

HEADQUARTERS 6TH ARMY GROUP

2 May 1945

Brief of 6th Army Group Operations1. Landing in Southern France.

Under command of Seventh Army, Operations "DRAGOON" began 15 August with VI US Corps composed of the veteran Third, Thirty-Sixth and Forty-Fifth Divisions making the assault landing. French Army "B" came ashore in the wake of VI Corps rapid advance northward, turned westward and by 28 August had captured Toulon and was mopping up in Marseilles. With Task Force Butler speeding northeastward towards Grenoble, VI Corps continued up the Rhone Valley. Before reaching Grenoble TF Butler turned west and attempted to block the Rhone Valley in rear of the retreating Germans in the Valence area where a stiff fight ensued and heavy casualties were inflicted upon the enemy. Meanwhile, strong French forces had advanced up the west bank of the Rhone to protect Seventh Army's left flank. After the Valence battle, the advance continued rapidly northward.

2. Sixth Army Group Assumes Command.

Moving from St Tropez where the first headquarters was established on 31 August to Lyon, Sixth Army Group assumed command of "DRAGOON" forces on 15 September. French elements became First French Army when 6th Army Group took command. Main body of our forces was generally along the line DIJON-BESANCON. Patrols of the 1 DMI of French Army "B" and 2 DB, French division of XV Corps, established contact at SOMBERNON on 11 September. On 14th September firm contact was made between the two divisions SE of CHAUMONT. After contact with XV Corps was made, French Army moved to right of Seventh Army. First French Army was directed on the axis BESANCON-BELFORT while VI Corps was advancing on axis VESOUL-ST DIE. XV Corps, composed of 79th US Infantry Division and 2nd French Armored Division, was transferred to the 6th Army Group on 29 September in the LUNEVILLE area. Late in October three new US Divisions, 100th and 103rd Infantry and 14th Armored debarked at Marseilles and were assigned to 6th Army Group.

3. Offensive to Close to the Rhine.

On November 13, Seventh Army, composed of the VI and XV Corps, began operations destined to breach the SAVERNE Gap and capture Strasbourg by 23 November. On November 14, First French Army's offensive against BELFORT GAP began and MULHOUSE was captured on 22 November.

4. Ardennes Offensive.

After capturing STRASBOURG, Seventh Army turned north and had reached the Franco-German border when the German ARDENNES counteroffensive upset operations. Seventh Army sideslipped to the left, taking over a Corps' sector from Third Army, thereby weakening its front and shelving temporarily its offensive. On 1 January, a strong German attack was hurled against Seventh Army in the HARDT Mountains and made some headway before being stalled. These operations, however, made it necessary for Seventh Army to withdraw to the Moder River Line which it occupied while operations were underway to reduce the Colmar Pocket.

5. Colmar Pocket Offensive.

With the 3rd US Division under command, the French II Corps launched an attack southward on 22 January to join up with French I Corps attacking towards the north to reduce the Colmar Pocket. Operations did not progress as rapidly as expected and the XXI US Corps with the 28th and 75th Infantry and 12th Armored Divisions were sent in to bolster the attack. When the XXI Corps came into the picture 3rd US Division went under its control. With this added strength, German resistance was broken and the west bank of the Rhine south of Strasbourg was cleared of enemy on 9 February. Following this operation, the entire XXI Corps was transferred back to Seventh Army.

6. Breaching the Siegfried Line.

Rested and refitted and strengthened by addition of 63rd, 42nd Infantry, and 10th Armored Divisions, Seventh Army launched an attack against the Siegfried Line 15 March as Third Army drove from the north from across the Moselle River through

the Saar Palatinate. Aided by the rapid advance of Third Army, Seventh Army rapidly closed to the Rhine River in its zone while making preparations to make an assault crossing across the river at the same time. All organized resistance west of the Rhine River ended 25 March.

7. Crossing the Rhine and Advance to East.

As Third Army advanced on Frankfurt from its bridgehead across the Rhine, Seventh Army, spearheaded by the 3rd and 45th Infantry Divisions, established a bridgehead over the Rhine on 25 March. Progress was rapid and Seventh Army elements relieved Third Army units along the Main River on 27 March. Advancing eastward, Seventh Army moved north of Nuremburg to the Bayreuth area where it was turned southward, directed on Munich. First French Army made an assault crossing of the Rhine on 31 March and advanced southward on KARLSRUHE.

8. Turn Southward.

Seventh Army turned southward at BAYREUTH, captured Nuremburg on 18 April while First French Army was advancing down the Rhine plain and extending into the Black Forest area. After taking these objectives, the armies regrouped on the run and continued a relentless pursuit of the shattered German forces with Seventh Army capturing ULM on 24 April and Munich on 1 May as First French Army sealed the German-Swiss border on 25 April and reduced organized resistance in the Black Forest area on 27 April.

9. Operations into Western Austria.

Directed to occupy the mountainous region of western Austria to prevent the formation of the much talked about German National "Redoubt", 6th Army Group directed Seventh Army to continue southward with fast, mobile forces to seize INNSBRUCK and LANDECK to block passes into northern Italy while First French Army was instructed to seize the highly important BREGENZ-FELDKIRCH hinge of the "Redoubt" along the Austrian-Swiss border. BREGENZ was captured 2 May and progress continued to the south in the French sector. Seventh Army advanced well into the Alps and was only three miles from the important east-west communication link of the INN River in the INNSBRUCK area.

Entry of 6th Army Group units into western Austria means an advance of over 900 miles since the landing in southern France 15th August 1944.

G-3, Joint Planning Sec + Historian got this
out complete with 2 lig 12 foot square
situation maps with phase lines etc
for Gen Devers briefing to the press -
- all in about 4 hours.