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THE WESTERN FRONT

1-14 FEBRUARY, 1945

Daily situation reports issued by
OKL Operations Staff Ia

TRANSLATED BY
AIR MINISTRY, A.H.B.6
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G.403062/EFT/5/54/100

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1 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

British preparations for an offensive continue in the Nijmegen - Venlo - Roermond area.

Army Group B:

In this area too there are increasing signs of a new American build-up east of Aachen.

Army Group G:

Only local activity.

Nineteenth Army:

The situation in the Colmar area has become more acute as a result of continued enemy attacks in strength.

Air Situation

On slight enemy nuisance activity in the West during the night of 31 January/1 February. Balloons fitted with an explosive charge for use against high tension cables were used on some scale.

During the day there was intensive activity by enemy fighter-bombers and twin-engined aircraft. About 800 American four-engined aircraft attacked transport targets at Mannheim-Ludwigshafen and Bochum. Some 150 British four-engined aircraft attacked transport targets at Muenchen-Gladbach.

Operations by Luftwaffe H.Q. West were on a very small scale.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. In view of the critical situation east of the Oder, Luftflotte Reich is ordered to employ all operational, reserve training, refitting and testing and experimental formations as well as operational elements of flying schools located in Luftgau III against enemy forces which have made a surprise breakthrough on the Oder defence line. Employment of JG 300 and JG 301 and of night fighter formations of 1st Jagdivision in the West is postponed until further notice.
2. In accordance with the Reichsmarschall's directive, all Luftwaffe installations west of the Oder will not be evacuated and destroyed but defended to the limit unless otherwise ordered by OKL.
3. The Luftflotten and A.O.C.'s of Luftwaffe operational commands will receive appropriate operational directives in view of the considerable deterioration in the aviation fuel situation. A.O.C.'s will postpone all plans for re-equipment and training which are not absolutely essential.
4. A directive to Luftflotte Reich states that flak units stationed in Berlin (1st Flak Division) will be placed under command of the Kommandant of Berlin with immediate effect for use as ground artillery. Flak training and replacement installations located in the Greater Berlin area will be immediately subordinated to Luftflotte Reich for operational purposes.

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5. Flak Einsatzstab Ost* is directed to assemble two heavy flak Abteilungen (partly motorised) for the newly-formed SS-Division "30th January" and three heavy flak Abteilungen (partly motorised) for the "Berlin" infantry division. These formations will be set up by 5th and 6th February respectively.

6. To give added reinforcement of flak strength in the East the following formations will be transferred to Flak Einsatzstab Ost:

1 heavy Flak Abteilung (semi-mobile) comprising 3 heavy Batterien from Munich,

1 heavy Flak Abteilung (semi-mobile) comprising H.Q. and 3 heavy Batterien from Augsburg,

2 heavy Batterien (semi-mobile) from Stuttgart and

4 heavy Flak Abteilungen, (partly motorised) comprising 12 heavy Flak Batterien (partly motorised) from the flak units which have been or are being formed in the Western Luftgaue.

7. To ensure the movement of vital coal supplies from the Ruhr, Reichsminister Dr. Dorpmueller requested fighter cover or increased direct flak protection. The Chief of the Armed Services Transport Department declined to put coal trains on his priority list for flak protection (railway units) and referred to the Reichsbahn's own transport defence units. OKL cannot provide fighters to protect coal trains as developments on the Eastern front necessitate the employment of every available fighter in that area. However, it was suggested that a fresh application be made for the inclusion of coal trains in the priority list for protection.

Points from Daily Conferences:

The Chief of the Operations Staff will deputise for the Luftwaffe Chief of Staff who has been taken ill.

The Reichsmarschall requests the redesignation and reorganisation of Luftwaffe H.Q. East Prussia as Luftflotte 1 and of Luftflotte 1 as Luftwaffe H.Q. Courland. As this will create considerable difficulties with regard to signals, Field Post Office numbers etc., which the Staff regards as unacceptable at present, the Chief of the Operations Staff intends to make an appropriate report to the Reichsmarschall.

To free further Luftwaffe personnel for employment as ground troops Q.M.G. 6th Abteilung (allocation of aircraft, crews, flak and flak equipment) proposes that all Luftwaffe officer cadets who have already entered or who have been selected, be released to the Paratroop Army to replenish Paratroop divisions. Students at air warfare academies will be held back in reserve for the time being. The Chief of the Operations Staff agreed with this proposal. The matter will be discussed with the authorities concerned and clarified in this light.

Ia/Flak reports that if the ground situation continues to develop as at present rapid evacuation and demolition of the experimental stations for AA rockets at Leba and Karlshagen will be necessary. Following the appointment of SS General Kammler as special commissioner for the development and testing of all remote-controlled missiles, the Chief of the Operations Staff decided to put this matter to Kammler who would take the appropriate measures.

* Flak Einsatzstab Ost: Anti-aircraft Artillery Operational Headquarters - Eastern Front.

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2 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Enemy artillery fire flared up in the Nijmegen - Roermond area.

Army Group B:

The Americans resumed local attacks, particularly in the Monschau area, and made some gains.

Army Group G:

Enemy local attacks increased, particularly in the Hagenau area.

Nineteenth Army:

The situation in the Colmar area has further deteriorated. The town has been lost.

Air Situation

During the night of 1/2 February about 900 British four-engined aircraft attacked the city areas and transport targets at Mannheim-Ludwigshafen and Mainz. Some 60 Mosquitoes attacked transport targets at Rheine. In the evening and early morning two Mosquito formations each comprising about 60 aircraft attacked Berlin. There was intensive enemy nuisance activity over the Duisburg - Muenchen-Gladbach area. German night fighter operations were on a small scale and only a small number of enemy aircraft were shot down.

Following an improvement in the weather there was intensive activity during the day by enemy twin-engined fighters and twin-engined bombers over front-line areas and west of the Rhine.

Only small-scale operations were carried out by Luftwaffe H.Q. West.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. Luftflotte Reich is directed to employ its formations against ground targets on the Eastern Front in the closest co-operation with Luftflotte 6. For this purpose a qualified liaison officer will be posted immediately from Luftflotte 6 to 1st Jagddivision. Operational formations of Luftflotte Reich will be employed exclusively against enemy bridgeheads on the Oder and enemy concentrations on the east bank of the Oder.
2. OKL suggested to OKW/Armed Forces Operations Staff that airfield strength in the Zagreb area be reduced to two main bases and that the personnel released by relinquishing the other airfields be added to Army strength.
3. 1st Staffel of Minensuchgruppe 1 is placed under command of Luftflotte 6 with immediate effect and in all respects and will be responsible for mine-location and mine-sweeping operations throughout the Baltic east of the line Darsersort - Falsterbo.
4. In view of increasing Russian submarine activity, A.O.C. Training - Baltic will be placed under the operational command of Luftflotte 6 for reconnaissance

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and anti-submarine operations. Owing to the difficult fuel situation, the employment of aircraft with Diesel engines will be greatly increased.

5. Two parachute companies will be dispatched immediately from Wittstock to Sagan-Kuepper for a special paratroop operation*. Luftflotte 6 and Army Group Centre will co-operate directly in carrying out the operation.

6. In view of developments on the Eastern front the Fuehrer has ordered the immediate subordination of flak formations in the East as follows:-

Army Group Centre Area:

G.H.Q. I Flakkorps will take over command of all Luftwaffe, Army and Waffen-SS flak formations in its area in the capacity of Army Group AA Command.

Army Group Vistula Area:

G.H.Q. II Flakkorps will assume the same duties.

For reasons of command and supply the Flakkorps' formations will not be subordinated to the lower-level Army headquarters, but have been instructed to co-operate with the latter.

7. With regard to the formation of the "Berlin" division, the Reichsminister for Armaments and War Production has requisitioned ammunition for a considerable number of light and medium guns. As the "Berlin" division presumably cannot provide trained men for this large number of guns, OKL proposes that 500 2-cm AA guns (half of those allocated to the division) be released to the Luftwaffe which has personnel trained in their use. After the guns have been provided with crews they will be used principally on the Oder in support of the Army. During the period from 12th to 31st January losses of flak guns in I and II Flakkorps' areas have been extremely heavy, particularly in the cases of 2-cm guns (512) and 88-mm guns (575).

8. Luftflotte 4 is ordered to investigate to what extent flak defences along the railway line Vienna - Graz - Maribor - Zagreb can be reinforced by formations of 19th Flak Division which has been withdrawn from Serbia. The main emphasis will be placed on the reinforcement of flak defences at Maribor.

Points from Daily Conferences:

As the Luftwaffe has informed the Fuehrer of its doubts about the future capabilities of the Luftwaffe in view of the constantly increasing transfers of personnel to the Army, the Fuehrer ordered a survey of the entire ground organisation in formerly occupied areas which would indicate how many men had been transferred to the Army and how many could be recalled. The Chief of the Operations Staff directed Q.M.G. 2nd Abteilung (High policy with regard to personnel. Formation, subordination etc. of units. Control of establishments), to draw up an appropriate chronological survey of the evacuation of occupied areas and of personnel drafts released to the Army.

The Reichsmarschall agreed that the 100 Mistel aircraft planned by Reichsminister Speer in addition to the 130 already in production or completed will not now be built to allow the industrial capacity to be freed for other purposes. The Reichsmarschall intends to confer with Reichsminister Speer.

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* Preparations for the operation will be made there until 4 February.

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At present III/JG 7 (Me 262) has 17 serviceable aircraft and a further ten aircraft are on the way to the unit. The Chief of the Operations Staff has given permission effective immediately for this formation to operate against enemy reconnaissance aircraft and fighters.

Owing to development difficulties the employment of "Taifun"* which had been planned to take place at Hannover this month cannot be carried out and will have to be postponed for approximately six months.

* "Taifun": German flak rocket missile

3 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Large-scale enemy movements in the Nijmegen and Venlo areas are continuing.

Army Group B:

There was intensive artillery activity in the Dueren area. The Americans are continuing their local attacks, particularly in the Monschau area. Enemy preparations for an offensive are continuing in the area east of Aachen.

Army Group G:

The enemy is beginning to become more active.

Nineteenth Army:

The situation has deteriorated as a result of considerable gains in ground by the enemy in the Colmar and Muehlhausen areas.

Air Situation

During the night of 2/3 February attacks strongly screened by jamming aircraft were made on the city areas and transport targets at Wiesbaden by about 500 British four-engined aircraft, at Karlsruhe by about 200 British four-engined aircraft, at Bochum and Gelsenkirchen by about 300 British four-engined aircraft and at Magdeburg by 50 Mosquitoes. Fifteen enemy aircraft were shot down during German night fighter operations which were carried out exclusively by specially-selected personnel.

During the day there was intensive activity at the front and in the Coblenz area by enemy fighter bombers and twin-engined aircraft. About 100 American four-engined aircraft made a very effective attack on Berlin. Part of this formation attacked Magdeburg.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. In view of the changed ground situation Jafü Silesia and Jafü East Prussia will be wound up with immediate effect. 1st and 8th Jagddivisions will extend the boundaries of their command areas as far as the front line throughout the Luftflotte 6 area. The Divisions will still remain subordinate to Luftflotte Reich in all respects. Similarly, the night fighter formations hitherto

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subordinated to Luftflotte 6 will return to Luftflotte Reich command with immediate effect.

2. The request made by Luftflotte 6 and Army Group Vistula for the employment of a Paratroop battalion in the fortress of Posen cannot be granted owing to the absence of such a unit and in view of the extremely difficult fuel situation.

3. The Chief of the Technical Air Equipment Department and G.O.C. AA Command are ordered to furnish OKL with a report stating to what extent and by whom the demolition of experimental V-1 missiles and of the entire testing and experimental station at Udetfeld was carried out, as the Soviet news agency has reported that the Russians have captured V-1's at Udetfeld.

4. Luftflotte Reich and Luftflotte 6 are directed that flak formations employed on the defence of the Oder line will be subordinated to Luftflotte 6.

G.H.Q. II Fliegerkorps which has meanwhile arrived at Biesenthal near Bernau will be subordinated to Luftflotte 6 in all respects and with immediate effect. The Korps will take over command of flying formations in the Army Group Vistula area.

5. After the Fuehrer had ordered the code-word "Gneisenau-Flak" to be issued, Luftflotte Reich was ordered to carry out the immediate transfer of a further 123 heavy flak Batterien to the Eastern Front. The majority of these Batterien will be employed in ground operations on the Oder line and will be sited in deeply-echeloned anti-tank defence belts, while some Batterien will be sited towards the rear of the battle area to protect lines of communication against air attacks. Most of these units will have to be withdrawn from Luftgau VI. As the Luftwaffe cannot provide all the transport required by these formations, OKW/Armed Forces Operations Staff is requested to direct the Reich Ministry of Transport (representatives), the Ministry for Armaments and War Production and Wehrkreis H.Q.'s that transport units and single vehicles will be temporarily detached to assist in making the Flak units mobile.

6. SS-Gruppenfuehrer Dr. Kammler (Special Plipotentiary Grade II) is informed of the present state of "Taifun" development.

Points from Daily Conferences:

During today's heavy air raid on Berlin the Reichsmarschall asked the Chief of the Operations Staff why no German fighters were sent up. Owing to the difficult situation on the Oder, OKL had ordered that all fighter formations, including those of Luftflotte Reich, be employed on the Eastern Front. These formations were engaged on bombing operations. When the enemy attack on Berlin commenced JG 301 had already carried out one operation on the Oder front and JG 300 was bombed-up and ready for a sortie. III/JG 7 (Me 262) is not yet completely ready for operations. The Chief of the Operations Staff suggested to the Reichsmarschall that after the enemy bridgeheads across the Oder had been eliminated, the fighter formations previously engaged in the defence of the Reich as well as further fighter Geschwader used to reinforce Luftflotte 6 be re-assigned to the defence of the Reich. The Reichsmarschall agreed with this proposal. The Chief of the Operations Staff will discuss this matter by telephone with Oberst von Below, the Fuehrer's adjutant.

OKH requested Flakeinsatzstab Ost to provide 90 searchlights (60 cm) for ground operations on the Oder line. Fifty fully-equipped searchlights

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are available for immediate release. However, no Luftwaffe crews are available and these will have to be provided by the Army.

Luftflotte Reich suggested to Q.M.G. that aviation fuel held by all airfields in Luftgau III be requisitioned for operational purposes on the Eastern Front. Q.M.G. expressed serious misgivings, as this measure would put an end to all training at flying schools and operational reserve training units in Luftgau III. The Chief of the Operations Staff rejected the Luftflotte Reich proposal.

Q.M.G. reports that the investigating officers whom he assigned to disperse retreating Luftwaffe ground services from airfields have carried out their tasks successfully. However, the vehicles released by these officers could not be allocated to Flakeinsatzstab Ost to put Flak units on a mobile basis as had been planned, as they had been requisitioned for Army Group purposes by a special commissioner of the SS Reichsführer in the Army Group Vistula command area. The Chief of the Operations Staff intends to discuss this matter with the SS Reichsführer with a view to obtaining the release or replacement of these vehicles.

Supplement:

7. A.O.C. Ground Attack Formations, Major-General Hitschold, submits to Operations Staff Ia in a short report on his experiences and observations during his tour of ground attack formations on the Eastern Front from 19th to 22nd January 1945.

4 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

In the Nijmegen area enemy artillery fire increased considerably, reaching bombardment intensity in places. However, only local reconnaissance raids were carried out.

Army Group B:

The Americans continued their build-up in the area east of Aachen and achieved minor successes in local attacks, particularly in the Monschau area.

Army Group G:

Fluid local fighting is increasing.

Nineteenth Army:

The situation continues to deteriorate. The salient based on the Vosges ridge had to be pulled back a considerable distance. The enemy attacks from the Colmar and Muehlhausen areas are being continued.

Air Situation

During the night of 3/4 February about 400 British four-engined aircraft strongly screened by jamming aircraft attacked industrial and transport

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targets at Dortmund, Oberhausen and Essen. About 50 enemy aircraft carried out mine-laying operations over the Elbe estuary.

Owing to the bad weather there was only very slight enemy air activity during the day.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. 9th Paratroop Division, newly-formed by G.O.C. Paratroop Training and Reinforcement, will be moved up into the area west of Greifenhagen and placed under command of G.H.Q. Eleventh Army. The division will be employed in such a way that all newly-arriving elements can be subordinated and dispersion of the formation avoided.
2. Q.M.G. 4th Abteilung (Allocation of supplies. Control of transport) submits to the Chief of Staff a report on the air supply of the fortresses of Budapest, Posen, Schneidemuehl and Elbing during the night of 3/4 February.
3. The Commandant of Stettin will not include the flak defences at Poelitz in the defence ring owing to the lack of infantry. At present there are still altogether 429 static AA guns at Poelitz which represent a considerable defensive fire power as this number includes 72 128-mm and 98 105-mm guns. OKL therefore requests OKH to include the Poelitz flak force in the defence of Stettin and to provide the necessary infantry covering force.

5 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Enemy preparations for an offensive continue.

Army Group B:

The Americans continued their local attacks.

Army Group G:

Local operations increased.

Nineteenth Army:

The bridgehead west of the Rhine was again reduced considerably as a result of heavy enemy attacks.

Air Situation

During the night of 4/5 February attacks were made on Bottrop by about 300 British four-engined aircraft, on Bonn by about 200 British four-engined aircraft and on Hannover by about 60 Mosquitoes. Mine-laying operations were again carried out over the Elbe estuary by about 50 four-engined aircraft.

Owing to the bad weather there was only insignificant enemy air activity during the day. No German operations were carried out.

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Orders and Staff Reports:

1. Luftflotte Reich will retain responsibility for the execution of night fighter operations in East Prussia. If necessary, a night fighter operations controller will be appointed for this purpose by arrangement with Luftflotte 6.
2. Luftflotte 6 is ordered to employ a fighter Gruppe based in the Stettin area to ensure the port of Swinemunde against incursions by aircraft from the East as the harbour is greatly overcrowded with refugees and shipping.
3. In accordance with the Reichsmarschall's new directive, the orders hitherto applicable to fighter operations (Me 262) will be amended in that until the EZ 42 (gyro sight) has been fitted, only heavy bomber formations will be engaged and operational tactics similar to those of the Assault Gruppen* will be employed. To reinforce JG 7 the Me 262 factory defence flights will be disbanded and the personnel and aircraft transferred to the Geschwader.
4. The Q.M.G. Policy Section receives a report from Operations Staff Ia/Flak on the state of flak defences at jet unit airfields as at 24 January 1945.
5. Q.M.G. 4th Abteilung submits to the Chief of Staff a report on the air supply of Budapest, Posen and Schneidemuehl during the night of 4/5 February.
6. Flakeinsatzstab Ost is ordered to dispatch one heavy Flak Abteilung (partly-motorised) to "Holstein" Panzer Division and another to "Kurmark" Panzer Grenadier Division.
7. OKL urgently requests OKW/Armed Forces Operations Staff to make every effort to increase the mobility of the Flak units already operating on or moving up to the Oder line. The release of transport held by 5th Flak Division (V 1) is proposed.

Points from Daily Conferences:

The heavy losses of formation leaders in day fighter units can no longer be made good. Ia therefore proposes the disbanding of all fourth Staffeln and, if necessary, the fourth Gruppen of Jagdgeschwader. The Chief of the Operations Staff agreed and intends to put this matter to the Reichsmarschall.

Q.M.G. and A.O.C. Night Fighters requested the early transfer or dispersal of particularly important departments. The Chief of the Operations Staff ordered that the appropriate written requests be submitted to OKW, which has until now absolutely forbidden the transfer of departments from Berlin.

Q.M.G. reports that to date 130 Luftwaffe permanent stations and other airfields have been lost in the major Russian offensive.

Following a request by Major Schroetter (General Staff) for the release of 32 young airmen fit for general service from the headquarters of A.O.C. Fighters and after the Reichsmarschall had personally observed young personnel in Luftwaffe salvage columns, the latter ordered that a further 100,000 men be released from Luftwaffe H.Q.'s and technical units and assembled for the Paratroop Army. However, Q.M.G. 2nd Abteilung points out that at present these men cannot be replaced by older personnel as none is being made available by OKW. The Chief of the Operations Staff orders the postponement of this matter until the Chief of Staff returns to good health.

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* Assault Gruppen: Sturmgruppen - units of very heavily armed single-engined fighters employed to intercept heavy bombers.

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As a result of direct reports from IX SS Panzer Korps to the Fuehrer's Headquarters regarding the situation at Budapest, the Fuehrer severely reprimanded the Luftwaffe during the night of 4/5 February for allegedly inadequate air supply. The Chief of the Operations Staff observes that the Luftwaffe does as much as the weather will permit. By order of the Fuehrer a transport controller for air supply will be appointed and subordinated to OKW.

6 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Enemy movements continue.

Army Group B:

Enemy preparations for an offensive continue in the area east of Aachen. Along the rest of the front American attacks were continued at the same points.

Army Group G:

Enemy local attacks are intensifying.

Nineteenth Army:

A withdrawal of the bridgehead to a new line was necessary.

Air Situation

During the night of 5/6 February there was slight enemy long-range night fighter activity and nuisance attacks were made on Berlin by about 30 - 40 Mosquitoes.

During the day there was increased activity by enemy single-engined fighters and twin-engined aircraft over the front, the area west of the Rhine and Holland. Transport and industrial targets were attacked at Magdeburg by about 350 American heavy bombers and at Chemnitz, Gera, Gotha, Poessnick and Schmalkalden by a further 700 American heavy bombers.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. With effect from midnight, 6 February, a new operations and reconnaissance boundary between Luftflotte 4 and Luftflotte 6 will be ordered on the basis of the new Army Group boundary.
2. In accordance with the Reichsmarschall's order, 1st Jagddivision and its subordinated formations will remain under the operational command of Luftflotte 6 for ground-support operations on the Eastern Front. Luftflotte 6 will make available to Luftflotte Reich formations not suitable or not required for these operations for employment in the defence of the Reich.
3. Luftflotte Reich and Luftwaffe H.Q. West are directed that until further notice day-fighter operations in the West will be planned and carried out by Geschwader commanders on their own responsibility according to the air situation. Measures to enable the independent operation of fighter formations will be put into effect as quickly as possible.

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4. Luftflotte 6 will transfer I/JG 1 to Parchim for training and re-equipment with the 162. Aircraft becoming surplus will be used to replenish II/JG 1.

5. A memorandum on the employment of Flak artillery in the Eastern battle area is submitted for examination and approval to the Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff, Generaloberst Jodl. After the Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff has given his approval, the reinforcement and planned employment of the Flak artillery described in the memorandum will be carried out as proposed in respect not only to ground-support operations but also to anti-aircraft defence.

Points from Daily Conferences:

Q.M.G. is ordered to compile all requests made by Luftwaffe departments for transfer from the Greater Berlin area and to submit them for approval to OKW in order of priority. In addition, Q.M.G. will commence preparations for the dispersal and transfer of the Kurfuerst Operations Staff in accordance with the directives issued by the Chief of the Operations Staff.

7 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Enemy artillery fire intensified, particularly in the Nijmegen and Venlo areas.

Army Group B:

Artillery fire on front line positions east of Aachen is increasing. The Americans maintained their stubborn local attacks along the rest of the Army Group front and achieved minor local successes.

Army Group G:

Local activity continues.

Nineteenth Army:

The size of the German bridgehead west of the Rhine was reduced in order to shorten its defence line.

Air Situation

There was no enemy air activity during the night of 6/7 February.

Owing to a deterioration in the weather there was only slight enemy fighter activity during the day. About 150 British four-engined aircraft bombed Bochum through cloud.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. A draft operational order for Luftflotte 6 is submitted to the Reichsmarschall for signature.

2. The G.A.F. General in Norway receives an amendment to the operational

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order issued on 1 November 1944 permitting KG 26 to be employed against merchant ships if conditions for attacking carriers are unfavourable.

3. Major Stamp has worked out a new plan for air-to-air bombing against heavy bomber formations and is at present testing its practical possibilities. He has already been allocated 4 Me 262's for this purpose and another two have been earmarked. In a detailed criticism of the prospects of success, which will be very slight in the foreseeable future, the Chief of the Operations Staff suggests to the Reichsmarschall that the Stamp Detachment be disbanded immediately or attached to JG 7 if the tests are to be continued.

4. To supplement the summary report submitted to the Reichsmarschall by the Chief of Staff on 18 January and the Chief of Staff's views on the Reichsmarschall's proposed reorganisation of day fighter Geschwader from four to three Gruppen, Oberst Gollob (A.O.C. Fighters) submits views on this problem in respect to jet fighters.

5. Luftflotte 6 is ordered to re-equip the Staff of 11th Flak Division (static) as quickly as possible so that if necessary it can be employed in place of a motorised Flak Division Staff. The motorised Flak Division Staff will then be available to Luftflotte 6 for special command duties.

6. In view of the developments in the ground situation on the Eastern Front, all Flak formations stationed east of the line Greifswald - Tutow - Neu-Strelitz - Oranienburg - Werneuchen - Rangsdorf - Luckau - former boundary between Luftgau VIII and Luftgau III and XV - Morava-Ostrava - Dreilaendereck (all towns and airfields to come under command of Luftflotte 6) will be subordinated to Luftflotte 6 in all respects. This order will come into effect immediately and invalidate all previously issued instructions.

7. OKL agreed to a Luftflotte Reich proposal that all static 128-mm and 105-mm Batterien of the Poelitz flak force located east of the Oder be withdrawn west of the river. In the event of an unexpected development in the situation, orders for the destruction of all guns still located east of the Oder will not be issued until all available ammunition has been expended and every possibility of recovering the guns exhausted.

8. Luftflotte 6 and Luftflotte Reich are directed to reinforce the light flak defences of the overcrowded airfields at Straussberg, Fuerstenwalde and Werneuchen.

9. The Reichsmarschall rejected a Luftflotte Reich request for the immediate suspension of all searchlight operations in the Berlin area so that troops may be released for other duties. However, all preparations for assembly and training (formation of tank-destroyer units and the employment of Reich Labour Service female auxiliaries in other capacities) will be made so that searchlight operations can be suspended immediately and active units mustered at short notice if necessitated by developments in the situation.

10. Ia/Flak submits a report on the state of flak formations in the West and East as at 7 January 1945.

8 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

The British launched the expected offensive from the Nijmegen area and have already achieved local penetrations.

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Army Group B:

The Americans continued their preparations for an offensive east of Aachen and their local attacks at the same points.

Army Group G:

There was local activity on the Saar front.

Nineteenth Army:

West of the Rhine a fighting withdrawal to a greatly reduced bridgehead has been carried out.

Air Situation

During the night of 7/8 February attacks heavily screened by jamming aircraft were made on transport targets at Emmerich by about 250 British heavy bombers, on the Dortmund-Ems canal at Ladbergen by about 100 British heavy bombers and on Magdeburg by a fairly small formation of Mosquitoes. About 200 heavy bombers again carried out mine-laying operations over Heligoland Bay and Kiel Bay.

During the day there was intensive activity by enemy single-engined fighters and twin-engined aircraft over front-line areas, particularly in Holland. Owing to the weather only small-scale German operations were carried out.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. In view of developments in the situation, OKL issues an order to the Luftflotten by virtue of which full co-ordination of all measures relating to organisation and tactics taken by forward Luftflotten H.Q.'s will be settled with Luftflotte Reich and subordinate Luftgau H.Q.'s.
2. A.O.C. Fighters and Q.M.G. 6th Abteilung (allocation of aircraft, crews, flak and flak equipment) are directed to carry out standardisation of equipment in each fighter Geschwader in so far as aircraft production will permit.
3. As the Army Group Centre special paratroop operation cannot be carried out, the two paratroop companies assembled for this purpose will be returned to G.O.C. Paratroop Training and Reinforcement for allocation to 9th Paratroop Division.
4. Luftflotte 4 is directed to carry out the air supply of Budapest by day using ground attack aircraft, if weather conditions prevent these operations at night.
5. Luftflotte 6 and Luftflotte Reich are directed to put transport from Stations near the front temporarily at the disposal of Flakeinsatzstab Ost for the use of the flak Batterien in the Oder line.
6. Luftflotte 6 will carry out the immediate transfer of three 88-mm flak Batterien (railway) from the Greifenhagen and Poelitz areas so that the flak defences at Swinemuende may be reinforced temporarily.
7. The Reichsmarschall writes to C-in-C West, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, suggesting that Luftflotte Reich take over command of flak formations on the Rhine defence line.

Points from Daily Conferences:

The breakdown of the Finkenherd power station (south-west of Frankfurt on Oder) is having a very serious effect on the supply of power to radar

/stations,

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stations, searchlight batteries and signals communications (wireless) in the Berlin - Brandenburg area.

Luftflotte 6 requested the transfer of Rudel Geschwader from the Steinau area to the Cottbus area in view of the enemy offensive. The Chief of the Operations Staff rejected this request as the effective strength of formations is reduced by continual transfers and they cannot put up a 100% effort during the transfer.

By order of OKW the Luftwaffe has released considerable amounts of its aviation fuel located west of the Rhine to put Army motorised formations on a mobile basis. A.O.C. Night Fighters reports that the wireless monitoring service has established that General Student is constantly receiving detailed reports by wireless even from Paratroop Corps and Divisions which are no longer under his direct command. The enemy is thus being given a clear picture of the present operational areas, effective strengths etc. of paratroop formations. The Chief of the Operations Staff orders A.O.C. Night Fighters to submit all the relevant documents with an appropriate covering note to the Reichsmarschall.

It reports from intelligence sources that the ground organisation of the Soviet Air Force cannot advance across a line running south-west from Posen for the time being owing to ground conditions.

9 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

The British continued their heavy attacks from the Nijmegen area and succeeded in gaining a considerable amount of ground.

Army Group B:

The enemy continued preparations for an offensive east of Aachen and local attacks in the Schnee Eifel.

Army Group G:

Only slight local activity. Nineteenth Army has now withdrawn completely from the west bank of the Rhine.

Air Situation

During the night of 8/9 February the hydrogenation plant at Poelitz was attacked and heavily damaged by two British heavy bomber formations each comprising about 150 aircraft which approached by different routes. The enemy was heavily screened by jamming aircraft and German "window" was used on a large scale. At the same time about 100 aircraft carried out mine-laying operations over Stettin Bay and the Haff. Sixteen enemy aircraft were shot down by sixty-one German night fighters which were operational. Fifty Mosquitoes attacked Berlin at the same time. A little later another force comprising about 400 British heavy bombers strongly escorted by long-range night fighters attacked industrial targets at Wanne-Eickel and Mors.

During the day the enemy air forces continued their large-scale operations against transport targets. Attacks were made on Magdeburg, Eisenach, Jena and

/Duelmen

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Duelmen by some 1,100 American heavy bombers and on the Dortmund-Ems canal by about 150 British heavy bombers.

There was intensive enemy fighter activity over the front, particularly in the Nijmegen area and west of Cologne. Enemy twin-engined aircraft attacked shipping targets in Norway. Sixty-seven fighters of 1st Jagddivision took off to intercept the main enemy daylight bomber force, but had very little success.

Fifteen aircraft of IV/KG 54 (Me 262) led by the Geschwader commander took off without special orders. Owing to bad weather the aircraft were not able to operate as a formation and suffered heavy losses, including the Geschwader commander who was killed.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. On 8 February Luftflotte Reich sent various queries to OKL concerning the employment of fighters on the Eastern Front and in the defence of the Reich. A teleprinter message from OKL Operations Staff dealt with these queries, which have already been settled in previously issued orders.
2. The Luftflotten, Air Officers commanding branches of the Service and the Chief of Technical Air Equipment are directed that in view of developments in the ground situation the destruction of runways at threatened airfields will be prepared so that it can be effected as quickly as possible following orders from OKL or the Luftflotte. The enemy must be prevented from using these runways at all costs.
3. The two reorganised and re-equipped fighter Gruppen II/JG 3 and III/JG 54 will be subordinated to Luftflotte 6 in all respects. As the Gruppen have no experience of fighter operations they will be assigned to fighter Geschwader with operational experience of the Eastern Front.
4. To intensify reconnaissance and anti-submarine operations in the Baltic, 2/sea reconnaissance Gruppe 126 will be re-equipped with Me 410's, 1/sea reconnaissance Gruppe 126 reinforced and both formations subordinated to the Luftflotte 6 Reserve Training Coastal Reconnaissance Staffel for operational purposes.
5. After the enemy air attack on Poelitz during the night of 8/9 February, it transpired that Luftflotte Reich had disbanded the entire AA searchlight force without the permission of OKL. The Chief of Staff therefore demands a detailed report on this matter from Luftflotte Reich.
6. In view of developments in the ground situation, Luftflotte Reich submitted a proposal on 24 January to the effect that Luftwaffe female auxiliaries serving with AA searchlight and other batteries be trained in the use of light arms. The Reichsmarschall rejected this proposal.
7. In view of the enemy breakthrough in the Liegnitz area, Luftflotte Reich and Luftflotte 6 are directed to despatch the next fifteen medium Batterien (high velocity) to arrive from the West to the Goerlitz area.
8. The Flak emergency units raised at Doeberitz by the Director of Technical Armament Flak Reserve Training will be placed at the disposal of Luftflotte Reich for employment with 1st Flak Division.

Points from Daily Conferences:

By order of the Chief of Staff the strength of all OKL units will be cut by 10%. Ic reports that he will release about 33% of his personnel. In this

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respect A.O.C. Night Fighters referred to the increasing signals difficulties which will arise as a result of the dispersal of OKL departments throughout the Reich which will soon become necessary. For this reason it appears that a reduction in strength of A.O.C. Night Fighters' sub-units cannot be borne as a matter of course. The Chief of the Operations Staff orders that when units are considering the release of personnel it is essential that efficient personnel be retained so that in the event of a unit being transferred, work can be continued even under primitive conditions.

The appointment of a special plenipotentiary for air supply (General Morzik) ordered by the Fuehrer was necessitated by the Army's inability to deliver the right supplies at forwarding airfields in sufficient quantities and at the right time. A particular example of this merits attention: Army Group North requested a particular type of ammunition for assault guns. Five Ju 52's were immediately made available for loading at the forwarding airfield. There were only two plane-loads of the required ammunition and the other aircraft were loaded with infantry ammunition etc. Long after the Ju 52's had returned from Heiligenbeil and landed at their bases, Army Group North asserted that the aircraft with the urgently required ammunition had not arrived. Reports of this type made by the Army result in the Luftwaffe being accused of not carrying out its air supply duties.

In view of the ground situation on Army Group North's front, OKH requested large-scale air evacuation of wounded from East Prussia. As this would involve a considerable expenditure of aviation fuel, the Chief of the Operations Staff intends to clarify the matter with OKW. At present wounded are being evacuated constantly by Luftwaffe medical services and by every Ju 52 flying supplies to East Prussia.

With regard to personnel economies, the Reichsmarschall agrees to the disbanding of the department of the General for Military Training.

Supplement:

9. Ia Flak submits a report on the movements of Flak formations to the Eastern Front as at 9 February 1945.

10 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

The British continued their offensive from the Nijmegen area and succeeded in taking Cleves.

Army Group B:

Continued enemy preparations for an offensive east of Aachen and local activity in the Schnee-Eifel.

Army Group G:

Only slight local activity.

Air Situation

There was only very slight enemy air activity during the night of

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9/10 February. German night ground attack operations were carried out in some strength against enemy supply routes in the Arnhem - Nijmegen area.

During the day there was considerable to strong activity by enemy fighter-bombers and twin-engined aircraft, particularly in the Nijmegen - Cleves area. About 300 American heavy bombers attacked the Luftwaffe fuel depot at Duelfmen. According to a report by Q.M.G. the depot was not hit; moreover, the tanks are empty at present.

Thirty-one aircraft of KG 26 from Norway carried out an effective torpedo attack on an enemy PQ convoy in the Arctic Ocean.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. A.O.C. Fighters is directed to reorganise IV/JG 54 as II/JG 7 (Me 262). The fourth Staffel, which will thus be released, will be placed at the disposal of General Galland for the establishment of an Me 262 fighter Staffel to be commanded by him and incorporated in JG 7.
2. Following the recent considerable increase in R.A.F. mine-laying operations in the Femern Belt area and the Baltic, Luftflotte 6 and Luftflotte Reich are directed to effect a corresponding intensification of mine location and sweeping operations by Ju 52 aircraft.
3. The Chief of Army General Staff sent the Chief of Luftwaffe General Staff a letter of appreciation for the good work of reconnaissance formations operating on the Eastern Front.
4. Following the appointment of SS-Gruppenfuehrer and General of the Waffen-SS Dr. Kammler as plenipotentiary for the further development of all remote-controlled missiles, a Luftwaffe Operations Staff headed by Major Harras was established in his department. In a personal letter to Dr. Kammler the Chief of Staff rejected this designation as it would inevitably lead to confusion and errors.
5. Ia/Flak submits a report on the situation of flak formations on the Eastern Front as at 8 February 1945.

Points from Daily Conferences:

With regard to today's fighter operations by Luftflotte Reich against the enemy heavy bomber formation, the Chief of the Operations Staff observes that the employment of such a small number of aircraft is purposeless and must be regarded as a mistake. Luftflotte Reich will be informed accordingly by way of Ia.

Q.M.G. 6th Abteilung (Allocation of aircraft, crews, flak and flak equipment) reports that to date Luftflotte 6 has detached more than 200 fighters to its control stations. In view of this large number of reserve aircraft, the Chief of the Operations Staff orders an investigation into the possibility of a whole fighter Geschwader of Luftflotte 6 being withdrawn from operations for refitting and replenishment. He emphasises that on no account will the Luftflotten hold back their reserves in this way as it prevents Headquarters from refitting and replenishing formations at the proper time.

The G.A.F. General in Norway forwarded the report on the first torpedo operation against the PQ convoy as requested by OKL Operations Staff. According to the report, the failure of this first sortie was attributable to the leadership of KG 26. In addition, "Hohentwiel" radar installations broke

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down. The Geschwader commodore and experienced Gruppen commanders did not take part in the operation.

In view of the increasingly difficult fuel situation Operation "Gisela" cannot be carried out at present. The Chief of Staff will obtain the Reichsmarschall's consent to this decision.

Q.M.G. 2nd Abteilung (High policy with regard to personnel. Formation, Subordination etc. of units. Control of establishments) reports that as a result of continued disbanding and the release of personnel from H.Q.'s and units, a considerable number of men who cannot be supplied with arms at present is accumulating in the reserve formations of the Paratroop Army. However, the Reichsmarschall has ordered the combing-out of further personnel for the formation of new Paratroop Army divisions in addition to the previous personnel reductions and releases. The 2nd Department reports that these Paratroop divisions which are to be formed also cannot be supplied with arms and the efficiency of Luftwaffe and Flak formations still serving is being reduced to an increasing extent by continued personnel reductions and releases.

In order to speed up the production and issue of the Me 262 so that this type can be put into operational service in some strength as soon as possible in accordance with the Fuehrer's orders, the following have or will be appointed by the Reichsmarschall or Hauptdienstleiter Saur:

- a plenipotentiary for production,
- a plenipotentiary for testing at factories,
- a plenipotentiary for ferrying aircraft to squadrons and
- an inspector of personnel (Oberstlttn. Schenk).

The inspector will be directly subordinate to the Luftwaffe Operations Staff.

Supplement

6. Ia Flak submits a report on the movements of Flak formations to the Eastern Front.

11 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

The British continued their attacks and succeeded in gaining more ground.

Army Group B:

The enemy continued preparations for an offensive east of Aachen. There was brisk local activity elsewhere along the front.

Army Group G:

Only slight local activity.

Air Situation

During the night of 10/11 February there was large-scale activity by enemy jamming aircraft to mislead German night fighters, intensive enemy

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long-range night fighter operations and a nuisance raid on Hannover by about 60 Mosquitoes.

Small-scale German night ground attack operations were carried out in the Nijmegen area and supplies were flown to the Atlantic strongholds.

During the day there were very heavy enemy fighter-bomber operations against transport targets in the area west of the Rhine. About 250 American heavy bombers made another attack on the fuel depot at Duelfmen. German operations were on a very small scale owing to bad weather in take-off areas.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. Owing to the southward movement of the ice-line in the Aalands Sea, there is a possibility of Swedish ships bound for Finnish ports entering the area of the eastern Baltic declared an operational zone on 26 January. The order issued with regard to firing on Swedish ships will therefore be amended for political reasons so as to prevent Swedish ships being attacked or sunk inadvertently.
2. Luftflotte 6 receives permission to use mines against enemy bridges over the Oder (particularly pontoon bridges).
3. As a result of the large-scale transfer of flak units from the Reich to the Eastern Front the effective strength of personnel in formations defending the Reich is decreasing considerably, as all the Batterien which have been released are manned exclusively by servicemen. All auxiliary personnel are replaced prior to transfer. Operations Staff Ia instructs the Luftwaffe Organisation Staff 9th Abteilung that in future no servicemen will be withdrawn from flak units for release to the Army. Moreover, 7 Flak Abteilungen comprising 21 medium Batterien are serving as an Army Division.
4. Ia Flak submits a report on the state of movements of flak units to the Eastern Front and of flak Batterien already in action at the Oder bridgeheads.

Points from Daily Conferences:

The Reichsmarschall approved the operational directive for Me 262 fighter aircraft drawn up by the A.O.C. Fighters. However, fire will be opened at 1,000 metres instead of 600 metres as proposed by A.O.C. Fighters.

KG 54's battle report on yesterday's operation clearly indicates that the heavy German losses were caused by the defensive fire of the heavy bombers as the German formation split up while passing through the clouds and attacked singly or in pairs in face of concentrated defensive fire.

The Fuehrer orders that while waiting for the enemy offensive in the West, German flying formations will carry out several daily sorties, as is the case on the Eastern Front. The fuel situation will permit this for the time being as there are still about 6,000 tons stored in the western Luftgaue. An order to this effect will be drawn up by Ia.

A.O.C. Fighters requested that the most advanced Fighter Geschwader in the West be moved back for tactical reasons. The Chief of the Operations Staff rejected this request after it had been investigated by Ia. Similarly, A.O.C. Fighters proposed that fighter Gruppen refitting in their Geschwader areas in the West be transferred for service on the Eastern Front. The Chief of the Operations Staff also rejected this proposal to avoid splitting up the Geschwader again. Consideration was given to the withdrawal of a whole Geschwader

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for refitting after the Gruppen of other Geschwader which were being refitted had been replenished with its serviceable elements. However, the idea was dropped as the reshuffling of personnel would be too difficult and it would mean one Geschwader less operating in the West. However, the Chief of the Operations Staff intends to put this matter to the Reichsmarschall.

Luftflotte 6 has requested that all operational Staffeln hitherto formed from training school and reserve units be withdrawn as they have had too little success. These units would be replaced by an effective He 111 bomber Gruppe (from KG 53). The Chief of the Operations Staff rejected this proposal owing to the fuel situation, but will obtain a final decision from the Reichsmarschall. The Chief of the Operations Staff instructs that in future Luftflotte 6 ground attack formations will also use the SD 2 bomb fitted with instantaneous fuze, particularly against enemy crossings on the Oder. Stocks of these bombs held by Luftflotte Reich will be despatched to Luftflotte 6 as quickly as possible.

Q.M.G. raises the urgent matter of the High Command's intentions concerning A.P. ammunition. Owing to the rapidly changing ground situation on the Eastern Front the very large Luftwaffe stocks must be transferred from threatened areas into the interior of the Reich. However, there is no means of storing the ammunition in this area. There is an increasing danger to our already fairly densely concentrated population and this is being further intensified by the streams of refugees. An early decision is essential as the movement of ammunition from depots in the East will require a considerable amount of transport. The Chief of the Operations Staff instructs Q.M.G. to propose the destruction of part of the ammunition to OKW, as the possibility of large-scale expenditure by German bomber formations (He 111, He 177, Ju 88) is becoming increasingly remote.

12 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

The British continued their heavy attacks and succeeded in gaining more ground.

Army Group B:

Activity on any scale was confined to the Echternach area.

Army Group G:

Activity was limited to patrolling by both sides on the Saar front.

Air Situation

During the night of 11/12 February there was only slight enemy nuisance activity.

Owing to bad weather there were also only slight enemy operations during the day.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. Following the coming into force of the re-organisation in the Luftflotte

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Reich command area ordered on 2 February, the Reichsmarschall issues a new operational directive.

2. Now that a major British attack had been launched from the Nijmegen area, Luftflotte Reich and Luftwaffe H.Q. West are directed to give German ground forces in that area all possible support. To this end all Luftwaffe H.Q. West jet formations will be concentrated in north-western Germany and fighter formations will carry out several sorties per day to protect Army lines of communication.
3. Following a discussion with the Reichsmarschall on the Luftflotte 6 request for an active bomber Gruppe (He 111), the latter decided that after relinquishing its present V 1 equipment and refitting with He 111's by Q.M.G. 6th Abteilung, III/KG 53 will be subordinated to Luftflotte 6 for operational purposes on the Eastern Front. A.O.C. Bombers and Q.M.G. 6th Abteilung (Allocation of aircraft, crews, flak and flak equipment) will ensure that the Gruppe is made ready for operations as quickly as possible.
4. Following a further request for the transfer of a German single-engined fighter Gruppe to Italy made by the Duce via the G.A.F. General in Italy on 8 February, the latter was directed that this transfer cannot be carried out at present. However, by sending modern fighter aircraft and giving pilots appropriate training, OKL is endeavouring to establish and maintain first two and later three Italian fighter Gruppi at the highest possible quantitative and qualitative standard.
5. Subsequent to the OKH order for a new boundary between Army Group South and Army Group Centre becoming effective as from 5 February, a new boundary will be ordered between Luftflotte 4 and Luftflotte 6 in respect of subordination of Flak units to ensure unimpeded co-operation between the Luftflotten and the Army Groups.
6. Luftflotte Reich is informed that the two Flak Assault Regiments assembled by Luftwaffe H.Q. West for release to the Eastern Front will be despatched immediately to the Goerlitz and Cottbus areas (Luftflotte 6 - Army Group Centre command area).
7. Of the 327 heavy and 110 medium and light Flak Batterien ordered for the reinforcement of the Eastern Front by 6 February, the following have arrived to date:

141 heavy and 40 medium and light Batterien;
a further
45 heavy and 24 medium and light Batterien are en route
by rail and road.

Points from Daily Conferences:

According to a report by Ic, the continued bad weather has compelled the Russians to transfer from their advanced landing grounds to former German airfields with runways. It is therefore of particular importance that the runways at such airfields be completely destroyed before they fall into the enemy's hands.

Q.M.G. points out that the exceptionally intensive scale of operations hitherto carried out by Luftflotte 6 can no longer be continued owing to the fuel situation. About 400 tons of fuel are expected from industry in February. In order to release fuel for operational purposes, Q.M.G. suggests that the training programme of the A.O.C. Flying Training be suspended entirely and

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that those of Air Officers commanding the various branches of the Luftwaffe (preparation of the most essential personnel replacements for operational service) be reduced as much as possible. The Chief of the Operations Staff agrees that these measures are necessary, as the scale of Luftflotte 6 operations must be maintained to give the Army the opportunity to reconsolidate. At present the matter cannot be settled merely by the suspension of training; in addition, the personnel released by this action must be released to operational formations. Q.M.G. 4th Abteilung (Allocation of supplies. Control of transport) will prepare a comprehensive report on the fuel situation for a discussion with the Fuehrer.

Following a discussion with the commander of KG 200, the Reichsmarschall postponed the final decision to carry out Operation "Drachenhoeckle" for a further three days. The Reichsmarschall gave permission for KG 200 to use remote-controlled missiles against bridges over the Vistula. Operation "Eisenhammer" will be carried out at all costs. Preparations will be expedited. The fuel required for the operation has been promised by OKW. According to a report by the commander of KG 200, a special operation on a smaller scale named "Antwerpen" will also be carried out. Owing to the increasingly critical fuel situation, the Chief of Staff agrees to the postponement for the time being of Operation "Gisela" (night attack on airfields in Britain). However, a decision on this matter by the Reichsmarschall is still necessary.

The Director of Technical Armament suggested to the Chief of the Operations Staff that in future only the emergency programme be carried out by the aircraft industry and that all Luftwaffe personnel still employed in the industry be withdrawn and released to the Army for active service. The Chief of the Operations Staff agreed with this proposal. Q.M.G. 2nd Abteilung (High policy with regard to personnel. Formation, subordination etc. of units. Control of establishments) will make the appropriate arrangements with the relevant authorities. Furthermore, the Chief of Technical Air Equipment reports that he has made a 50% personnel reduction in his own department at all tests of aircraft, weapons, equipment etc. which cannot be carried out in the immediate future have been abandoned. At present the fuel situation as regards jet aircraft (J 2) is still adequate, but should be closely watched in view of the increasing numbers of aircraft. Experiments are now in progress to convert reject petrol (about 200,000 tons available) for use by jet aircraft. Prospects of success may be described as good.

As the Poelitz hydrogenation plant will be completely out of action for some time as a result of the last air attack, Ia suggests that the present flak defences be dispersed so that the guns may be used at other targets. Moreover, it now appears possible to reduce the number of guns from 600 to an ultimate total of about 200, as ordered by the Fuehrer. The Chief of the Operations Staff agrees with this proposal and will discuss the matter with the Reichsmarschall and the Fuehrer in this light.

After LG 1 had been grounded for some time owing to shortage of fuel it was put back into service in the West for a short period. It sustained heavy losses in its first operations and the effect achieved was not commensurate with the expenditure. The officer commanding KG 1 has submitted a detailed report to OKL Operations Staff on the Geschwader's period of inactivity and the brief operational term. These experiences clearly indicate that when a formation is grounded for a lengthy period and is not given appropriate training, heavy losses will necessarily result upon its return to operational service and the expenditure will bear no relation to the effect achieved until the aircrews are once more completely "re-acclimatised". Thus, when the fuel situation necessitates the grounding of a bomber Geschwader, it is preferable to disband only part of the formation and leave at least one Gruppe either on operations or in training.

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8. The Reichsmarschall issues "Reichsmarschall Order No.13" on the subject of battle training in Luftwaffe H.Q.'s and units.

13 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

British attacks continued, but were generally contained.

Army Group B:

Fluctuating local fighting continues, particularly in the Echternach area.

Army Group G:

Only slight activity.

Air Situation

During the night of 12/13 February there was slight enemy nuisance activity. A rather small formation of Mosquitoes attacked Stuttgart.

During the day there was very heavy enemy fighter activity over the front and the entire area west of the Rhine, the main objective being transport installations. In addition, there was intensive activity by twin-engined aircraft.

Moderate German forces carried out ground support operations in the Cleves area.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. The critical aircraft fuel situation is necessitating further stringent restrictions everywhere. However, in view of the serious developments in the ground situation on the Eastern Front, the bulk of fuel supplies available to OKL will be allocated to Luftflotte 6. Nevertheless, Luftflotte 6 will also adapt its operations to the serious fuel situation so that aircraft can be used on a large scale to achieve a decisive effect at the vital point.

2. Luftflotte Reich receives a supplementary order to the operational directive for the Western area issued on 12 February to the effect that daylight operations by jet formations and night operations by night ground attack formations will be concentrated in the vicinity of the front between Nijmegen and Schleiden.

3. To make more fuel available for operational purposes, the A.O.C.'s of Luftwaffe branches and the A.O.C. Flying Training are directed that further training will be restricted to personnel within four weeks of completion in reserve training units and to personnel within two weeks of completion in units under the command of the A.O.C. Flying Training.

4. After SD 2 bombs with instantaneous fuze have been issued by Q.M.G. 4th Abteilung (Allocation of supplies. Control of transport), Luftflotte 6 will use them on a large scale, particularly at night. At the same time the

/Luftflotte

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Luftflotte receives detailed information on the most effective use of this type of bomb.

5. Luftflotte Reich is ordered to postpone Operation "Gisela" until further notice.

6. Following the arrival of fighter formations and the completion of the withdrawal by operational ground attack and night ground attack formations of Luftflotte 6, the units set up from forces in the areas of Air Officers commanding Luftwaffe branches in accordance with the order of 1 February will no longer be required and will be disbanded and returned to the command of the Air Officers.

7. The Luftwaffe Operations Staff demanded a detailed report from Luftflotte Reich after the latter had disbanded the searchlight force at Poelitz without permission from OKL. The Chief of Staff makes full comment on the detailed report submitted by Luftflotte Reich and orders that whoever was responsible for ordering the disbanding of the Poelitz AA searchlight forces be reported immediately. In connection with this, Luftflotte Reich is directed to report on the present state of the searchlight force throughout its command area.

8. Ia/Flak submits a report on the state of flak formations transferred or en route to the Eastern Front as at 13 February. According to the report, 152 heavy and 145 medium and light Batterien have arrived to date and 40 heavy and 20 medium and light Batterien are en route out of a total of 327 heavy and 110 medium and light Batterien to be transferred.

Points from Daily Conferences:

After OKH had subordinated the western Wehrkreis H.Qs. to the C-in-C West for operational purposes, it was proposed that the western Luftgau H.Qs. also be subordinated to Luftwaffe H.Q. West for operational purposes. The Chief of the Operations Staff rejected this proposal, as the supply of Luftwaffe H.Q. West formations had hitherto proceeded smoothly. Owing to the present developments in the over-all situation, Luftflotte Reich will have to transfer its focal point of command to the West and the subordination of the western Luftgau H.Qs. will not then be necessary.

After the fuel required for Operation "Eisenhammer" had been provided by OKW, the Reichsmarschall decided that the operation will be prepared and carried out as soon as possible. Operation "Drachenhoehle" will be postponed for the time being, but the fuel assembled for this purposes will still be held in reserve.

The Reichsmarschall intends to relieve both Geschwader H.Qs. and form KG 51 and KG 76 (present strength 4 Ar 234 Staffeln and 2 Me 262 Gruppen) into a Fliegerbrigade.

As considerable stocks of fuel are still held in Norway for "Dr. G. Nord", Q.M.G. suggests that the removal from Norway of another 2,000 tons be proposed to OKW as the aircraft formations participating in this operation will have to be considerably reduced owing to present developments in the situation. The Chief of the Operations Staff agrees with the proposal. An application to this effect will be submitted to OKW with a reminder that OKL will no longer be able to maintain the number of aircraft previously envisaged for "Dr. G. Nord". At the same time Ia is instructed to examine and re-shape the directives for "Dr. G. Nord".

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14 FEBRUARY 1945

Ground Situation

Army Group H:

Heavy British attacks continued in the Cleves area.

Army Group B:

Only local activity, particularly in the Echternach area.

Army Group G:

Only local activity in the Hagenau area.

Air Situation

During the night of 13/14 February the R.A.F. again carried out large-scale operations heavily screened by jamming aircraft. German "window" was used extensively against the bomber formations. Attacks were made on Magdeburg by about 50 Mosquitoes, on Boehlen and Troeglitz by about 300 heavy bombers accompanied by Mosquitoes and on Dresden by about 300 heavy bombers accompanied by Mosquitoes. About three hours later Dresden was attacked again by a further 300 heavy bombers accompanied by Mosquitoes. The city sustained maximum damage in this double attack. The central district was almost completely destroyed and there were heavy casualties.

During the day about 1,200 American heavy bombers continued the air offensive against the Reich. Chemnitz was the main target, while Dresden and Magdeburg were attacked by elements of the enemy force. There was a considerable "terror" effect in the cities which were attacked. Only 145 German fighters could be sent up against this enemy force.

There were intensive and in places heavy operations by enemy fighter-bombers and twin-engined aircraft along the front and in the area west of the Rhine. The bridge over the Rhine at Wesel was damaged several times during these operations.

German ground attack and fighter operations were carried out in some strength.

Orders and Staff Reports:

1. To enable unified direction of air defence the Flak Division located on the Rhine will be subordinated to Luftwaffe H.Q. West after the Reichsmarschall has given his approval.
2. When establishment has been completed H.Q. KG 76 (Ar 234) and 6/KG 76 will be transferred for operational service to Achmer and Hopsten respectively and will be subordinated to Luftflotte Reich in all respects.
3. Luftflotte Reich is directed to fit one FW 190 Staffel and one Me 163 Staffel with the newly-developed "Rohrblock" and "Jaegerfaust" weapons for operational testing in co-operation with the A.O.C. Fighters.
4. Luftflotte Reich, Luftflotte 6 and Flakinsatzstab Ost (AA Artillery Operational H.Q. - Eastern Front) are again directed to use every means,

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26.

including improvisation, to speed up the movement of flak formations transferred to the Eastern Front from the railway stations to their allotted positions.

5. Following a conference the Fuehrer approved a reduction of the present flak defences at Poelitz to about 150 heavy guns. Luftflotte Reich and Luftflotte 6 receive directives regarding the disposition of the guns thus released:

most of the guns will be used to reinforce defences at other hydrogenation plants in the Reich, while some will serve in the East with Luftflotte 6.

6. Flakeinsatzstab Ost is directed to assemble a partly-motorised heavy Flak Abteilung for the "Wirth" Police Brigade (later 35th SS-Police Division).

Points from Daily Conferences:

According to a report by KG 200, Operation "Eisenhammer" can be carried out as early as the end of February or the beginning of March. The Reichsmarschall has now relieved Luftflotte 6 of the control of the operation, as previously arranged, and has made KG 200 responsible for its control.

The Chief of the Operations Staff orders the establishment of a third fighter Gruppe for service in Norway following the disbanding of the fourth Staffeln of the two Norwegian fighter Gruppen, the extra personnel required being obtained from A.O.C. Fighters. By this means a more effective tactical disposition of the small fighter strength in Norway will be achieved.

In accordance with his military powers, the Fortress Commandant of Berlin has taken over the motorised Civil Defence Detachment located in the Berlin area for defence purposes (construction of trenches, barricades etc.). Ia points out the serious consequences which will result from this action in the event of heavy enemy air attacks on Berlin. The Chief of the Operations Staff shares these misgivings and intends to apply to the Reichsmarschall and the Fuehrer for the release of the C.D. Detachment. The detachment's present employment must at least be arranged in such a way that it can be called in and reorganised for its proper task if an air attack is expected.

A.H.B.6 Distribution

Same as for Translation VII/128