleared the IP at 1055A and by 1415A had closed in a forward assembly area in the vicinity of DEHLINGEN. The following route was taken by Hq Combat Command "B" DELME - CHATEAU-SALINS - DIEUZE - FENETRANGE-SARRE UNION - DEHLINGEN. CP CC "B" closed in DEHLINGEN during the morning.
- 19 The commanding officer, CT commanders and separate company commanders of the combat command made a reconnaissance of routes and forward assemble areas.
- 20 The combat command remained in an assembly area in the vicinity of DEHLINGEN, ALSACE. At 1220A orders were received from division for the combat command to march in one column from the assembly area. The command passed through elements of the 3d Infantry Div, split into two columns at ZWEIBRUCKEN, GERMANY, and attacked to the northeast against moderate enemy resistance. CT 69 had a fire ~~and~~ fight at WEISSEPHUEBEL, approximately two miles north of ZWEIBRUCKEN. By 1735A the CT resumed its march after destroying 2 AT guns and capturing two more. At 1815A the CT reached MORSBACH where it captured three 155mm guns. At ~~1900~~ 1930A the CT passed through KASHOFEN and by 2145A it had advanced to the vicinity of ROSENDORF where it drew considerable "Bazooka" fire. This opposition was reduced and the column continued to move to the northeast. The last element of CT 69, which was Co A 69th Tk Bn, was cut off on the high ground about 1½ km southwest of MARTINSHOE. At this spot the enemy, from a well dug in position on the hill top, opened up with AT, 20mm, machine gun and rifle fire on the tank company, Hq CC "B" Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-) Co C 603d TD Bn (-) and Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn (-) which were halted along the road. Two half-tracks and one 2½ ton truck were knocked out, making a very large fire, which illuminated the entire hill top, affording the enemy excellent observation. This direct fire from AT ditches on either side of the road left two choices - to withdraw or defend, since bypassing was impossible because of the terrain. The elements on the road pulled off in a defilade position and established a defense for the night. CT 44 attacking to the northeast on command's right flank advanced against light enemy resistance. At OBER-AUERPACH the CT was forced to by-pass a blown bridge. The bridge by-passed, the CT advanced without interruption until it reached WINTERBACH where a road block and AT guns halted the CT, temporarily.
- 21 The elements of the comand which had been cut off in the vicinity of MARTINSHOE were subjected to intense small arms, direct AT fire, bazooka and mortar fire throughout the entire night. The enemy's positions were only about 150 yards from our own and close contact was maintained throughout the night. Our force decided to attack at approximately 0630A the following morning, but immediately upon moving out, a medium tank was knocked out by direct fire, so it was decided to reverse the route and go back through ROSENKOPF and KASHOFEN and tie in on the tail of Reserve Command in the vicinity of WINTERBACH on the route of CT 44. This route was followed and these elements rejoined CT 69 in the assembly area in the vicinity of EBERTSHEIM that night. CT 69 reached LANDSTUHL early in the morning, then moved through RAMSTEIN, RODENBACH, SIEGELBACH, OTTERBACH, NEUKEICHER to ENKENBACH, RONSER, EISENBERG, to an assembly area in the vicinity of EBERTSHEIM. At 0930A the road block and AT guns that had stopped CT 44 at WINTERBACH had been removed and the CT

MARCH 1945
21 contd

reached LANDSTUHL against weakening enemy resistance. From LANDSTUHL CT 44 moved to RAMSTEIM, southeast to AUTOBAN to HEELBACH, OTTERBACH, OTTERBERG, MEHLINGE, ENKENBACH, RAMSEN to present assembly area in the vicinity of EBERTSHEIM. CP CC "B" closed in the vicinity of the railroad station at EBERTSHEIM. Our losses for the two days' operations were as follows:

Personnel:

K

MIA - 5

WIA - 10

MIA - 1

Vehicular

1 - Medium Tank

2 - Light Tanks

1 - 2½ Ton Trucks

1 - ¼ ton truck

Enemy Losses

Killed (Est) - 200

Pw's - 600 (Est)

Pw's Cleared through med channels - 34

Vehicular

1 - Panther Tank

1 - H/T Pers Carrier

2 - Assault Guns

14 - AT Guns

24 - Artillery Pieces

300-Motor & Horse Drawn Vehicles

- 22 The combat command remained in its assembly area in the vicinity of EBERTSHEIM, GERMANY, prepared for future operations. Maintenance of vehicles, cleaning of weapons and rest of personnel were stressed.
- 23 The division reverted from the control of the XV Corps, Seventh Army to that of the XX Corps, Third Army.
- 24 The division was relieved from XX Corps and attached to the XII Corps, Third Army. At 1000A, there was a unit commanders' meeting. All units in the command were alerted to move anytime after late afternoon. At 1800A another unit commanders' meeting was held and the following plan for the combat command was announced: The command would begin its march to the north at Midnight via the following route: GOLLHEIM, DREISEN, MARHEIM, KIRCHHEIM, BOLLNDER, ALZEY, UNDERHEIM to an assembly area in the vicinity of DEXHEIM. The IP to be at the RJ at GOLLHEIM. Upon arrival in the assembly area CT 69 would pull off to the north side of the road and CT 44 to the south side of the road, at which time reservicing of vehicles would take place. The combat command would cross the RHINE RIVER on the north bridge in the vicinity of OPPENHEIM at approximately 0900A on the morning of 25 March, pass through the 5th Infantry Div and operate in a zone to the east towards HANAU and FRANKFURT and secure a crossing of the MAIN RIVER. After crossing the MAIN RIVER, the command would exploit to the north to reach its objective east of GEISSEN, where contact with the First Army would be made. Each combat team commander would be prepared to bypass enemy resistance and take any available road along the way, in order to reach its objective as quickly as possible.
- 25 The combat command moved shortly after midnight to an assembly area in the vicinity of DEXHEIM, refueled and began crossing the RHINE RIVER in the vicinity of OPPENHEIM at approximately 0930A, passing through the 5th Inf Div bridgehead. CT 69 made first contact with the enemy dug-in in the vicinity of WALDORF, advanced northeast towards MORFELDEN against light resistance. CT 69 by-passed MORFELDEN to the south to avoid artillery,

MARCH 1945

25 Contd

small arms and bazooka fire. It reached the vicinity (M622522) after having been delayed for several hours by AT and heavy artillery and continued attack northeast and at darkness moved into an assembly area $1\frac{1}{2}$ km southwest of LANGEN. It contacted Combat Command "A" on the left and elements of the 90th Inf Div on the right. CT 44 followed the route of advance of CT 69 to GROSS GERAU and turned east to E WIKHAUSEN, then north in the direction of LANGEN and made contact with elements of the 90th Inf Div. CC "B" CP closed in the woods about 2 km southwest of LANGEN.

2

26

The combat command continued its attack to the northeast early on the morning of the 26th. CT 44 moved out in conjunction with the 359th Inf Regiment, 90th Inf Div and secured LANGEN. Later it captured SPRENDLINGEN. Upon reaching the woods in the vicinity (M698597) the combat team was met ~~in~~ by heavy AT gun fire. The combat team was broken into two task forces. One force attacked along the SPRENDLINGEN-NEW ISENBERG ROAD coming back to the main axis at (713635). The other force attacked northeast on SPRENDLINGEN OFFENBACH. A reconnaissance force was dispatched to the east from LANGEN by-passing resistance at GOTZENHAIN, thence to DIETZENBACH and returning to main axis at (713635). The combat team moved quickly into OFFENBACH against light resistance reaching the MAIN RIVER at approximately 1530A. CT 69 moved from the bivouac area east of LANGEN, overran an enemy battalion CP one mile from the area and continued on through GEHSPITZ, encountering several enemy vehicles which were destroyed, continuing the attack moving into position south of NIEDERRAD and pushing on to SACHSENHAUSEN with small combat teams. CC "B" CP was located in the vicinity (M660635). CT 50 was attached to the combat command at 2030A. The combat team was composed as follows: 50th Armd Inf Bn (-2 Cos), one tank company and one engineer platoon.

27

Patrols of CT 44 contacted the 359th Inf Regiment, 90th Inf Div in the vicinity of BURGEL. The combat team also sent patrols to reconnoiter the south bank of the MAIN RIVER to OBERRAD. Roving patrols continued to patrol the streets of OFFENBACH. CT 69 remained in its assembly area preparing for future operations. A force of the combat team, consisting of two platoons 69th Tk Bn, one platoon Tr D 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecs and one section Co C 603d TD Bn moved from the bridge sector to a rear assembly area. The advance CP CC "B" moved into OFFENBACH.

28

A unit commanders' meeting was held at 1015A. The 128th APT Bn was to support CT 44 and the 231st AFA Bn to support CT 69 and CT 50 in the crossing of the MAIN RIVER and in the attack to the north. The command displaced from its assembly area in the vicinity of OFFENBACH and at 1320A commenced crossing the MAIN RIVER in the vicinity of DORNIGHEIM over a bridge constructed by the 90th Div on night of 27-28. By 1427A CT 44, with the 128th Armd FA Bn had crossed and were well on their way to secure their initial objective. CT 69 crossed directly behind CT 44, advanced to the northwest to capture the high ground (Hill 201) and then in conjunction with CT 44 entered and secured the towns of BERGEN and ENKHEDM from the north. CT 50 advanced to the northwest from BISCHERSHEIM across country, entered the town of VILBEL from the east and secured the bridge in the vicinity (719768) intact. Having secured the bridge all elements crossed the NIDDER RIVER and captured the towns of MASSENHEIM, DORTELWELL, NDR ESCHBACH and NDR ERLNBACH. Upon reaching these positions, all elements went into their respective assembly areas and prepared to advance to the north at dawn the following day. The division was relieved from the XII Corps and

MARCH 1945

28 Contd

attached to the XX Corps, Third Army. CP CC "B" closed in the vicinity of DORTELWEIL.

29 CT 69 moved out at 0530A and attacked to the north. At 0605A it met light enemy resistance at OKARBEN, NDR WOLLSTADT and OBR WOLLSTADT. At 0845A CT 50 was in the vicinity of OCKSTADT. At 1000A CT 44, having advanced rapidly to the north, entered NDR WELSEL. At 1015A CT 50 was advancing along the Autobahn and had reached a point east of BUTZBACH, meeting no opposition and advancing parallel to CT 15 of Combat Command "A". CT 50 in its advance liberated 800 American PW's from a German PW enclosure at HATTENROAD in the vicinity (G788202). The combat team closed in its assembly area in the vicinity (G789203) at 1720A. CT 44 in its advance met no organized resistance. The combat team knocked out two AT guns in the vicinity of BUTZBACH which were firing upon elements of Combat Command "A". CT 69 encountered some heavy action in the vicinity of FRIEDBERG. Direct tank and artillery fire was laid upon the town and the place was by-passed to the east and then the combat team entered the town from the east. All elements of the command moved rapidly meeting little organized resistance and captured many PW's and vehicles. A garrison of 800 men surrendered and numerous vehicles were captured in FRIEDBERG. CT 69 moved north meeting no resistance, but capturing many prisoners and vehicles and moved into an assembly area in the vicinity of REISKERCHEN after clearing the town of approximately 700 PW's. At 2100A a unit commanders' meeting was held to discuss the plan for the combat command for 30 March. The division to attack at 0600A 30 March to capture ALSFELD and KASSEL, a distance of approximately 70 miles. The division would attack with combat commands abreast, each combat command operating in at least two columns, with Combat Command "B" on the right (SE) and moving on three routes in its zone to KASSEL. Combat Command "A" was to take ALSFELD, with one combat team from Combat Command "B" to be prepared to assist in the reduction of the town in case it should be strongly defended. TR B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was ~~was~~ released from the combat command and Rcn Co 603d TD Bn assigned to the combat teams as follows: 1 plat assigned to CT 44, 1 plat assigned to CT 69 and the company minus 2 platoons to CT 50. CT 44 would operate on the south route, CT 69 on the north route and CT 50 in the center. The 128th Armd FA Bn would be in direct support of CT 44 and the 231st AFA Bn (-1 Btry) would be in direct support of CT 69. One battery 231st Armd FA Bn was assigned to CT 50. The 176th Armd FA Bn would be in general support. All trains to be released to units and would accompany units on this operation. CP CC "B" closed in REISKERCHEN.

30 CT 69 resumed its march at 0600A by a north route and met enemy resistance southwest of ALSFELD. It overran a regimental CP and destroyed two 105mm Howitzers, by-passed a blown bridge to the east of ALSFELD and resumed the route of march to OTTRAU where it met light machine gun and bazooka fire. The combat team cleared the town and resumed its march with light scattered resistance and closed in an assembly area in the vicinity of OBERBEISHEIM. CT 44 moved out on a ~~the~~ south ~~point~~ route and was followed by CT 50. The command closed in an assembly area in the vicinity (H238722). 2d Bn 261st Inf. Regiment, 65th Inf Div was attached to the combat command. The composition of the command was as follows:

69th Tk Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn (-Cos A & C)

MARCH 1945

30 Contd

2d Bn 261st Inf Regt (Atchd)
Co A 68th Tk Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn —
Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn and Rcn Co 603d TD Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

CP CC "B" closed in OBERBEISHEIM

- 31 A unit commanders' meeting was held at 0900A. All unit commanders were to push security reconnaissance because of the nearness of the enemy. CT 44 would be sent to clear the west bank of the FULDA RIVER in the vicinity of HEINEBACH using the south route; CT 50 would clear the west bank of the river and secure crossings in the vicinity of NEUMORSCHEN and ALTOMORSCHEN; CT 69 to operate to the north and through ELFERSHAUSEN and clear the west bank of the river in the vicinity of MALSFELD AND OBERMELSUNGEN. The plan for the combat command for 31 March was as follows: A reconnaissance would be made across the FAULDA RIVER commencing at daylight; continue pursuit of the enemy to an area east of MULHAUSEN commencing at 1000A, crossing the FAULDA RIVER as far south as necessary, prepared to continue pursuit to LEIPZIG. Co C 50th Armd Inf Bn was relieved from CC "R" and reverted to Bn control and Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was attached to CC "B". CT 69 moved out to secure OBERMELSUNGEN and river crossings and encountered road block defended by bazooka, small arms and artillery fire. The road blocks and resistance were cleared and the combat team moved into OBERMELSUNGEN and cleared it of the enemy, but the bridge was blown before the combat team could reach it. CT 69 moved through BEISEFORTH and MALSFELD and cleared towns of enemy resistance, small arms and bazooka fire and found all the bridges blown. River crossings were made by the 261st Inf Regiment at 1900A and bridging operations were started. CP CC "B" remained at OBERBEISHEIM.

5. Vital statistics during the above period were as follows:

a. OWN Casualties:

(1) Personnel

KIA - 23
WIA - 87
MIA - 3

(2) Vehicular

2 - Medium Tanks
4 - Light tanks
5 - Half -tracks
1 - Armd Rcn Car
1 - Carriage M7 105 Howitzer
1 - 2½ ton truck
3 - ½ ton trucks

b. Enemy casualties:

(1) Personnel

PW's - 7200 (5000 which were captured 29 March)
Killed & wounded - Unknown

(2) Vehicular

6 - MkIV Tanks	2 - 20 mm AA Guns
1 - Half-Track Pers. Carrier	16 - AT Guns
1 - Armd Car	2 - Assault Guns
26 - Artillery Pieces	390 - Various Type Vehicles

c. 2069 Allies PW's released.

EMBRY D LAGREN
Lt. Colonel Cavalry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
APO 256, U S ARMY

5 May 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against the Enemy for the Period 1-30 April 1945

To : Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, APO 256

1. The following report is submitted of the action of Combat Command "B" against the enemy for the period 1-30 April as required by AR 345-105, C3.

2. At the beginning of the month Combat Command "B" was preparing to cross the FULDA RIVER in the vicinity of MALSFELD, GERMANY.

3. The composition of the combat command on 1 April 1945 was as follows:

69th Tk Bn
44th Armd Inf Bn
50th Armd Inf Bn (- Co A)
2d Bn 261st Inf Regt (Atchd)
Tr B, 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
Co A 68th Tk Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn
Plat Co C 25th Armd Engr Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn and Rcn Co 603d TD Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

4. Chronological events for the month were as follows:

APRIL 1945

- 1 The combat command, consisting of three task forces; a north, center and south column, was west of the FULDA RIVER preparing to cross. CT 44 started crossing at 0940A in the vicinity of MALSFELD, GERMANY. Good progress was made until reaching ADELSHAUSEN where enemy infantry with bazookas slowed down the forward elements. This resistance was reduced very quickly and the column proceeded to the west edge of SPANGENBURG where the enemy was dug in on both sides of the road and were reluctant to surrender. This opposition was reduced and upon entering the town, the combat team flushed out many prisoners. After CT 44 had cleared the bridge at MALSFELD, CT 50 began crossing and shifted generally south and then to the east. The roads were very poor, thereby causing CT 50 to proceed very slowly. No enemy was met until CT 50 approached ALTMORSCHEN where the action was brisk and opposition hastily reduced. CT 50 then proceeded to BERGHEIM, then generally northeast and closed in an assembly area just southeast of SPANGENBURG. During the river crossing the bridgehead was supported by elements of CT 69. When CT 50 had cleared, CT 69 crossed the river and marched to the vicinity of MORSHAUSEN without any enemy action and closed in a security bivouac prepared for further operations. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz screened the combat command's north flank during the day, but encountered very few enemy troops. CP of CCB located at SPANGENBURG.

APRIL 1945

- 2 Effective this date the time changed from "A" time to "B" time. At 0700B CT 69 moved from its assembly area at MORSHAUSEN, passed through SPANGENBURG and advanced very rapidly overrunning an undefended road block near ROTTERODE and continued without enemy reaction until reaching HOFFELD. Scattered enemy troops were dug-in along the route, but they were immediately cleaned out and by 1300B the combat team had advanced to KRAWILERSHAUSEN. The roads were in very poor condition and in order to advance rapidly the combat team kept shifting to the northeast to secure better routes. A Radar station at HAUSON was captured by CT 69. Upon reaching KLEINBALD, the bridge was found to be blown, causing the combat team to swing further to the northeast. CT 69 proceeded to TRANKAMMERBACK and then to BADSORDEN where 10 enemy tanks and SP Guns were located. Four enemy tanks were immediately knocked out. These tanks had no escape route to the east and their annihilation was accomplished with ease and without loss. In the meantime, at about 1500B some 25 FW 190's attacked the column, bombed and strafed, and inflicted several casualties. Four enemy aircraft were destroyed. The enemy apparently was jubilant over discovering this column and returned again at 1600B with 12 aircraft, but no severe damage was sustained. By 2100B, CT 69 by aggressive action and travelling in small combat teams, was on the west bank of the WERRA RIVER, probing and searching for crossings. CT 44 moved on the center route at 0700B, advanced to the east very rapidly until reaching WALDKAPPEL, where it was discovered the town to be lightly defended. Friendly aircraft made a strike on the town and accidentally strafed the head of the column. No casualties were suffered by the combat team as a result of this action. The enemy which was dug-in in town was reduced and the advance continued to the east. As the column began to move, 9 to 12 FW 190's made a strike on the column, but no damage was done. The column met very light small arms fire at H535845 and some AT fire at H560850, also some infantry which was supported by an undertermined number of SP guns at H566847. The enemy action was reduced and the combat team advanced to H5786 and found a bridge intact. The combat team crossed the bridge and secured a bridgehead on the east side of the river. CT 50 passed through SPANGENBURG, deviated from the main axis of advance and moved to the southeast. By 1200B the town of ELTMANNSEE had been cleared and the combat team met its first enemy resistance at H465795. The roads to the east were reported as impassable by CT 50, thereby causing a slight shift to the northeast. Ct 50 crossed the river at H538768 and made contact with elements of the 65th US Inf Div, operating on our south flank. Preparations were made to continue operations to the northeast at daylight on 3 April. CP CCB closed at BISCHHAUSEN.
- 3 CT 69 started moving south at 0800B in order to cross the WERRA RIVER and to get back on main axis of advance. CT 44 moved east at 0700B and met a few scattered enemy on route. This opposition was overcome and the combat team continued its advance. CT 50 moved from its assembly area at 0845B. CT 44 moved about 2 km south of ESCHWEGE in order to bypass the city but were fired upon by AT guns and SA from the vicinity of ESCHWEGE. No damage was reported. Some small arms fire was received from the East but this opposition was reduced. CT 44 met small arms fire along all critical points but all this was quickly reduced. By 1245B CT 44 had reached H670893 had reported bridge blown north of town. In reconneitering ~~from~~ for crossings, the column came under direct tank fire from the north side of the river in the vicinity of H670907. It was decided impracticable to stage a fire fight across the river ~~in the vicinity of H670907. It was decided~~ with the enemy so the combat team went into a temporary assembly area awaiting orders. In the meantime, CT 6

APRIL 1945

3 Contd

moved south and reconneitered for crossings. A bridge was found intact at H589912 and the combat team crossed the river and immediately launched an attack on ESCHWEGE. Light resistance was encountered and by 1300B the city was reported clear. An enemy hospital with 60 patients and an airport were captured. By 1055B CT 50 had advanced on the south route approximately 10 to 12 kms against scattered opposition, making good progress over poor roads. In the vicinity of H629826 approximately 150 British, French and Dutch prisoners were liberated by CT 50. At 1445B the combat team captured a bridge intact at H780895 and immediately established a bridgehead on the east bank. This bridge was prepared for demolition by the enemy but by bold aggressive action on the part of the combat team the enemy had no time in which to destroy it. The capture of this bridge afforded an excellent opportunity for quick passage of the entire combat command to the east. CT 44 reversed its route immediately and crossed behind CT 50 and was followed by CT 69. By 2100B the combat command had crossed the river and had gone into an assembly area in the vicinity of TREFFURT. CP CCB located at HEYERODE.

- 4 At 0700B the combat command continued the attack to the east, advancing on 3 routes with CT 50 and on the north route, CT 44 on the center route and CT 69 on the south route. CT 44 was held up by bazooka and dismounted rifle men in the edge of the woods approximately 3 kms west of OBERDOLA. This action was brisk and was readily overcome. Upon reaching the vicinity of OBERDOLA CT 44 was on its assigned objective with orders to go into a defensive assembly area. CT 50 made good progress and was approximately about 2 kms short of objective by 0900B. CT 69, on the south route, cleared a road block in NAZZA and continued to its objective without opposition. The objective just south of MULHAUSEN placed this combat command facing east in three columns prepared for future action. However, orders were changed and the combat command was ordered to block the roads going west, south and east from MULHAUSEN. CT 50 blocked the main road going west, also the secondary roads going southwest. CT 44 moved east thru OBERDOLA and NIEDERDOLA and cut the main road leading southeast in the vicinity of SEEBACH. CT 69 moved southeast thru KAMMENFORST, FLARCHEIM, GROSSENGOTTEN. During its advance, an airport consisting of approximately 25 enemy aircraft and hangers was fired upon. The combat team cut north severing the main road running east from MULHAUSEN at KORNER, where it contacted CCA. The combat team advanced east and by 2300B had captured SCHLOTHEIM where it went into an assembly area for the night. During this action CT 44 moved thru NIEDERDOLA and pushed patrols to the north. By sending patrols to the north and following them up in strength, the combat team was in the outskirts of MULHAUSEN by 1800B. By 2000B elements of CT 44 were well inside the city and the remainder of the combat command had all escape routes to the west, southwest, southeast and east blocked. CT 44 continued mopping up and by dawn the city was practically clear. Many railroad trains with tanks, guns and supplies were captured and guards were placed over all installations. Enemy opposition was light and many prisoners were taken.
- 5 The combat command prepared to move into an assembly area southeast of MULHAUSEN prepared for future operations to the east. CP CC B moved to SCHLOTHEIM. During the day the 50th Inf Bn was attached to Reserve Command.
- 6 The command continued patrolling in its zone and prepared to move to an assembly area for refitting and for future operations to the east.

APRIL 1945

- 7 At 0750B Co B 69th Tk Bn was ordered to EIGENRIEDEN prepared to attack to the northwest under division control. At 0830B CT 69 was ordered to move to the eastern exits of MULHAUSEN prepared to support other elements of the division. The combat team reverted to division control at this time. CT 44 ~~reverted~~ at 1530B was alerted to assist the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz if necessary. Reconnaissance was made of the routes for movement to the reconnaissance area and liaison was established. At 1930B CT 44 moved to the vicinity of SCHLOTHEIM and disposed to the south and east of SCHLOTHEIM. At approximately 1700B the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was passed to control of Combat Command "B". CC B CP moved to the town of KORNER.
- 8 The combat command continued to hold within its sector and maintained contact with Combat Command "A" on its right flank. At approximately 0600B CT 44 was attacked in the vicinity of MAROITERODE by an estimated enemy force of one infantry battalion, supported by ten tanks and/or SP guns. After a heavy fire fight, the attack was repulsed and at 1000B the attackers withdrew to the southeast only to be bombed and strafed by supporting aircraft. Between TOBA and EBELEBEN dismounted infantry attempted to infiltrate the lines of the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, but all attempts to do so failed. CP CC B remained in KORNER.
- 9 CT 44 continued to hold its line. 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz continued its reconnaissance screen on the division north flank and seized TOBA. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz, reinforced with one platoon light tanks and one platoon tank destroyers, prepared to protect the left (north) flank of the 76th US Inf Div's advance to Phase Line "D", starting from its present location. The combat command prepared to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of THAMBRUCK with the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz in an assembly area in the vicinity (H9887). CP CC B remained in KORNER.
- 10 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz contacted elements of the 9th US Armored Div at ELGENRODE. 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-) was relieved of reconnaissance and screening mission in the First Army zone at 1700B by elements of the 9th US Armored Div and 69th Inf Div. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz (-) moved to GROSSENGOTTERN and closed in an assembly area at 1900B. Tr B 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz continued its reconnaissance screen on the north flank of the 76th US Inf Div and contacted reconnaissance elements of the 9th US Armored Div and prepared to be relieved by elements of the 3d US Cavalry Group. 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz was detached from Combat Command "B". Elements of CT 69 under Div control were relieved at 1000B and rejoined CT 69. The combat team then moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of THAMBRUCK closing in this area at 1329B. CP CC B opened at THAMBRUCK at 1700B. At 2130B there was a unit commanders' meeting and the following was the plan for 11 April; CT 69 to jump off at 0700B on the south route and CT 44 on the north route. Combat teams were to advance to the east in their zone and establish a bridgehead over the ELBE RIVER about 100 miles distant. 128th Armd FA Bn to be in direct support of CT 44 and the 231st Armd FA Bn in direct support of CT 69 with the 176th FA Gp in general support. The following was the composition of the command:

44th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
Co C 603d TD Bn
Co A 25th Armd Engr Bn —
Btry B 777th AAA Bn

APRIL 1945

- 11 CT 69 moved out from THAMBRUCK at 0700B, advanced to the east, passed through the 304th Inf Regt, 76th US Inf Div, knocked out one SP gun in the vicinity of BUTTSTADT, secured a road bridge at (J751860) across the SAALE RIVER against small arms and bazooka fire. At 2200B one company of medium tanks, one company of infantry and one platoon of TD's were across the river and remainder of the combat team was preparing to cross. The town of DLEINHERSINGEN was cleared and the combat team closed in a security bivouac. CT 44 moved out, met small arms resistance at FRONNDORF, marching along a route parallel with CT 69. The combat team secured a bridge over the SAALE RIVER in the vicinity of KOSEN. At 2200B most of the command was across the river and the combat teams tied in for the night. CP CC B closed in BERGSULA at 2045B.
- 12 CT 44 and CT 69 having crossed the SAALE RIVER prior to 112400B consolidated their bridgeheads and prepared to resume their advance to the east on the morning of 12 April. The command, upon reorganizing its forces, moved out and by 1100B its leading elements were at (J805885). CT 69 on the right flank received bazooka and small arms fire at 1120B in the vicinity of MEYHEN and CT 44 was in the process of clearing a road block in the vicinity (J805832). The advance of both of these combat teams was delayed by small groups of enemy who opposed them at every strategic point with small arms and bazooka fire. By 1153B CT 69 had cleared MEYHEN and had resumed its advance. As CT 69 approached THEISSEN, a tremendous amount of AA fire was met. One armored mobile AA train was destroyed at this point. CT 69 bypassed ZEITZ to the north but in so doing the column ran a gauntlet of AA fire in the vicinity of THEISSEN and continued northeast to the vicinity of QUEISAU where it went into a security bivouac for the night. CP CC B closed in the town of QUEISAU. By 1125B CT 44 had cleared the road block opposing it and had resumed its advance. At 1215B CT 69 entered the town of BEUDITZ where it encountered dug-in enemy infantry. At 1249B CT 44 was at (J855870) and CT 69 was at (J905846). By 1310B CT 44 was preparing to enter FUNKENITZ and at 1345B had secured the bridge at (J880879). At 1855B leading elements of CT 44 were at (K152950) and leading elements of CT 69 ~~was at (J905846).~~ ~~By~~ were at (K031860). At 1900B CT 44 had secured a bridge intact at (K162948) and it continued on to AUDIGAST. It was during this period that the combat team received a tremendous amount of AA fire from the vicinity of GROITZSCH. The combat team, upon reaching AUDIGAST, consolidated its positions and prepared to resume the offensive the following morning.
- 13 CT 44, having moved into an assembly area east of the WEISSE RIVER, moved out to the southeast at 1100B. Ct 69 secured a crossing at 0700B in the vicinity (K145908). By 1100B the combat team was moving to the southeast against light enemy resistance in all small towns. At KAUFERHAIN a heavy fire fight was encountered causing heavy destruction to the town. By the end of the day the combat team had advanced to the vicinity of HAGENEGE where they consolidated positions prepared to resume the offensive to the southeast the following morning. Ct 44 in its advance to the southeast encountered heavy AAA fire at (K180927). It was estimated that 24 105mm guns with hydraulic lifts were in this area. This was confirmed later. An air strike and artillery was placed on these gun positions. The results of this was unknown. The combat team planned to move southeast to an assembly area (K2291) during the night; however, if the combat team was unable to follow this route, it was to move to the southwest along the WEISSE RIVER and move into the assembly area by following CT 69's route. CP CC B located in LUCKA. CT 69 closed in the vicinity of LUCKA at 1700B. CT 44 cleared its opposition after dark and went into a security bivouac for the night.

APRIL 1945

- 14 CT 44 began movement to the southeast at 0500B, and by 0900B had closed in assembly area northeast of LUCKA, tying in with CT 69 on its right flank. CT 69 moved out at 1000B and met enemy bazookas and small arms fire in LEHMA and east along the highway to WINDESCHLEUBA. After clearing this, the combat team continued east receiving 20mm bazooka and machine gun fire along the route to STOLLSDORF. Bazooka men infiltrated back into the rear of the column at WINDESCHLEUBA, but they were cleared out. CT 44 moved southeast and then east, bypassing all heavy resistance to reach the WICK FULDA RIVER in the vicinity of ROCHLITZ. The combat team encountered pockets of heavy enemy fires in towns. Advances were bold and aggressive. During the night a bridge in ROCHLITZ was captured by CT 44 against stubborn resistance. Infantry and tanks were sent across under heavy AT fire. Sniper fire was received in ROCHLITZ all night. CP CC B closed in STOLLSDORF.
- 15 CT 44 cleared ROCHLITZ and secured a bridgehead to the east. Heavy AA and bazooka fire was encountered together with some AT fire. CT 69, in conjunction with CT 44, crossed the MULDA RIVER and enlarged the bridgehead. CP CC B located in ROCHLITZ.
- 16 CT 69 sent combat patrols to establish an outpost line at 1500B and contact was made with the 417th Inf Regiment, 76th US Inf. Div. CT 44 continued patrolling to the northeast and established an outpost line. The composition of the combat command was as follows:

44th Armd Inf Bn
69th Tk Bn
Btry B 777th AAA Bn (-2 Secs)

- 17 Both CT 69 and CT 44 remained in contact with the enemy with CT 69 in the vicinity of (K666851) and CT 44 in the vicinity of (K660881). The woods in the vicinity of (K6488) was cleared of enemy by CT 44 by 1230B. Elements of the command not in the front line positions continued their program of rehabilitation and maintenance. CP CC B remained in ROCHLITZ.
- 18 The combat command continued to hold within its sector and carried an active patrolling. Contact was maintained with Combat Command "A" and the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz. The combat command was prepared to take over the Div rear area west to the SALLE RIVER in order to maintain law and order upon relief by Reserve Command on 19 April in place on the front line. The composition of the command for policing the rear area would be as follows:

69th Tk Bn
86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz
603d TD Bn

The division passed from control of the IX Corps to VIII Corps at 1200B.

- 19 The combat command was relieved by Reserve Command on the front line at 0700B and moved to the Div rear area to maintain law and order. CP CC B moved to ZEITZ during the morning. The 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz had the general area around OSTERFELD; the 603d TD Bn (SP) moved to the vicinity of ZEITZ and the 69th Tk Bn moved to the general area around ALTENBURG.

APRIL 1945

- 20 The combat command continued to maintain law and order in the Div rear area west to the SAALE RIVER. The command carried on with its program of rehabilitation and refitting. A squad from the 25th Armd Engr Bn was attached to the command for demolition work.
- 21 CC B was relieved of governmental responsibility by the 11th Armd Group.
- 22 The VIII Corps, of which the 6th Armd Div is a part, passed to control of the First US Army at 1200B. The command continued maintaining law and order and its refitting and rehabilitation program.
- 23 No Change.
- 24 All elements of the combat command made preparations for relief by elements of the 7th Tank Destroyer Group.
- 25 The combat command was relieved of its responsibility for the sector from the Div rear boundary west to the SAALE RIVER by elements of the 7th Tank Destroyer Group. The command continued its maintenance program. At 0900B the 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecs moved to its assigned area southeast of ALTENBURG. CP CC B moved to the city of ALTENBURG during the afternoon.
- 26 No change.
- 27 No change.
- 28 The command remained in an assembly area and maintained law and order in assigned sector.
- 29 At 1500B CC B held a review at the ALTENBURG airport, during which time a representative of the French Government presented decorations to various officers and men of the Div.

Troops standing review were: 86th Cav Rcn Sq Mecs, 69th Tk Bn and Hq Co CC B.

- 30 No change.

5 Vital statistics during the above period were as follows:

a. Own casualties:

(1) Personnel

KIA - 40
WIA - 105
MIA - 18

(2) Vehicular

1 - Medium Tank
3 - Light Tanks
3 - Half-tracks
5 - 2½ ton Trucks
3 - ½-ton C&R
7 - Trailers, Cargo
4 - Trailers, Ammunition

b. Enemy casualties:

(1) Personnel

PW's - 6000
Killed & wounded - Unknown

(2) Enemy Equipment, Captured or Destroyed:

Several trainloads of enemy equipment, military Volkswagens, 88mm guns, radio equipment; also several warehouses; Food liquor, clothing, signal supplies, Airport (40 planes); also an undetermined number of vehicles

APRIL 1945

- c. 4000 Allied PW's liberated.
8000 Allied PW's evacuated by the Command while it was operating in the Div. rear area maintaining law and order.
- 6. General Comment:
 - (1) Not since the days of AVRANCHES has enemy aircraft been so active and up in strength. However with the exception of one severe bombing, all planes approached with caution and apparently were on reconnaissance. One very noticeable highlight in connection with enemy air after crossing the RHINE RIVER was that enemy aircraft paid their usual visit each morning bright and early as our columns started moving. They were always met with a hot reception of flak.
 - (2) After moving to the rear area to establish law and order in towns and cities, it is significant to note the civilian reaction to our occupying their towns. No serious trouble has developed with the GERMAN civilian population. Some minor disturbances by slave laborers have been stopped. General business and manufacturing installations have resumed operation. Farming and agricultural industries continued to produce. Railroads are in operations insofar as railroad lines permit transit. City officials and policemen are functioning under the supervision of the Allied Military Govt. Coal mines, electric plants and city water plants are functioning. No outbreaks of disease have been reported. There is sufficient food and clothes for the civilian population.

EMBRY D LAGREW
Lt Col Cavalry
Commanding