

**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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**OPERATION SHINGLE AND
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN P. LUCAS**

BY

**COMMANDER ROGER W. SASSMAN
United States Naval Reserve**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**Operation SHINGLE and
Major General John P. Lucas**

by

Commander Roger W. Sassman
United States Naval Reserve

Colonel Brian Moore, USMC (Ret)
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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ABSTRACT

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Operation SHINGLE, the World War II amphibious turning movement at Anzio, placed VI Corps of the Allied 5th Army seventy miles behind the German Gustav Line defenses in central Italy. The operation's objective of cutting German lines of communication and thereby turning German defenses on the Gustav Line would force a German retreat that would liberate Rome was a failure. The American commander, Major General John P. Lucas, has been frequently maligned for failing to use greater initiative in quickly seizing the Alban Hills as soon as the Allies landed at Anzio. The assault on his military skills is not justified. Had General Lucas seized the Alban Hills, as the plan intended, he would likely have lost his entire Corps to German counterattack. This paper addresses the strategic and operational facets of the plan to seize the Alban Hills. General Lucas was probably not the best choice to lead the Anzio landing. Nevertheless, he took what would prove the best course of action to deal with the circumstances in which he found himself and VI Corps at Anzio.

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**OPERATION SHINGLE AND
Major General John P. Lucas**

THESIS

At 0200 on 22 January 1944, a combined American and British force of two reinforced divisions landed on beaches 35 miles south of Rome at the resort town of Anzio in an amphibious assault known as Operation SHINGLE. Major General John P. Lucas commanded the landing force, organized as the VI Corps of the American 5th Army.

Described as "one of the most unfortunate and tragic figures of World War II," General Lucas was widely maligned during and after the battle for failing to take swift action to break out of the Anzio beachhead.¹ "On his unhappy head fell the wrath of all those who were chagrined and disappointed by the early failure of the landing."² Instead of ending the stalemate at the Gustav Line 70 miles to the south, VI Corps fought a desperate battle over three months to retain a tenuous foothold behind German lines.

Unjustly accused, General Lucas was ultimately relieved by the 5th Army commander, Lieutenant General Mark Clark on 22 February 1943, one month to the day after the landing. "Lucas has been heavily criticized ... but it is impossible to withhold sympathy for a man who, at the summit of his military career, finds himself in a position from which he is removed under a

cloud of professional disapproval."³ Lucas was sacrificed as a convenient scapegoat for the failure of a poorly planned operation doomed before it began to stalemate at best and failure at worst.

PERSPECTIVE

To understand Anzio, one must understand the circumstances of the time. Entering the World War II following the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, the United States followed a strategy that placed first priority on victory over Germany in Europe before shifting full effort against Japan in the Pacific. President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill concurred early in this policy.⁴

Though difficult for many Americans to accept, President Roosevelt fully understood that, after three years of war, Great Britain had suffered extensive manpower and material losses and was exhausted. The United States wanted to open a Western Front against Germany as soon as possible, and believed that a direct English Channel crossing into France was the fastest way to end the war in Europe so the focus could be shifted to defeating Japan. A tired and drained Great Britain was more interested in peripheral land operations that would limit manpower losses while the strategic air bombing campaign, combined with the Soviet Union's (USSR) Eastern Front efforts, further weakened Germany. By 1943, Great Britain was so short of manpower that a division

would be disestablished every month to provide replacements for her remaining units.⁵

In 1942, President Roosevelt conceded that Allied forces were still too weak to directly attack German forces on the continent. Consequently, American forces joined the British in the North African campaign to train unblooded troops and to keep German forces engaged. By 1943, the Allies had thrown Germany out of North Africa, but had not yet secured the Mediterranean for Allied shipping through the Suez Canal to the USSR (via the Persian Gulf) and the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater.

By the autumn of 1943, the USSR had been fighting for over two years a massive land battle against German forces on what was known as the Eastern Front. The Soviet leader, Josef Stalin desperately wanted the United States and Great Britain to open a Second (Western) Front against Germany to relieve pressure on the USSR's battered armies.

Lacking sufficient assault craft and troops to conduct a cross-Channel invasion to open the Western Front in France, the Allies captured Sicily and began moving up the Italian boot. The military objective of the campaign was divert and engage German forces, thereby weakening German efforts on the Eastern Front and Atlantic Wall defenses.⁶ Roosevelt and Churchill felt this would appease Stalin's demands for help against Germany while at the same time the United States and Britain were building up forces and ships for Operation OVERLORD, the planned spring 1944 cross-

channel amphibious assault in France. In addition to the military objectives, an overriding political consideration was Churchill's growing obsession with capturing Rome. He wanted to seize Rome to prevent the OVERLORD cross-Channel invasion from permanently forcing the Italian campaign out of the spotlight.⁷

As 1943 drew to a close, the Allied offensive in Italy stalled before the stubborn German defenses of the Gustav Line between Naples and Rome. Unable to breach the Gustav Line by frontal assault, the Allies planned an amphibious assault to break the stalemate.⁸ The best option available to the Allies was to land at Anzio, 70 miles behind the Gustav Line. From there they could quickly drive 20 miles inland and seize the Alban Hills (also known as the Colli Laziali), cutting the primary German communications with the Gustav Line. The Allies hoped this would force the Germans to retreat north of Rome or face being cut off.⁹

Anzio was considered the best landing site for a variety of reasons. First, it combined acceptable assault beaches with a good port facility to logistically support the force. Second, the large coastal plain would permit the Allies to exploit their superior armor mobility, which had been stymied in the rugged Italian mountains.¹⁰ Third, Anzio's proximity (less than 100 miles) to air bases at Foggia would allow good tactical air support.¹¹ Each geographic feature was considered essential to

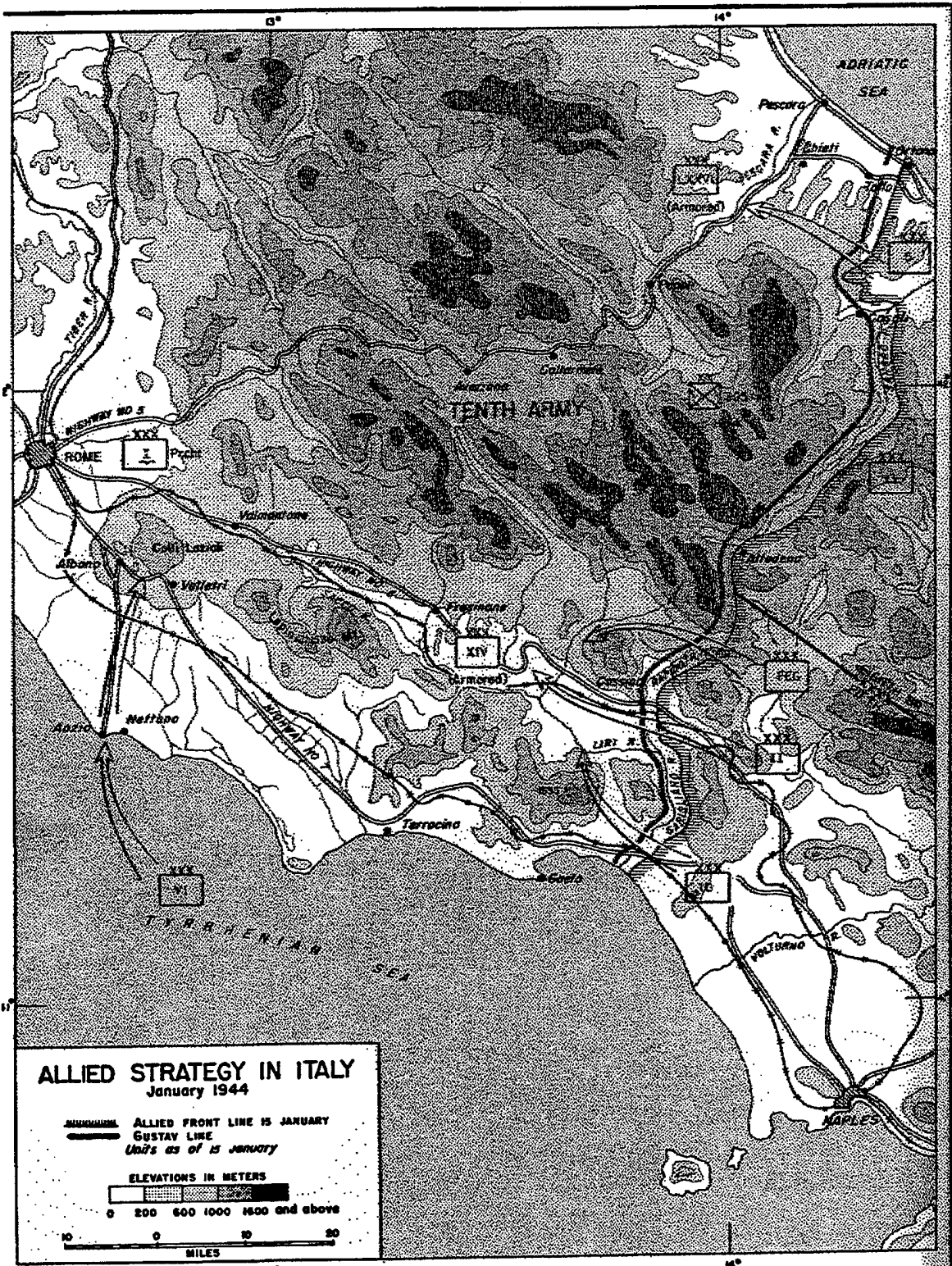


Figure 1

operational success, particularly in moving the landing force rapidly into the Alban Hills to cut the German communications.

CHURCHILL

In October 1943, the Mediterranean Theater contained only sufficient landing craft to land and support one division.¹² Landing craft availability, particularly Tank Landing Ships (LSTs), would restrict the scope and timing of every amphibious assault in World War II.¹³ Anzio was no exception. A force of one division was viewed as clearly insufficient to accomplish the mission, and Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean (SAC-MED), General Dwight D. Eisenhower, shelved the plan to land at Anzio.¹⁴

Several events transpired to change the landing craft situation. On 8 January 1944, General Eisenhower left for Britain to assume command of Supreme Headquarters Allied Forces Europe (SHAPE) in preparation for OVERLORD. General Sir Henry M. Wilson, formerly the British Middle East Commander, relieved IKE as SAC-MED. The 15th Allied Army Group Commander, British General Harold R.L.G. Alexander, ran the Italian land campaign.¹⁵

One of the consequences of the command change was to give the British executive direction of the Mediterranean Theater, making the theater, in effect, a British province. With Wilson in command, (Prime Minister) Churchill and (British Chief of Staff Sir Alan) Brooke would have the final say (on theater operations).¹⁶

In December 1943, Churchill contracted pneumonia while returning from the Cairo and Teheran conferences, and he was hospitalized in Tunis to recuperate. While recovering, Churchill used his idle time to review Allied progress in the Mediterranean theater. He became obsessed with ending the stagnation on the Italian Front by resurrecting an assault at Anzio.¹⁷ He saw Rome as a political prize that would revitalize the importance of the Mediterranean Theater.¹⁸ Churchill appealed directly to Roosevelt to retain sufficient LSTs in Italy to execute the landing with two reinforced divisions. This force was considered the absolute minimum size necessary for success. It was also the maximum force that available sealift could logistically support.¹⁹ On December 28th, Roosevelt agreed to extend the LSTs in Italy, but only until February 5th, when they would be moved to Britain because OVERLORD was scheduled for May 1944.²⁰

THE COMMANDERS

Alexander's 15th Army Group in Italy consisted of two armies. The British Eighth Army under Lieutenant General Sir Oliver Leese, who relieved General Sir Bernard Montgomery upon his return to England to prepare British forces for OVERLORD, held the Adriatic (eastern) side of the Allied line.²¹ The American Fifth Army, under Lieutenant General Mark Clark, held the western side of the Allied line and owned the VI Corps (Lucas') assault force.²²

The VI Corps assault element included Major General Lucian Truscott's 3rd U.S. Infantry Division, Colonel William Darby's three Ranger Battalions, Major General Penney's 1st British Infantry Division, and other reinforcing elements.²³

Allied Chain of Command

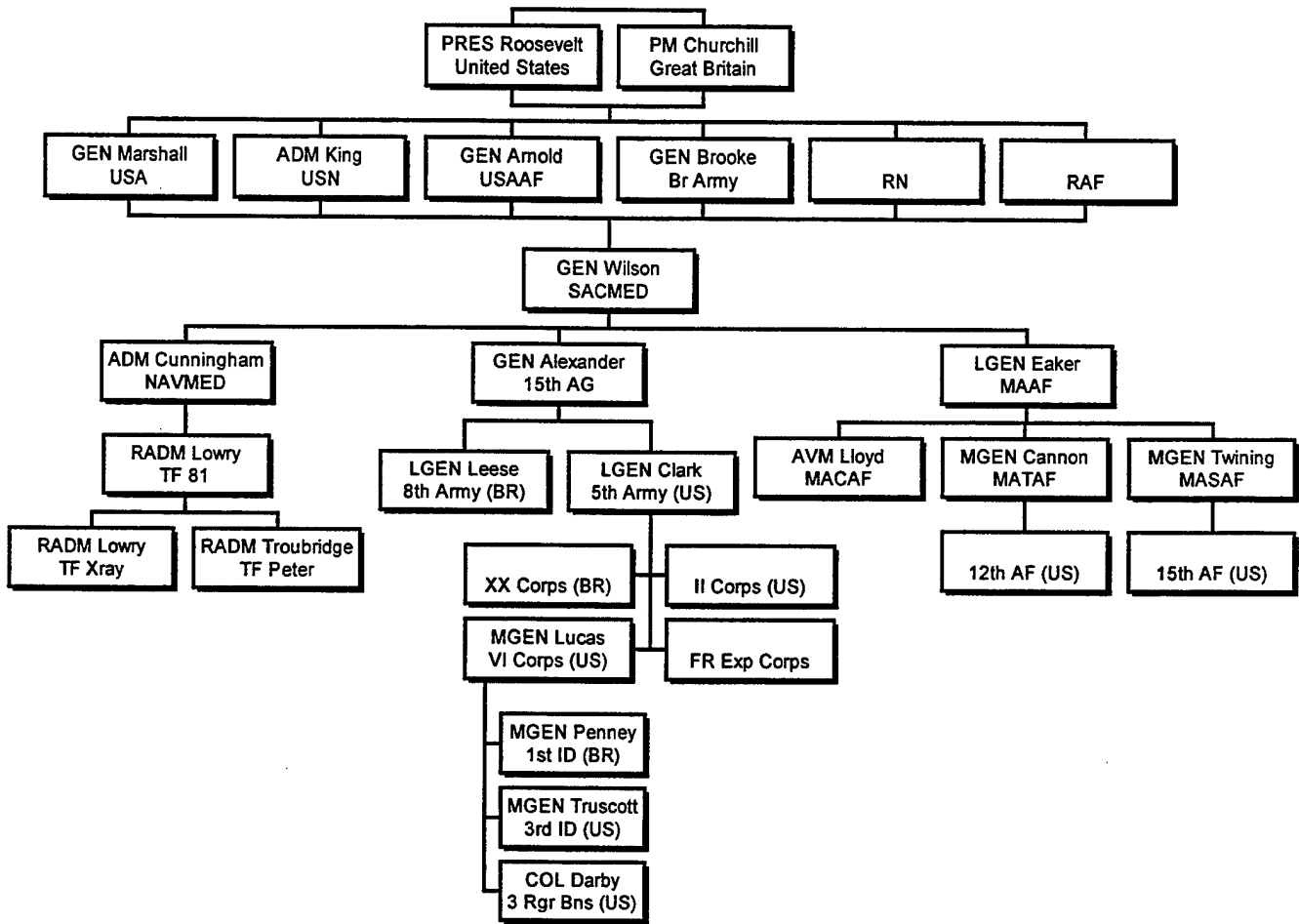


Figure 2

General Lucas was tired after months of mountain warfare as VI Corps commander. "He was 54, and he felt, as he was to note in his diary on his birthday a few weeks later, 'every year of

it.'"²⁴ He was patient, thorough, cautious, and friendly, with an abiding concern for the welfare of his troops. He lacked confidence in his British troops and in the purpose of the assault.²⁵ Although General Alexander told Lucas at the time of the assault that he was hand picked for the job, he later stated that Lucas was simply the only Corps Commander available.²⁶ Although an able officer, Lucas' inherently cautious personality and exhausted condition in late 1943 made him a poor choice for a plan that depended on lightning movement inland after the landing.

PLANNING

With barely enough landing craft on hand and those only available until early-February 1944, the landing of VI Corps was set for 22 January, barely three weeks away. Further delay was impossible. So was adequate planning and preparation for the landing. A rehearsal held on beaches south of Naples on 19 January was a fiasco. Forty-three amphibious trucks (DUKWs) and nineteen howitzers were lost, and several men drowned. Lucas requested more time for another rehearsal. Clark told Lucas bluntly, "You won't get another rehearsal. The date has been set at the very highest level. There is no possibility of delaying it for even a day. You've got to do it."²⁷ Lucas was not aware of the schedule restrictions that OVERLORD placed on the Anzio landing.²⁸

Due to the limited size of the landing force, rapid linkup with Allied troops advancing from the south was vital to successfully forcing the Germans out of the Gustav Line. Two divisions were simply insufficient and could not hold an extended perimeter, 45+ miles in length, from the Anzio beachhead to the Alban Hills for more than a few days. By doctrine, a force of this size should only hold a frontal length of 20 miles.²⁹ In seizing the Alban Hills, the landing force's survival would totally depend on a breakout of Allied forces from the south to join up with the beachhead. If those forces were unsuccessful in their breakout bid, German units arriving from France and northern Italy would rapidly destroy the overextended landing force trying to hold both the logistic beachhead at Anzio and the Alban Hills.

Generals' Clark and Alexander planned to assault the Gustav Line just days before the landing, forcing the Germans to commit their reserves. They hoped that "by posing a threat to German lines of communication between the main front and Rome, the Anzio force might so dishearten and demoralize the Germans that they would weaken their front, withdraw to face the threat in their rear, and thereby facilitate the Fifth Army's advance to Rome. The idea was attractive but impractical."³⁰ As General Alexander put it, "It would, admittedly, be rather in the nature of a bluff."³¹

If Allied troops could wrest road and railway from the Germans, they would be in possession of one of two main

lines of communication between Rome and Naples. Unless they took the Alban Hills themselves and dominated the second railway and the Via Casilina on the north side, they would not cut these communications; their beachhead would be a mere nuisance to the enemy, who might be expected to react violently against it. That was the fundamental weakness of Operation SHINGLE. Either it was a job for a full army, or it was no job at all; to attempt it with only two divisions was to send a boy on a man's errand.³²

THE GUIDANCE

Churchill's unbridled optimism and desire for a quick thrust were not conveyed to the on-scene commander, General Lucas, until too late to make a difference in the operation.

General Clark, as commander of one of the two armies comprising the 15th Army Group emphasized to Lucas that his principal task was to gain and secure a beachhead. He must on no account press forward to the Alban Hills at the risk of losing his Corps. If there seemed no danger in getting to the Alban Hills, all well and good; but his primary duty was to get his men ashore and to hold a beachhead.³³

Clark's G-3, Brigadier General Donald W. Brann, personally made it clear to Lucas that the Alban Hills were the objective of the 5th Army advancing up the Liri Valley more than the objective of VI Corps.³⁴ Clark's direction to exercise extreme caution was based on his personal very bad experience at the recent Salerno landing, where the Germans had severely handled the landing force.³⁵ His written orders were to move **toward** the Alban Hills if possible, with no mention of the hills as an urgent or ultimate objective.³⁶ Even General Alexander, on two visits to the beachhead on D-Day and D+3, praised Lucas and failed to press for rapid movement inland.³⁷

Whatever their reasons for not applying the spur, General Alexander and General Clark sailed from the beachhead in the afternoon (of D-day) leaving the impression behind them that they were satisfied with the progress made and that they approved the policy of waiting for the German counter-attack.³⁸

Clearly, the operational guidance provided to Lucas was not in agreement with Churchill's concept. Churchill later described the landing as a "stranded whale", not the "wildcat" he had envisioned.³⁹

THE GERMANS

Following the loss of North Africa and Sicily, Hitler never seriously considered abandoning all of Italy because it would place Allied heavy bombers too close to Germany. He assigned Field Marshall Irwin Rommel to northern Italy to secure the mountain passes and take charge of German forces as they retreated north of Rome. The commander of German forces in southern Italy was an Italophile, Air Marshall Albert Kesselring.⁴⁰ Kesselring was determined to hold as much of Italy for as long as possible. He gained Hitler's confidence with his stubborn defense of the Gustav Line.

Axis Chain of Command

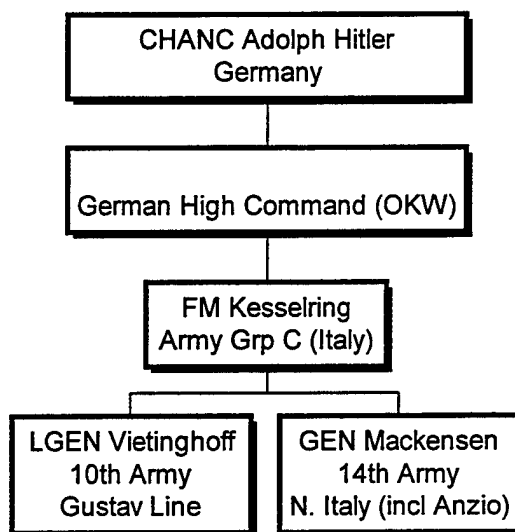


Figure 3

Consequently, Rommel was relieved of northern Italy on 6 November 1943 and sent to strengthen the Atlantic Wall against the anticipated cross-Channel landing. Kesselring assumed command of the entire Italian Theater.⁴¹

The German 10th Army, under General Heinrich von Veitinghoff, held the Gustav Line. German forces north of the front were more loosely organized as the 14th Army, commanded by General Eberhard von Mackensen.⁴²

Kesselring knew he possessed insufficient forces to stop an amphibious assault at each possible location. He felt that by judicious placement of reserve forces, he could contain and destroy a landing without diverting forces from the 10th Army on the Gustav Line to do it.⁴³

Kesselring, with fresh divisions in northern Italy and others promised from France and Germany, had plans all worked out in case the Allies attempted to land at

Leghorn, Genoa, Ravenna, Istria, or Anzio. He was ready to execute any one of them when and if the Allies acted, but not before.⁴⁴

Since the Germans had no intent to abandon the Gustav Line if cut off from the rear by amphibious assault, the Allied gamble at Anzio was doomed before it began.

AIR SUPPORT

Air power to support the landing was critical to the Anzio landing. Key missions included interdiction of German reinforcing lines of communication, preventing German air attacks on the beachhead by offensive counter-air operations, and providing close air support (CAS), particularly to units beyond the range of artillery and naval gunfire support (NGFS).

Air assets in Italy fell under the control of Lieutenant General Ira Eaker, Mediterranean Allied Air Forces (MAAF) commander. He had three primary tasks: to support the Combined Bomber Offensive against Germany, to support the ground campaign in Italy, and to protect the Mediterranean shipping lanes. To accomplish these tasks he depended on three distinct air forces with over 2600 aircraft.⁴⁵

The Mediterranean Allied Strategic Air Forces (MASAF) under Major General Nathan Twining, consisted of heavy bombers plus escort fighters and received their tasking directly from General Spaatz at United States Strategic Air Forces (USSTAF) in Great Britain. They could be retasked to support the Italian theater only in emergencies as requested by General Wilson, SAC-MED.⁴⁶

The Mediterranean Allied Coastal Air Forces (MACAF) under Air Vice Marshal Sir Hugh Lloyd protected the Liberty ships and LSTs that provided all logistic support for the landing.⁴⁷

The Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Forces (MATAF) under Major General John Cannon provided most of the support to the Anzio operation. This force tried with little success to interdict German reinforcing efforts. They also tried to break up enemy troop concentrations behind the German lines. The CAS mission was severely limited by a lack of direct communications between air liaison officers assigned to the task force and the MATAF squadrons supporting the landing or their aircraft. This limitation also hampered deconfliction of Allied aircraft from Axis raids.⁴⁸ Although the Allies retained control of the skies throughout the campaign, the poor winter weather effectively negated this advantage.

NAVAL SUPPORT

Naval forces supporting Anzio were organized as Task Force 81 under Admiral Lowry. They were further split along national lines to support landing of their own troops. Lowry retained American ships in Task Force Xray, with British ships under Rear Admiral Troubridge in Task Force Peter.⁴⁹

The lack of battleships in the Mediterranean Theater severely limited the impact of NGFS at Anzio. The six-inch guns of the available light cruisers, kept three miles offshore by shallow water and mines, could not support land forces more than

six miles from the beach. Consequently, by January 24th, the landing force had moved too far inland and NGFS was limited to protecting the beachhead flanks, where the Moletta River (northwest) and Pontine Marshes (southeast) formed strong natural barriers to German counterattack.⁵⁰

Minesweepers cleared the approaches to Anzio and destroyers reinforced air defenses to prevent infrequent German raids from damaging the vital port facilities, without which the beachhead could not be sustained. A steady stream of LSTs from Naples and Liberty ships from North African ports kept the supply line open. At the height of the battle, 450 Allied artillery pieces were firing 20,000 rounds per day (plus naval gunfire support), compared to 1,500 rounds daily by the Germans.⁵¹ This weight of shell was only possible because of Herculean efforts to resupply the beachhead.

One ingenious supply method involved LSTs loaded at Naples, each with 50 trucks carrying 5 tons of ammo, fuel, and food. The trucks could drive off the LST in the Anzio port and proceed directly to the supply dumps or units requiring replenishment. Empty trucks would return to Naples on an LST the next day. This efficient system allowed a 72-hour turnaround from request for specific items to delivery in the beachhead.⁵² At the height of operation, the port of Anzio was the 6th busiest in the world in tonnage unloaded.⁵³

WEATHER

Winter had three major impacts on the Allied effort, all of them negative. As previously stated, continuous cloud cover in Italy rendered Allied air forces unable to stem the flow of German reinforcements into the area or provide significant close air support. Aircraft were regularly grounded or could not find targets due to poor visibility.⁵⁴

Constant rain soaked the plain surrounding Anzio, creating a quagmire that restricted armor to the few roads. This allowed the Germans to focus their limited assets on the very few avenues out of the beachhead and negated the Allied maneuver advantage as effectively as the rugged mountains of the interior.

The rain also flooded the Rapido River to the extent that the American 36th Division was severely mauled trying to cross it in the Gustav Line offensive just before the landing. Failure to breach the Gustav Line doomed the Anzio landing to stalemate.⁵⁵ Lucas would be unable to seize and hold the Alban Hills without relief, and 5th Army was simply unable to break through the German defenses and hostile terrain.

THE LANDING

With caution as both his innate nature and his superior's explicit guidance, Lucas set out for Anzio following the rehearsal landing. Several events immediately went in favor of the Allied assault. Luftwaffe air reconnaissance planes were grounded and the Germans were not alerted that the landing force

had sailed from Naples. Consequently, with no German combat units assigned to the area, the Allied landing was virtually unopposed. Unknown to the Allies, it would be several hours before the Germans could assemble credible defensive forces to counter the landing.⁵⁶ This window of lost opportunity would forever haunt Lucas.

In another stroke of good fortune, Anzio's sheltered port facilities were captured intact before German engineers could destroy them. The exposed beaches at Anzio and Nettuno were almost useless for resupply because they were too shallow, with offshore sandbars, and rough winter weather made causeway use impractical.⁵⁷ The eventual survival of the beachhead hinged on this lucky turn of events.

Lucas moved his forces inland to their initial beachhead line and prepared defensive positions while improving the port facility and building up sufficient logistic assets. He would not risk his corps by racing inland without a secure base of operations.

BUILDUP AND CONFLICT

By the late morning of January 22nd, Kesselring was confident he could contain the Allies in the beachhead. When he activated the 14th Army Headquarters on the 23rd, he felt, "we no longer have to fear any major reverse."⁵⁸ On 24 January, VI Corps began offensive operations toward Campoleone and Cisterna. The operation became a race between the Germans moving forces south

and the Allies bring reinforcing units ashore. By the 30th, eight days after the landing, the Allies had landed 60,000 troops while the Germans had built up to 70,000 troops.⁵⁹ The offensive stalled on 3 February and Lucas began preparing defensive positions for the expected counterattack. The German counteroffensive stalled on 12 February, when the American 45th Infantry Division moved into the defensive line to relieve much of the British 1st Infantry Division, which bore the brunt of the German onslaught. Over the next four days, the British 56th Infantry and American 1st Armored Divisions would strengthen the beachhead defenses but could not shift the initiative back to the Allies. The Germans resumed the offensive from Campoleone on 16 February, making their strongest effort to push VI Corps back into the sea. Suffering heavy losses from massive combination of artillery, air strikes, and naval gunfire, the German assault reached culmination on 20 February and subsided. "The former 3rd Division Commanding General, General Lucian Truscott, who had been named Deputy Commander of VI Corps on 17 February, succeeded General Lucas as Commander of VI Corps on 23 February."⁶⁰

Allied efforts to advance out of the beachhead were limited by stubborn German resistance and horrible weather, which deprived them of tank maneuverability and air superiority. A period of trench warfare reminiscent of World War I set in during March and April as VI Corps built up reserve forces and supplies to resume the offensive once 5th Army broke through the Gustav

Line to the south.⁶¹ Ultimately, VI Corps would grow to 110,000 troops and the German 14th Army would grow to 135,000 troops, but neither resumed the offensive until the Alexander's 15th Army Group broke through the Gustav line in late May. Allied VI Corps combat casualties were 29,200, including 4,400 killed, while German 14th Army combat casualties were estimated at 27,500.⁶²

SUMMARY

With the capture of Rome, Fifth Army attained the ultimate goal toward which the Anzio landing had originally been directed. On the eve of the landing on 22 January, the Allied High Command had hoped that the surprise assault behind the German Tenth Army, combined with a strong offensive in the south, would collapse the enemy's resistance along the Gustav Line and lead to a rapid march on Rome. Actually, the Anzio assault did not become a phase in an overall Allied offensive, for the attack in the south stalled on the very day that the men of VI Corps swarmed unopposed over the beaches near Anzio. What had been envisioned as a brief operation coordinated with an Allied drive from the south became an isolated and bitter struggle to preserve a strategic foothold far behind the main enemy line of defense. Reinforced, Allied VI Corps was able to hold the beachhead, and then to build up its forces to fulfill its role in the spectacular spring offensive.⁶³

When Clark relieved Lucas he did so without prejudice, feeling Lucas was worn out. Nevertheless, he was unwilling to take further heat from Alexander on Lucas' performance.⁶⁴

General Lucas was sacrificed to restore the confidence of the defenders. In truth, he was a competent professional soldier, well liked in Army circles but placed in a position where competence is not enough. There was need at Anzio of a man of steely resolution and resilience.⁶⁵

Lucas returned to the United States, getting a third star and command of the 4th Army.⁶⁶

Army Field Service Regulations concerning large unit operations state that "the decisions and plans of the commander must be positive and clear-cut, and they must visualize the attainment of the ultimate objective."⁶⁷ Churchill and Alexander intended that VI Corps seize the Alban Hills. Clark not only failed to convey that objective to Lucas, he intentionally provided guidance to the effect that protecting VI Corps was of greater importance than advancing to the Alban Hills.

If Lucas had been aggressive and immediately seized the Alban Hills he would have been forced to violate another doctrinal tenet. "To allot a division an excessive frontage invites a hostile penetration and break-through. The means of modern warfare demand that the defensive position be organized in great depth and that organized areas be mutually supporting."⁶⁸ A frontage stretching from Anzio to the Alban Hills would have been impossible for Lucas to hold for more than a few days. Defensive depth was out of the question. "If Lucas had 'stuck his neck out', he would in all probability have lost his neck, and the beachhead too."⁶⁹

Kesselring had decided long before the landing that he would not panic and abandon the Gustav Line if it occurred, but would counter a landing with 14th Army units. Had VI Corps seized the Alban Hills when "opportunity knocked" on 22 January, it would depend utterly and completely on quick relief by 5th Army.

Without relief, Mackensen's 14th Army would almost certainly have destroyed Lucas' thinly dispersed VI Corps.

Wet weather conspired to deprive Lucas of air superiority and maneuver room that might have permitted greater risk-taking on his part. Lack of sealift prevented the rapid landing of a decisive and self-sustaining strike force. In retrospect, the time restraints forced by sealift availability resulted in weak planning that did not account for these factors. "The fundamental flaw of the maneuver was the haste with which it was prepared and executed."⁷⁰ "There are too many hypotheses involved to make further speculation valuable; but such conclusions as can be drawn are at any rate satisfactory: that the actual course of events was probably the most advantageous in the end."⁷¹

Fifth Army broke through the Gustav Line in late May and Rome fell to General Clark on 4 June 1944. Two days later, Eisenhower would land at Normandy and the Italian campaign would become a backwater. Axis resistance in northern Italy would last until just days before Germany's May 1945 surrender.

The Allied strategic leaders dealt the operational commander, Major General John Lucas, a poor hand and he made the best of it. Churchill, by sheer willpower, forced the Allies into an unnecessary operation with limited forces, supported by marginal logistics, under appalling winter weather conditions. By pursuit of the cautious, vice bold, path of operations, Lucas

saved his corps from probable destruction, but guaranteed that the operational objectives would not be achieved. The failure of Operation SHINGLE was not Lucas' alone. It was a failure of strategic decision-making by Churchill and the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) that absorbed Allied resources far out of proportion with its military or political benefit.

WORD COUNT = 4679

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