THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION IN SICILY: A CASE STUDY IN TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE

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This case study examines how, and to what effect, the 1st Infantry Division used tactical intelligence to support its amphibious assault during the first phase of the Sicily Campaign in 1943. Close scrutiny of field orders, intelligence estimates, and message traffic reveals that the unit's tactical intelligence effort, led by the G-2, shaped military decision-making by the division commander and other leaders during this critical initial operation of the invasion. This study concludes that these decisions directly impacted the division's successful five-day fight to secure and break out from its expeditionary beachhead. Moreover, the analysis attached to this detailed examination of the 1st Infantry Division's experience in Sicily adds insight into some of the more enduring challenges and opportunities associated with the art and science of expeditionary tactical intelligence operations. In particular, it highlights both the beneficial capabilities of the overarching Allied intelligence enterprise as well as its limitations and susceptibility to disruption amid the fog, friction, and chaos of ground combat.

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ABSTRACT

THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION IN SICILY: A CASE STUDY IN TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE, by Major Jonathan A. Woislaw, 271 pages.

This case study examines how, and to what effect, the 1st Infantry Division used tactical intelligence to support its amphibious assault during the first phase of the Sicily Campaign in 1943. Close scrutiny of field orders, intelligence estimates, and message traffic reveals that the unit's tactical intelligence effort, led by the G-2, shaped military decision-making by the division commander and other leaders during this critical initial operation of the invasion. This study concludes that these decisions directly impacted the division's successful five-day fight to secure and break out from its expeditionary beachhead. Moreover, the analysis attached to this detailed examination of the 1st Infantry Division's experience in Sicily adds insight into some of the more enduring challenges and opportunities associated with the art and science of expeditionary tactical intelligence operations. In particular, it highlights both the beneficial capabilities of the overarching Allied intelligence enterprise as well as its limitations and susceptibility to disruption amid the fog, friction, and chaos of ground combat.

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ACRONYMS

AFHQ	Allied Force Headquarters
ASC	Air support command
ASP	Air support party
AT	Anti-tank
CIC	Counter Intelligence Corps
CP	Command post
DIVARTY	Division Field Artillery
EEI	Essential element of information
FA	Field Artillery
G-2	Intelligence (headquarters staff section)
G-3	Operations (headquarters staff section)
HG	*Hermann Goering*
I&R	Intelligence and reconnaissance
LNO	Liaison officer
OP	Observation post
PIR	Priority intelligence requirement
PzG	*Panzergrenadier*
RCT	Regimental combat team
SIGINT	Signals intelligence
SIAM	Signal information and monitoring
SSA	Signal Security Agency
SIS	Signal Intelligence Service
USAAF	U.S. Army Air Force

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A Case Study in Tactical Intelligence

On the afternoon of 10 July 1943, American infantrymen equipped only with small arms and light antitank rockets peered out above the shallow fox holes they had only recently scraped from the rocky Sicilian soil. Ahead of them, the large and lumbering silhouettes of German tanks emerged cautiously over and between the crests of small, barren hills along the ridgeline—just as the 1st Infantry Division G-2 had predicted weeks before. According to the division's intelligence estimate, the soldiers of the 16th Infantry Regiment were in "tank-proof" terrain, placed there by the division commander's scheme of maneuver which was itself influenced by the G-2's pre-invasion assessment of the anticipated battlefield.[1] Still, despite these advantages of information and position, as well as the supporting naval gunfire that began crashing down on the enemy armor, the outcome of the fight, and indeed the whole amphibious assault, was in doubt. It would take two desperate days of close quarters action and hundreds of casualties before the division permanently secured its beachhead on the island.

This battle and those that soon followed beg a question. Is tactical intelligence a panacea for success in ground combat or merely a buzzword which belies much of the ambivalence held towards it by military historians? For soldiers and practitioners in

[1] Robert Porter, "Senior Officer Oral History Program," interview by LTC John N. Sloan, U.S. Army Military History Institute, Project 81, vol. 1, 1981, 292-293, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Wheaton, IL (hereafter referenced as Porter Interview).

modern armies, this is a settled issue and a sacrosanct principle—intelligence drives operations.[2] Many historians, however, leave the question far more open to critical scrutiny.

In their written works over the last century, military professionals, steeled by doctrine, tend to reinforce invaluable but inherently limited lessons from their own narrow scope of combat experience, usually in support of the value of tactical intelligence. By contrast, most historians draw their conclusions from a more remote survey of military history and are generally more concerned with the operational and strategic levels of war. Consequently, they often discount or otherwise overlook the importance of tactical intelligence. In examining the 1st Infantry Division's operations during the first phase of the Sicily Campaign, from 10 to 14 July 1943, this case study offers an alternative analytical vantage point from which to consider the utility and impact of tactical intelligence in combat.

Combining a practitioner's understanding of the complexities of ground combat with academic rigor and objectivity, this work evaluates how, and to what effect, Major General Terry Allen's division collected information and produced tactical intelligence in support of its amphibious assault during Operation "Husky." Using the division's extensive and meticulously preserved operational records as its primary evidence, it seeks to answer one central question relating to the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence operations in the first phase of the Sicily Campaign: did they matter? Stated another way, this study asks whether or not the division G-2, led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Porter,

[2] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 2-0, *Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 6 July, 2018), vii.

influenced both combat decision-making and the end results of the unit's first battles with German and Italian forces on the south coast of Sicily.

Writ large, the simplest answer to that question is: yes, tactical intelligence assisted Allen in making decisions and contributed to the 1st Infantry Division's successful amphibious assault. This study is concerned, however, with a more complete answer. That is: the division's tactical intelligence effort shaped several important decisions made by the unit's leaders in the first phase of the Sicily Campaign. Those decisions, for better or worse, directly impacted the overall outcome of the division's five-day fight to secure and break out from the Gela beachhead.

As the following chapters demonstrate, when Allen, his subordinate commanders, and the division staff received accurate and timely intelligence on the terrain and the enemy, they made sound decisions. Conversely, when Porter and his G-2 section were unclear about the nature of the enemy situation, the division's leaders were slow to adjust the unit's operations in response to new battlefield conditions. Even taking into account the role played by numerous other factors, the results of the unit's tactical intelligence effort manifested themselves clearly and distinctly within the decisions and actions that delivered the 1st Infantry Division through its initial period of intense expeditionary combat between 10 and 14 July 1943.

This study illuminates that reality as it evaluates the division's employment of tactical intelligence over the course of three distinct segments of its operations in 1943: its pre-invasion planning in May and June, the seizure and defense of the Gela beachhead on 10 and 11 July, and its transition to the offense between 12 and 14 July. In drawing its conclusions, this assessment offers objectivity along with an acknowledgement of the

ubiquitous presence of uncertainty and the multi-faceted nature of combat decision-making. Far from diminishing the value of the case study, attentiveness to these conditions grounds the work in realism and relevance.

Nor does this study elevate the success of the 1st Infantry Division G-2 beyond the truthful reality of its imperfect performance in Sicily. Setting aside the division's infamous failure in intelligence and decision-making ahead of its 1 to 6 August 1943 battle at Troina, which lies outside the scope of this work, the G-2's effort in June and early July was still far from unassailable.[3] Furthermore, as Michael Handel and Ralph Bennett clearly articulate, the myriad complex variables associated with warfare at the tactical level make it inherently difficult to establish definitive cause-and-effect relationships between tactical intelligence and combat outcomes.[4] They correctly point out that there are too many competing elements and too much missing information, known and unknown to actual participants and modern researchers alike that fail to cooperate with such a linear analysis.[5]

In part, this may help to explain the divergence between the opinions of soldiers and historians. The former experience the impact of tactical intelligence on their own

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[3] For background on tactical intelligence failures relating to the Battle of Troina, see: Albert N. Garland and Howard Smyth, assisted by Martin Blumenson, *The United States Army in World War II: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Sicily and the Surrender of Italy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1965), 324-327.

[4] Michael L. Handel, "Intelligence and Military Operations," in *Intelligence and Military Operations*, ed. Michael L. Handel (1990; repr., Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2004), 32; Ralph Bennett, "Intelligence and Strategy: Some Observations on the War in the Mediterranean 1941-45," in *Intelligence and Military Operations*, ed. Michael L. Handel (1990; repr., Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2004), 445.

[5] Ibid.

operations and value its contributions, even if they cannot pinpoint the exact parameters of its influence amid the chaos of combat. The latter, far removed in time and space from the battlefield, see a more complete and dispassionate picture of the fight and are therefore reluctant to credit just one condition as the proximate cause of victory or defeat. Nonetheless, there is much to be gained in the attempt to scrutinize even inferential correlations between information, decision-making, and tactical results. As this work demonstrates, there remains more than enough evidence available to tease out important insight regarding the capabilities and limitations of intelligence in combat.

Avoiding the pitfalls associated with the passage of time and historical hindsight, this work therefore supplies modern readers with a realistic analysis that considers the fog, friction, and chaos of combat as it was experienced by the 1st Infantry Division's commander, staff, and subordinate units on Sicily in 1943. Relying on minute-by-minute commentary found within surviving staff journals and operations logs, it will resonate with familiarity for combat leaders of all types. Finally, in highlighting some of the more enduring opportunities and challenges associated with tactical intelligence operations, its observations are worthy of contemplation by today's military intelligence professionals and the commanders they support.

Key Terms and Definitions

Where possible, this study uses terminology consistent with the U.S. Army's doctrine as it existed in 1943, leaning heavily on the 1940 version of Field Manual (FM) 30-5, *Military Intelligence–Combat Intelligence* and the 1941 edition of FM 100-5, *Field Service Regulations: Operations*. However, for the sake of clarity and utility to modern

readers, it is occasionally necessary to offer more precise definitions of some key terms. The definitions that follow meet such requirements and address the needs of this study.

Broadest of all terms discussed here, *information* is defined in FM 30-5 as: "All documents, facts, or observations of any kind which may serve to throw light on the enemy or the theater of operations."[6] Information is comprised of raw, unanalyzed data on the enemy or terrain in its most pure and basic form. Meaning and value has not yet been assigned. The data exists in isolation of context and awaits further analysis to determine its worth and significance.

Following from the definition of information, *military intelligence* is: "evaluated and interpreted information concerning a possible or actual enemy, or theater of operations, together with the conclusions drawn therefrom."[7] The distinguishing element between information and intelligence is therefore the analysis which allows commanders and staff officers to assign it value, especially through comparison with other information. The final piece of the definition is also important since intelligence is typically used to draw conclusions and to develop predictions about future enemy actions. In sum, analysis makes information useful to military operations and ultimately results in the production of intelligence.

Second World War doctrine discriminates, however, within the field of military intelligence between "War Department Intelligence" and "Combat Intelligence."[8] War

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[6] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 30-5, *Military Intelligence, Combat Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 17 April 1940), 1.

[7] Ibid., 1-2.

[8] War Department, FM 30-5, 1-2.

Department Intelligence roughly equates to the modern concept of strategic intelligence and concerns the overall capabilities of a nation's armed forces.[9] Combat Intelligence, by contrast, refers to "military intelligence produced in the field, after the outbreak of hostilities," and includes analysis of information at all levels of war—strategic, operational, and tactical.[10] For clarity, this study provides the term *tactical intelligence* to define analysis of information conducted by a tactical headquarters staff, such as the 1st Infantry Division G-2, which provides detailed information concerning the terrain and enemy forces within a unit's immediate area of operations. Current U.S. military publications highlight that it is used for "planning and conducting battles, engagements, and special missions."[11] This serves to distinguish tactical intelligence from the wide area intelligence operations conducted by operational level staffs during the Sicily Campaign, such as the 7th Army and 15th Army Group, as well as by Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) at the strategic level.[12]

Where the U.S. Army's Second World War doctrine offered the concept of combat intelligence as an all-encompassing term, modern military manuals present important distinctions which divide intelligence products into eight separate categories.[13] From this list, two categories of intelligence, "estimative" and "current," are critical

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[9] War Department, FM 30-5, 1-2; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 2-0, *Joint Intelligence* (Washington, DC: JCS, 22 October 2013), x.

[10] War Department, FM 30-5, 2.

[11] JCS, JP 2-0, x.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., I-18.

additions to the terminology of this study.[14] These two terms offer separate and important lenses through which to evaluate the major activities of the 1st Infantry Division's G-2 Section and serve as a focal point for this study.

Adjusting the doctrinal definition slightly, this study uses the term *estimative intelligence* to refer to written assessments—in this case both published "intelligence estimates" and daily "G-2 periodic reports"—which provided predictive analysis for a given battle period or action before it began. [15] Along these same lines, the U.S. Army's 1940 and 1941 documents directly connected estimative intelligence to pre-combat decision-making, stating that "[t]he estimate of the situation culminates in the decision."[16] The following chapters of this work examine the 1st Infantry Division's use of estimative intelligence in the context of those pre-battle decisions made by Allen and his staff on when, where, how, and why to employ the division's combat power to accomplish its assigned missions.

Expounding again from today's terminology, for the purpose of this study, a unit's *current intelligence* effort takes place *during* the actual execution of combat operations and is the basis on which commanders and staffs adjust their plans to suit the battlefield's actual conditions.[17] Even though earlier doctrine did not account for the

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[14] JCS, JP 2-0, I-18.

[15] Ibid., I-20; Oscar W. Koch with Robert G. Hays, *G-2: Intelligence for Patton* (Atglen: Schiffer Military History, 1999), 142.

[16] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Field Service Regulations: Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 22 May 1941), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM100-5_Operations_1941.pdf, 26.

[17] JCS, JP 2-0, I-18-19.

specific differentiation of current intelligence from the unified idea of combat intelligence, it did recognize a need for intelligence staffs to execute the same function:

> The commander's initial decision, however, must be supplemented by other decisions as the action progresses . . . Accordingly, the intelligence activities should be so directed as to investigate each capability with a view to finally determining which of his capabilities the enemy is actually adopting. This can be accomplished only by obtaining information which gradually eliminates certain capabilities and eventually enables G-2 to determine the line of action the enemy has adopted.[18]

In the context of this study, therefore, the term current intelligence encompasses the 1st Infantry Division G-2's continuous operations to provide accurate situational awareness to their commander and subordinate units to drive new decisions throughout the course of a battle period.

It is necessary here to acknowledge that those familiar with the practice of tactical intelligence could easily consider a division's daily periodic reports to fall within the category of current intelligence. However, once it landed in Sicily, the 1st Infantry Division conducted its operations almost exclusively on the basis of daily fragmentary orders issued from its higher headquarters. As a result, the division staff, including the G-2, never had the guidance or time necessary to conduct deliberate planning for operations more than 24 to 48 hours in advance. Given this reality, the G-2's daily periodic reports represent concise but vital examples of estimative intelligence upon which the Allen and the G-3 determined each day's scheme of maneuver and support.

Of course, the key input to any intelligence effort is, as described above, information. In the Second World War, the U.S. Army utilized "reconnaissance" as an

[18] War Department, FM 30-5, 7.

all-inclusive term to refer to the gathering of information with no discrimination between its various methods such as air, ground, or electronic. Once again, modern doctrine provides an opportunity for more precision through its own catch-all term of *information collection,* defined as: "the acquisition of information and the provision of this information to processing elements."[19] While similarly broad like the 1940s meaning of reconnaissance, reference to information collection as an overarching concept leaves critical space for further differentiation between collection methods.

Thus, within this work, the word *reconnaissance* describes actively tasked missions undertaken to obtain specific information on the enemy or terrain.[20] Conversely, *observation* refers to passive surveillance, generally over a wide area and usually conducted by a relatively static force.[21] For the sake of example, a scout platoon may undertake a reconnaissance mission by moving to or through a specific area to make contact with an enemy force whereas artillery observers may establish a concealed observation post to detect the movement of enemy troops passing before them. Though different, each activity falls within the realm of information collection and exists to provide information of value to commanders and their intelligence staffs.

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[19] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 3-55, *Information Collection* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 3 May 2013), 1-1.

[20] Ibid., 1-6.

[21] War Department, FM 30-5, 13; Today, the U.S. Army utilizes the term "surveillance" to describe these information collection activities. See: HQDA, FM 3-55, 1-11.

To focus and direct information collection operations, U.S. Army commanders and G-2s in the Second World War determined and prioritized their most significant knowledge gaps regarding the terrain and the enemy. On the basis of these gaps, the most important items were labeled as "essential elements of information" and guided each unit's information collection plan.[22] Equating almost exactly with the modern concept of priority intelligence requirements (PIRs), *essential elements of information (EEIs)* are:

> that information of the enemy, of the terrain not under our control, of meteorological conditions in territory held by the enemy, or hydrographic conditions needed by a commander in a particular situation in order to make a sound decision, conduct a maneuver, and avoid being surprised. The essential elements of information constitute the basis for orders governing the search for information.[23]

Both Second World War EEIs and modern PIRs have the same purpose: to enable commanders to make the best possible decisions.[24] Likewise, while commanders specify the information they require, intelligence staffs remain responsible for planning and executing the search for that information.[25]

As units execute their collection plans under the supervision of the G-2, however, some pieces of data are more instantly recognizable in value and meaning than others. Leaning on a term that has enjoyed great continuity for over a century, this case study

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[22] War Department, FM 100-5, 42.

[23] Ibid. Note: For an updated explanation of PIRs, see: JCS, JP 2-0, I-7.

[24] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 2-0, *Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 6 July 2018), 1-11; War Department, FM 100-5, 42; Note: In modern Joint doctrine, EEIs are "subsets" of PIRs and answer important associated questions. See: JCS, JP 2-0, I-7.

[25] War Department, FM 30-5, 8; HQDA, FM 2-0, 1-11.

draws from the most current U.S. doctrine to define *indication* as: "information in various degrees of evaluation, all of which bear on the intention of a potential enemy to adopt or reject a course of action."[26] Once they are in possession of information, intelligence staffs determine if their collected data contains indications as to what the enemy is likely to do in a given situation. Grouped according to common activities associated with all forms of military operations, such as offense and defense, indications are clear signals that require minimal analysis and are easily understood by intelligence professionals and regular soldiers alike. Notwithstanding the enemy's use of deception to telegraph false intentions, often just one timely indication, provided through a unit's current intelligence effort, can drive important new decisions amid the fast-paced and highly reactive environment of tactical ground combat.

The Dynamics of Art and Science: Combat Decision-Making and Tactical Intelligence

While today's network-enabled military intelligence systems and processes are vast and extraordinarily capable, tactical headquarters at the division level and below still suffer from the deleterious effects of confusion and chaos on the modern battlefield. Conceptualized by the inescapably relevant 19th Century Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz through his explanation of terms such as "fog" and "friction," these elemental conditions of combat have disrupted military activities at all levels for

[26] JCS, JP 2-0, GL-8; Note: A related, but different, intelligence term is *indicator*, which U.S. Joint doctrine defines as: "an item of information which reflects the intention or capability of an adversary to adopt or reject a course of action." Typically, intelligence staffs provide indicators to information collection units as part of the collection requirements management process. See: JCS, JP 2-0, GL-8.

millennia, up to and including the present day.[27] Operations in complex terrain and against capable enemy forces, such as those experienced by the 1st Infantry Division in Sicily, only compound the challenges faced by tactical units trying to maintain situational awareness and make effective decisions to accomplish their missions in the maelstrom of combat.

Despite powerful machine-based technological solutions that have advanced every commander's capacity to execute what the U.S. Army publications refer to as the "science of control" over units and operations, current doctrine still recognizes the need for a complimentary "art of command."[28] Commanders exercise this art through the decisions they make on the basis of their own human judgement and intuition to drive tactical action and assume unavoidable risk in the fight to meet their objectives.[29] As Martin van Crevald details, in pursuit of success, commanders frequently attempt to build technology-enabled decision-support systems and processes to eliminate the unknown.[30] However, he points out the nature of war is such that some degree of uncertainty

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[27] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 119-120.

[28] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations,* with Change No. 2 (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 22 April 2016), vii.

[29] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, *Mission Command, Command and Control of Army Forces* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 31 July 2019), 1-13.

[30] Martin van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 264-265.

regarding the enemy and the operating environment will invariably endure in spite of every valiant effort to the contrary.[31]

The questions and doubts that shrouded the 1st Infantry Division's commander, Terry Allen, as he made decisions in the Summer of 1943 will not be unfamiliar to today's combat-tested military leaders who possess exponentially greater technological tools and yet still contend with the realities of battlefield uncertainty. Sixty years after Allen's operations in Sicily, U.S. Marine Corps Major General James Mattis led the 1st Marine Division on its own expeditionary assault in March 2003 along a narrow axis of attack through 250-kilometers of complex terrain to Baghdad, Iraq.[32] Recalling the challenges of the campaign, Mattis and his co-author Bing West offer a stinging rebuke to the idea that technology can ever completely surmount the chaos of war:

> Uncertainty runs riot if you don't keep cool . . . digital technologies can falsely encourage remote staffs to believe they possess a God's-eye view of combat. Digital technologies do not dissipate confusion; the fog of war can actually thicken when misinformation is instantly amplified.[33]

While Mattis possessed satellite-enabled communications systems like Blue Force Tracker, he wrestled with the same informational and decision-making impediments as Allen despite the fact that the latter's Second World War command post (CP) contained merely wired telephones, limited-range radios, and paper situation maps with acetate

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[31] van Creveld, *Command in War,* 264-265.

[32] Colonel Richard D. Camp, "Foreward," in *With the First Marine Division in Iraq, 2003: No Greater Friend, No Worse Enemy*, by Lieutenant Colonel Michael S. Groen and Contributors, Occasional Papers Series (Quantico: Marine Corps University, 2006), iii.

[33] Jim Mattis and Bing West, *Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead* (New York: Random House, 2019), 101.

overlays.[34] As Mattis's comments reflect, decision-making by any commander, in any era, is far more dependent on the quality of its informational inputs, such as intelligence and the status of friendly forces, than the physical form of its transmission or display. And while speed is critical, incorrect information will always travel just as rapidly as correct data over the same operating systems.

With a vital responsibility to provide such critical informational inputs to support their commanders' decision-making, military intelligence staffs also navigate a similar dynamic between what may be described as the more technical "science" of information collection and the subsequent "art" of drawing analytical conclusions on the basis of available information.[35] Just as it does today, in the Second World War the U.S. Army's doctrine prescribed that, "the commander with the assistance of the G-2 must arrive at conclusions relative to the enemy's capabilities and the effect of time, space, terrain, and other conditions upon each of these."[36] By design, tactical intelligence operations exist exclusively to support the decision-making of the commander and to enable the success of the unit in combat. However, despite the tremendous capabilities of modern

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[34] Mattis and West, *Call Sign Chaos*, 84.

[35] In his memoir, former 7th Army G-2, then-Colonel Oscar Koch, offers insight into this dynamic as he explains his analytical thought process and methodology for rapidly assessing the likelihood of a serious enemy counterattack at Agrigento on D+6 of the Sicily Campaign. See: Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 55-57; Brigadier General Robert Scales offers a more recent illustrative example of the "art" involved in tactical intelligence operations as he describes the struggles of the VII Corps intelligence staff on "G-Day" during the 1991 Gulf War. See: Brigadier General Robert H. Scales, *Certain Victory: The US Army in the Gulf War* (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 1994), 236-237.

[36] War Department, FM 30-5, 11.

information collection technology, even today's G-2s cannot escape the pernicious effects of uncertainty.

Defending his argument as to the existence of a so-called "modern system" of military tactics, Stephen Biddle articulates the limitations of contemporary intelligence capabilities:

> First, surveillance information, while easier to obtain than targeting data, has never been perfect and is unlikely to be anytime soon . . . If one cannot see everything, if the locations of individual elements are never certain, and if many are hidden at any given moment, then a deployment's precise contours can be blurred. Together with the sophisticated use of decoy vehicles, phantom radio networks, and dummy emitters to create false information for today's high-volume collectors to collect, the result is inevitably some degree of ambiguity as to [an enemy] force's true whereabouts and intentions.[37]

The above quote so aptly summarizes the universal difficulties of conducting effective tactical intelligence operations that Biddle could just as easily be referencing the struggles of Porter's 1st Infantry Division G-2 section in Sicily during 1943 as those of the 1st Marine Division G-2 staff, led by Colonel Jim Howcroft, in 2003.[38]

In fairness to those who emphasize the advantages of modern communications and information collection technology, the purpose of this discussion is not to suggest that current commanders and their tactical intelligence staffs do not enjoy significant material advantages over their 1940s predecessors, for that is not the case. They unquestionably do. It is rather to highlight the fact that, over time, the cognitive

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[37] Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 63-64.

[38] Lieutenant Colonel Michael S. Groen and Contributors, *With the First Marine Division in Iraq, 2003: No Greater Friend, No Worse Enemy,* Occasional Paper Series (Quantico: Marine Corps University, 2006), 4-9.

aspects—the "arts"—of combat decision-making and intelligence analysis represent far more continuity in purpose, value, and method between the Second World War and today than the dramatically evolved technical tools that commanders and G-2s use to execute their more "scientific" tasks of collection and dissemination. No matter how much commanders and their staffs may wish it away, however, uncertainty remains just as much of an inescapable reality on the modern battlefield as it did in the Second World War. It is left for intelligence staffs to reduce it as far as possible.

Examining the 1st Infantry Division's Tactical Intelligence Effort

This study begins with a literature review on the scholarship surrounding tactical intelligence in general, as well as a historiography on the 1st Infantry Division's operations during the beginning of the Sicily Campaign. It then proceeds with two background chapters. The first covers the division's organization, training, and experience in North Africa with emphasis on Allen's leadership, his relationship with Porter, and the overall results achieved from its earliest utilization of tactical intelligence in combat. The second background chapter focuses exclusively on tactical information collection capabilities and the internal operations of the division G-2 as they existed in 1943, extracting observations from their performance during the North Africa Campaign.

The proceeding three chapters follow the division's planning and execution of its July 1943 amphibious assault in chronological order. Chapter 5 analyzes how the 1st Infantry Division leveraged the resources and assessments of more senior staffs to build its own estimative intelligence ahead of the invasion. Chapters 6 and 7 center on the division's current intelligence effort in support of its initial assault and hasty defense of its beachhead followed by the transition to aggressive offensive operations that concluded

the first phase of the campaign. Finally, this study's conclusion in Chapter 8 reviews the division's tactical intelligence performance between 10 and 14 July 1943 as a whole and offers insight into dimensions of the G-2's operations that remain especially relevant for modern military professionals.

In addition to this introduction's previous commentary on the impacts of modern technology, it is also worthwhile here to mention other caveats that must be attached to this study. First, the focus of this analysis remains on the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence capabilities and operations as they existed in the summer of 1943 and not at any other point in the war. The division famously went on to spearhead the June 1944 Allied invasion of Normandy and fought in nearly every other major operation across Western Europe and into the German heartland through 1945.[39] Thus, it would be wrong to consider the 1st Infantry Division's organization and operations in Sicily as an example of the absolute best materiel, methods, and leadership that the division or the U.S. Army would provide during the Second World War. Nor will this study claim such a distinction. Instead, readers must bear in mind that after its experience dating back to 1942 in North Africa, the 1st Infantry Division in Sicily was an improved, veteran unit but even in 1943 was far from the pinnacle of its later capabilities and experience.

Readers will also note immediately that this study, or any other focused on the 1st Infantry Division in the Second World War, will primarily deal with dismounted infantry operations due to the fact that three infantry regiments provided the base of the division's

[39] Shelby L. Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle: An Encyclopedic Reference to U.S. Army Ground Forces from Battalion through Division 1939-1946* (1984; repr., Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2006), 76-77.

combat power.[40] Unlike the 2nd Armored Division, which also participated in the Sicily Campaign, the 1st Infantry Division lacked anything approaching a similar level of motorized speed or organic firepower. However, contemporary readers with an interest in the mechanized warfare aspects of the campaign may still derive value from this study's examination of the way the 1st Infantry Division employed its supporting armor to great effect on 11 and 12 July. Indeed, where and when to deploy tanks in support of his infantrymen was a key subject of decision-making for Allen throughout his division's defense of the Gela beachhead.

Finally, military readers will quickly recognize the comparatively lean combat power and information collection capabilities resident in Second World War divisions, regiments, and battalions compared with today's more robust and diverse force structures. While the 1st Infantry Division in Sicily relied on a small intelligence staff and a limited pool of supporting information collection assets, it must be considered in the context of its own era and operational environment. Still, in considering how the failure of the U.S. Army Air Force's support plan and tactical communications architecture impacted the 1st Infantry Division G-2's situational awareness, this study parallels concerns over the potential frailty of modern intelligence information systems whose effectiveness is predicated on continuous and reliable electronic communications.

Moreover, as discussed above, this case study has far less to do with material capabilities than it does with the timeless dynamics of the interplay between military art

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[40] Kent Roberts Greenfield, Robert R. Palmer, and Bell I. Wiley, *The United States Army in World War II: The Army Ground Forces: The Organization of Ground Combat Troops* (1947; repr., Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2004), 301.

and science. To overcome the inevitable reality that information gaps relative to the enemy will always exist, commanders and their G-2s must still regularly infuse inherently fallible human judgement into their activities and decisions. These critical cognitive functions remain as relevant today as they were in 1943.

Interestingly, then-Lieutenant General George S. Patton, commander of the U.S. 7th Army and the senior American officer in Sicily, anticipated that his decision-making both before and during the invasion would be a topic of interest for future military researchers and historians. He also correctly predicted, as this work's historiography demonstrates, that most scholars would emphasize the plans and decisions of commanders at the operational and strategic levels. This, Patton believed, was a mistake.

Writing in his diary following an Operation Husky planning conference, the 7th Army commander displayed a perhaps surprising degree of humility and suggested an alternate approach. He remarked: "Some day bemused students will try to see how we came to this decision and credit us with profound thought we never had. The thing, as I see it, is to get a detailed study of the tactical operation of the lesser units. Execution is the thing, that and leadership."[41] In the spirit of those comments, this study contributes to the existing body of scholarship from a perspective not yet fully explored and full of potential for insight into both the campaign itself and the enduring nature of tactical intelligence operations.

[41] George S. Patton, Jr., diary entry, 5 May 1943, in Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers: 1940-1945* (1947; repr., Boston: Da Capo Press, 2002), 241.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Introduction

This case study requires both a literature review and a historiography to adequately address the existing scholarship on the theory and utility of tactical intelligence as well as the 1st Infantry Division's operations in Sicily. First, a review of the published works surrounding the inherent purpose and value of tactical intelligence in combat provides a frame of reference through which to understand when, how, why, or even if, intelligence staffs can support the decisions of commanders and their unit's operations. Next, the chapter transitions to examine the major historical works detailing the 1st Infantry Division's participation in Operation Husky. Taken together, these two surveys offer important context regarding this case study's consideration of the 1st Infantry Division's operational records and the G-2's tactical intelligence effort in June and July of 1943. Most importantly, they reveal a clear opening through which this analysis may bridge the gap between the two subject areas.

The Purpose and Value of Tactical Intelligence in Combat

What value does military intelligence provide to tactical commanders and combat units in the field? What makes a tactical intelligence effort successful? These important questions are the subject of a small but insightful set of books spanning from the before the Second World War through today. As the previous chapter alluded, the varied conclusions found within this body of literature is largely defined by a difference of opinion between military authors and career historians. Soldier-scholars aiming to

reinforce and supplement doctrine generally take the importance and value of tactical intelligence for granted as they articulate the human cost of intelligence failure: increased and unnecessary friendly casualties. While competing academic voices acknowledge intelligence as one factor among many, on balance they see the link between it and success or defeat in battle as far more tenuous and conditional. Given this case study's central focus on the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort in Sicily, scrutiny of these two competing perspectives is essential to laying the groundwork for further analysis.

Beginning a trend which would see several generations of military instructors at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College publish books on the topic of tactical intelligence, Colonel Edwin E. Schwien completed *Combat Intelligence: Its Acquisition and Transmission* in 1936. Based on his personal experience in the First World War and his education in 1932 at France's *École Supérieure de Guerre*, Schwien's work draws heavily on wartime vignettes and French Colonel Jean-Charles Augustin Bernis's publication, *An Essay on Military Intelligence in War*.[42] Decrying the precipitous drop in quality staff work at the division, corps, and field army level in the wake of post-war demobilization, the author provides his observations from schoolhouse exercises which featured poor efforts from undertrained, unprepared, and unmotivated G-2s.[43] Most serious of all, Scwien charges that G-2s in the 1930s U.S. Army "treat the enemy as a sort of inanimate factor" and rely on flawed subjective guesses as to the

[42] Edwin E. Schwien, *Combat Intelligence: Its Acquisition and Transmission* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1936), v-vi.

[43] Ibid., v, 6.

adversary's intentions rather than a proper objective assessment of the full range of capabilities available within the training scenarios.[44]

In response, Schwien's stated goal is to offer concrete, scientific principles for tactical intelligence work which will make it impossible for G-2s to gloss over important details and potential enemy courses of action.[45] According to the author, following such guidelines will allow intelligence officers to fulfill their most important function: enabling their commander's decision-making.[46] This is all the more important because, as Schwien confidently states, tactical intelligence "is by far the most important factor in the commander's decision, hence the importance of the intelligence section."[47] Returning to this theme throughout his book, the author stresses the catastrophic dangers which may ensue on the battlefield if G-2s fail to consider the most dangerous course of action open to their enemy.[48]

Collaborating with other former tactical intelligence officers in the immediate aftermath of the next world war, Lieutenant Colonel Stedman Chandler and Colonel Robert Robb picked up where Schwien left off when they published *Front-Line Intelligence* in 1946. Written similarly as a supplement to doctrine for S-2s at the regimental and battalion level, Chandler and Robb's work incorporated lessons learned

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[44] Schwien, *Combat Intelligence*, v, 8-11.

[45] Ibid., vi.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 22.

and examples from their recent combat experience. The authors offer that, "the purpose of tactical intelligence is to accomplish the mission and save lives."[49] In making this succinct statement, Chandler and Robb offer a specific metric of success for tactical intelligence operations: victory at the least cost.

Front-Line Intelligence continues by addressing the subject of information gaps in situational understanding. The authors acknowledge that even the best intelligence staffs will never totally eliminate uncertainty.[50] Despite this reality, Chandler and Robb believe that an S-2 or G-2 still provides value to their commander by helping, as one factor among many, in developing sound tactical plans and accomplishing the unit's mission.[51] Of all the elements working against the tactical intelligence effort, the authors particularly note that the speed of combat at the tactical level places constant pressure on intelligence staffs and often precludes much more than a rapid mental evaluation of current intelligence and verbal dissemination of predictive analysis.[52] Like Schwien, Chandler and Robb return repeatedly to a particular theme—that of the "incalculable" weight of responsibility which intelligence officers hold given that their "mistakes are inevitably disastrous" to both the unit's mission and the safety of their comrades.[53]

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[49] Stedman Chandler and Robert W. Robb, *Front-Line Intelligence* (1946; repr., Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Libraries Collection, 2020), 7.

[50] Ibid., 27.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 49.

[53] Ibid., 7.

During their own tenure as instructors at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College, Lieutenant Colonels Robert Glass and Phillip Davidson, also building on their participation in the Second World War, wrote and published *Intelligence is for Commanders* in 1948. Relaying the message in the book's title, the authors write to demonstrate to combat arms commanders that the value and central purpose of tactical intelligence in combat is: "to help the commander make a decision, and thereby to proceed more accurately and more confidently with the accomplishment of his mission."[54] Glass and Davidson also note concerningly that some military leaders were openly "contemptuous" toward tactical intelligence in the Second World War.[55] To correct for this error, they correspondingly place the onus for successful utilization of intelligence on a unit's commander, rather than the G-2.[56]

In the first few pages of their book, after briefly citing a handful of historical examples, Glass and Davidson issue a direct response to this study's central question. For this reason, their writing is worth examining at length:

> History, of course, turns its searching spotlight upon only the major campaigns and battles, not on the countless instances of lack of intelligence, or errors in application, on lower levels. And yet these cases, like their major counterparts, have cost lives, have disgraced and ruined otherwise competent commanders, and in their sum total have lost battles and wars. To be defeated by overwhelming odds is understandable; to be surprised, in spite of the odds—never . . . Effective military intelligence prevents such surprises, while poor intelligence leads the commander into pitfalls by creating a false or incomplete picture of the terrain

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[54] Robert R. Glass and Phillip B. Davidson, *Intelligence is for Commanders* (Harrisburg: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1948), ix.

[55] Ibid., x.

[56] Ibid.

> and the enemy. The lesson is clear. A commander who is served by inadequate intelligence is courting disaster.[57]

Interestingly, like Schwien and others who would follow, Glass and Davidson tie the consequences of a poor tactical intelligence effort directly to defeat in combat. However, they forgo a discussion on the inverse proposition: that an effective intelligence effort will lead to success. Readers are left to infer as much, though it requires no great feat of logic to do so.

In keeping with their theme, the authors further stress that, "Intelligence is not an academic exercise nor is it an end in itself."[58] It must be used, generally by commanders, to be of value.[59] They devote the remainder of their short book to detailing the phases, inputs, and outputs of the tactical intelligence cycle using the U.S. Army's doctrine as a foundation.[60] Finally, Glass and Davidson also offer what amounts to a beginner's guide, again grounded in doctrine, to the various collection assets available to tactical commanders at the time.[61]

Since he was a direct participant in the Sicily Campaign as the 7th Army G-2, then-Colonel Oscar Koch's intelligence-focused memoir is of particular interest to this review. Even though he passed away in 1970, Koch's his co-author Robert Hays brought

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[57] Glass and Davidson, *Intelligence is for Commanders*, ix.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 6.

[61] Ibid., 17-20.

G-2: Intelligence for Patton through to publication in 1999.[62] Originally conceived by Koch as an instruction manual for tactical intelligence officers based on his own experiences in the Second World War, the memoir reads much like a lessons-learned document or after action review.[63]

According to Koch, the purpose of a G-2 is: "to supply his commander with the information necessary to make the command decisions critical to fulfillment of the mission."[64] Like Chandler and Robb, he assigns emphasis to "lives lost" as a metric for a G-2's success or failure in combat.[65] It is probably no coincidence that Koch's commentary on tactical intelligence aligns with those previously discussed American authors writing in the late 1940s; they shared similar training and experiences. In his book, Koch repeatedly shows great deference to the "military genius" of Patton, his long-time commander and friend.[66] For this reason, it is perhaps unsurprising that *G-2* deals more with the hypothetical consequences of intelligence failure, for which Koch readily assigns blame to intelligence staffs, rather than crediting the efforts of G-2s with a unit's success, which would detract from the legacy of Patton and the field armies he led.[67]

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[62] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 12.

[63] Ibid., 10.

[64] Ibid., 133.

[65] Ibid., 132.

[66] Ibid., 155.

[67] Ibid., 132, 150-152.

In 1960, another Command and General Staff College instructor, Lieutenant Colonel Irving Heymont, added his voice to the discussion of tactical intelligence and its importance. In *Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare*, Heymont provides yet another doctrinal supplement in the style of previous work by Schiwen, Chandler and Robb, and Glass and Davidson. Contemplating the U.S. Army's Korean War experience as well as rapid advances in technology, including nuclear weapons, Heymont clearly states that the intent of his book is to update the existing literature on "the principles and operations of combat intelligence" to reflect the complexities of the modern battlefield.[68]

Unlike the previously cited works, however, *Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare* furnishes a direct connection between tactical intelligence and battlefield success, not merely the consequences of failure. The very first sentence of the book bluntly states: "The decisive factor in warfare has often been combat intelligence. It has been of influence in every battle, campaign, and war in history, affecting the outcome of squads and armies."[69] Heymont believes that the decisiveness of tactical intelligence, especially information collection technology enabling precision targeting, is all the more pronounced in the nuclear age.[70] Writing under the presumption that nuclear weapons would dictate the outcome of the next major war, Heymont states that the advantage in such a conflict clearly belongs to the side with the most accurate targeting intelligence.[71]

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[68] Irving Heymont, *Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare* (Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1960), preface.

[69] Ibid., 1.

[70] Ibid., 1, 25.

[71] Ibid., 1.

Even at the tactical level, ground forces expected to employ low-yield nuclear devices against large enemy formations, making timely and accurate data on their location critical for commanders.[72]

While the conflict Heymont envisioned remained only theoretical for the duration of the Cold War, the proceeding years of great power tension between the United States and the Soviet Union also witnessed a change in the tenor of intelligence scholarship. In a field comprised mainly of British academics, historians exploring the impacts of military intelligence transitioned the focus of their study toward the strategic and operational levels. Whether by direct assertion, or omission, their published works generally discounted the importance of the tactical level of war and the intelligence activities associated with it.

In this context, Donald McLachlan's two-chapter contribution to Michael Elliott-Bateman's 1970 edited first volume of *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare* may be viewed as a transitional work. While Elliott-Bateman's volume as a whole maintains a focus on irregular warfare, McLachlan writes more broadly on the subject of military intelligence based on his experience as a British Naval Intelligence officer in the Second World War.[73] In addressing the difference between tactical and strategic intelligence, McLachlan states that analysts pressed for time at lower levels must be directly tied into operations staffs, whereas strategic intelligence lends itself more easily to solitary

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[72] Heymont, *Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare*, 1.

[73] Donald McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/1," in *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare,* vol. 1, *Intelligence, Subversion, Resistance*, ed. Michael Elliott-Bateman (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1970), 52.

research and report writing.[74] In particular, the author points to the frequent availability, at the tactical level, of information such as intercepted radio messages or captured documents whose value is so immediate and obvious that it requires little to no actual analysis or "complicating interpretations."[75] Still, he notes that the value of tactical information generally expires quickly and holds relevance only out to a maximum of two weeks.[76]

McLachlan also suggests a universal dual-purpose for military intelligence. This is: "offensively to achieve and defensively to avert surprise . . . It reduces and limits the margin of ignorance to be found in any plan of a military or political operation."[77] In other words, intelligence has value in its ability to both anticipate the enemy's actions as well as to assist commanders and units in accomplishing their missions through situational awareness and the identification of opportunities to exploit.[78]

While he does not use the term itself, McLachlan emphasizes the importance that current intelligence plays in the overall intelligence effort. Because the battlefield situation is constantly evolving, McLachlan notes the need for near-real-time information

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[74] McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/1," 56.

[75] Donald McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/2," in *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare,* vol. 2, *Intelligence, Subversion, Resistance*, ed. Michael Elliott-Bateman (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1970), 73.

[76] McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/1," 56.

[77] Ibid., 54.

[78] Ibid.

to adjust operations during their execution.[79] He states: "One of the most valuable functions of an intelligence staff is to help ensure that an operation which is in fact unnecessary or undesirable because of a change in the situation should be reconsidered."[80] This is a critical current intelligence function, especially for units at the tactical level, and one that provides immense value for the commander and subordinate units.

Drawing in part on McLachlan's scholarship, intelligence historian Michael Handel edited a volume of essays on the subject in 1990. As the title of his *Intelligence and Military Operations* suggests, the focus of Handel's book, as well as his own contributing essay, is on the operational level of war, though he does offer some limited commentary on the tactical level. In similar fashion to McLachlan, Handel describes time as the main distinguishing factor between the intelligence efforts at the tactical and operational levels.[81] Owing to the speed of combat operations and pressures of time, Handel believes that decisions at the tactical level can and should be made on the basis on a single piece of current intelligence to take advantage of the information before it is rendered useless.[82] By contrast, longer planning and execution horizons at the operational level offer more time for collection of information and deliberate analysis.[83]

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[79] McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/2," 70.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Handel, "Intelligence and Military Operations," 12.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

In a departure from other authors, especially *Front-Line Intelligence's* Chandler and Robb, Handel finds it difficult to isolate intelligence as a variable in decision-making in order to pass judgment on its actual value to military operations.[84] He does believe, however, that estimative intelligence provides more value than current intelligence. Handel writes:

> Intelligence can make its greatest contribution *before* the fighting starts by providing the commander with the best possible data on his enemy's order of battle, intentions, weapons, performance, defense systems, morale and so on. Once the battle is joined, everything is in flux: events move extremely fast and by the time movements have been observed, the situation may have changed. And even when reports are accurate, they can still be misperceived or transmitted incorrectly. Furthermore, the commander can not always ensure that his orders, based on the intelligence he has received, will be executed as he intended.[85]

Despite the fact that Handel's comments are centered on the operational level, his logic clearly applies to tactical operations as well. Indeed, Handel himself admits that the two levels of war share most of the same characteristics and merely differ in terms of the time available and the consequences of failure which may result from them. According to Handel, such magnified consequences, relating specifically to intelligence and operations, make the impact and importance of intelligence far greater at the operational level of war.[86]

Providing his own essay to *Intelligence and Military Operations*, historian and former British strategic signals intelligence officer Ralph Bennett largely concurs with

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[84] Handel, "Intelligence and Military Operations," 32.

[85] Ibid., 66.

[86] Ibid., 12.

many of Handel's conclusions.[87] In particular, he agrees that determining the tangible effects, and therefore value, of intelligence on the battlefield is extremely difficult.[88] Bennett cautions that many historians do not consider the extreme "atmosphere" of combat and that "military history will sometimes err at critical moments and that any general principles it enunciates, including that of the relationship between Intelligence and action, must be regarded with caution."[89] Even though he echoes Handel's concerns with the challenges of intelligence scholarship, Bennett nonetheless offers his own analysis based on both his practical and academic background, emphasizing that intelligence must be put to use and is an operational tool rather than a scholarly activity.[90] In summarizing his thoughts on the overall ability of military intelligence to affect the outcome of operations, Bennett agrees that there is a relationship between the two, "but it can never be very close," owing to a panoply of other factors, especially policy considerations and constraints resident at the operational and strategic levels.[91]

Over a decade following Handel's edited work on military intelligence, John Keegan published *Intelligence in War: The Value–and Limitations–of What the Military can Learn about the Enemy* in 2002. Through what he describes as a "collection of case

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[87] Ralph Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1989), 7-10, front dust cover.

[88] Bennett, "Intelligence and Strategy: Some Observations on the War in the Mediterranean 1941-45," in *Intelligence and Military Operations,* ed. Michael L. Handel (1990; repr., Abingdon: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1990), 445.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid., 462.

[91] Ibid., 444.

studies," Keegan directly deals with the utility of military intelligence in combat.[92] He finds that, "intelligence, while generally necessary, is not a sufficient means to victory. Decision in war is always the result of a fight, and in combat willpower always counts for more than foreknowledge."[93] More than authors like Handel and Bennett, who merely urge caution, Keegan is more forthright in his doubts as to the value of intelligence in war. Like other modern authors, Keegan writes with an operational- and strategic-level view in mind. In doing so, he generally focuses on estimative intelligence used by commanders to determine their courses of action prior to combat, largely neglecting decisions made on the basis of current intelligence during the fight itself.[94]

While he notes the positive contributions of near-real-time intelligence, especially signals intelligence, in providing information on the enemy, Keegan's emphasis remains on its usefulness as an input for pre-combat plans.[95] He also fails to consider the contributions of current intelligence operations, through tactical information collection, to allow commanders to adjust their plans during combat. Instead, Keegan appears to consider tactical information collection operations as merely an extension of combined arms maneuver, as opposed to a dedicated component of a continuous intelligence effort enabling commanders to revise their plans at any point in time and make new decisions.[96]

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[92] John Keegan, *Intelligence in War: The Value–and Limitations–of What the Military can Learn About the Enemy* (2002; repr., New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 6.

[93] Ibid., 25.

[94] Ibid., 6.

[95] Ibid., 18.

[96] Ibid., 25.

From this perspective, he perhaps overlooks a key component of military intelligence operations.

After nearly twenty years of continuous military engagement in the Middle East and Southwest Asia, at least one recent work from a U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer has re-focused the discussion of military intelligence back towards the tactical level. Its 2003 invasion of Iraq notwithstanding, the vast majority of the U.S. military's operations since 2001 have been executed at the battalion level or below against similarly small groups of insurgents and terrorists. Therefore, with a junior military audience in mind, Timothy J. Oliver published his book *Practicing Intelligence: Providing Support to Combat Operations* in 2018. Written in the same vein as the doctrinal supplements discussed earlier, Oliver's work likewise provides 153 pages of practical lessons and considerations for tactical intelligence leaders, both officers and enlisted, based on what he terms his own substantial resumé of "lived experience."[97]

Admittedly, Oliver is quick to point out the major limitation of his work—that the lessons offered in *Practicing Intelligence* are exclusively his own and that he deliberately omits use of historical case studies to further illustrate his guiding concepts.[98] Even lacking concrete examples, however, Oliver presents an executable set of operating principles built around his central idea that the true value of tactical intelligence is in its ability to "[provide] informational advantage as maneuver provides positional

[97] Timothy J. Oliver, *Practicing Intelligence: Providing Support to Combat Operations* (Arlington: Clarendon Research & Analysis Press, 2018), vi.

[98] Ibid.

advantage."[99] For Oliver, the ability of a unit, through its intelligence effort, to accurately predict the enemy's course of action and adjust its own plans is the pinnacle of achievement for an S-2 or G-2.[100]

Like many of the other works described above, the foreword to *Practicing Intelligence* clearly states the author's opinion on the value of tactical intelligence. In citing the "potentially catastrophic failure" which may result from an S-2's failure, Oliver joins Schwien, Chandler and Robb, and Koch in highlighting the correlation between a poor tactical intelligence effort and negative results on the battlefield.[101] The book then moves on to detail what an effective S-2 does to be successful and to influence his or her commander's decisions.

Returning to the theme of several previously discussed works by other intelligence practitioners (though notably not Glass and Davidson), Oliver strongly emphasizes that: "Ensuring intelligence is used is the intelligence officer's responsibility."[102] Similarly, he also connects "utilization" to commanders' decision-making, but with one important distinction: that the commander is ultimately his own "senior analyst" and may choose not to act on the basis of his or her intelligence officer's recommendations, even if the intelligence conclusions are sound.[103] Oliver further

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[99] Oliver, *Practicing Intelligence*, 2.

[100] Ibid., 5.

[101] Ibid., "Foreward."

[102] Ibid., 37.

[103] Ibid., 134.

claims: “Intelligence is an aid to decision-making, not decision itself, and intelligence is often not the primary factor that contributes to a military decision.”[104] Here, the author’s comments likely reference the range of commanders’ political and social concerns stemming from years of experience in counterinsurgency warfare. Nonetheless, his comments on decision-making add nuance to the overall scholarly commentary on the topic and are worthy of further consideration.

Aside from Oliver’s workmanlike approach to *Practicing Intelligence*, the major works of military intelligence scholarship from the Cold War years and beyond reflect a growing skepticism regarding the value of intelligence to military commanders and their units. Unsurprisingly, those authors with direct experience conducting tactical intelligence operations in combat—Schwien, Chandler and Robb, Glass and Davidson, Koch, Heymont and, more recently, Oliver (all Americans)—appear much more convinced that intelligence is indispensable for enabling decision-making and accomplishing a unit’s mission. While only Glass and Davidson’s *Intelligence is for Commanders* and Heymont’s *Combat Intelligence in Modern Warfare* directly connect tactical intelligence to decisively positive combat outcomes, all the authors listed above are convinced that an inadequate S-2 or G-2 effort will nearly always result in battlefield disaster. Unfortunately, aside from Schwien and to a lesser degree Chandler and Robb, the works listed above mostly rely on vague, artificially constructed scenarios or shallow wartime anecdotes to reinforce their arguments. They do not reap from the fertile ground of intensive historical analysis.

[104] Oliver, *Practicing Intelligence*, 134.

Among the British scholars noted in this chapter, even those with actual intelligence experience are generally doubtful that intelligence can serve as a decisive factor in tactical combat. Instead, they tend to view intelligence as important but merely one factor among many others contributing to success or failure on the battlefield and often far from the most significant. Perhaps because of their broad view from strategic and operational vantage points, these historians are more likely to agree with Keegan's characterization of tactical intelligence activities as inherent functions of combined arms operations rather than distinctive features of an overall military intelligence effort.

A gap exists, then, in the lack of a detailed historical case study which may bridge the divide between the wide, generalized lens of academic analysis and the overly simplistic scenarios offered as evidence by former practitioners of tactical intelligence. To date, none of the published material, including more critical recent works, dedicate themselves to an in-depth analysis of one unit's intelligence effort over an extended period of time. Instead, nearly all existing literature on the topic offers only surface-deep analysis and commentary on a handful of battles or campaigns. By delving more deeply into the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence operations between June and July 1943, this study examines the issues debated above in a more holistic and concrete fashion.

The 1st Infantry Division in Sicily

While there is no single dedicated historical analysis of intelligence in the Sicily Campaign, and certainly no such work centered on the 1st Infantry Division alone, nearly all major secondary sources provide some limited commentary on the subject. These books often rely, however, on the same operational records and primary sources and do

not treat the topic with any great depth or context. It is therefore not surprising that many authors writing from a general, often operational- or strategic-level perspective, draw similar conclusions regarding a small set of intelligence triumphs and blunders centered on a few key events: the amphibious assaults, the battle at Troina, and the evacuation of German forces from the island. On the whole, the first key event, the Allies' initial landings under Operation Husky, are seen by most historians as a positive example of intelligence support to operations. By contrast, the latter two represent outright failure and missed opportunity, respectively. In keeping with the scope of this case study, the following historiography deals exclusively with scholarship on the first phase of the Sicily Campaign.

Unlike the official United States Army history or the other works that followed, the Society of the First Infantry Division's *Danger Forward: The Story of the First Division in World War II*, written by H. R. Knickerbocker and nine co-authors, provides a detailed chronology specific to the division's major operations in the Second World War, including Operation Husky.[105] Compiled from combat records and veterans' accounts immediately after the war in 1947, this unit history is a superb source of information on the movements and operations of the division and its subordinate units. However, since the work was originally designed as a keepsake and written memorial for the division's veterans, it lacks any seriously critical analysis regarding tactical failures or problems.[106]

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[105] H. R., Knickerbocker, Jack Thompson, Jack Belden, Don Whitehead, A. J. Liebling, Mark Watson, Cy Peterman, Iris Carpenter, R. E. Dupuy, and Drew Middleton, *Danger Forward: The Story of the First Division in World War II* (1947; repr., Nashville, TN: The Battery Press, Inc., 1980), 101-170.

[106] Colonel S. B. Mason, "Foreword," in *Danger Forward: The Story of the First Division in World War II,* by H. R. Knickerbocker, Jack Thompson, Jack Belden, Don

Additionally, because of the lack of citations and a bibliography, it is generally impossible to trace the sources or any original reports associated with references to intelligence or reconnaissance activities. This limits the value of the book to contemporary scholars.

Albert Garland and Howard Smyth's stalwart contribution to the United States' official military history of the Second World War, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, printed in 1965, offers a foundational narrative based on access to the full range of the nation's archival material. As with most works that came later, the authors are concerned primarily with the operational level of the campaign, especially in their discussion of combat decision-making.[107] However, their work is an invaluable and definitive source of factual information concerning the background and execution of important tactical actions as well. In the process, they provide enough direct material surrounding the operations of the 1st Infantry Division to add important context and clarification to this study's detailed assessment of the division's actions during and immediately after its amphibious assault.

Though not writing on behalf of the U.S. Army as he did so frequently in his career, Martin Blumenson followed up his assistance of Garland and Smyth's official effort with his own small work, *Sicily: Whose Victory?*, in 1968. Focused mostly on the actions of 7th Army and II Corps, Blumenson tacitly suggests that Patton repeatedly

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Whitehead, A. J. Liebling, Mark Watson, Cy Peterman, Iris Carpenter, R. E. Dupuy, and Drew Middleton (1947; repr., The Battery Press, Inc., 1980).

[107] Albert N. Garland and Howard Smyth, assisted by Martin Blumenson, *The United States Army in World War II: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Sicily and the Surrender of Italy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1965), 325.

imposed his will for sustained and aggressive operations onto Terry Allen, the 1st Infantry Division Commander.[108] In particular, Blumenson cites Patton's exhortations for action as the driving force behind Allen's decision to launch his spoiling attack on the night of 11 July.[109] Despite the fact that Blumenson does not quote either leader directly, his commentary on Patton's influence offers an intriguing look at yet another potential factor in Allen's decision-making in Sicily and is therefore valuable in the context of this study.

In 1977, S.W.C. Pack, a British author and former Second World War Royal Navy officer who worked directly under the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff, published *Operation HUSKY: The Allied Invasion of Sicily*. While Pack was a serving officer in 1943, he was not physically present for the invasion. It is therefore appropriate to consider *Operation HUSKY* as a secondary source, rather than a primary one. Predictably, Pack's focus is predominantly naval and largely centered on the planning for and execution of the initial Allied landings in Sicily on 10 July 1943.

The author's attention to the extensive aerial reconnaissance and naval beach intelligence operations conducted in the months prior to the operation add important context to this study's analysis of the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence effort.[110] In addition, he offers strong credit to the British Government's strategic signals

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[108] Martin Blumenson, *Sicily: Whose Victory?* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), 67, 105.

[109] Ibid., 67.

[110] S.W.C. Pack, *Operation HUSKY: The Allied Invasion of Sicily* (New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1977), 67.

intelligence program for correctly identifying the main Axis combat formations and their locations ahead of the invasion.[111] Thus, while Pack does not comment directly on ground tactical intelligence operations, he offers excellent background information concerning the level of joint support available to the 1st Infantry Division's G-2 and G-3 planners in June 1943.

Writing a decade after Pack and citing extensively from Garland and Smyth's official history, Carlo D'Este offers a more deliberately critical look at the Sicily Campaign in his 1988 book, *Bitter Victory: The Battle for Sicily, 1943*. In his analysis, D'Este provides observations from strategic, operational, and tactical perspectives and alternates between them throughout his study. Regarding tactical intelligence in Sicily, he notes the lack of responsive air reconnaissance support before, during, and after the 10 July 1943 amphibious assault, a factor which severely impacted the 1st Infantry Division.[112] Like Pack, D'Este also credits the contribution of strategic signals intelligence in generating order of battle data on German forces in Sicily.[113] As he discusses, this information was a critical addition to the overall intelligence effort.[114]

Following D'Este's influential work, Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr. and Friedrich von Stauffenberg added their voices to the scholarship surrounding the Sicily Campaign in their 1991 work, *The Battle of Sicily: How the Allies Lost Their Chance for Total Victory*.

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[111] Ibid., 70.

[112] Carlo D'Este, *Bitter Victory: The Battle for Sicily, 1943* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1988), 167, 303-305.

[113] Ibid., 246.

[114] Ibid.

Mitcham, a British historian, and Stauffenberg, a native German, add more depth to previous analysis of Axis operational and tactical decision-making and operations during the campaign. Their perspective covers the entire breadth of combat in Sicily from the operational level but does narrow in on several significant tactical actions involving the 1st Infantry Division, including the 10-11 July Axis counterattacks at Gela. Within this limited tactical analysis, the authors touch on an issue related to the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence.

In their narrative of the Gela landings, Mitcham and von Stauffenberg offer two significant comments regarding the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence. First, they note that poorly interpreted aerial photo reconnaissance led to intelligence estimates that erroneously indicated the "Red" sector beach in the division's area of operations was clear of enemy mines, when in fact the coastline there was heavily saturated with the devices.[115] More controversially, the authors also make the claim that Allen and his unit were not aware of the presence of the German *Hermann Goering* Division and were therefore victims of tactical surprise on D-Day.[116] This statement directly contradicts every other major work on Sicily as well as primary source commentary from both the U.S. 7th Army G-2, Oscar Koch, and the 1st Infantry Division G-2, Robert Porter.[117] Unfortunately, Mitcham and von Stauffenberg do not follow up their accusation of intelligence failure with any other specific or substantiating information, making it

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[115] Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr. and Friedrich von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily: How the Allies Lost Their Chance for Total Victory* (New York: Orion Books, 1991), 98.

[116] Ibid., 100.

[117] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 47-48; Porter interview, 287.

difficult to trace and potentially calling into question other similar assertions in their book.

Douglas Porch includes a dedicated chapter on the Sicily Campaign within his multiple-year focus in *The Mediterranean Theater in World War II: The Path to Victory*, published in 2004. Given the brevity with which Porch addresses Sicily, it is not surprising that his analysis is mostly built around the theater-strategic level of war even though he touches on the most significant operational-level events. After noting, without any detail on tactical intelligence, the Axis counterattacks against the 1st Infantry Division's landings at Gela on 10 July, Porch covers the 7th Army's pursuit in general terms while commenting on the failure of the Allied 15th Army Group commander, General Sir Harold Alexander, to set specific operational objectives beyond establishing the initial Allied beachheads.[118] As Porch describes, these planning blunders at the operational level had ramifications and consequences felt all the way down at the tactical level by the 1st Infantry Division.[119]

Rick Atkinson, author of numerous popular history books dealing with military operations, completed *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944* in 2007. In a departure of style from previous works on the Sicily Campaign, Atkinson takes a personality-based approach toward his historical narrative, focusing on combat through the eyes of major leaders such as Patton, and, of interest to this study, Allen. In doing so, Atkinson's engaging book is more concerned with making the history of the campaign

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[118] Douglas Porch, *The Path to Victory: The Mediterranean Theater in World War II* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), 434.

[119] Ibid., 419-421, 431-433.

accessible to general-interest readers than in deeply exploring any particular aspect of the Allied operation. As his narrative progresses, however, Atkinson does attempt to establish a directly causal link between poor tactical intelligence and faulty decision-making at the division level which resulted in the disaster at Troina.[120] Again, however, such discussion is beyond the purview of this case study.

Also published in 2007, James Wheeler's *The Big Red One: America's Legendary 1st Infantry Division from World War I to Desert Storm* provides the most recent book since *Danger Forward* to dedicate at least part of its Sicily commentary exclusively on the 1st Infantry Division's operations. Written by Wheeler at the behest of the Society of the First Division and the Cantigny First Division Foundation, the book strikes a generally triumphal tone, as its title may suggest.[121] While the work covers the entirety of the 1st Infantry Division's history from 1917 onward, Wheeler's Sicily chapter is robust and solidly grounded in primary source research. Wheeler uses his sources to create a coherent and easily understood chronological narrative of the 1st Infantry Division's combat actions. However, since it was written for veterans and their public supporters, it is no surprise that *The Big Red One*, like *Danger Forward*, generally steers clear of serious criticism regarding the division's battles in 1943.

Finally, in similar style to Atkinson's *Day of Battle*, James Holland's 2020 book, *Sicily '43: The First Assault on Fortress Europe*, features a popular history narrative on

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[120] Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2007), 153.

[121] James Scott Wheeler, *The Big Red One: America's Legendary 1st Infantry Division from World War I to Desert Storm* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), xii-xiii.

the campaign aimed at a non-academic audience. Unlike Atkinson, however, Holland features more balance between Allied and Axis viewpoints by incorporating perspectives from 22 different German and Italian individuals at all echelons.[122] Unfortunately for this study, even though Holland does relate the experiences of soldiers within the 1st Infantry Division, he does not include the division's commander as a focal personality. Thus, the author only tangentially touches on combat decision-making at the division level.

Holland's history of the Gela landings falls in line with the generally positive conclusions of most other historians, though he provides additional emphasis on the failure of U.S. airborne forces to concentrate on key terrain objectives ahead of the 1st Infantry Division's 10 July amphibious assault.[123] The author also notes the decisive success of Allen's spoiling attack on the night of 11 to 12 July, a topic that this study addresses at length.[124] In this way, *Sicily '43* remains aligned with most other works on the topic, but Holland does offer additional color that average readers are likely to find engrossing.

In conclusion, this overview of scholarship on the Sicily Campaign reveals an opening for further analysis. To begin with, most of the authors cited above devote the preponderance of their studies to strategic and operational-level considerations and only reference intelligence as it pertains to the a few significant events of the campaign. Even in reference to supposed intelligence successes and failures, their works deal with the

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[122] James Holland, *Sicily '43: The First Assault on Fortress Europe* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2020), xxxviii.

[123] Ibid., 225.

[124] Ibid., 279.

issue only in a cursory manner lacking depth, specificity, or context. No author has yet provided a comprehensive study of the tactical intelligence operations of one particular division within the context of the first phase of the Operation Husky landings. This case study attempts to do just that.

Conclusion

Based on the missed opportunities identified within this chapter's literature review of commentary on tactical intelligence and analysis on the 1st Infantry Division in the Sicily Campaign, there is a clear opportunity for further scholarship that incorporates both topics. This case study steps into these gaps in existing body of work by using primary source operational records to investigate how, and to what effect, the division employed tactical intelligence in support of its Operation Husky amphibious assault. Viewed through the lens of the theories and debate on the value of intelligence in ground combat, the following evaluation of the 1st Infantry Division's actions in the summer of 1943 therefore represents a new and distinct addition to the current collection of published works.

CHAPTER 3

THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION FROM 1940 TO MAY 1943: ORGANIZATION, LEADERSHIP, AND EXPERIENCE IN THE NORTH AFRICA CAMPAIGN

Introduction

By the time it departed the Algerian coast on naval transports bound for Sicily in July 1943, the 1st Infantry Division was one of the most experienced and tactically competent divisions in the U.S. Army. After the unit's reorganization and training between 1940 and early 1942, it was further molded by the crucible of combat during the North Africa Campaign from October 1942 to May 1943. Under Terry Allen's charismatic leadership, which was both aggressive and deeply thoughtful, the division cemented its reputation for excellence early in the Second World War. Throughout all of its initial trials, Allen's unit employed and improved its methods for information collection and application of tactical intelligence to achieve battlefield results. Because so many of these formative experiences occurred just months before the division's invasion of Sicily, they have direct relevance to this study's examination of the first phase of Operation Husky. In this way, the following overview provides a more complete understanding of the unit's key personalities and background events and serves to establish a solid foundation upon which to evaluate the division's tactical intelligence effort in the summer of 1943.

Preparing for War: Organization and Training, 1940-1942

Organized around a nucleus of long service Regular Army troops augmented by new recruits, the 1st Infantry Division began intensive preparations for a potential

overseas deployment at Fort Devens, Massachusetts in early 1941 under the looming shadow of the Second World War.[125] Unlike most other large units following the First World War, the division remained part of the U.S. Army's active force structure and retained a cadre of well-trained, professional commissioned and noncommissioned officers.[126] More importantly, key leaders were not stripped from the division to provide a skeletal backbone for new divisions filled with draftees, as was the experience of other units in 1940 and 1941.[127] Thus, while it navigated a period of transition and organizational upheaval, the 1st Infantry Division remained one of the Army's premier fighting units, at least on paper.

Even before its initial steps toward large-scale mobilization in 1941, the U.S. Army adopted the new "Triangular Division" structure for its mainstay infantry divisions, which were destined to serve as the basic unit of action for large scale tactical operations during the Second World War.[128] In fact, as Peter Mansoor describes, the 1st Infantry Division provided an early positive validation for the model during the 1940 Louisiana Maneuvers.[129] The division's three infantry regiments—the 16th, 18th, and 26th—were

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[125] Peter R. Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe: The Triumph of American Infantry Divisions, 1941-1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999), 49-50; 1st Infantry Division, *The First!* (Washington, DC: Historical Records Section, AGO, undated, circa 1945), First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 5.

[126] Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 50.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 8.

[129] Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 51.

led by colonels and usually referred to as "regimental combat teams" (RCTs) given their typical augmentation by additional enabling units possessing both combat and support roles.[130] Reflecting the Triangular model's namesake emphasis on the concept of tactical units with three parts, each regiment was further divided into three battalions commanded by lieutenant colonels.[131] Correspondingly, every battalion contained three rifle companies and one heavy weapons company.[132] All told, the 1st Infantry Division went to war with a total strength of almost 10,000 infantrymen.[133]

In support of its maneuver units, the Triangular construct also provided the 1st Infantry Division with various enabling systems and units to augment the infantry's combat power. For example, each regiment contained an anti-tank company with 37-mm and 57-mm antitank (AT) guns as well as a cannon company with 75-mm howitzers.[134] In addition, the division's artillery headquarters (DIVARTY) controlled four field artillery (FA) battalions—the 5th, 7th, 32nd, and 33rd—containing 48 total howitzers.[135] When necessary, one or more FA battalions could be tasked in direct support of an RCT.

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[130] Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 13.

[131] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 101-10, *Staff Officers' Field Manual, Organization, Technical and Logistical Data* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 15 June 1941), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM101-10_Organization,_Technical,_and_Logistical_Data_1941.pdf, 17.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Greenfield, Palmer, and Wiley, *The Army Ground Forces*, 301-302.

[135] The 7th, 32nd, and 33rd FA battalions contained 105-mm howitzers while the 5th was a 155-mm battalion. See: Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 75.

Outside of these lethal capabilities, the 1st Infantry Division also contained a cavalry reconnaissance troop (detailed in the next chapter), an engineer battalion, and various company-size, non-combat support formations to enhance the unit's effectiveness and ensure the success of its RCTs across a range of offensive and defensive operations.[136] Finally, while the U.S. Army's infantry divisions were optimized for dismounted infantry combat, each fielded six truck companies used to shuttle limited quantities of troops and supplies over improved roads.[137] According to Mansoor, this enhanced the mobility and flexibility of the division as a whole.[138]

Perhaps the single most glaring capability gap within the Triangular model, however, was its lack of organic tank support. To address this need, the Army maintained a contingent of General Headquarters (GHQ) tank battalions that could be attached to infantry divisions to meet the requirements of specific combat situations.[139] In theory, this solution was sufficient to allay concerns about any deficiencies in mobile firepower associated with the Triangular Division.[140]

While he also cites the lack of organic armor, as well as limited combat engineer assets, as deficiencies of the Triangular Division, Jonathan House notes that, in general, the four field artillery battalions supplied enough firepower to compensate for the missing

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[136] Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 13.

[137] Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 38.

[138] Ibid.

[139] M. H. Gillie, *Forging the Thunderbolt: History of the U.S. Army's Armored Forces, 1917-45* (1947; repr., Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2006), 186-187.

[140] Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 19.

tanks.[141] For House, the division's most defining features were the subordinate, task-organized RCTs, each possessing their own AT and indirect fire capabilities, allowing them to maneuver individually as "a small division in itself."[142] As evidenced later in this case study, on 10 and 11 July 1943, the consequences of these pre-war organizational decisions would prove urgently relevant for the 1st Infantry Division as it weathered strong counterattacks from large enemy armored formations immediately following its landing in Sicily.

Following the 1940 Louisiana Maneuvers, the 1st Infantry Division's preparations for major combat operations intensified during 1941. Among the training conducted by the division, amphibious assault exercises in Massachusetts, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, and Martinique featured prominently.[143] The unit's training program only accelerated in May 1942 when Allen took command at Fort Benning, Georgia, focusing on what James Wheeler describes as rehearsals that were "as realistic as possible, with emphasis placed on air-ground liaison and close artillery support."[144] It is hardly surprising, then, that the 1st Infantry Division—affectionately nicknamed the "Big Red One" for its simple but recognizable shoulder patch, or, alternatively, the "Fighting First"—was among the first units earmarked by the U.S. Army for overseas deployment. After additional large-scale

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[141] Jonathan M. House, *Combined Arms Warfare in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 139.

[142] Ibid.

[143] 1st Infantry Division, *The First!*, 8.

[144] Wheeler, *The Big Red One*, 137-138.

maneuvers at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, the division began its sea movement to Glasgow, Scotland on 2 August 1942.[145]

In the United Kingdom, Allen's troops further honed their amphibious skills in anticipation of the Allies' forthcoming November 1942 Operation "Torch" seaborne invasion of North Africa.[146] By the time it sailed from the British Isles in late October, the division was therefore a well-drilled, if untested, combat formation. Until it fought an actual enemy on a real battlefield, however, it was impossible to assess whether or not the 1st Infantry Division would fulfill the expectations of the Army's institutional leaders who helped to shape its structure.

Terry Allen and His G-2: Perspectives on Tactics and Intelligence

Leading the 1st Infantry Division into North Africa and later Sicily, Allen possessed a unique and somewhat unusual background that ultimately served to enhance the hard-fighting reputation of his unit and endear himself to its members.[147] While he was noted in his own time and in the decades since as an aggressive, tough-talking combat commander in the mold of Patton, his friend and mentor, Major R. J. Rogers points out that Allen was also dedicated to the more cerebral aspects of tactical theory and its application.[148] Even if this was not a trait that he or his contemporaries frequently

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[145] 1st Infantry Division, *The First!*, 8.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Gerald Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen: Combat General of World War II–The Life of an American Soldier* (New York: Ballantine Publishing Group, 2003), ix-x.

[148] Major R. J. Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division During World War II: Terry de la Mesa Allen and Clarence Ralph Huebner," (Master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1965),

highlighted, Allen's published writing as well as his relationship with his G-2, Robert Porter, demonstrates that he contemplated and valued the acquisition of tactical intelligence as an important input to his own decision-making in battle.

A West Point drop-out and First World War veteran, Allen was a popular leader known for extreme, possibly excessive, loyalty to his men.[149] Also like Patton, Allen wore his emotions on his sleeve, causing *The New Yorker* magazine correspondent A.J. Liebling to comment in a 1943 biographic sketch: "Allen is a man of moods."[150] Often relying on hard-scrabble boxing or football analogies, Liebling stated that Allen considered his role as commander of the 1st Infantry Division to be the "most honorable place" in the U.S. Army.[151] Consequently, according to the article, he was a "worrier," always concerned with the well-being of his soldiers.[152]

19990413172, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 10; A. J. Liebling, "Profiles: Find 'Em, Fix 'Em, and Fight 'Em–I," *The New Yorker* (24 April 1943): 22-26, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS: 22, 24-25; Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 365.

[149] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 22, 24; Note: Allen's corps commander in North Africa and Sicily, then-Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, stated in his memoirs that he felt Allen's partiality toward his own division "tended to belittle the roles of others" and was anathema to fostering teamwork with adjacent units and his higher headquarters. See: Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (1951; repr., New York: Random House, Inc., 1999), 100.

[150] A. J. Liebling, "Profiles: Find 'Em, Fix 'Em, and Fight 'Em–II," *The New Yorker* (1 May 1943): 24-28, 36, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS: 28; D'Este, *Patton*, 2.

[151] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 22; Liebling, "Profiles–II," 25, 36.

[152] Liebling, "Profiles–II," 25.

Allen was a cavalryman by training and, even though he commanded an infantry battalion in the First World War, he returned to his horse-mounted reconnaissance roots in the interwar years of the 1920s and 1930s.[153] During that time, while serving as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army's 7th Cavalry Regiment, Allen published a short doctrinal supplement, *Reconnaissance by Horse Cavalry and Smaller Units*, in which he expounded on the conduct and theory of mounted and dismounted reconnaissance in combat.[154] Notoriously uninterested in purely intellectual pursuits, and with a checkered academic past, the fact that Allen took the time to write a 40-page manual on reconnaissance is a strong indication of his commitment to executing effective information collection operations.[155]

In his book, Allen used the U.S. Army's official terms of "distant" and "close" reconnaissance to describe information collection activities conducted out of contact with the enemy, which typically informed pre-combat estimative intelligence.[156] By contrast, "battle" reconnaissance took place "in close proximity" to the enemy and helped to produce current intelligence of immediate value during the execution of combat

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[153] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 24.

[154] Terry Allen, *Reconnaissance by Horse Cavalry Regiments and Smaller Units* (Harrisburg: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1939), https://mcoepublic.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/library/Documents/Hardcopy/paper/U220_A45_Reconnaissance_Horse_Cavalry_Terry_Allen.pdf, 1.

[155] Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen*, 13-14; Note: In addition to Allen's academic struggles at West Point, which led to his disenrollment, Liebling's biographic profile includes an anecdote from the future general's experience at the Command and General Staff College whereby a senior officer called Allen "the most indifferent student ever enrolled there." See: Liebling, "Profiles–I," 25.

[156] Allen, *Reconnaissance by Horse Cavalry Regiments and Smaller Units*, 2-3.

operations.[157] To support the current intelligence effort in particular, Allen offered a formulaic methodology:

> During battle reconnaissance, observation aviation reconnoiters the entire field of battle; mechanized units reconnoiter around the enemy's flanks and towards his rear; patrols maintain contact with the enemy's front line, his flanks, and his close supporting units."[158]

Thus, through the employment of multiple collection assets with differing capabilities, such as the layering of ground and air observation, Allen viewed information collection as a wide-ranging, combined arms effort that was not limited just to a unit's organic cavalry or infantry patrols.

Like so many of the tactical intelligence theorists and historians referenced previously, Allen stressed the need to utilize intelligence to support a commander's tactical decision-making. In making the connection between obtaining information and actually employing it on the battlefield, Allen professed his belief that commanders should hedge their decisions in favor of what the enemy could do, not just what a commander or G-2 thought he might wish to do:

> Only a mind reader can ascertain the enemy's *intentions*. However, the commander can secure certain information of the terrain and of the enemy. By considering the time and space factors involved, he can then approximately determine those *capabilities* of the enemy which may affect the accomplishment of his mission.[159]

Through the direction of limited information collection assets against only "essential," prioritized information (i.e. EEIs), Allen believed that cavalry units, and by extension the

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[157] Allen, *Reconnaissance by Horse Cavalry Regiments and Smaller Units*, 2-3.

[158] Ibid., 3.

[159] Ibid., 4-5.

G-2s who analyzed their reports from the field, could best assist commanders in the "formulation of sound, prompt tactical decisions."[160] If, as Glass and Davidson suggest, there was an underlying level of disdain for tactical intelligence among some American commanders during the Second World War, Allen was certainly not among them.[161]

Considering the substantial amount of time and thought that Allen must have devoted to producing his published work, it is not surprising that his philosophy on reconnaissance became the first element of what he later conceived as his three successive tenets of effective ground combat operations. Known to all members of the 1st Infantry Division by Allen's succinct exhortation to "find 'em, fix 'em, and fight 'em," the phrase's proliferation in all manner of official documents from the division headquarters between 1942 and 1943 is a testament to the zeal with which he proselytized his tactical dogma.[162] Commensurate with this simple and pithy framework, the 1st Infantry Division's commander relied on his G-2 and the unit's entire range of information collection capabilities to "find" the enemy so that his infantrymen could effectively "fix" and "fight" their way to victory.

Similarly central to Allen's conception of what made for successful tactical operations, and in line with his concern for preserving the lives of his men, was what

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[160] Allen, *Reconnaissance by Horse Cavalry Regiments and Smaller Units*, 4.

[161] Glass and Davidson, *Intelligence is for Commanders*, x.

[162] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 22; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons for Training Purposes," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 9 June 1943, Terry de la Mesa Allen Papers, 1907-1969, MS 307, Box 4, Folder 10, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, El Paso, TX, 18-19.

Liebling further described as a "fetish" for "maneuver" whereby the division commander sought to reduce unnecessary casualties by avoiding enemy strength and attacking "weak points."[163] Toward this end, Allen favored what he later described as "bold initiative and the faculty of being able to '[b]eat the enemy to the punch'."[164] Most of all, he showed a strong bias for night attacks that both surprised the enemy and offered greater concealment (and thereby protection) for his infantrymen.[165] Highlighting the potential to gain substantial quantities of ground quickly through this method, Allen referred to offensive action during darkness as: "The Forward Pass of the Infantry Units."[166] To enable these tactics, and in accordance with his well-developed philosophy on combat reconnaissance, Allen viewed information collection as an important prerequisite for the type of aggressive, high-tempo offensive operations which he prized above all others.[167]

Shortly after he was selected for command of the 1st Infantry Division, Allen negotiated a series of back-channel agreements with Army Field Forces staff in Washington, DC to secure the services of his former subordinate, and mutual Patton

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[163] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 22; 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences," 19.

[164] Terry Allen, "A Summation of 'Combat Leadership' as Presented to Officers of 1st Guided Missile BN," (lecture, Fort Bliss, TX, 22 June 1962), Terry de la Mesa Allen Papers, 1907-1969, MS 307, Box 5, Folder 6, C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, El Paso, TX, 2.

[165] Terry Allen, letter to Major General Harold K. Johnson, Commandant, Command and Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 11 May 1966, reference number N-3901, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 3.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen*, 109.

acquaintance, Major Robert Porter, as his division G-2.[168] Though he lacked any prior intelligence assignments or experience, Porter was yet another cavalryman who, given Allen's efforts to recruit him, clearly enjoyed the confidence and support of his division commander—important prerequisites for success as a G-2.[169] As related by Gerald Astor, Porter recalled Allen's words when he joined the division at Indiantown Gap in 1942:

> Your job is to keep me abreast of the enemy situation. As long as you give me good advice and good recommendations I'll do anything I can to help you in any way as far as personnel resources, or the use of reconnaissance elements of the division, artillery, anything you want. But the first time you give me bum advice and we lose a battle, I'm going to cut your head off. Is that clear?[170]

Empowered as well as forewarned by terms of employment that may be all too familiar for modern military intelligence officers, Porter clearly understood Allen's style of command and tactical philosophy, making him an appropriate selection to lead the 1st Infantry Division's intelligence effort.[171]

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[168] Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen*, 82-83, 107-108; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 270-271; Note: The U.S. Army did not adopt "Military Intelligence" (then referred to as "Army Intelligence and Security") as a distinct basic branch until 1 July 1962. Before that time officers, from combat arms and other branches filled G-2 and S-2 billets as a temporary assignments before typically rotating back to an operational role or command position. See: U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School, *The Evolution of American Military Intelligence* (Fort Huachuca: U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School, 4 May 1973), 29-30, 46, 105-106.

[169] Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen*, 108-109.

[170] Ibid., 109.

[171] Promoted to lieutenant colonel in August 1942, Porter remained Allen's G-2 in North Africa through the conclusion of the Sicily Campaign. He eventually eclipsed his old commander and mentor, achieving four stars and the rank of general in 1969. See: Porter interview, Appendix A, 3-4.

As their combat experience in 1942 and 1943 would subsequently demonstrate, Allen and Porter shared a commitment to rapidly developing the tactical situation, especially through aggressive ground reconnaissance, rather than waiting for detailed information or orders from higher headquarters.[172] It is therefore interesting and surprising that even "one of the most attack-minded officers to ever command a U.S. division," as D'Este described Allen, was accused of over-cautiousness by Patton, his friend and senior commander, on multiple occasions in North Africa and Sicily.[173] Before those fateful events, however, Allen and the 1st Infantry Division enjoyed a string of successes, as well as a few setbacks, in the U.S. Army's tumultuous initial proving ground of the North Africa Campaign.

Operations in North Africa: November 1942-May 1943

In the seven months between November 1942 and May 1943, the 1st Infantry Division traversed nearly 1,000 kilometers of rugged North African terrain from Algeria to Tunisia. During that time, Allen and his unit accumulated a collection of occasionally costly combat lessons that helped to transform the 1st Infantry Division into a highly effective tactical unit. These formative experiences transcended mere tactics, however, and extended throughout all aspects of the division's operations, including the G-2's tactical intelligence effort. In particular, the performance of Porter and his staff notably contributed to the important American victory at El Guettar. In that action, and throughout the entire North Africa Campaign, the G-2's operations served to reflect both

[172] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 15, 24.

[173] D'Este, *Patton*, 507.

the major capabilities and limitations of early Second World War tactical intelligence staffs.

Much as it would later in Sicily, beginning in the dark hours just after midnight on 8 November 1942, the 1st Infantry Division achieved tactical surprise through a night-time amphibious assault during Operation Torch, landing the division's units both east and west of the Algerian port city of Oran.[174] Aiming for what Terry Allen's post-war report described as a "double envelopment" of the overmatched and under-motivated Vichy French forces defending the city, the division's western "Y Force" (26th RCT) and eastern "Z Force" (16th and 18th RCTs plus the attached 1st Ranger Battalion), supported by Combat Command B of the 1st Armored Division, converged on Oran following their disembarkation.[175] After three days of sustained combat, most notably the 18th RCT's fierce action near the village of St. Cloud, the division overcame all resistance and established an important lodgment on the North African coast to facilitate the inflow of

[174] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 5 December 1942, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 2.

[175] Terry Allen, "Situation and Operations Report of the First Infantry Division During the Period of its Overseas Movement, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns, from 8 August to 7 August 1943," prepared for the Society of the First Division: 3 August 1951, reference number N-17371, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2; Note: The organization of the U.S. Army's armored divisions changed several times during the war. In general, a "combat command" was a task-organized, combined arms force consisting of at least one tank battalion and one armored infantry battalion with supporting field artillery and other enabling units. See: Stanton, *World War II Order of Battle*, 17-17.

additional Allied forces and logistics.[176] The 1st Infantry Division's relatively easy victory against what one after action report termed a "weak and sporadic" enemy defense certainly engendered a degree of confidence in Allen and his infantrymen, but it was most likely tempered by the knowledge that tougher combat against veteran German and Italian troops lay ahead.[177]

[176] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 2-3.

[177] Commander, 1st Infantry Division Artillery, "Inclosure No. 8 to 1st Inf Div Report: Hq & Hq Btry Div Arty – Report, TORCH Operation," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division Artillery, 16 November 1942, reference number 4882, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

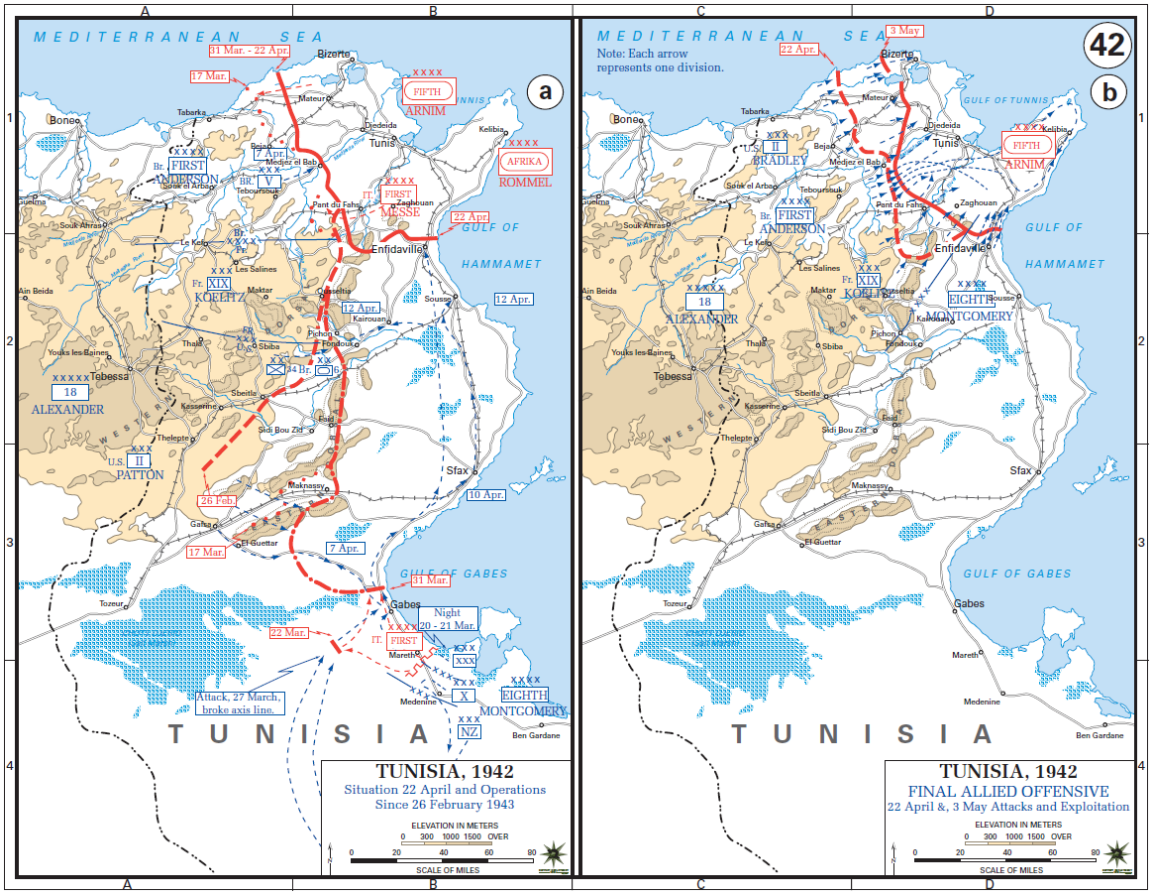

Figure 1. Tunisia, Situation 22 April 1943

Source: Department of History, United States Military Academy, "Tunisia, Situation 22 April 1943," https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic_departments/history/WWII%20Europe/WWIIEurope42Combined.pdf.

In December and January 1942, concurrent with the collapse of the Vichy French administration of North Africa and rapid advance of Allied forces east toward Tunisia, Allen's division was largely dispersed beyond his control with individual RCTs and battalions siphoned off piecemeal in support to other commands.[178] With his own

[178] Rick Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942-1943* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2002), 150-151; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of Activities of 1st Infantry Division," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 8 March 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection,

headquarters temporarily assigned under the French XIX Corps, Allen could only stand by at a distance as his 1st Battalion, 26th RCT, attached separately to Major General Lloyd Fredenhall's U.S. II Corps, suffered defeat during the ignominious American withdrawal from Kasserine Pass on 19 February 1943.[179] Rushed quickly to the II Corps area of operations in the following days, Allen and his mostly reunited 1st Infantry Division defended the key town of Tebessa and led a successful counterattack that was instrumental in forcing the culmination of the German-led assault three days later.[180] Following his unit's consolidation at Marsott from 1 to 10 March 1943, Allen was satisfied that subsequent operational plans called for the 1st Infantry Division to fight as a cohesive whole for the remainder of the North Africa Campaign.[181]

Immediately after the disaster at Kasserine Pass, Patton replaced Fredenhall as commander of II Corps and shortly thereafter launched an offensive, designated Operation "WOP," eastward to the Tunisian towns of Gafsa and El Guettar in mid-March

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Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 2.

[179] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 3-4; For a detailed analysis of the Battle of Kasserine Pass, see: George F. Howe, *The United States Army in World War II: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West* (1957; repr., Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 438-457.

[180] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of Activities," 2-3.

[181] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 4; Terry Allen, letter to General George C. Marshall, 10 March 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp.

1943.[182] Aiming to seize Gafsa "with a view to using it as a forward supply base for re-supplying the [British] Eight Army," Patton ordered the 1st Infantry Division, his main effort, to capture the junction town on 17 March, assigning the 1st Armored Division and 9th Infantry Division as supporting efforts in the north and south, respectively.[183] After a successful night movement, Allen's division easily reached its initial objectives and established the unit's forward command post in Gafsa itself by early afternoon on 18 March.[184]

Despite the division's success, and in what would become a trend extending into the Sicily Campaign, Patton was displeased with Allen for what he perceived as a lack of forward progress, even considering the adverse weather conditions limiting the 1st Infantry Division's mobility. The dressing-down that followed had a distinct impression on Porter, who recalled Patton's admonition to Allen: "You should have kept going until you found somebody to fight." [185] Allen's regard for the welfare of his troops at Gafsa, not to mention his pause to allow time for thorough information collection, thus ran afoul of Patton's demand for relentless action and pressure on the enemy, no matter the terrain

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[182] Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 180; Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 4.

[183] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," Headquarters, II Corps, 10 April 1943, reference number N-2652-A, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 5; Orr Kelly, *Meeting the Fox: The Allied Invasion of Africa, from Operation Torch to Kasserine Pass to Victory in Tunisia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002), 264.

[184] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 4; Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943, 5.

[185] Porter Interview, 278.

or mission variables that may have lent themselves to a more cautious approach.[186] It would not be the last time this occurred.

Orchestrating the unit's movement through short, verbal orders to his RCT commanders, a hallmark of the flexible, decentralized style of command and control that Allen would continue to employ in Sicily, the 1st Infantry Division continued its eastward advance.[187] With a mission to seize the ridges six miles east of El Guettar that dominated the critical Gafsa-Gabes highway from the north and south, the 1st Infantry Division launched its attack on 21 March.[188] Granted only limited time for ground reconnaissance, the division's infantry patrols nonetheless provided Porter's G-2 Section with information on the enemy's prepared defensive positions, and in doing so contradicted optimistic II Corps intelligence estimates predicting that local Italian opposition would be minimal.[189] In this case, the 1st Infantry Division's current intelligence, secured only hours before its pre-planned assault, compensated for incorrect estimative intelligence supplied by its corps headquarters—an incident which, according to Allen, reflected an unfortunate trend in Tunisia.[190]

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[186] Porter interview, 278-279.

[187] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 15, 25-26.

[188] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 29; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of the El Guettar Offensive (20 Mar. – 6 Apr. '43)," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division: 9 June 1943, Terry de la Mesa Allen Papers, 1907-1969, MS 307, Box 4, Folder 7, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, El Paso, TX, 2-3.

[189] Porter interview, 279; Liebling, "Profiles–II," 26.

[190] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

Specifically, the 1st Infantry Division's report cited an insufficient level of tactical detail in II Corps' estimative intelligence throughout the North Africa Campaign: "Complete or reasonably complete G-2 information from higher headquarters is frequently lacking. The Division rarely knew what was facing it when it went into action and had to depend largely upon combat [read: current] intelligence for its success."[191] Allen's frustration with the II Corps G-2, led by Colonel B. A. "Monk" Dickson and assisted by Patton favorite Colonel Oscar Koch, was likely only compounded by the effects additional friction stemming from Patton's insistence on high-tempo operations at the expense of time for effective information collection.[192] Reflecting these issues, the unit's after action report continued: "Rarely was enough time available for reconnaissance and preparation."[193] While many of the problems relating to the division's higher headquarters would subside within the relatively placid atmosphere that surrounded pre-invasion planning and intelligence work for Operation Husky, they would arise again in the heat of combat in Sicily.

Thankfully for Allen and Porter, at El Guettar the 1st Infantry Division's time-constrained information collection effort yielded results revealing a 6,000-soldier strong defense-in-depth by the Italian *Centauro* Armored Division amidst favorable terrain

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[191] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

[192] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 31.

[193] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

described by Allen as "[a] horseshoe shaped mountainous area of precipitous hills."[194] In response to this information, uncovered at the last moment by the division's current intelligence effort, Allen hastily planned one of his trademark night attacks, which he believed "proved of extreme value for attaining surprise and, occasionally, as the only means of getting our troops across open country without severe losses."[195] Unfortunately, Allen's desire to wait for darkness and launch his initial attack at 1930 again sparked Patton's ire and caused the II Corps Commander to demand that the division begin its assault by 1700, when two hours of daylight still remained.[196] Porter summarized the consequences: "We lost all surprise."[197] Once again, however, as at Gafsa, the 1st Infantry Division achieved all its objectives and incurred what the II Corps after action report described as only "minor casualties," while capturing 700 Italian soldiers.[198]

In their sweeping victory on 21 March, the division's infantry regiments supplied an almost textbook example of Allen's tactical framework for outflanking the enemy through maneuver and seizing dominant terrain features, especially ridge lines and mountain crests.[199] During its successful action, the 1st Infantry Division attacked east

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[194] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 5.

[195] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 21.

[196] Porter interview, 280.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943), 7.

[199] Ibid., 20; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of the El Guettar Offensive," 3.

with nearly all its units in line.[200] Arrayed from north to south, these were, in order: the 26th RCT, 1st Ranger Battalion (attached), 18th RCT, and finally the 16th RCT in a "follow in support" mission.[201] As the division's soldiers became more experienced with this type of mountain warfare, so too were they learning respect for the enemy's widespread employment of mines along obvious offensive avenues approach (major highways and low-laying valleys) that served to disrupt Allied units and slow the pace of operations.[202] Both these major features of combat in North Africa, mountains and mines, would similarly come to dominate the division's operational environment during the Sicily Campaign.

After consolidating its gains east of El Guettar on 22 March, the 1st Infantry Division prepared to receive a much-anticipated enemy counterattack, one that finally arrived at dawn on the 23rd. At 0600, forward elements of the attached 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion provided Porter's staff section with early warning about the enemy's imminent approach, which the division G-2 quickly disseminated as current intelligence to the rest of the unit.[203] Throughout the day, the division withstood two determined attacks led by at least 50 tanks of the German 10th *Panzer* Division and remnants of the

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[200] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of the El Guettar Offensive," 3; Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 5-6.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943, 20; War Department, *Lessons from the Tunisian Campaign* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 15 October 1943), reference number 940.5423L641c1, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 60-62.

[203] Porter interview, 276-277.

Italian *Centauro* Division.[204] In the afternoon, ahead of the second and most threatening enemy assault, II Corps did in fact make a distinctly positive contribution to the 1st Infantry Division's intelligence effort as it supplied information, most likely derived from British tactical signals intelligence (SIGINT), which again provided early warning of the enemy's renewed advance.[205] As he did in the morning, Porter ensured the division's forward RCTs received the new current intelligence immediately.[206]

All told, the 1st Infantry Division's layered anti-tank defense, including disruptive indirect fire, the infantry's shoulder-fired bazookas and AT guns, attached tank destroyers, and even direct-fire field artillery, stymied both German-led counterattacks on 23 March and destroyed approximately 30 enemy tanks.[207] Amply supplied by timely and accurate current intelligence from the G-2, the division's successful defense at El Guettar proved to both Allen and Patton that infantry possessing effective, massed artillery fire and entrenched on hilltops and restrictive terrain could defeat attacks led by even the large and powerful Mark IV and Mark VI ("Tiger") German armor.[208] Porter later

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[204] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943, 7.

[205] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Summary of the El Guettar Offensive," 6; Porter interview, 283; Note: F.H. Hinsley credits a British tactical signals intelligence unit for providing "precise warning" of enemy plans at El Guettar. See: F. H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, abr. ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 286.

[206] Porter interview, 283.

[207] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 24; Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943, 8.

[208] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 10 April 1943; Porter interview, 282.

emphasized the confidence this knowledge engendered in the division's infantrymen who had dutifully remained in their foxholes, allowing the enemy's tanks to roll past while waiting to engage the vulnerable and slower-moving German and Italian infantry.[209] The lessons drawn from this experience would become important four months later as the 1st Infantry Division's RCTs withstood a similar onslaught of enemy tanks while attempting to secure the Gela beachhead during the Operation Husky landings in Sicily.

Between 16 April and 9 May 1943, the 1st Infantry Division continued to take part in II Corp's turn northeast and its advance toward Bizerte and Tunis under the command of newly appointed Major General Omar Bradley.[210] In what Porter referred to as an "anticlimax" after the victory at El Guettar, the division nonetheless gained further experience in the sort of slow and grinding mountain combat it would encounter in Sicily.[211] Fighting company- and battalion-sized actions for command of successive hilltops and ridgelines within the Tine Valley, small enemy units seeking to stave off inevitable defeat continued to inflict punishing casualties on the division's severely fatigued infantrymen.[212]

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[209] Porter interview, 282.

[210] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 7-10; Note: Concurrent with Bradley's elevation to corps command, Patton was re-assigned to begin planning for Operation HUSKY. See: Patton, diary entry, 14 April 1943 in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 200.

[211] Porter interview, 286.

[212] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 8-10.

Described by Allen as "dog tired," the 1st Infantry Division ended its combat operations in Tunisia with its infantry RCTs understrength by a total of 29 officers and 2,573 enlisted men.[213] Even though it emerged from the North Africa Campaign in mid-1943 as a highly capable division, these raw statistics demonstrate the price paid by the unit for its hard-won victories and experience. Writing only weeks after his final battle in Tunisia, Allen remained concerned about the division's decrease in combat performance over the final stretch of 17 continuous days of fighting in North Africa, a result he attributed to exhaustion.[214] He lamented: "Troops cannot sustain a strong offensive over long periods without rest. The experience of this Division indicate[s] that losses among tired troops in the offensive are excessive due to fatigue."[215] In light of this cautionary note, it probably would not have encouraged Allen to know that his division was soon to endure 28 consecutive days of hard fighting on the beaches and in the mountains of Sicily.

Serious worries over operational tempo and exhaustion notwithstanding, Allen's after action report also assessed the division's successes and failures relating to information collection and tactical intelligence. In support of his emphasis on leveraging the division's combat power "against weak places and the conservation of strength in front of strong places," Allen was somewhat disappointed with the inherent capabilities

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[213] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 10; Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations," 15 May 1943, 15.

[214] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 10.

[215] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 20.

and overall effectiveness of his organic ground reconnaissance in North Africa.[216] In particular, and discussed at length in the following chapter, Allen highlighted the repeated failure of patrols from his forward infantry companies to gain and maintain contact with the enemy and to ensure that local reconnaissance was continuous.[217]

On a more positive note, Allen confirmed the "tremendous importance" that the division G-2's tactical intelligence effort held to inform decisions and battle plans not only in his own headquarters but also down to the unit's subordinate RCTs and battalions."[218] Still, in warning that "erroneous evaluation has a tendency to depress or unduly increase the optimism [of commanders]," the report hedged against complacency.[219] It fell to Porter and his staff to apply the lessons of North Africa, good and bad, as his G-2 section prepared for the Sicily Campaign.

Conclusion

Years of preparation and seven months of combat operations in Algeria and Tunisia transformed the 1st Infantry Division into a veteran and highly effective unit by May 1943. Enabling this success, Allen and his subordinate commanders relied on what was, in terms of overall results, a successful tactical intelligence effort led by Porter and his G-2 section. Before proceeding to analyze the unit's preparations for the Sicily

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[216] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19, 24.

[217] Ibid., 2, 24.

[218] Ibid., 26.

[219] Ibid.

Campaign, however, it is first necessary to consider closely the division's organic and supporting information collection resources as well as the internal workings of the G-2 section. Because these assets and their characteristics largely dictated the timeliness and accuracy of the division G-2's reports and assessments, understanding their capabilities and limitations provides for a more complete evaluation of 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort during Operation Husky.

CHAPTER 4

INFORMATION COLLECTION AND THE DIVISION G-2

Introduction

Led by Porter, the 1st Infantry Division's G-2 section worked side-by-side with Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Gibb's operations (G-3) section to provide both estimative and current intelligence in support of their commander, the division staff, and subordinate RCTs. In this endeavor, the division's intelligence team relied on not just their own personnel and collection assets, but also sought to exploit the entire expanse of capabilities resident within units and intelligence staffs up and down the entire Allied chain of command through what field manuals then described as "close liaison."[220] Today, modern U.S. Army doctrine refers to this interconnected network of intelligence staffs, assets, systems, processes, and information as the "intelligence enterprise."[221]

The preponderance of the division's organic information collection capability rested within its infantry regiments, reconnaissance troop, and artillery battalions. Inevitably, then, the overwhelming majority of reports from the field emanated from a single perspective: ground, line-of-sight visual contact. While several light aircraft, prisoner of war interrogation teams, Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) detachments, and a radio intercept platoon supplemented the collection activities of the 1st Infantry Division's combat units, Allen and his staff required assistance from their higher

[220] War Department, FM 30-5, 5.

[221] HQDA, FM 2-0, 5-3.

headquarters to gain and maintain situational awareness on enemy activity outside of their assigned area of operations.

In theory, the provisions made before the war and during the North Africa campaign by various U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF) leaders and Allied air staffs should have ensured that the division had access to consistent support from high-speed tactical air and photo reconnaissance assets. In reality, competing air component priorities and an unreliable communications architecture frequently left the 1st Infantry Division without critical information on enemy movement and operations beyond the line of contact. Similarly, though the division did profit from strategic signals intelligence, especially for planning purposes, senior American commanders made decisions ahead of the Sicily campaign that relegated tactical signals intelligence to the sidelines.

To coordinate collection, analyze information, and support decision-making through employment of all these means, Allen and Porter augmented their miniscule War Department allocations for G-2 soldiers with a large infusion of additional personnel. Empowered through this additional strength, and Allen's trust, Porter developed a highly effective team that gained valuable practical experience in North Africa. It is therefore essential to understand both the Allied intelligence enterprise and the internal workings of the division G-2 section before proceeding to assess the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort during the first phase of the Sicily Campaign.

Infantrymen as Collectors: Companies, Battalions, and RCTs

It is no exaggeration to state that the 1st Infantry Division's average rifle company was its most reliable and consistently employed information collection asset. Terry Allen's own late war "Directive for Reconnaissance" memorandum added

emphasis to this point: "Small units must be impressed with the fact that higher headquarters are dependent upon them for vital information."[222] Participation in combat patrols and manning static observation posts were thus ubiquitous experiences for every soldier in the division's line companies. This reality made the information collection capabilities of RCTs and their subordinate units both essential to the division's intelligence effort as well as frustratingly one-dimensional since they relied exclusively on visual, line-of-sight observation.

With a large pool of potential manpower, each of the 1st Infantry Division's infantry companies possessed the raw capability to provide valuable information from their sectors of the front line up the chain of command. Indeed, even when they were not conducting deliberate information collection operations, frequent situation reports from infantry companies allowed their battalions, RCTs, and the division to maintain situational awareness across the breadth of the battlefield. However, owing to the need for stealth and concealment, reports from patrols and OPs often lacked timeliness as units observed radio silence, passing messages via courier or else upon the final return of the patrol or relief from duty.[223] This represented a key limitation and frequent sticking point in after action reports.

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[222] Terry Allen, "Directive for Reconnaissance," undated memorandum, ca. 1944-1945, Terry de la Mesa Allen Papers, 1907-1969, MS 307, Box 4, Folder 13, C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, El Paso, TX:,16.

[223] G. R. Thompson and Dixie R. Harris, *The United States Army in World War II: The Technical Services: The Signal Corps: The Outcome (Mid-1943 Through 1945)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1966), 39; Allen, "Directive for Reconnaissance," 18, 29;

Regardless of how information from infantry patrols and observation posts was disseminated, factual accuracy of the actual message content was then, and remains today, an ever-present concern for recipients at higher headquarters. Writing with visible frustration, the 16th RCT S-2 stressed this point in his contribution to AFHQ's *Training Notes from Recent Fighting in Tunisia*.[224] His original underlined text adds emphasis and urgency:

> An all-important point in all scouting, observation, and reconnaissance patrolling: Train men to report only what they actually see, and not to include any personal interpretations. Make the essential details complete, but let the topside people do the interpreting. If they report information they didn't see personally, report the data absolutely as given, and who gave it. One out-standing example-lesson was the twisting of information reported. An OP reported that they had seen three Italians coming down a certain hill. This information was given to someone else for relaying to a higher headquarters. It was reported that three battalions were coming down the hill . . . Clarity of reports and certainty of the proper understanding of reports must be stressed.[225]

Here, the S-2's pointed remarks illustrate the importance of informational accuracy from the division's most forward combat elements in relation to reducing the friction and uncertainty common to any tactical operation.

Given the important lesson contained within the anecdote above, it is easy to connect such errors to a distinct lack of formal training in reconnaissance at the infantry company level. Even though companies and their subordinate platoons conducted

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39; U.S. Army Infantry School, *Tactics: Combat Intelligence* (Fort Benning: The Infantry School, 1942), 17-19.

[224] G-3 Training Section, Allied Force Headquarters, *Training Notes from Recent Fighting in Tunisia*, Allied Force Headquarters, 15 May 1943, reference number 940.5423 T768 1943, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 10-11.

[225] Ibid.

reconnaissance patrols or manned observation posts on a routine daily basis, their primary role remained to close with and destroy the enemy in combat, not to gather information. As a result, the average infantryman in a rifle company typically lacked the sort of intensive training provided to dedicated ground reconnaissance elements at the battalion and RCT-level.[226]

This was among the most glaring deficiencies identified by Terry Allen in North Africa. Issued under the division commander's name, the 1st Infantry Division's "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons for Training Purposes" offered a blunt assessment:

> Reconnaissance, while stressed in training and amply covered in training literature, appears to be one of the weaknesses of our infantry. An organization of carefully trained and selected scouts in each company would insure better reconnaissance. Patrols of all sizes must be aggressive and determined to gain the information for which they were sent out. They should be given definite missions before leaving and should understand the importance attached to their missions. Contact, once gained, must be maintained.[227]

Through his critique, Allen noted not only the poor reconnaissance training of frontline infantry companies, but also a lack of motivation or understanding of purpose among his infantrymen in relation to missions aimed at collecting information. In response to these problems, Allen supervised the production and distribution of the division's "Reconnaissance Pamphlet" after its 1942 Operation Torch landings, further emphasizing

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[226] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 7-25, *Infantry Field Manual, Headquarters Company, Intelligence and Signal Communication, Rifle Regiment* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 7 October 1942), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM7-25_Headquarters_Company,_Intelligence_and_Signal_Communication_1942.pdf, 16.

[227] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 2.

his commitment to improving the shortcomings of his infantrymen with respect to information collection.[228]

In North Africa, the most frequent consequence of the 1st Infantry Division's uneven performance in ground reconnaissance, especially in patrolling, was a tendency to lose contact with the enemy, particularly during the division's offensive operations when Axis units sought to disengage and withdraw.[229] The division's after action review from its operations in Algeria underlined this concern: "When contact with the enemy is once gained, it must be retained."[230] Seven months later in Tunisia, the division commander was still disappointed that his infantry repeatedly squandered opportunities to execute his second pillar of operations—"fix 'em"—by allowing enemy forces to slip away from reconnaissance patrols once they had been found.[231]

Unlike at the company level, battalion headquarters executed a better-resourced effort with respect to information collection operations. As the most junior tactical leaders with a dedicated staff, battalion commanders relied on their intelligence officers and S-2 sections to provide estimative and current intelligence as well as to work with the operations section (S-3) to plan, direct, and coordinate the battalion's overall information

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[228] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy," 5 December 1942, 1.

[229] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

[230] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy," 5 December 1942, 1.

[231] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

collection plan.[232] In addition to the infantry company patrols and observation posts described above, battalion S-2s used their own specifically trained infantrymen-turned-"intelligence scouts" to both supplement company collection operations as well as to screen and tactically question enemy prisoners.[233]

These full-time responsibilities fell to a small section of six soldiers led by the S-2 (typically a first lieutenant), and two noncommissioned officers.[234] Fulfilling such a broad and continuous array of intelligence tasks with an undersized section represented one of the greatest limitations of any battalion S-2 early in the war.[235] Not surprisingly, the U.S. Army later recognized the liabilities posed by a lack of personnel and updated its tables of organization in 1945 to provide an entire information collection platoon in direct support of the battalion commander and S-2.[236] In North Africa and Sicily, however, the 1st Infantry Division's battalion S-2s remained bound by the early 1940s constructs.

As opposed to its meager allocations for battalions, the Army provisioned the colonels who commanded the division's regimental combat teams with a trained and

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[232] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 7-20, *Infantry Field Manual: Rifle Battalion* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 28 September 1942), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM7-20_Rifle_Battalion_1942.pdf, 6-7.

[233] War Department, FM 30-5, 13.

[234] U.S. Army Infantry School, *Tactics: Combat Intelligence*, 9.

[235] 2nd Command Class, U.S. Army Command and Staff College, "Memo: For the Director Command Class: Combat Intelligence," Analytical Studies Subcourse, U.S. Army Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 7-21 June 1946, reference number N-13774.1, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1, Appendix A, 4.

[236] Greenfield, Palmer, and Wiley, *The Army Ground Forces*, 460.

dedicated intelligence collection capability: the "Intelligence and Reconnaissance" (I&R) Platoon.[237] As described in doctrine, "The principal mission of the regimental intelligence and reconnaissance platoon is to serve as the special intelligence agency of the regimental commander for the collection of information under the supervision of the regimental intelligence officer (S-2)."[238] Comprised of a platoon headquarters and two reconnaissance squads (17 total soldiers) with eight four-wheeled "jeeps" to enhance their mounted mobility, the I&R platoon represented a significant increase in capability over those found at lower echelons.[239]

It is important to note, however, that the division's experience in North Africa demonstrated that just because the I&R Platoon possessed jeeps, rough terrain frequently precluded their use and called more often for dismounted operations.[240] Following from his previously cited after action comments, the 16th RCT S-2 offered more insight into the grueling nature of information collection missions: "All our reconnaissance has been on foot . . . You cannot use the roads because they are often mined, and you can't be road-bound in reconnaissance. The answer is to go across country . . . on foot over mountains, ravines, rivers, etc."[241] These limitations imposed by harsh terrain were

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[237] War Department, FM 7-25, 5-6.

[238] Ibid.

[239] U.S. Army Infantry School, *Tactics: Combat Intelligence*, 8; War Department, FM 7-25, 34; John J. McGrath, *Scouts Out!: The Development of Reconnaissance Units in Modern Armies* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 108.

[240] G-3 Training Section, Allied Force Headquarters, *Training Notes,* 14.

[241] Ibid.

merely a preview of the arduous conditions that infantry patrols would experience in Sicily.

Of all the factors pertaining to ground reconnaissance, however, Allen singled out lack of time as the most detrimental to the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort in North Africa.[242] Frequently issued mission orders by II Corps with minimal notice, information collection operations conducted by RCTs and their subordinate units were often hasty and therefore usually lacked coordination with higher headquarters.[243] While Allen possessed only limited sway to influence the timelines of his higher headquarters, he demanded improvement from his own units to maximize the time they did have to gather information:

> Subordinate units should submit to Division, as early as possible, their plan of patrolling, especially at night. This is necessary to coordinate the activities on the Division front. It will prevent combat between adjacent patrols and will assist them in executing their required mission and it will enable [the] G-2 to utilize planned patrols to obtain specific information for his use. Without coordination, artillery harassing fires may disrupt patrol activities, whereas a coordination of the two has frequently resulted in unexpected success.[244]

By highlighting the dangers of a lack of coordination (fratricide) as well as potential benefits (better situational awareness for the division and greater support fire support), Allen illuminated his unit's struggles with the fog and friction of war in North Africa.

These comments also serve as further evidence that planning and coordination of information collection operations, especially at the RCT level, was in many instances

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[242] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19.

[243] Ibid.

[244] Ibid., 22.

cursory, with an emphasis on flexibility and responsiveness to changes in objectives, terrain, and the enemy situation. Because of this, coordination meetings between various subordinate and adjacent unit liaison officers (LNOs) and the 1st Infantry Division G-2 were essential.[245] Detailed later in this chapter, the LNO system provided daily opportunities to synchronize and deconflict information collection operations face-to-face.[246]

In summarizing the information collection capabilities of Allen's infantry regiments, it is obvious that, through sheer numbers alone, they possessed great inherent capacity to gather, observe, and report critical information on the enemy up the chain of command to the G-2. After the 1st Infantry Division's formative combat experience in North Africa, however, there was much room for improvement in the performance of these essential activities. It is also impossible to escape the reality that, as valuable as they were, patrols and observation posts were limited to a ground, line-of-sight perspective. This left open the possibility that skillful use of masking terrain and concealment could obscure the enemy's true composition, disposition, and strength from even alert and engaged infantrymen seeking such information. Thus, it was for additional collection capabilities at the division level and echelons far above to provide other angles and dimensions to enhance the G-2's overall understanding of the enemy situation.

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[245] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 26-27.

[246] Ibid.

Information Collection Capabilities at Division and Above

Outside of its RCTs, the 1st Infantry Division headquarters had direct access to additional information collection capabilities through its organic reconnaissance troop and secondhand via reports from the division's artillery units. As experience would prove, the latter in particular represented an accurate and reliable source of information on the enemy. Complementing these means of collection, prisoner of war interrogation teams, CIC detachments, and a radio intercept platoon rounded out the division's internal resources. Each of these specialized elements brought with them a unique capability that added to the G-2's intelligence effort. Even though all of the division's collection assets had their own limitations, they were nevertheless directly answerable to Allen and Porter and remained responsive to immediate tasking from senior leaders within the division.

The same could not be said for the more low-density, external information collection capabilities outside the division's control. Chief among these were high-speed air reconnaissance sorties, both visual and photographic, which had the potential to provide valuable and otherwise unattainable information on the enemy for the division G-2. However, in practice, problematic relationships with the USAAF and technical challenges in communications frustrated tactical units like the 1st Infantry Division in their effort to gain support from the air component. Other challenges surrounded the employment and utilization of both tactical and strategic signals intelligence, which limited their utility to Porter and his intelligence staff. All these difficulties in unlocking the latent capabilities of the Allied intelligence enterprise manifested themselves in North Africa and remained largely unresolved ahead of the Sicily Campaign. As a result, the

division G-2 was far more dependent on its organic collection assets to inform its current intelligence effort.

By organizational design, the principal internal collection resource available to Porter and the 1st Infantry Division was the motorized divisional reconnaissance troop, known as the "1st Reconnaissance Troop" in alignment with the division's own numeric designation. Born from the genesis of heated pre-war debates over what size and composition of organic reconnaissance was appropriate for the Triangular Infantry Division, the final 1942-1943 organization of the unit provided a 147-soldier cavalry troop of three platoons with three sections each of one scout car and four jeeps.[247] In reality, however, the only differences between the regimental I&R platoons and the division's reconnaissance troop was that the latter organization was larger and worked directly for the division commander, albeit typically through the G-2. Functionally, the troop represented more of the same ground-based capability found within the three infantry regiments.[248]

Similar to his pointed remarks on the division's infantry patrols, Allen was also disappointed in the performance of the 1st Reconnaissance Troop in North Africa, complaining that it lacked the armor and firepower necessary to fight for critical

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[247] Matthew Darlington Morton, *Men on Iron Ponies: The Death and Rebirth of the Modern U.S. Cavalry* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009), 26-27; McGrath, *Scouts Out!*, 107.

[248] As of 20 July 1943, beyond the time horizon covered by this work, the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the 1st Infantry Division for the duration of its operations in Sicily. See: 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, "After Action Report, 91st Cav Recon Squadron, 10 July-16 August 1943," Headquarters, 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, 6 October 1943, reference number 891 CRS 151, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

information.[249] Ultimately, though, in the operations covered by this case study, the reconnaissance troop played only a very minor role in the fight for the Gela beachhead and thus its actions are not covered in depth. It was not until after 14 July, when the troop began operating forward of the division's infantry regiments in accordance with its doctrinal purpose, that its true impact was felt with respect to information collection operations.[250]

Far more impactful to the G-2's current intelligence effort in the initial phase of the campaign were observers from the 1st Infantry Division's artillery units. Commanded by Brigadier General Clift Andrus, the DIVARTY provided a supplemental and vital additional dimension to the division's organic information collection capabilities. In addition to its wide dispersion of ground observation posts manned by "forward observer parties" of one officer and two enlisted men attached to front line infantry companies, the DIVARTY also fielded five organic "air observation post" sections of unarmed L-4 Piper Cub light aircraft.[251] This capability, provided by 10 total aircraft within the division, was critical for acquiring targets beyond the many intervening crests that blocked ground observation in mountainous terrain—an unavoidable reality of the operational

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[249] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 19; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy," 5 December 1942, 2.

[250] For brief descriptions of significant actions by the 1st Reconnaissance Troop later in the campaign, see: Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 114-121.

[251] John R. Walker, *Bracketing the Enemy: Forward Observers in World War II* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 5; Edgar F. Raines, Jr., *Eyes of Artillery: The Origins of Modern U.S. Army Aviation in World War II* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 2000), 118, 131.

environment in North Africa and Sicily and a key limitation of the division's reconnaissance units detailed earlier.[252]

While the primary mission of both ground and air artillery OPs was to call for and control indirect fire, John Walker emphasizes that basic information collection in support of higher headquarters was a "distinct task" of second nature to U.S. Army forward observers in the Second World War.[253] On the receiving end of reports from artillery OPs, the small S-2 staffs of the individual artillery battalions and the DIVARTY headquarters were primarily concerned with analyzing the information to determine the locations of enemy artillery to enable counterbattery fires.[254] Nevertheless, the same reports were invaluable to Porter and his G-2 section. The division's report on operations in Tunisia highlighted this fact:

> Over half of the G-2 intelligence was obtained through the artillery S-2. It is believed that all observers would be trained to be constantly alert for bits of information that would be of value to G-2 and not limit their duties to seeking targets and adjusting fire. The next most valuable source of information was the Recon Troop.[255]

So critical were artillery OPs to the Division's overall information collection effort and situational awareness (not to mention effective fire support) that Allen further noted the need for his infantry units to "seize and hold observation for the artillery" long before

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[252] Raines, *Eyes of Artillery*, 131, 160.

[253] Walker, *Bracketing the Enemy*, 177.

[254] War Department, FM 30-5, 15.

[255] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 27.

beginning any major maneuver operations.[256] There was no question as to the effectiveness of artillery observers both in their primary fires support task and in their secondary role as information collectors.

The same could not be said, however, regarding the doubts that overshadowed the air observation post system. Prior to the war, senior leaders within the USAAF lobbied heavily against fielding light observation aircraft within infantry divisions.[257] Instead, they restated their firm belief that corps and divisions would receive adequate support from the air component's high-speed tactical air reconnaissance aircraft.[258] With great foresight into the potential benefits of organic air observation within divisions, however, Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall granted the artillery branch its request.[259] In this way, the employment of air OPs in North Africa by tactical units represented more of a proof of concept than a fully mature fire support or information collection capability.

Flying in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, new and inexperienced Army air OP pilots were conscious of their vulnerability and reluctant to incur losses that could have discredited themselves and their experimental mission.[260] As a result, they used "grasshopper" tactics involving rapid ascents and descents of no more than a few hundred

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[256] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 1.

[257] Raines, *Eyes of Artillery*, 103.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid., 82, 103.

[260] Ibid., 158.

meters and lasting only seconds at a time, increasing their survivability but dramatically reducing their effectiveness.[261] Because of this caution, forward observers on the ground remained the primary "eyes" of the artillery and, for that matter, tactical G-2s, though air OPs still contributed where and when they could.[262]

More frequently, artillery aircraft and pilots were assembled into a makeshift "Air Dispatch Service" shuttling orders, messages, and sometimes key leaders, between the various division, corps, and field army headquarters spread across the North African desert—a secondary mission that would continue in Sicily and throughout the war.[263] Allen himself found this capability so valuable that he advocated, unsuccessfully, "that Cub planes be assigned to Division Headquarters."[264] More than anything, combat missions in North Africa gave air OP pilots vital experience which led to far more audacious and, ultimately, effective tactics in Sicily.[265] This rapid maturation in tactics and competence was all the more important given the USAAF's struggles to deliver the results that it continually promised.

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[261] Raines, *Eyes of Artillery*, 158.

[262] Ibid., 158, 160; Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 26.

[263] Thompson and Harris, *The United States Army in World War II*, 38.

[264] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 26.

[265] Julian William Cummings with Gwendolyn Kay Cummings, *Grasshopper Pilot: A Memoir* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2005), 39, 49-50; Morton, *Men on Iron Ponies*, 134.

Predicated on a secure and reliable communications architecture, not to mention sufficient quantities of platforms, the USAAF planned to meet both its own information collection needs and those of the ground forces by exercising what its doctrine termed "centralized control" over all tactical reconnaissance aircraft.[266] Unlike an infantry division's air OPs, which could be tasked immediately and directly, ground commanders submitted requests for tactical air reconnaissance in North Africa and Sicily to the USAAF's XII Air Support Command (ASC) through two-man "air support parties" (ASPs) embedded within their command posts.[267] Despite the marked improvements of air OPs, the Piper Cub's unavoidable range and physical performance limitations necessitated support from the air component's high-speed fighters to collect information behind the enemy's forward line of troops at any great depth.[268]

Even though tactical air reconnaissance reports represented only rapid, visual observations by USAAF pilots of enemy activity in a certain location at a specific time,

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[266] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 100-20, *Field Service Regulations: Command and Employment of Air Power* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 21 July 1943), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM100-20_Command_and_Employment_of_Air_Power_1943.pdf, 7-8; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 106.

[267] Lt. Col. Kent Roberts Greenfield and Dr. Robert R. Palmer, *Origins of the Army Ground Forces, General Headquarters, United States Army, 1940-1942, Study No. 1* (Washington, DC: Historical Section, Army Ground Forces, 1946, reference number N-15415, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS), 63; Headquarters (Rear), XII Air Support Command, "Plan of Air Support Force 343," Headquarters (Rear), XII Air Support Command, 7 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 3.

[268] Brad William Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support in World War Two: The Western Desert and Tunisia, 1940-43* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 164; War Department, FM 100-5, 40.

they were critical to providing insight on the larger, operational-level enemy situation and its implications for future action in a ground unit's area of operations.[269] This type of situational understanding was essential to tactical commanders and their staffs. In particular, it had the potential to heavily influence the G-2's predictive analysis based on reports of troops movements, reserve locations, and defensive preparations to determine what courses of action the enemy might pursue in the upcoming 24 to 48 hours, or even beyond.[270] Without this information, the G-2 could remain blind to threats, as well as opportunities, which manifested outside the division's immediate tactical area of operations.

Unfortunately, combat experience in North Africa ran contrary to the pleas within the U.S. Army's doctrine for "teamwork, mutual understanding, and cooperation" between air and ground forces.[271] Instead, the campaign exposed the faults of a layered and bureaucratic air support request process that was, at least for the 1st Infantry Division, deemed wholly ineffective by Allen.[272] While II Corps praised the air support system in an after action review from the campaign, it also requested direct control over

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[269] Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support in World War Two*, 14; Allen, "Directive for Reconnaissance," 12.

[270] War Department, Field Manual 1-20, *Army Air Force Field Manual: Tactics and Technique of Air Reconnaissance and Observation* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 20 April 1942), http://www.pattonthirdarmy.com/fieldmanuals/FM1-20_Tactics_and_Technique_of_Air_Reconnaissance_and_Observation_1942.pdf, 42-44.

[271] War Department, FM 100-20, 11.

[272] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 20-21.

certain numbers of air reconnaissance aircraft in future operations.[273] In reality, therefore, the corps' surprisingly laudatory comments probably represent more of the aspirational spirit of teamwork referenced in doctrine rather than actual satisfaction with respect to results achieved in combat.

Aerial photo reconnaissance was similarly a high-demand, low-density information collection capability resident within the Allied air component. Even in support of more senior headquarters with longer planning horizons, however, the USAAF's 3rd Photographic Reconnaissance Group often struggled to provide timely information to ground forces during the North Africa Campaign.[274] Thankfully for the Allies, by the spring of 1943, just as preparations for Operation Husky were intensifying, photo reconnaissance units finally addressed problems of timeliness and quality in their operations, much to the relief of senior planning staffs.[275] While Porter and his intelligence staff had direct access to the same resources as their higher headquarters in the comfortable, static planning environment prior to their amphibious assault in July 1943, experience in North Africa made it clear that the division could not rely on photo reconnaissance support once it was in contact with the enemy.[276]

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[273] Commander, II Corps, "Report of Operations" (10 April 1943), 24.

[274] Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support in World War Two*, 146.

[275] Ibid.

[276] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 31.

If air and photo reconnaissance were information collection resources better suited to higher headquarters, the 1st Infantry Division had other, more responsive, assets at its disposal in 1943. Falling under the modern military intelligence discipline of human intelligence (HUMINT), prisoner of war interrogators fulfilled an important mission at every level of war in North African and Sicily. Consisting of two officers and four enlisted men with specific training, each interrogation team was designated by the foreign language capability of its members (i.e. "German" or "Italian").[277] During the Sicily Campaign, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 was allocated one German team and one Italian team and encouraged by the 7th Army to shuffle personnel "to provide for two like teams of mixed language qualifications" in order to most effectively support its tactical needs.[278]

The 7th Army G-2 also highlighted the need for complete integration of interrogators into each division's intelligence team. The written instructions stressed that the attached personnel "should be thoroughly familiar with the tactical situation" and emphasized that G-2s "must inform the [interrogation team] officer in charge of the Essential Elements of Enemy Information desired."[279] Provided with this critical information, interrogators could prioritize tactical information, especially concerning

[277] G-2, Force 343 (7th Army), "Intelligence Plan: Operation 'BIGOT-HUSKY,'" Headquarters, Force 343 (7th Army) G-2, 22 April 1943, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

[278] Ibid., 1.

[279] Ibid., 2.

enemy strength and order of battle details, that was most important to the division G-2s they were supporting. [280]

In furtherance of that mission, and citing the uneven performance of the division's infantrymen in North Africa, the 26th RCT's Lieutenant Colonel John Bowen (soon to be promoted and to command the same regiment in Sicily) urged that forward infantry units must seek to keep prisoners in a state of frightened "battle shock" to elicit the best information.[281] This problem was not unique to the 1st Infantry Division. A 7th Army G-2 annex for Operation Husky similarly admonished that only commissioned officers were to question prisoners immediately upon capture and that "[t]here will be no food, water, or gifts of cigarettes, no offers of money, etc. . . . and no talking (other than official) between our troops and prisoners, until interrogation at division collecting points has been completed."[282] By prohibiting the type of "fraternization" observed by Bowen, as well as by separating captured officers and enlisted men, American officers hoped to encourage prisoners to divulge more information by cultivating stress and uncertainty among their detainees.[283]

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[280] Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, "Combat Intelligence: A Comparative Evaluation," U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, CIA Historical Review Program, approved for release 22 September 1993, posted 8 May 2007, updated 4 August 2011, accessed 1 October 2020. https://www.cia.gov/static/62158ec0c361c5d062349ae2af8a3c06/Combat-Intel-Comparative-Eval.pdf.

[281] G-3 Training Section, Allied Force Headquarters, *Training Notes*, 38.

[282] G-2, Force 343 (7th Army), "Intelligence Plan," 22 April 1943, 2.

[283] G-3 Training Section, Allied Force Headquarters, *Training Notes*, 38; Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support in World War Two*, 44.

The 1st Infantry Division's interrogation teams produced a consistent run of reports, some brief and others meticulously detailed, that enhanced the division G-2's intelligence picture, particularly regarding enemy unit identifications and morale. Most often, the content of these interrogation reports was directly reflected in division's estimative intelligence, especially in the analysis supporting its daily periodic reports. The G-2 supplemented and corroborated the information gathered from its interrogators with reports from an additional 25 attached, non-interrogator Italian "interpreters" dispersed among its subordinate units to enable interaction with, and information collection from, the native Sicilian population.[284]

As many prisoners were captured in possession of official or unofficial documents like maps, orders, and personal letters, the translation, processing, and analysis of these documents, known today as "document and media exploitation," was closely linked to both interrogation activities and the operations of Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) detachments.[285] Attached to tactical units, CIC detachments often secured vast troves of materials from abandoned enemy civil and military headquarters along major axes of advance.[286] Though their primary doctrinal mission was, to protect the friendly force "from enemy espionage and sabotage," CIC agents nonetheless made valuable

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[284] G-2, Force 343 (7th Army), "Intelligence Plan," 22 April 1943, 4.

[285] JCS, JP 2-0, B-9.

[286] The Counter Intelligence Corps School, *Counter Intelligence Corps History and Mission in World War II* (Fort Holabird, MD: The Counter Intelligence Corps School, 15 November 1951), 17.

contributions to the division's information collection effort.[287] In addition, unlike other divisions during the campaign, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 specifically dedicated additional translators and analysts from its already limited staff to assist CIC agents in culling through such large piles of captured enemy documents for useful information.[288]

While the results of these efforts were not always immediate, they were often highly rewarding. According to the official history of the Counter Intelligence Corps in the Second World War: "These [CIC reports to the division G-2] contained descriptions of roads beyond the enemy lines, information on enemy concentrations, state of enemy morale, locations of enemy mine fields and road blocks, and detailed data concerning enemy strength, disposition, and movement."[289] Generally, because of the time required for translation and analysis, information obtained from CIC detachments most useful to the division G-2's production of estimative intelligence.

The 1st Infantry Division's CIC agents were not the only divisional assets with a dual focus on information collection and security. In a similar manner, the radio intercept platoon, officially a communications unit and part of the division's signal company, served two functions: to identify and record enemy messages as well as to monitor the radio nets of the division's higher headquarters and subordinate units to increase

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[287] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 5-6, 16; War Department, Technical Manual (TM) 30-215, *Technical Manual, Counter Intelligence Corps* (Washington, DC: War Department, 22 September 1943), 1.

[288] The Counter Intelligence Corps School, *Counter Intelligence Corps History*, 25

[289] Ibid.

situational awareness.[290] In practice, the platoon's operations primarily focused on its friendly mission.

The U.S. Army's Second World War doctrine also highlighted the fact that the unit was not a dedicated SIGINT collector like those found at the corps level and above:

> While signal intelligence is not a normal mission for signal communication personnel, all such personnel should be trained to recognize and immediately report any information of value to the signal intelligence effort. Examples of this type of information are violations of cryptographic security, heavy increases or silences in enemy radio transmissions, description of captured or abandoned enemy signal communication or cryptographic equipment, intercepted enemy messages.[291]

Without the technical equipment to conduct direction-finding operations and lacking the skills and training required to decode the enemy's most important encrypted radio messages, whatever enemy information the intercept platoon provided to the division G-2 was limited to infrequent lapses by German or Italian troops broadcasting uncoded messages "in the clear."[292]

After seven months of combat in North Africa, Allen concluded that even though the platoon did occasionally furnish useful information to the 1st Infantry Division G-2, it should remain with the signal company and under the direction of the G-6, as opposed to

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[290] War Department, Field Manual (FM) 11-35, *Signal Corps Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2 September 1942), https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1113&context=dodmilintel, 5, 14; Thompson and Harris, *The Signal Corps*, 347.

[291] War Department, FM 11-35, 5.

[292] Ibid., 14.

the G-2.[293] Considering the limitations outlined above, this was a logical and easily defensible decision. Indeed, given the frequency with which friendly messages marked "intercept" appear in the division's operational records, it is clear that even though it lacked a truly effective SIGINT capability, the platoon nonetheless contributed substantially to enabling situational awareness for Allen and his entire command post.

Developed informally in North Africa as a parallel to the divisional radio intercept concept and based on the British Army's "J" Service for friendly radio monitoring, II Corps officially established its own "signal information and monitoring" (SIAM) capability to support its command post operations in advance of the Sicily Campaign.[294] In another indication that the 1st Infantry Division and its higher headquarters did not place much value in a more expansive mission set for its intercept units, II Corps pulled radio intercept personnel from both the 1st and 3rd infantry divisions to run its SIAM service ahead of the invasion.[295] Along with the corps' wire and radio communications, and its courier services, SIAM was yet another situational awareness tool used by Bradley to track the progress of his subordinate units, including Allen's division, in combat.

Borrowing another model from the British, in North Africa the U.S. Army provided II Corps with a dedicated tactical SIGINT capability to match the British

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[293] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 26.

[294] Thompson and Harris, *The Signal Corps*, 37-38.

[295] Ibid., 38.

Army's employment of a corresponding "Y" Service focused on enemy signals.[296] After rigorous selection and training, cryptologists from the U.S. Army's 2nd Signal Service Battalion, under the new Signal Security Agency (SSA) based in Arlington, Virginia, deployed overseas to augment corps and field army radio intelligence companies beginning in early 1943.[297] The U.S. Army's SSA also collaborated with British SIGINT teams at Bletchley Park and in the field exploiting the Germans' famed "Enigma" encryption system for signals of strategic and operational importance (referred to as "Ultra" intelligence).[298] Unfortunately for tactical Allied commanders, Ultra was usually neither responsive nor detailed enough to effectively support their needs on the battlefield, especially in the time-sensitive realm of current intelligence.[299]

Additionally, because German Enigma machines were too slow to keep pace with the rapid communications requirements of tactical ground combat, and because of the risk of capture if utilized too close to the front lines, enemy divisions generally used more

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[296] Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 105; U.S. Army Signal Security Agency, "SRH 124: Operational History of the 849th Signal Intelligence Service: Mediterranean Theater of Operations, United States Army," in *U.S. Army Signals Intelligence in World War II: A Documentary History*, 180-191, ed. James L. Gilbert and John P. Finnegan (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 183.

[297] Thompson and Harris, *The Signal Corps*, 328, 339; U.S. Army Signal Security Agency, "SRH 124," 182-183, 185.

[298] Colonel Alfred McCormack to Mr. John J. McCloy, 23 October 1943, SRH 141-2, "Papers from the Personal Files of Alfred McCormack, Colonel, AUS, Special Branch, G-2, Military Intelligence Division, War Department General Staff," in *U.S. Army Signals Intelligence in World War II: A Documentary History*, 180-191, ed. James L. Gilbert and John P. Finnegan (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 129.

[299] Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 24.

basic radio codes.[300] These messages were the target of the British Y Service and the U.S. Army's AFHQ-based 849th Signal Intelligence Service (SIS).[301] With nearly 400 cryptologists, the 849th's "A" and "E" detachments provided II Corps the capability to break "low security" enemy radio traffic codes (used at the regimental level and below) while a subsequently fielded Detachment "B" exploited "medium-security" enemy signals used at the divisional level, such as the "Playfair" double-encryption system.[302]

Then, as now, SIGINT was a highly technical and secretive discipline whose opacity did not always lend itself to seamless integration into tactical operations. The U.S. Army's official history of signals intelligence in the Second World War expounded upon such difficulties in North Africa:

> [there was] general ignorance within the then new American tactical staffs on the role which signal intelligence could play in combat operations and an unfortunate misconception in the same quarters of how the exploitation of German Army low-security radio traffic could best be accomplished. American tactical commands, unfamiliar with signal intelligence services, were not anxious for the information which signal intelligence could supply, and were at first skeptical of the validity of some of the information produced by the Detachments.[303]

Like its early challenges with so many other new collection assets described earlier, among them artillery air OPs and tactical air reconnaissance, the U.S. Army's disappointing experience with tactical SIGINT in North Africa was reflective of a

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[300] House, *Combined Arms Warfare in the Twentieth Century*, 157.

[301] U.S. Army Signal Security Agency, "SRH 124," 181.

[302] Ibid., 184-186.

[303] Ibid., 182.

fighting force that was still in its early stages of evolutionary development and far from the peak of effectiveness that it would reach later in the war.

However, unlike the other collection capabilities with which tactical and operational staffs struggled in 1942 and early 1943, tactical SIGINT was so badly discounted based on its failures in North Africa that it did not receive anything approaching a similar level of continued emphasis and utilization during the Sicily Campaign. While II Corps did eventually plan to deploy the 849th's A and E detachments in Sicily, it continually delayed their movement from North Africa to the point where the teams did not land on the island until 7 August 1943, one day after the 1st Infantry Division concluded its deadly and culminating battle for Troina.[304] As their actions reflect, Bradley and other senior American leaders so de-valued the importance of tactical SIGINT that they voluntarily left the capability behind on the other side of the Mediterranean.

Before concluding the discussion surrounding the U.S. Army's tactical SIGINT capabilities in North Africa and Sicily, it is important to return once again to the topic of Ultra. As introduced above, Ultra intelligence provided the Allies with an exquisite source of information on the worldwide disposition of Axis military forces, major troop movements, and occasionally even the enemy's intentions at the operational and strategic levels of war.[305] The fact that the mere existence of the program was not revealed until decades after the Second World War speaks to the reality that very few in the U.S.

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[304] U.S. Army Signal Security Agency, "SRH 124," 182.

[305] Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 410-416.

Army's own military intelligence community were aware of Ultra or its impact even as they profited by its information, the origin of which was deliberately and cleverly obscured.[306] This information was so secret that access even to Ultra-informed analysis did not travel below the field army level, and even then briefings were limited to the army commander and a handful of additional primary staff officers, almost always including the G-2.[307]

While British and American defense officials continued a lengthy series of negotiations and agreements between 1942 and 1943 that eventually brought U.S. intelligence officers into the Ultra analysis and dissemination apparatus, senior American leaders in North Africa and Sicily continued to receive all their Ultra intelligence from exclusively British "Special Liaison Units" (SLUs).[308] Interestingly, even armed with such a potent SIGINT capability, the initial reactions of some American leaders in North Africa betrayed a similar attitude to the indifference with which they treated their own army's tactical SIGINT.

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[306] Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 405; Ronald Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War: The First Account of World War II's Greatest Secret Based on Official Documents* (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1978), 251.

[307] Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 169; Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War*, 246.

[308] McCormack to McCloy, 23 October 1943: 129; United States Army Center of Military History (CMH), *U.S. Army Signals Intelligence in World War II: A Documentary History*, ed. James L. Gilbert and John P. Finnegan (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 135; F. W. Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974), 98, 105.

In recounting Patton's response to his first Ultra briefing in North Africa, former British Army Group Captain F. W. Winterbotham highlighted a potentially problematic tendency by the future 7th Army commander:

> [Patton] was delighted at the idea of reading the enemy's signals, but when I got on to the security angle he stopped me after a few minutes. 'You know, young man, I think you had better tell all this to my Intelligence staff, I don't go much on this sort of thing myself. You see I just like fighting.' He had summed himself up pretty accurately . . . I just had to rely on [British Air Marshal] Tedder to keep an eye on him, and on his very excellent Intelligence staff to keep him 'wised.'[309]

Patton's dismissive attitude, which Ronald Lewin ascribes in this instance to a "cavalier" disregard for Ultra, is worth noting.[310] Though Lewin is perhaps excessively alarmist, his comments are worth considering in the broad context of Patton's performance as the 7th Army Commander in Sicily. If anything, Winterbotham's anecdote and Lewin's remarks reflect that while he may have valued intelligence to a point, Patton would hardly rate it as the single most important criteria in his own decision-making.

Limited in its tactical utility by the lack of timeliness and detail outlined earlier, not to mention its extreme dissemination restrictions, Ultra was necessarily a tool best suited for operational and strategic commands.[311] Still, without a direct link to Ultra, or even knowledge of its existence, tactical G-2s nevertheless profited from its wealth of information. Particularly useful in long-range planning and enemy order of battle analysis, the next chapter illustrates the ways in which Ultra surreptitiously provided the

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[309] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 98.

[310] Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War*, 241.

[311] House, *Combined Arms Warfare in the Twentieth Century*, 155.

II Corps and 1st Infantry Division G-2s with the foundation upon which they were able to produce successful estimative intelligence Operation Husky.[312]

From the outline above, it is evident that new technologies and capabilities for information collection at echelons above division held great potential for successful exploitation by intelligence staffs. It is also equally clear that, for the 1st Infantry Division, timely and consistent access to those resources was hard to come by, especially in light of its experiences in North Africa. As D-Day for Operation Husky approached in the early summer of 1943, Porter and his G-2 section knew they remained reliant on the division's own infantrymen and small-scale attachments of supporting assets, like interrogation teams and CIC detachments, to provide information on the enemy, particularly in the fast-paced domain of current intelligence.

The Division G-2: Nexus of Information

Considering the vast array of information collection capabilities detailed above as well as the continuous deluge of reports and orders flying into and out of the 1st Infantry Division command post, how then did the division G-2 as a staff manage these resources and inputs? Reflective of Allen's personal beliefs regarding the important of intelligence in combat, he augmented Porter's G-2 section with additional personnel to enhance its effectiveness. Furthermore, in accordance with his leadership style and preference to locate himself with his forward units, Allen trusted and empowered Porter and the rest of his division staff to exercise their own judgement and initiative while he was away from the command post. The cumulative effects of these conditions and the formative lessons

[312] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 106-107; Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War*, 279.

gained from combat in North Africa therefore made the 1st Infantry Division G-2 a highly competent and well-practiced intelligence team on the eve of the invasion of Sicily.

Compared to a modern division G-2 staff with its large and expansive roster of personnel, the U.S. Army's structural model for division G-2s was exceptionally lean, supplying only five personnel led by a lieutenant colonel, a major as the Deputy G-2, and three enlisted men.[313] Unsurprisingly, many divisions, including the 1st Infantry Division, reinforced both their G-2 and similarly small G-3 sections with additional personnel drawn from various headquarters companies throughout the unit.[314] In North Africa and Sicily, the division G-2 employed 19 personnel to staff its round-the-clock tactical intelligence operations.[315] These officers, noncommissioned officers and soldiers were further divided into four "functional" sections: combat intelligence, counter-intelligence, liaison, and administration.[316] Together, these sub-sections analyzed information and worked to integrate information collection activities and tactical

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[313] Major Bruce R. Pirnie, "Division and Corps Command Posts in World War II," (Historical Analysis, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Analysis Branch, Washington, DC, 27 March 1986), https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a167405.pdf., 2.

[314] Ibid., 3; The Counter Intelligence Corps School, *Counter Intelligence Corps History*, 25.

[315] Allied Force Headquarters Intelligence Training Center, "Notes on Lecture Given by Lt. Col. Curtiss on Functions of Division G-2 on 11 October 1943," in "Intelligence Training Center Instructional Material," Allied Force Headquarters, 1943, reference number N-15377, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

[316] Ibid.

intelligence assessments into the division's plans and operations.[317] The routine attachment of prisoner of war interrogation teams and Counter Intelligence Corps detachments during periods of sustained combat operations, as in North Africa and Sicily, brought the 1st Infantry Division G-2's total manpower up to a final count of 53.[318] Even with its additional strength, however, the G-2 remained a small and overworked team—a problem noted specifically by Terry Allen in his "Report on Combat Experiences" from Tunisia.[319]

Like their counterparts today, Second World War G-2s found their small staffs further strained by additional requirements surrounding their section's doctrinal responsibility as the unit's proponent for operations security, the acquisition and distribution of map products, and even oversight of embedded journalists.[320] From managing daily "paroles" and "countersigns" (verbal challenge-password combinations) and ensuring proper use of camouflage to censoring correspondence and addressing deficiencies in radio security, the G-2 exercised a wide range of extra duties.[321] These

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[317] Allied Force Headquarters Intelligence Training Center, "Notes on Lecture Given by Lt. Col. Curtiss on Functions of Division G-2," 1, 5.

[318] Ibid., 1.

[319] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 29.

[320] War Department, FM 30-5, 5; Greenfield, Palmer, and Wiley, *The Army Ground Forces*, 36.

[321] G-2, II Corps, "Intelligence Instructions Number 53: Security," Headquarters, "SHARK" (II Corps), 17 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-4; G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Instructions Number 3: Countersigns and Paroles," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 25 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny

tasks, centered on protecting friendly forces rather than assessing the enemy, generally fall outside the scope of this study but must be accounted for as a factor that constantly limited the time and personnel resources that Robert Porter was able to leverage towards his G-2 section's primary intelligence mission on any given day.

As described by Major Bruce R. Pirnie, divisions typically split personnel between a "forward" (or, "advance") CP and a "rear" headquarters with the G-2, G-3, and G-4 (logistics) sections as the "operational elements" located forward in tents or requisitioned civilian buildings and the G-1 and special staff as the division's "administrative elements" remaining with the rear CP.[322] Pirnie notes that division CPs were generally positioned "about two to five miles from the line of contact" to facilitate frequent battlefield circulation by the division's commander and assistant commander.[323] Pirnie also notes that it was typical for the U.S. Army's Second World War general officers to spend the preponderance of their time away from the command post, entrusting their chiefs of staff and G-3s with the detailed direction and execution of planned operations.[324] The 1st Infantry Division employed this model wholeheartedly in North Africa and later in Sicily.

As early as November 1942, immediately after landing near Oran, Algeria during Operation Torch, Allen stressed the need for himself and his staff to be as close as

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Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-2.

[322] Pirnie, "Division and Corps Command Posts in World War II," 9.

[323] Ibid., 10-11.

[324] Ibid., 10-11, 16.

possible to the unit's front lines.[325] He directed: "During a war of rapid movement, it is imperative that the Division Command Post be well forward and that it be furnished adequate protection against enemy mechanization."[326] Speaking to both the advantages and risks of operating in close proximity to the enemy, Allen's comments offered a preview of the 1st Infantry Division's command post positioning in Sicily. In a related parallel to concerns shared by today's division commanders, Allen also underscored the need for "[c]amouflage discipline" to obscure the "large and numerous radio vehicles" of the CP from detection by enemy aircraft.[327]

The 1st Infantry Division's operational records as well as other primary source accounts offer further evidence that Allen and his assistant commander, Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., followed the same pattern, operating beyond the forward CP in what Allen termed the "Advance Command Group."[328] On a typical day in combat, both generals would usually embed separately with forward RCT commanders at major points of friction, returning to their own CP periodically for situational and planning updates.[329] Thus, by design and in practice, senior divisional staff officers, such

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[325] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy," 5 December 1942, 2.

[326] Ibid.

[327] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 27.

[328] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 29; Porter interview, 282.

[329] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 24-25; Liebling, "Profiles-II," 28.

as Gibb and Porter, enjoyed a tremendous degree of autonomy to manage the division's operations and make decisions in the absence of the unit's commanders.[330] The frequently tenuous radio and telephone links between CPs reinforced this model as a pragmatic necessity.

At the center of the 1st Infantry Division's command and control effort in North Africa and Sicily, the forward CP's radio communications message center was a vital hub for the receipt and dissemination of information collection reports as well as current intelligence and fragmentary orders.[331] Because of the requirement to encode outgoing radio messages and decode incoming ones, the division's message center was both a bulwark for security as well as a potential hindrance to the timely dissemination of information and intelligence in combat. For this reason, divisions worked quickly to lay telephone wire connections between themselves and other units on the battlefield.[332]

Occasionally, and to the chagrin of listening British officers, Porter deliberately chose to send critical current intelligence updates to the 1st Infantry Division's subordinate units "in the clear," as he did ahead of the second German counterattack at El

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[330] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 25-26; Note: An incident that occurred later in the Sicily Campaign highlights this dynamic. Left at the command post while both general officers and the G-3 were away, Porter issued movement orders to one of the division's battalions that ran contrary to the wishes of the 7th Army and II Corps commanders, causing in particular an increase in personal tension between Bradley and Allen. See: Porter interview, 297-299.

[331] Pirnie, "Division and Corps Command Posts in World War II," 9.

[332] Special Activities Branch, Signal Corps Historical Section, *Signal Corps Historical Project E-3, Tactical Communications in World War II, Part II: Signal Communication in the Sicilian Campaign* (New York: Signal Corps Historical Section, 2 July 1945, reference number N-9425.4, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS), 61-63.

Guettar in North Africa, foregoing security in favor of timeliness.[333] In defense of his G-2, Allen defused a subsequent investigation by underwriting Porter's decision, demonstrating not only the strength of their personal relationship, but also emphasizing his own commitment to empowering the division's infantrymen with timely and accurate intelligence at the expense of bureaucratic procedures, even those relating to security.[334]

As described above, the division CP's message center was the primary mechanism for the receipt and transmission of current intelligence due to the short lifespan and at times immediate action requirements attached to such information. In developing and disseminating estimative intelligence, however, the G-2 was less constrained by time and therefore enjoyed the support of a wider array of communications methods. Chief among these, couriers arrived and departed at frequent intervals with hard copy daily periodic reports from higher, subordinate, and adjacent intelligence staffs as well as detailed updates from interrogation teams, CIC detachments, and even the XII ASC.[335]

Unfortunately, the tempo of operations, transportation limitations, and sheer distance between CPs dictated that these products were usually not processed and consumed by their recipients, including the division G-2, until at least 24 hours after they were issued and often up to 72 hours for written updates sent from the field army

[333] Porter interview, 284.

[334] Ibid.

[335] Allied Force Headquarters Intelligence Training Center, "Notes on Lecture Given by Lt. Col. Curtiss on Functions of Division G-2," 2.

headquarters.[336] The division G-2 was itself part of the broader II Corps and 7th Army intelligence information dissemination system (what modern militaries refer to as an "intelligence architecture").[337] Late each evening, Porter's staff worked to compile its own two-page periodic report covering combat action in the preceding 24 hours and typically offering estimative intelligence predicting the enemy's course of action for the following day. As with other such reports, this product and its supporting map overlays were distributed widely both inside and outside the division to enhance shared understanding and ensure the maintenance of a common intelligence picture between the various G-2s and S-2s.

Of course, this system was only as effective and reliable as the communications architecture upon which it was built. In North Africa, the 1st Infantry Division's after action report demonstrated, above all, that "it is fatal to depend upon one means [of communication] only."[338] When cut off from reports and information coming from the division's own line of contact or higher headquarters, the G-2 and the rest of the forward CP experienced precipitous drops in situational awareness. Today, tactical staffs navigate similar problems, especially in environments where enemy forces maintain the capability to jam or otherwise deny digital and electronic communications.

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[336] The 1st Infantry Division's operational records from Sicily bear witness to this fact as estimative intelligence products from higher and adjacent staffs typically appear in the division G-2's daily staff multiple days following their initial publication.

[337] JCS, JP 2-0, I-11-I-12.

[338] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 23.

In North Africa, Robert Porter supplemented the normal operations of the division's message center and various couriers with what Allen viewed as a highly effective standard operating procedure for a dedicated "liaison section."[339] The division's "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons" offers vivid detail on what became a critical capability:

> Each major unit detailed a liaison officer who lived at Division and operated under G-2. In the morning, all liaison officers were briefed as to the G-2 situation. They were then given a list of information desired from their units and also anything that G-3 wishes sent to their units. They then returned to their organizations, consulted with the S-2's, made themselves thoroughly familiar with the local situation and obtained any S-2 or S-3 information, or request, which they took back to Division. At a conference, each liaison officer reported the results of his visit and answered any questions. In this manner, G-2 was able to maintain close relations with the S-2's and at the same time keep its situation map and subordinate units situation maps in consonance.[340]

The process outlined above was especially critical given the reliance by II Corps and the division itself on field orders issued in a verbal, fragmentary form and only later provided in writing.[341] On some days, liaison officers made as many as 12 trips back and forth between their units and the forward division CP; they were critical to the dissemination of information and intelligence up and down the chain of command.[342] Highlighting this reality in the wake of Operation Torch, Allen stressed the necessity for a strong liaison

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[339] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 26.

[340] Ibid., 26-27.

[341] Ibid., 29.

[342] Allied Force Headquarters Intelligence Training Center, "Notes on Lecture Given by Lt. Col. Curtiss on Functions of Division G-2," 2.

system, remarking that "active, intelligent, and aggressive liaison officers" were essential to success.[343]

On the surface, these overwhelming analog staff processes may seem antiquated to modern military professionals. However, whereas the command and control realities described above provided Porter with autonomy and empowered him to exercise his judgement and initiative broadly, modern G-2s may experience nearly the inverse. As Anthony King notes, for today's division commanders and staffs, information technology represents both an immense increase in capability but also serves as a tether to anchor key leaders to their command posts as they cope with informational "overload" and the "burdening" problems of exercising detailed control to ensure coordination and synchronization of operations.[344] These technical watchwords—control, coordination, synchronization—represent facets of military operations that, if left to dominate a commander's daily activities, may in fact lead to micro-management and stifle the initiative of divisional staff officers, including the G-2.[345]

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[343] Commander, 1st Infantry Division, "Report after Action against Enemy" (5 December 1942), 4.

[344] Anthony King, *Command: The Twenty-First Century General* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 290-291.

[345] Peter C. Vangjel cautions against the designs of modern military commanders who attempt to use technology and staff processes to enforce rigid synchronization upon operations, potentially at the expense of seizing battlefield opportunities. He suggests that "harmonized individual efforts" are better alternatives to "central control." See: Peter C. Vangjel, "Mission Command: A Clarification," in *Mission Command: The Who, What, Where, When, and Why, An Anthology*, vol. 2, ed. Donald Vadergriff and Stephen Webber (Virginia: Donald Vandergriff & Stephen Webber, 2018), 16-17.

Offering his own summation of the relative success of U.S. Army division G-2s in the Second World War, Mansoor points to this type of intelligence work as a key enabling function that allowed U.S. commanders to exploit the combat power resident within their large and capable infantry divisions.[346] After its successful performance in North Africa, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 section certainly validates such a confident analytical assertion. At least in the context of its own era, and as it began preparing estimative intelligence for the Sicily Campaign, Porter's G-2 section was therefore at the leading edge of tactical intelligence effectiveness.

Conclusion

As seen in North Africa and later in Sicily, the very structure of the division and the frequent lack of availability of outside assets ensured that Allen and Porter relied on ground-based infantrymen, cavalry scouts, and artillery forward observers to fulfill most of their information collection requirements. Nevertheless, additional enabling assets, such as prisoner of war interrogation teams, CIC detachments, airborne platforms, and signals intelligence still provided vital, albeit limited, inputs to the G-2's understanding of the terrain and the enemy. In conjunction with Allen's strong personal emphasis on continuous reconnaissance and developing the situation through action, the 1st Infantry Division thus possessed a highly capable, if not fully mature, tactical intelligence capability ahead of its amphibious assault in the Gulf of Gela in July 1943. It is now left for this study to examine how and to what effect the division employed these resources

[346] Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 5.

and its G-2 section to support tactical decision-making and accomplish its assigned missions under Operation Husky.

CHAPTER 5

PLANNING FOR OPERATION HUSKY: THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION'S ESTIMATIVE INTELLIGENCE EFFORT IN MAY AND JUNE 1943

Introduction

While the 1st Infantry Division's RCTs cycled through several iterations of amphibious assault training along the coast of Algeria in June 1943, the G-2 worked feverishly to prepare estimative intelligence for the division's forthcoming landing in Sicily.[347] Reliant upon theater and strategic information collection assets, as well as the foundational work of higher echelon intelligence staffs, Porter's assessments were nonetheless accurate and enhanced Allen's visualization of the battlefield. This in turn influenced the division commander's decisions regarding his initial scheme of maneuver. Most of all, his resulting battle plans took into account the G-2's predictions that highly mobile German and Italian formations would almost certainly launch counterattacks against the 1st Infantry Division soon after its assault in the Gulf of Gela. Further informed as it was by Porter's detailed studies of key terrain, particularly those areas best suited for infantry defense against tanks, Allen's concept of the operation therefore rested on a base of sound estimative intelligence.

Planning and Information Collection at the Strategic and Operational Levels

Geography dictated much in terms of how the 1st Infantry Division would conduct its tactical intelligence operations in preparation for the invasion of Sicily.

[347] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 101.

Because the Mediterranean island was only accessible to theater and strategic information collection assets under the direction of AFHQ, Porter and his intelligence staff were thus limited to data gathered on their behalf by external assets. Additionally, because Patton's "Force 343" headquarters (soon to be designated the U.S. 7th Army) began its planning well before either Allen's division or Bradley's II Corps concluded their operations in Tunisia, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 was already in possession of several initial intelligence assessments that served to jump-start its own estimative intelligence work. In general, the information provided to Porter's staff from throughout the Allied intelligence enterprise was complete and accurate enough to allow for tactical refinement in support of Allen's planning priorities. Of course, given the high degree of air, naval, and ground synchronization required during an amphibious assault, the 1st Infantry Division and its commander were forced to operate under significant operational constraints imposed by their higher headquarters.[348]

In mid-May 1943, near the conclusion of the North Africa Campaign, the 1st Infantry Division moved from its frontline positions around Tunis back to the safety and relative comfort of consolidation areas in the vicinity of Oran, Algeria.[349] While hopeful but ultimately false rumors circulated throughout the division that the deserving "Fighting First" would redeploy to the United States, Patton, as the soon-to-be

[348] For an overview of joint planning complexities associated with amphibious operations, see: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 3-02, *Amphibious Operations* (Washington, DC: JCS, 18 July 2014, validated 21 January, 2021), I-1.

[349] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 10.

commander of the new U.S. 7th Army, summoned Allen and Porter to a meeting where he explained the 1st Infantry Division's key role in the Allies' invasion of Sicily.[350]

In a side conversation recalled later by Porter, the 7th Army G-2, Oscar Koch, explained Patton's rationale for insisting to the Supreme Allied Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, that the 1st Infantry Division replace the newly formed and untested 36th Infantry Division in the 7th Army order of battle.[351] Koch stated that Patton "needed at least one division that had made an amphibious landing in the Mediterranean" and that the 7th Army Commander was "reluctant to assault the beaches in Sicily with green divisions."[352] In more dramatic fashion, D'Este describes Patton's exact phrasing of his request to Eisenhower for the services of the experienced 1st Infantry Division: "I want those sons of bitches. I won't go on without them."[353] Far from returning home, Allen and his staff began preparations for yet another amphibious assault within five days of returning to Oran.[354]

Months before, strategic decisions made by political leaders and senior officers at the January 1943 Casablanca Conference between U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill set in motion the plans and preparations

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[350] Porter interview, 289; Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 38.

[351] Porter interview, 289.

[352] Ibid.

[353] D'Este, *Patton*, 506.

[354] Porter interview, 290.

that would eventually propel the division into Sicily.[355] As outlined later by Eisenhower, the strategic objectives of the Sicily Campaign agreed to at Casablanca were: "(a) to make our lines of communication in the MEDITERRANEAN more secure; (b) to divert as much German strength as possible from the Russian front during the critical summer period; (c) to intensify pressure on ITALY."[356] In logical fashion, Eisenhower highlighted the one piece of strategically decisive terrain that would inevitably constitute the Allied 15th Army Group's primary objective: the far northeastern Sicilian port of Messina.[357] As the near side of a two-mile long ferry bridge which connected Sicily to the Calabrian coast on mainland Italy, the capture of Messina would permanently isolate all Axis units on the island and therefore determine the outcome in favor of the Allies.[358] Operational success was a simple calculation of basic geography.

[355] Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 19-20.

[356] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch: Sicilian Campaign, 1943," Allied Force Headquarters, 4 August, 1944, reference number R-13457, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 31.

[357] Ibid., 5.

[358] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 5; Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 27.

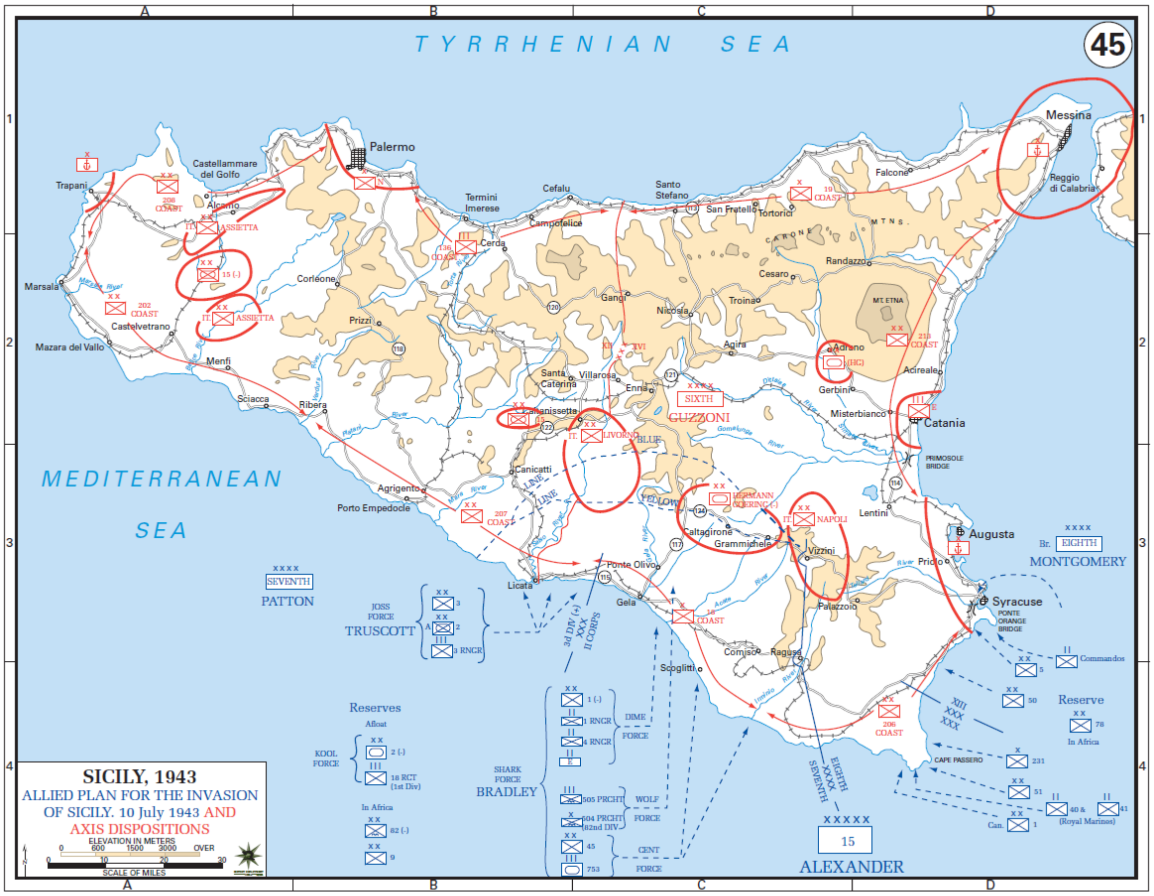

Figure 2. Campaign in Sicily, Allied Plan and Axis Dispositions, 10 July, 1943

Source: Department of History, United States Military Academy, "Campaign in Sicily, Allied Plan and Axis Dispositions, 10 July, 1943," https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic_departments/history/WWII%20Europe/WWIIEurope45.pdf.

To reach that objective, however, Eisenhower's own AFHQ staff as well as combined, joint service planners at 15th Army Group, under the command of British General Sir Harold Alexander, wrestled with the fact that Messina itself was outside the range of Allied fighter aircraft based in North Africa and Malta.[359] This made a direct

[359] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 6; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 83.

amphibious assault too risky given the vulnerability of Allied ships and landing craft to the enemy's dwindling but still-functioning tactical air forces.[360] Instead, Alexander chose as his operational approach a conservative plan that involved landing his entire force consisting of the British 8th Army, under General Sir Bernard Montgomery, and the Patton's U.S. 7th Army on the southeastern coast of Sicily, methodically "reducing" the island, and then eventually securing Messina.[361] As many historians have critically observed, Alexander's scheme of maneuver largely forfeited the potential to cut off and destroy the entire eight-division Axis garrison on Sicily.[362]

On the other hand, the AFHQ strategic objectives outlined above were largely centered on terrain—specifically, securing Mediterranean lines of communication—rather than the complete destruction of enemy forces on Sicily, a point the U.S. II Corps commander, Omar Bradley, reinforced in his memoirs.[363] Furthermore, James Holland makes the argument that given the simultaneous competing requirements of finishing the North Africa Campaign and avoiding any risky ventures which could

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[360] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 6; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 83.

[361] Earl Alexander of Tunis, *The Alexander Memoirs: 1940-1945*, ed. John North (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962), 105, 107-108.

[362] Mitcham and von Stauffenberg make Allied blunders, and especially planning failures, a focal point of their work. With regard to the initial HUSKY plan, the authors believe that Alexander was personally operating "out of his depth." See: Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily*, 12-13; D'Este offers a more balanced summary of the major points of contention and the positions of their advocates, though he too notes that the Allied plan featured a lack of boldness based on "greater respect than circumstances justified" for Axis forces in Sicily. See: D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 75-91.

[363] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 104.

fracture the new Anglo-American alliance, the 15th Army Group plan was entirely suitable to the strategic context in which it was created.[364] In this light, Alexander's operational approach is defensible, if still cautious and uninventive.

Of more concern for the U.S. 7th Army and its subordinate units, including II Corps and the 1st Infantry Division, the 15th Army Group plan was vague as to how precisely Alexander intended for ground forces to "reduce" the island following the establishment of secure beachheads and the seizure of coastal airfields to expand the Allies' fighter umbrella.[365] Much to the dismay of Patton and his innate desire to enhance the U.S. Army's prestige, Alexander's concept of the operation, which was based on a proposal by Montgomery, designated the 8th Army as the main effort and relegated the 7th Army to protecting the British left (western) flank.[366] After securing the critical ports of Syracuse and Catania in southeast Sicily, Montgomery optimistically planned a rapid drive northward on the coastal highway leading directly to Messina, with American units remaining in support of his attack at all times.[367]

According to the final version of the plan, Patton's 7th Army would execute simultaneous amphibious landings west of 8th Army with II Corps comprising its right

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[364] Holland, *Sicily '43*, 46-47.

[365] Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, *Eighth Army: El Alamein to the River Sangro* (Germany: Printing and Stationary Services, British Army of the Rhine, 1946), 91-92; Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 19-22; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 89.

[366] Montgomery, *Eighth Army*, 87-88; Patton, diary entry, 22 May 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 254.

[367] Montgomery, *Eighth Army*, 87-88; Alexander, *The Alexander Memoirs*, 105-106.

flank and assigned, east to west, the Scoglitti and Gela beaches respectively.[368] The U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, directly under the control of 7th Army, would protect Patton's left flank by landing at Licata.[369] At some indeterminate date, Patton expected to drive north through the island's central mountain ranges and secure the large deep water port of Palermo on the island's northwestern coast.[370] To enable the operations of both field armies, 15th Army Group also planned to conduct the first major Allied airborne operation of the war by dropping British and American paratroopers behind coastal defenses in the night hours just prior to their amphibious assaults.[371]

To preserve force-ratio planning calculations (nine Allied divisions to eight Axis divisions) and dissuade Axis leadership from reinforcing Sicily with additional units, AFHQ placed strong emphasis on strategic deception operations to convince the enemy that the next Allied offensive would occur in Southern France, Sardinia, Greece or perhaps the Balkans—anywhere but Sicily.[372] Most famously, in April 1943, under Operation "Mincemeat," Allied intelligence officers planted false invasion planning documents on a cadaver which they then dressed in a British Royal Marine officer's uniform, jettisoned from a submarine, and allowed to wash ashore on the Spanish

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[368] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 98-99.

[369] Ibid.

[370] Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 27.

[371] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 98.

[372] Ibid., 64-65.

coast.[373] According to plan, Ultra quickly revealed that the German and Italian high commands were re-prioritizing defensive preparations in areas other than Sicily.[374] To the relief of Eisenhower and Alexander, no unanticipated Axis reinforcements arrived on the island in the final stages of planning for Operation Husky.[375]

While deception operations large and small continued over several months, AFHQ was also heavily engaged in information collection operations oriented on providing the data necessary for intelligence staffs at all levels, from strategic down to tactical, to develop estimative intelligence in support of their assigned missions. Indeed, because the tactical units of the invasion force, such as the 1st Infantry Division, were marshalled in North African bivouac areas, they had no capability to collect information for themselves.[376] In this way, the AFHQ G-2, with input and specific requests from 15th Army Group as well as field army G-2s, was solely responsible for collecting information on the terrain and enemy forces located 90 miles across the sea.[377] In fact, during the initial months of planning for Operation Husky, 15th Army Group (then called "Force

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[373] Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War*, 279-280.

[374] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 9; Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 223-224.

[375] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 106.

[376] Note: Modern doctrine recognizes this problem explicitly and specifies that amphibious assault forces remain reliant on theater and national information collection capabilities to inform their estimative intelligence efforts. See: JCS, JP 3-02, IX-1.

[377] G-2, 1st Infantry Division (reproduced), "About Sicily," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division: undated (ca. June 1943), 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 2.

141") had no actual G-2 section of its own and relied entirely on Eisenhower's intelligence staff for support.[378] Whatever information AFHQ did (or did not) collect, would necessarily comprise the entire body of data upon which even the most junior S-2s and commanders relied to inform their tactical schemes of maneuver and battle plans prior to the invasion.

In any amphibious operation, terrain analysis in particular dominates the minds and efforts of intelligence staffs preparing estimative intelligence for their commanders.[379] There are only so many suitable beaches for landing craft of various sizes and a finite amount of road networks necessary for establishing a firm lodgment to ensure the steady flow of combat units and supplies into the operational area.[380] Of course, the same terrain that appeals to an invading force is equally of interest to defenders who are likely to emplace obstacles and defensive positions to counter amphibious assaults at obviously attractive landing sites. Thus, intelligence staffs must collect information that allows them to both identify the natural terrain most able to support amphibious operations as well as the man-made features emplaced around those areas to disrupt and delay attacking forces.[381] Toward this end, AFHQ dedicated a sustained air and naval reconnaissance effort in the months leading up to Operation Husky.

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[378] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 56.

[379] JCS, JP 3-02, IX-2-4.

[380] Ibid.

[381] Ibid.

Of no small challenge to AFHQ's information collection operations and its search for amphibious landing zones were the sharp geographic features of Sicily itself. One of the most notable and distinctive characteristics of the 140-mile long by 110-mile wide triangular island is the abruptness with which the terrain switches from that of a gentle and picturesque Mediterranean coastline to the tall, rugged, and uninviting mountain ranges which radiate from the base of the volcanic Mount Etna, which towers over the northeastern corner of the island.[382] Even on the seemingly placid seaborne approach to various potential landing zones, "false beaches" of sandbars with a gulf of deeper water separating them from the actual shoreline were typical of the difficulties of undertaking a major amphibious operation on Sicily.[383] For the soldiers who would fight in the summer heat across the beaches and into the island's barren mountains, detailed topographical information was critical to navigating terrain that Eisenhower called, "country admirably suited to the enemy's genius for mining and demolition."[384] Using information gathered primarily from aircraft, submarines, and even clandestine "pilotage party" swimmers, AFHQ eventually supplied its subordinate units with new maps, perspective beach

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[382] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 10.

[383] Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II,* Vol. 9*, Sicily – Salerno – Anzio, January 1943 – June 1944* (1954; repr., Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1957), 23.

[384] G-2, 1st Infantry Division (reproduced), "About Sicily," 2; Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 6.

sketches, assessments of enemy obstacles, and the locations of fortified gun emplacements.[385]

In total, the "North African Photo Reconnaissance Wing" captured approximately 195,000 aerial photographs of Sicily prior to D-Day, with many potential assault beaches imaged multiple times in the same day for thorough comparison.[386] When coupled with existing maps and naval intelligence which supplied a sea-level point of view of various beaches, these photographs enabled the construction of three-dimensional terrain models that were assembled in the United States and transported to North Africa to assist in planning the operation.[387] British Vice-Admiral Lord Ashbourne, a participant in the Husky landings, offered a ringing endorsement of the Allies' terrain-focused intelligence collection effort: "One of my biggest thrills was the view from the bridge of my ship at the first light of dawn on D-Day. It revealed a view that was exactly as I had expected."[388] In general, most contemporary participants, like Lord Ashbourne, appeared

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[385] Morison, *Naval Operations*, 23; Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, 344; I Armored Corps, Reinforced, "Passage of Beach Obstacles," Headquarters: I Armored Corps, Reinforced, 31 May 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-3.

[386] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 58; Robert Hays, *Patton's Oracle: Gen. Oscar Koch, as I Knew Him* (Savoy: Lucidus Books, Herndon-Sugarman Press, 2013), 92.

[387] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 11; Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 44.

[388] Vice-Admiral Lord Ashbourne, "Introduction," In *Operation HUSKY: The Allied Invasion of Sicily*, by S.W.C. Pack (New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1977), 7.

to agree that the Allies' information collection effort with respect to terrain information was highly accurate.[389]

As is common in any modern military operation, however, the inherently limited numbers of information collection assets (in this case, aircraft and naval vessels) available for reconnaissance missions, let alone the desire to limit sorties so as not to telegraph Allied intentions, left some intelligence consumers at lower echelons levels unhappy.[390] In particular, the 3rd Infantry Division Commander, Major General Lucian Truscott was frustrated by the lack of responsiveness on the part of the AFHQ G-2, British Major General Kenneth Strong, to his division's requests for specific air reconnaissance missions.[391] As a result, he bypassed the chain of command entirely and coordinated directly with USAAF units to satisfy his requirements.[392]

In an official report, one unnamed British "observer" embedded with Truscott's division echoed further points of contention with the intelligence supplied by AFHQ and especially 15th Army Group, noting that it was often not detailed enough for use at the tactical level and that it was "slow in coming and scanty, although it subsequently proved to be for the most part fairly accurate."[393] In particular, his report blamed 15th Army

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[389] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 44; Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 67-70; Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 111-113.

[390] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 167.

[391] Lt. General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr., *Command Missions: A Personal Story* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1954, reprint, 2017), 214.

[392] Ibid.

[393] Combined Operation Headquarters, "C.O.H.Q. Bulletin No. Y/1: Notes on the Planning and Assault Phases of the Sicilian Campaign," Combined Operations Headquarters, 1A Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.1., October 1943,

Group both for the lack of sufficient photo reconnaissance products and frequent "erroneous and incomplete interpretations" of those which they did provide.[394] By contrast, the observer was generally satisfied with the beach estimates supplied by Allied naval forces, though he still found fault with the "assessment of beach exits" and the fact that two different versions of the same products were disseminated through the separate ground and naval chains of command.[395]

As far as the 1st Infantry Division is concerned, there is no evidence to suggest that Allen or his G-2 raised any significant objections to the quantity or quality of the information provided by senior headquarters regarding the beaches or terrain in their assigned sector of the Gulf of Gela. This is not to say, however, that the terrain information supplied down the chain of command was perfect. For example, upon landing, the division encountered unanticipated mines on at least two beaches which caused significant friction and delayed the delivery of urgently needed anti-tank and armor units.[396] These realities were not lost on AFHQ, whose own after action review cited room for improvement.[397] This example highlights the unavoidable truth that,

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reference number N-6530.1, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 3.

[394] Combined Operation Headquarters, "Notes on the Planning and Assault Phases of the Sicilian Campaign," 3.

[395] Ibid.

[396] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 159.

[397] Allied Force Headquarters, "Notes on HUSKY Landings," Allied Force Headquarters, 23 July 1943, reference number N-6714, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 4.

known or unknown, even sound estimative intelligence will nonetheless contain gaps that the chaos of combat may reveal at the worst possible moment.

As discussed in the previous chapter and demonstrated during Operation Mincemeat, one of the greatest applications for Ultra information was in the construction of detailed enemy order of battle data which provided intelligence analysts the composition, disposition, and often the relative strength of enemy formations in a given theater or operational area.[398] Since geography precluded any other persistent form of observation, Ultra was the most critical informational input concerning the actual enemy air and ground forces that would oppose the Allied landings on Sicily. Among these forces, Ultra identified two German divisions which fell under the Italian Sixth Army, commanded by Italian *Generale d'Armata* Alfredo Guzzoni, responsible for the defense of Sicily: the "*Hermann Goering*" (*HG*) Division and 15th *Panzergrenadier* (*PzG*) Division.[399] Throughout their planning for Husky, Allied commanders were most concerned with these two units due to their inherent respect for the capabilities, training, and morale of German formations as opposed to the lesser fighting qualities that they ascribed to the Italians' two coastal divisions and four field divisions on Sicily.[400]

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[398] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 106-107.

[399] Ibid., 106; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 63; G-2, Allied Force Headquarters, "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 44," Allied Force Headquarters, 26 June 1943, reference number N-7362, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 4.

[400] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 106; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 64; G-2, Allied Force Headquarters, "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 42," Allied Force Headquarters, 15 June 1943, reference number N-7362, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS; Note: Bradley in

Not only did Ultra reveal the presence of the German divisions, that were certain to be the centerpiece of any counterattack against the Allied beachheads, it also indicated their dispositions, specifically that the *Hermann Goering* was divided into two combined arms battle groups in the central and southeastern areas of Sicily while the 15th *Panzergrenadier* was posted west of Palermo.[401] Based on his conversations with the 15th Army Group Commander, British SLU officer F. W. Winterbotham again offered an assessment on the value that Ultra provided to planning:

> From the disposition of all the Axis troops on the island, it was evident that the landing areas were only lightly guarded by Italian coast brigades and that, in view of the mountainous country, if the few roads to the coast could be denied to the German panzers, the landing operations should meet with little resistance. It was evident too that both [German Field Marshal] Albert Kesselring and Guzzoni were unsure as to when and where the attack would come. Thus Ultra not only gave the full strength and dispositions of the enemy, it also showed that the Allie[s] could achieve tactical surprise and, in the event, allowed Allied parachute troops to block a number of the German panzers in their race towards the beaches. This was Ultra at its best.[402]

In his narrative, Winterbotham touches on the connection between estimative intelligence and decision-making. Here, at the operational level of war, enemy information collected through Ultra, coupled with terrain analysis, allowed 15th Army Group to produce accurate estimative intelligence that correctly identified the composition and disposition of the main Axis counterattack force and the routes they would be forced to employ to reach the Allies' landing beaches.

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particular discounted the quality of Italian units, noting the "lazy and indolent" nature of their soldiers. See: Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 114.

[401] Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War*, 280-281.

[402] Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 107.

As seen in the example above, armed with information gleaned from Ultra, and supplemented by reports from British Special Air Service personnel operating in Sicily ahead of the invasion, Alexander and his staff made informed decisions about where and to what purpose they would employ their field armies and especially their airborne units.[403] Though its Ultra origin was concealed, as was common practice, subordinate tactical commanders and their intelligence staffs nonetheless had access to this same information on the enemy.[404] In fact, AFHQ's "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary Number 44," published on 26 June 1943 and intended for distribution among field army and corps intelligence staffs, noted the disposition and probable counterattack roles of the two "likely" German divisions on Sicily, even specifying the recently arrived Herman Goering Division by name.[405] Simply put, and contrary to the statements of Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, Porter made it clear in a post-war interview that he and Allen knew the

[403] Combined Operation Headquarters, "Notes on the Planning and Assault Phases of the Sicilian Campaign," 3; Note: AFHQ considered but rejected a last-minute proposal to infiltrate American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) personnel into Sicily prior to the invasion. OSS teams were utilized later in the campaign for both information collection and sabotage missions but were largely unsuccessful in both roles. See: Strategic Services Unit, War Department, *War Report: Office of Strategic Services (OSS),* vol. 2, *Operations in the Field* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 1949), https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:yk502ct8920/OSS_war_report_v2_operations_in_the_field.pdf., 62-63.

[404] Bennett, *Ultra and Mediterranean Strategy*, 21-23.

[405] G-2, Allied Force Headquarters, "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 44," Allied Force Headquarters, 26 June 1943, reference number N-7362, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 4.

1st Infantry Division would face German panzers in the hours or days following their amphibious assault at Gela.[406]

Indeed, this accurate pre-invasion assessment of enemy combat strength in Sicily is the focal point for contemporaneous commentators who claim it as a classic example of intelligence success.[407] Certainly, Ultra and supplementary air reconnaissance presented the Allies with a clear picture of the enemy's composition, disposition, and strength on the island. From a strategic or even an operational-level perspective, this is perhaps enough information upon which to develop a successful campaign plan that considers most of all total ratios of combat power between friendly and enemy forces on a macro scale.

While such information is also extremely useful at the division or regimental level, tactical units and their intelligence staffs remain equally concerned with precisely how the enemy will employ those forces in close combat. Here, more than anywhere else, the art of intelligence analysis takes over at the tactical level from where the relatively objective, scientific statistics sufficient for planning at more senior levels leave off. Given the lack of attention paid to this aspect of intelligence preparations for Operation Husky, it is necessary then to examine how such predictive analysis evolved throughout the spring and early summer of 1943.

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[406] Porter interview, 287; Note: AFHQ did in fact make the deliberate decision to withhold information on the presence of German forces in Sicily from Allied airborne forces due to their higher risk for capture and therefore interrogation by the enemy. After the war, Colonel James Gavin remained bitter over the issue and addressed it in his memoir. See: James M. Gavin, *On to Berlin: Battles of an Airborne Commander 1943-1946* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), 13n.

[407] Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 70-72; Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret*, 107.

The 7th Army G-2's Foundational Analysis

Before returning to Porter's analytical conclusions and his G-2 Section's estimative intelligence, it is important to understand how the hierarchy of analytical products and conclusions supplied from 7th Army and II Corps naturally supported and influenced the 1st Infantry Division's own assessment of the terrain and the enemy. Through an iterative and evolutionary analytical process, Oscar Koch's and Monk Dickson's G-2 staffs, at 7th Army and II Corps, respectively, continually refined their own estimative intelligence between April and late June 1943 based on the increasing volume of data from AFHQ's information collection efforts as well as specific planning guidance from Patton and Bradley. For the 1st Infantry Division, the final result of this progressive analysis was a nested series of estimates at each echelon from the field army down to the division which narrowed in scope from broad, wide-area generalizations to detailed descriptions of the "micro" terrain and likely enemy units that individual RCTs and their infantrymen would face in combat on D-Day.

At the beginning of the process and well before 15th Army Group had even decided on its operational approach, the 7th Army G-2 Section published its first intelligence estimate on 20 April which offered a well-defined order of battle for the major Italian units on Sicily.[408] While "G-2 Estimate of the Enemy Situation #1" described the 24,000 German troops on the island as only "Air Force ground personnel,"

[408] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #1," Headquarters, 7th Army, 20 April 1943, in *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, Annex 3: C-10-C-12, by U.S. 7th Army Staff, Headquarters, 7th Army, September 1943, reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, C-10.

Koch and his staff also projected that two German maneuver divisions, including armor, would be in position on Sicily by D-Day.[409] Concurrent with this first estimate, the 7th Army G-2 provided "Intelligence Plan Number 1" which in fact laid out a specific roadmap for the intelligence process described above and delineated efforts between echelons, including administrative information on the support that II Corps and its divisions would receive, such as the attachment of interrogation teams and interpreters.[410]

Koch's "Intelligence Plan Number 2," published on 5 May, refined the 7th Army's initial estimate and included for the first time mention of specific D-Day objectives, including what would become the 1st Infantry Division's primary initial mission: the capture of the Ponte Olivo airfield.[411] In the same estimate, the 7th Army's G-2 section also updated its assessment of the enemy situation, in particular noting the arrival on Sicily of the Italian 4th ("*Livorno*") Division—a unit that would later play a major role in opposing the 1st Infantry Division's landing at Gela.[412] These initial estimates, published while II Corps and the 1st Infantry Division were still fighting Axis

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[409] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #1," C-10.

[410] G-2, Force 343 (7th Army), "Intelligence Plan," 22 April 1943, 2-12; Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 43-44.

[411] G-2, Force 343 (7th Army), "Intelligence Plan No. 2 (for Southeast Sicily)," Headquarters, Force 343 (U.S. 7th Army), 5 May 1943, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

[412] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #2," Headquarters, 7th Army, 5 May 1943, in *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, Annex 3: C-12-C-14, by U.S. 7th Army Staff, Headquarters, 7th Army: September 1943, reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, C-12.

units near Tunis, represented a valuable head start and the foundation upon which subordinate G-2s would build their own assessments.

The 7th Army's final G-2 planning estimate on the enemy, issued on 9 June, accounted for a total enemy strength on Sicily of 208,500 personnel consisting of: up to 84 Italian coastal defense battalions in prepared positions, between six and seven mobile Italian divisions (including special battalion-sized "mobile groups" at key airfields and garrisons, such as Ponte Olivo), and two German divisions.[413] Finally, in line with XII Air Support Command's analysis, the 7th Army G-2 noted that the enemy's ground forces on Sicily were supported by an air component of around 700 serviceable fighters and bombers—a potentially grave threat to men and ships strung out along exposed beaches and shallow coastal waters in the early stages of an amphibious assault.[414]

Unlike the AFHQ intelligence staff who, according to Koch, believed that the enemy would immediately sense the 15th Army Group's intention to use 8th Army as its main effort and therefore direct its primary counterattacks to the east, 7th Army's predictive analysis supported a different conclusion.[415] Basing his assessment of the enemy's most likely course of action on capabilities—namely, the fact that the largest concentrations of mobile Italian and German forces were known to be near Caltanissetta

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[413] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #3," Headquarters, 7th Army, 9 June 1943, in *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, Annex 3: C-14-C-16, by U.S. 7th Army Staff, Headquarters, 7th Army: September 1943, reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, C-15.

[414] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #3," C-15.

[415] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 50.

and Enna, closest in proximity to the 7th Army's beaches in the south—Koch stated: "Of four possible enemy reactions to the invasion assault, we saw as the most likely defense at the water's edge with a counterattack from the northwest."[416] Frequently at odds with his British colleagues who dominated the AFHQ staff, Koch later used the disagreement to highlight the difference in analytical technique between the two allies:

> Arguments over whether military intelligence forecasts should consider enemy capabilities or enemy intentions are probably as old as intelligence itself. The American Army uses capabilities. No matter what the intentions of the enemy might be, he must have the capabilities to execute them; the converse is not true. He may have the capabilities and yet not execute them for reasons of his own. For intelligence purposes, only one thing counts: capabilities.[417]

Needled about his prediction prior to the invasion by an AFHQ staff officer, Brigadier General Albert Wedemeyer (an American, no less), Koch took great pleasure in noting Wedemeyer's prompt apology at their first meeting on Sicily, after the 7th Army G-2 was proven correct.[418]

Based on his G-2's estimative intelligence, Patton visualized how the 7th Army's assault across 60 kilometers of southern Sicilian coastline would unfold. Concerned primarily with establishing a secure beachhead for future operations, the 7th Army commander decided on two terrain-oriented objective lines, "Yellow" and "Blue," which ran in an arc from west to east across his army's entire planned frontage.[419] The Yellow

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[416] G-2, 7th Army, "G-2 Estimate of the Situation #3," C-15; Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 47; Hays, *Patton's Oracle*, 96.

[417] Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 56.

[418] Ibid., 54.

[419] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 98.

line, closest to the beaches, included critical coastal airfields, such as Ponte Olivo, and corresponded to the initial objectives which would ensure the immediate security of the assault forces.[420] Patton set the Blue line about 30 kilometers north of the landing zones at the point where ridgelines begin to rise from the coastal plain and the high ground near key junction towns which controlled the few improved north-south roadways into the island's central mountains.[421]

[420] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 98.

[421] Ibid.

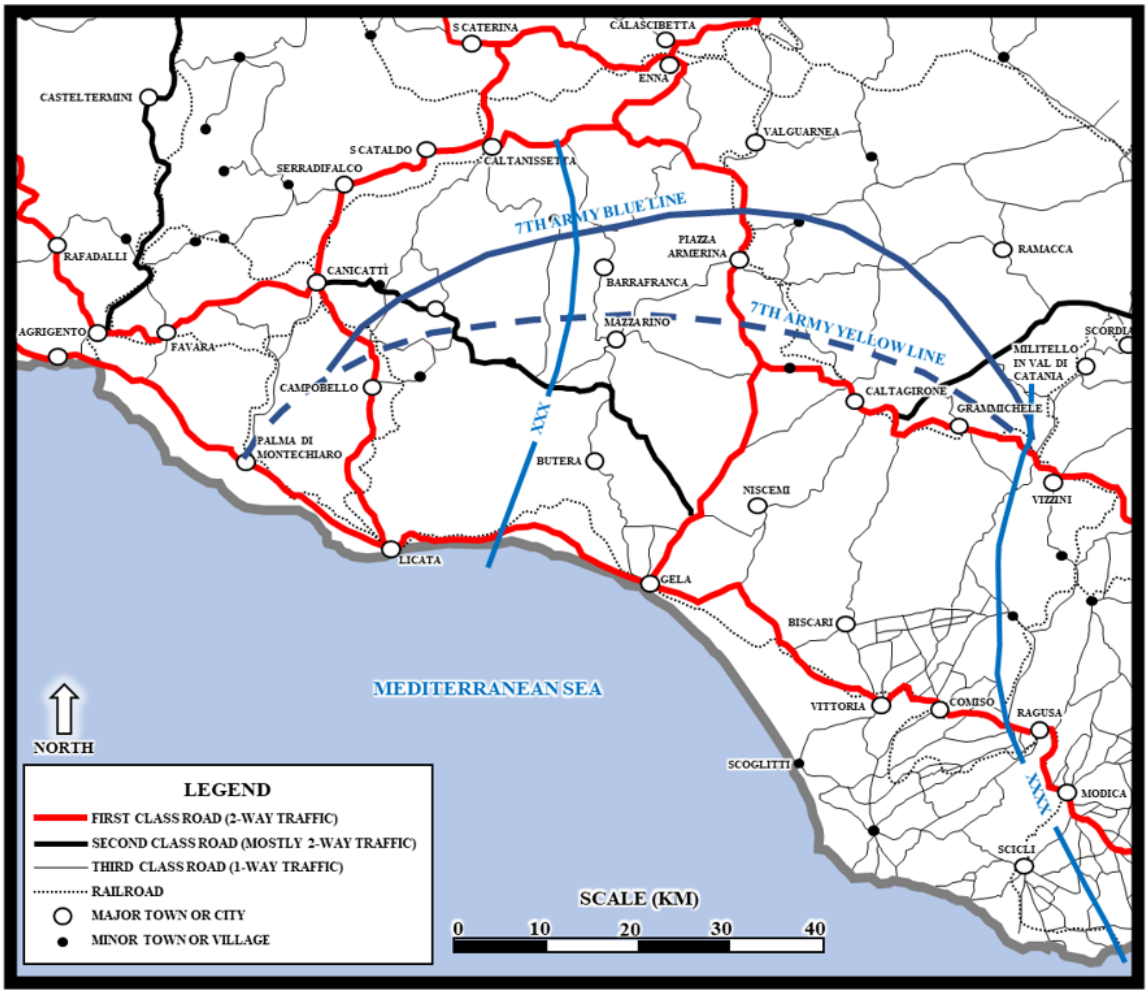

Figure 3. The 7th Army Beachhead

Source:—Created by author. Derived from: 7th Army, *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, U.S. 7th Army Staff, September 1943, reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, a-3.

To disrupt the anticipated German and Italian counterattacks, Patton depended on two regiments of the 82nd Airborne Division to act as disruptive shields until the seaborne forces—the 3rd, 1st, and 45th Infantry divisions from west to east,

respectively—could establish a firm anti-tank defense.[422] Because Patton planned to use the Gela beaches as his primary base of power projection for offensive operations, at least until 7th Army took Palermo, he assigned the 1st Infantry Division, his most experienced unit and main effort, to seize the area surrounding the coastal town.[423] The 7th Army commander also retained much of his armor in a "floating reserve," code-named "Kool Force," led by Major General Hugh Gaffey's 2nd Armored Division headquarters.[424] Gaffey's reserve element consisted of his own Combat Command B (CCB) as well as the 1st Infantry Division's 18th RCT, which was temporarily attached.[425] Additionally, because the first wave infantry divisions lacked tanks, CCB was an important hedge against any armor-heavy enemy counterattack. Gaffey therefore had pre-established contingency plans for the rapid landing and deployment of his armored units in support of Allen's infantrymen.[426] However, since Kool Force was a 7th Army asset, only Patton himself could order its commitment in support of the 1st Infantry Division or any other unit.[427]

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[422] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 101.

[423] Ibid., Pack, *Operation HUSKY*, 30.

[424] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division, April 22-July 25, 1943," Headquarters, 2d Armored Division, 5 August 1943, reference number R-11274.1, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 4.

[425] Ibid.

[426] Ibid.

[427] Donald E. Houston, *Hell on Wheels: The 2d Armored Division* (1977; repr., Novato: Presidio Press, 1986), 162.

Planning from within an abandoned schoolhouse in Relizane, Algeria, the II Corps G-2, Monk Dickson, began the process of tailoring the 7th Army's estimative intelligence specifically to his commander's assigned area of operations between Gela and Scoglitti, a little over 20 kilometers further to the southeast.[428] Like Patton, Bradley, as the II Corps commander, was also concerned with reaching the Blue line as soon as possible, remarking later: "For where a beachhead is rimmed by high ground, the landing is always imperiled until the invader can take those hills and secure his beach against observed enemy fire."[429] More worrisome for Bradley than indirect fire, however, were the enemy's counterattack forces which lurked behind those same hills. Both these perils, clearly highlighted by the corps commander, serve to underscore the vulnerabilities of any expeditionary force in the early stages of establishing a secure lodgment.

In describing the laborious efforts of his G-2, Bradley summarized the process by which Dickson analyzed the composition, disposition, and strength of the two German divisions on Sicily:

> scattered red symbols covered the work maps on which he charted the Axis ground defenses. Tabbed as enemy divisions, these symbols represented the end product of thousands of items of information, tediously correlated from agents, interrogations, broadcasts, letters, photos, newspapers, and the myriad commonplace sources in which intelligence hunts.[430]

By the time the Allied invasion force embarked on its troop transports in the first week of July 1943, II Corp's estimative intelligence mirrored 7th Army's and predicted that the

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[428] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 112-114.

[429] Ibid., 113.

[430] Ibid., 114.

Hermann Goering Division, then believed by Dickson to be based at Caltagirone, only 40 kilometers northeast of Gela, posed the greatest threat to the 1st Infantry Division and the Gela beachhead.[431] According to his memoirs, however, Bradley rated the German *Luftwaffe*'s ability to strike congested landing beaches as the greatest "[o]f all the terrors we faced," a fear that subsequent experience would at least partially validate.[432]

The way in which Dickson narrowed his focus from the 7th Army's wider estimative intelligence to center on the issues most pertinent to the II Corps area of operations reflects the expectation that each successive intelligence staff should tailor its analysis to the needs of its own commander.[433] In the weeks and months preceding Operation Husky, this model played out among intelligence staffs across the various echelons of command, from AFHQ on down. Thus, by the time the 1st Infantry Division G-2 section began its own estimative intelligence production in mid-May 1943, it was poised to capitalize on the substantial body of work already completed by more senior headquarters.

The 1st Infantry Division's Estimative Intelligence: Informing the Tactical Plan

Because the II Corps Headquarters remained engaged in Tunisia even longer than the 1st Infantry Division, it is hardly surprising that the intelligence produced by Porter's Division G-2 Section ahead of the Sicily invasion almost exclusively references 7th Army orders and intelligence annexes as their base data set. In this way, and as described

[431] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 113.

[432] Ibid., 114.

[433] JCS, JP 2-0, II-7.

above, both Bradley's and Allen's planning staffs relied heavily on analysis from their higher operational and strategic headquarters. Assigned the code name "Dime Force," the 1st Infantry Division particularly relied on air and naval information collection reports to conduct its detailed terrain analysis of the Gela beachhead. As would be expected, the first piece of finished estimative intelligence that Porter's staff produced was a terrain assessment. To this was added an assessment of the enemy's capabilities and finally intentions regarding how Italian and German units would defend the Gela sector. Both of these critical estimative intelligence inputs—terrain analysis and enemy course of action assessments—directly impacted Allen's determination of the division's initial scheme of maneuver and regimental objectives.

In the selection of actual assault beaches, however, the 1st Infantry Division had no real options. Of all the limiting factors of geography, Allen and his staff were forced to plan around the intractable problem that only certain stretches of coastline could accommodate the technical and spatial requirements of Allied landing craft.[434] From west to east (left to right of the division's frontage), naval intelligence identified six beaches suitable for amphibious operations in the Dime Force area: Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, Red 2, and Green 2.[435] East of Gela, all the division's beaches were at least partially obscured from inland line-of-sight observation by large masses of sand dunes just beyond

[434] Morison, *Naval Operations*, 23.

[435] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 136.

the waterline, features which turned out to be a key defensive advantage during the first stages of the assault.[436]

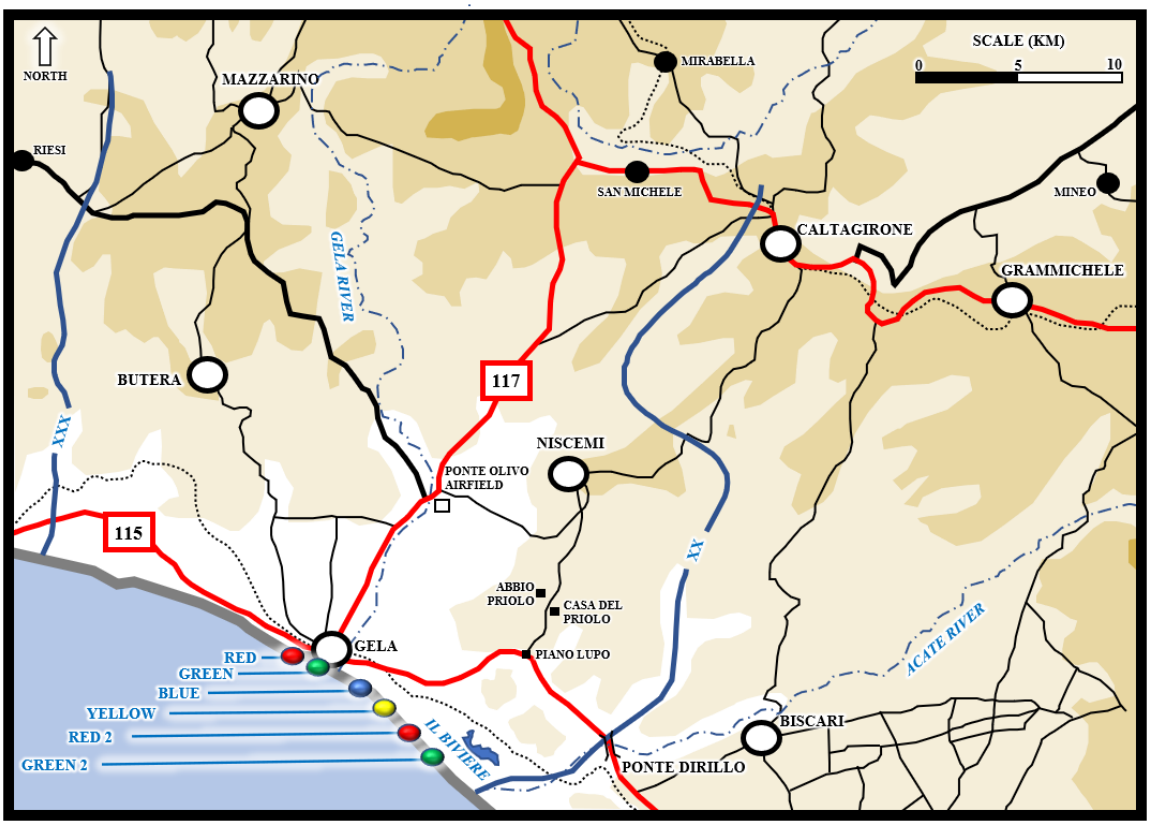

Figure 4. 1st Infantry Division Area of Operations and Assault Beaches

Source:—Created by author. Derived from: 7th Army, *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, U.S. 7th Army Staff, September 1943, reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, a-3; D. Holmes, Jr., U.S. Army Topographic Command, "The Final Landing Plan," in Albert N. Garland and Howard Smyth, assisted by Martin Blumenson, *The United States Army in World War II: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Sicily and the Surrender of Italy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1965).

[436] Morison, *Naval Operations*, 98.

Allen assigned the beaches immediately west of Gela (Red and Green) to the attached 1st and 4th Ranger battalions, designated "Force X" and under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William ("Bill") Darby, since their D-Day objective was the capture of the town itself.[437] Just over two kilometers along the shoreline southeast of Gela, the division plan called for the 26th RCT to land at the Yellow and Blue beaches before beginning northward movement toward the Ponte Olivo airfield.[438] On the far right and adjacent to the 45th Infantry Division sector, the 16th RCT would land at the Red 2 and Green 2 beaches and then proceed inland to secure the critical "Y" road junction at Piano Lupo and eventually the town of Niscemi.[439]

On D-Day, 10 July, Allen also expected the 16th RCT to make positive contact with paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division's 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), who were assigned to land in vicinity of Niscemi and disrupt enemy counterattacks against the Gela beachhead.[440] According to the 7th Army plan, at some point near the end of the 10 July, the 1st Infantry Division would take control of the 505th for use as its division reserve.[441] Until that time, the division would have precious few units (and no actual infantrymen) in its rear area to respond to tactical emergencies.[442]

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[437] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 136.

[438] Ibid.

[439] Ibid.

[440] Ibid.

[441] Ibid.

[442] Major General John. P. Lucas, memorandum for: The Commander-in-Chief, 21 July 1943, in "Report on Sicilian Campaign by Major General J. P. Lucas," Allied

In general terms, the 1st Infantry Division's assigned beachhead was bounded to the west and east by ridgelines falling south from the spurs of the mountains which began further north at the 7th's Army's Blue objective line. Between these ridges, the gently sloping Gela Plain formed a small valley floor interspersed with farms offering the best fields of fire and fastest cross-country mobility in the area of operations, despite small areas where the limited vegetation of "vineyards, orchards and olive groves" interrupted observation.[443] Even though this was the most obvious and attractive ground for armored forces of either side, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 noted that it also contained "dead space furnished by eroded stream beds" which could offer infantry units some limited cover and concealment.[444] Highway 117, a high-speed surface road, ran northeast from Gela and formed a junction with two northwest- and southeast-leading secondary routes near the Ponte Olivo airfield, the 26th RCT's objective and just southeast of the intersection. Highway 115, another improved road also known as the "Coastal Highway," joined Highway 117 in Gela and continued to run northwest and southeast in both directions, paralleling the coast across the breadth of the 1st Infantry Division's area of operations. At the Piano Lupo "Y" intersection in the 16th RCT's sector on the Division's right flank, Highway 115 formed a junction with the northeast-leading

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Force Headquarters, 1 October, 1943, reference number N-6448, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 7.

[443] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," Headquarters, "TIGER" (1st Infantry Division), 9 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 2.

[444] Ibid.

secondary road toward Niscemi and eventually Caltagirone. Small farm roads and trails also filled the space between the major improved routes but offered only limited mobility for larger vehicles such as tanks.[445]

Two riverbeds (the rivers themselves were dry in the arid Sicilian summers) steep enough to block the movement of wheeled and tracked vehicles paralleled the eastern and western ridgelines and fed into the Mediterranean at the waterline.[446] To the left, the Gela River flowed south inside the western ridgeline and just to the east of Gela, making the highway and railroad bridges two kilometers north of the town vital for lateral movement. On the division's right flank, and forming its boundary with the 45th Infantry Division, the Acate River channeled between the eastern ridge in the 1st Infantry Division's area of operations and similarly steep high ground on the 45th's left flank. The Coastal Highway (115) crossed the gap at the "Ponte Dirillo." This bridge, nearly seven kilometers inland from the assault beaches, was an essential link between the left and right divisions of II Corps and critical for maintaining a unified and secure lodgment. One additional water feature, a small lake called "Il Biviere," two kilometers long and 600 meters wide, was located just beyond the dunes northeast of the Green 2 beach, nestled in the division's right-rear flank, west of the Acate River.

Published on 9 June 1943 and accompanied by a map overlay, the 1st Infantry Division G-2's "Intelligence Notes #1" dealt exclusively with the impacts of this topography on the amphibious area of operations, adding analytical conclusions to raw

[445] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 2; G-2, 1st Infantry Division (reproduced), "About Sicily," 2.

[446] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 2.

data. Under the label "Critical Terrain Features," the division G-2 designated what modern doctrine would term "key terrain," defined as: "an identifiable characteristic whose seizure or retention affords a marked advantage to either combatant."[447] Here, Porter and his staff described the "dominating" effects of the "spine"-like ridges detailed above and their control over both the town of Gela and the entirety of the division's assault beaches.[448] Until Allen's infantrymen occupied those heights, enemy defenders could place devastating direct and indirect fire onto the additional waves of soldiers and landing craft at the shoreline.

Similarly, in the second phase of operations (the "Enlargement of the Beachhead"), the division's analysis identified as key terrain a series of hilltops overlooking the Ponte Olivo airfield on the left flank as well those heights which offered observation against the northeast-leading routes on the right flank.[449] The final piece of key terrain, important for the anticipated breakout from the beaches, was the major junction town of Caltagirone, an obvious assembly area and transit point for the enemy's mobile reserves.[450] The division G-2 concluded its overall assessment by issuing what turned out to be a highly accurate warning: "The crossing over the [River] ACATE must

[447] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 2; Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-90, *Offense and Defense* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 31 July 2019), 3-10.

[448] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 2.

[449] Ibid., 2-3.

[450] Ibid.

be held to protect the right flank."[451] Accordingly, Allen made the decision to issue the 16th Infantry with a specific mission to ensure protection of this critical vulnerability on the division's right.[452]

Only three days after disseminating its study of the terrain, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 section issued "G-2 Estimate #1" on 12 June 1943 along with two additional map overlays templating enemy beach defenses and major concentrations of enemy forces.[453] In two succinct pages, Porter and his staff laid out the enemy situation as they understood it and then provided analytical conclusions concerning the enemy's "capabilities" (what modern intelligence staffs would call potential "courses of action"). Referring to the 7th Army's detailed studies of beach obstacles and fixed defensive "strong points" such as bunkers and gun emplacements, Estimate #1 assessed that 3,800 Italian personnel from either the 206th or 207th Division in "4 coastal infantry battalions, one coastal artillery battalion, and three light antiaircraft [batteries]" manned these forward positions near the water's edge.[454] On the division's assigned initial objective of Ponte Olivo airfield, the G-2 assessed that two companies with heavy weapons provided

[451] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 3.

[452] Combat Team (CT) 16, "Field Order #13," Headquarters, CT 16, 27 June 1943, reference number N-17439.70, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

[453] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Estimate #1," Headquarters, "TIGER" (1st Infantry Division), 12 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-2.

[454] Ibid., 1.

a local response force in addition to those enemy troops manning static positions.[455] Most importantly, the estimate included an attached document with a summary on the history and organization of the Italian 4th (*Livorno*) Division, considered by Porter at the time to be the most likely enemy forces to counterattack the Gela beachhead.[456] Of course, this projection of enemy forces would change as the division G-2 received additional updates on anticipated German reinforcements, including the *Hermann Goering* Division, later in the month.

It was therefore almost certainly the *Livorno* Division, having been identified in previous months near Caltanissetta and Caltagirone, northwest and northeast of Gela respectively, that Porter had in mind as he considered the enemy's capabilities in response to the 1st Infantry Division's amphibious assault.[457] "Estimate #1" listed the enemy's most likely course of action as a "local" counterattack by a reinforced division coupled with "an air effort that will insure definite air superiority" and finally concluding with a "general" counterattack by two additional divisions no later than D+3.[458] In this scenario, which the division G-2 also felt was the most dangerous to its mission, the 1st Infantry Division would incrementally come in contact with various combined arms units

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[455] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Estimate #1," 1.

[456] Ibid.; G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Inclosure #2 to G-2 Estimate No. 1: History and Notes on the 4th Livorno Division," Headquarters, "TIGER" (1st Infantry Division): 12 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-2.

[457] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "History and Notes on the 4th Livorno Division", 1.

[458] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Estimate #1," 1.

of the *Livorno* Division executing disruptive but small-scale counterattacks which would contain the Americans near their landing beaches while the enemy assembled a larger force for a decisive final assault.

Out of all the factors considered by the G-2, pure capabilities mattered most—namely, the layout of the Italian shore defenses and the "disposition of enemy field forces" so close to the assault beaches led the 1st Infantry Division's Intelligence Section to believe that it would face immediate local counterattacks.[459] As a secondary consideration, the estimate also weighed the enemy's intentions, specifically that immediate and vigorous counterattacks in response to an invasion of Italian soil were in line with both "Italian tactical doctrine and national psychology."[460] It is also no coincidence that the favored enemy course of action almost exactly mirrors the predictions of the 7th Army and II Corps G-2s, a logical result of collegial and nested analytical efforts among staffs with the same doctrine, training, and experience.

The 12 June G-2 estimate further considered a next possible alternative, that the enemy (i.e. the *Livorno* Division) might employ a "coordinated counter-attack" (as opposed to the piecemeal effort outlined in the previous scenario) by D+1 or earlier, again in conjunction with strong air support.[461] However, Porter and his team clearly believed such decisive and concerted action, requiring "experienced troops of high morale," to be beyond the limited training and capabilities of poor-quality Italian ground

[459] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Estimate #1," 2.

[460] Ibid.

[461] Ibid., 1.

forces.[462] The 1st Infantry Division G-2 similarly discounted the likelihood of a third potential enemy course of action—that of a delaying action by the enemy until Axis forces could determine the Allied main effort and launch a massive, deliberate counterattack.[463] The fact that it would certainly take several precious days for the enemy to execute this course of action meant that it "would offer the least serious threat to the accomplishment of our immediate objective" and was therefore highly unlikely, in the G-2's view.[464]

One week before the division embarked for its oversea movement to Sicily, the G-2 clarified and refined its picture of the enemy forces defending Gela by issuing its 29 June 1943 "Intelligence Notes Number 2: Enemy Order of Battle."[465] Raising the estimate of total enemy forces on the island to 265,000, well above the 7th Army's 9 June snapshot assessment of 208,000, the division G-2 anticipated that mobile German units "will probably be moved to" the major junction towns along 7th Army's Blue line, 30 kilometers north of the coast, to serve as reserve counterattack forces.[466] The estimative intelligence also stated that the G-2 now believed local Italian beach defenses at Gela

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[462] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Estimate #1," 2.

[463] Ibid., 1-2.

[464] Ibid., 2.

[465] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes Number 2: Enemy Order of Battle," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 29 June 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-3.

[466] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes Number 2: Enemy Order of Battle," 1.

were manned by the 134th Autonomous Coastal Regiment and not the 206th or 207th divisions listed in earlier assessments.[467] It also supplied information that the Italian 54th ("*Napoli*") and 104th ("*Mantova*") divisions were postured as additional counterattack units further east of the *Livorno* Division, closer to the 8th Army beaches.[468]

Like the 7th Army's estimates, the 1st Infantry Division's 29 June intelligence product also described the battalion-sized Italian mobile groups of "*Nuclei Celeri*" as rapid reaction forces, including 11-ton Renault 35 tanks, posted to airfields and garrisons, such as Ponte Olivo.[469] Porter's estimate also directly copied the 7th Army G-2's outline of Axis air strength, highlighting the hundreds of fighters and bombers which could severely disrupt the division's landing.[470] Though the 29 June update brought more clarity to the adversary's strength and dispositions in Sicily, it did not change the division G-2's assessment of probable enemy courses of action.

However, from his post-war comments, it is clear that by this time Porter's focus was already shifting towards an anticipation of strong German counterattacks, supported by armor, which could seriously threaten the success of the 1st Infantry Division's operations in the first phase of Husky.[471] It is therefore at least mildly surprising that his

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[467] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes Number 2: Enemy Order of Battle," 1.

[468] Ibid.

[469] Ibid., 2.

[470] Ibid.

[471] Porter interview, 287.

29 June estimate only briefly mentioned the possibility, though purely in generalized terms. Two lines of thought may explain why this was the case.

First, it is possible that AFHQ's 26 June "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary Number 44," which offered more definitive conclusions about German forces on Sicily, had not yet been received or processed by the 1st Infantry Division G-2 and therefore missed the cutoff for inclusion in the order of battle assessment.[472] Secondly, for reasons of operations security, it could be that Porter and his staff were deliberately opaque about exactly what they knew concerning German forces in Sicily, considering the wide dissemination (and greater chance for compromise) that their intelligence products would have across the formation. In either case, given the firsthand testimony of Koch, Bradley, and Porter himself, there is no doubt that key leaders within the 1st Infantry Division had a firm understanding that German units would almost certainly contest their assault near Gela.[473]

Regardless of these details, the 1st Infantry Division G-2's estimative intelligence on the terrain and potential enemy courses of action presented Allen and his planners with the same problem: where and how could the division's infantrymen defend themselves and their vulnerable beach operations against a likely series of counterattacks

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[472] G-2, Allied Force Headquarters, "G-2 Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 44," 4.

[473] The intelligence annex to the 16th Infantry's field order acknowledged the possible presence of two German divisions as enemy reserves in the vicinity of Caltanissetta and Enna. See: S-2, Combat Team (CT) 16, "S-2 Estimate #1, Annex No. 2 (Intelligence) to CT 16 Field Order #13," Headquarters, CT 16, 27 June 1943, reference number N-17439.70, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 5.

from mobile enemy units supported by armor and artillery? On top of this dilemma, in truth, Allen had little flexibility to make changes within the highly prescriptive planning guidance issued by AFHQ, 15th Army Group, and 7th Army. To ensure the operational success of the combined, joint force's tightly synchronized air, naval, and ground efforts, the senior Allied and American headquarters issued specific guidance to choreograph the initial assault.[474] Patton's plan demanded that Allen's Dime Force land in the Gulf of Gela, seize the town, secure the beaches, take the Ponte Olivo airfield by D+1, and then push a further 20 kilometers north to 7th Army's Blue objective line.[475] At face value, it is easy to assess whatever tactical details remained to be worked out as comparatively small and inconsequential. In part, this may also help to explain the lack of historical analysis on the intelligence estimates of tactical units ahead of the Sicily Campaign.

Indeed, if any situation fits John Keegan's dismissive narrative on the relative unimportance of tactical intelligence to the outcome of battles or campaigns, it may appear be this. To borrow a term from the historian, it could easily seem as if Allen and his 1st Infantry Division were merely left to "fight" the intelligence-informed plan that 7th Army and II Corps handed to them.[476] Allen could not choose his objectives, his landing beaches, or the task organization of his unit (recall that the 18th RCT was assigned to the 7th Army "floating reserve"). He was forewarned of the enemy's prepared

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[474] Eisenhower detailed the complexities and rigid planning factors involved in preparing for Operation HUSKY in his official report after the campaign. See: Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 11-15.

[475] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 98.

[476] Keegan, *Intelligence in War*, 25.

coastal defenses and the likelihood of strong counterattacks by both Italian and significantly more-capable German units. However, in this first phase of Operation Husky, the division was expected to act according to an intricately detailed script written by 7th Army and Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt's Western Naval Task Force.

Such a view is not without its merits. As detailed earlier in this chapter, information collection and all-source analysis from strategic and operational level G-2 staffs within the Allied chain of command provided the raw data and finished intelligence that informed every one of the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence products. Credit rightly belongs to the senior G-2s, such as Oscar Koch, who laid the intelligence foundation upon which the entire campaign rested. That said, translating accurate intelligence estimates into sound military decisions went beyond the plans made by Alexander, Montgomery, and Patton as to when and where to land their armies on the shores of Sicily. To be sure, intricately detailed naval considerations, amphibious landing timetables, and the designation of critical initial objectives were instrumental, if not decisive, to the success of the campaign as a whole.

That said, upon disembarking from their landing craft, units like the 1st Infantry Division still had to solve tactical problems such as the one posed earlier—how to actually defeat the enemy in close combat. While the inescapable burden to "fight" remained on infantrymen and their supporting arms, Allen still had important decisions to make regarding the manner in which his division would maneuver into positions of advantage and prepare for the anticipated counterblows from Axis forces. In service toward these ends, estimative intelligence still had a role to play in influencing the division commander's decisions.

Drawing on the 1st Infantry Division's experience at El Guettar several months earlier, Allen had confidence that his light infantry could repel an enemy armored counterattack so long as they were dug-in on what Porter referred to as "tank proof" terrain.[477] Described earlier, the division G-2's 9 June "Intelligence Notes #1" and its accompanying map overlays (what modern professionals would know as a "modified combined obstacle overlay") provided clarity for Allen and his subordinate commanders as to the challenges and opportunities of the terrain.[478] As told by Carlo D'Este based on a post-war interview with the division G-2 himself:

> Porter was fortunate to have working in his G-2 section a young officer (Captain Klotz) whom he had recruited in Tunisia. Klotz prepared an excellent terrain map of the invasion area complete with lights and obstacles. According to Porter this enabled the 1st Division staff to work out in detail the best terrain for enemy tanks, what routes they were likely to employ and how long it would take for them to reach the beaches. The regimental commanders were then brought in and briefed, using the map.[479]

Based on this excellent estimative intelligence, Allen settled on a concept of operations for his infantry regiments and Ranger battalions which involved immediate and aggressive maneuver off their landing beaches and into the high ground on the division's right and left flanks.[480]

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[477] Porter interview, 287-288.

[478] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 2-01.3, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield* with Change 1 (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 6 January 2021), 4-13 - 4-16.

[479] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 297.

[480] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Intelligence Notes #1," 2.

Not only would these initial positions offer means of seizing the division's objectives, the undulating hilltops and rocky escarpments on either side of the improved roads, which ran down the centers of the eastern and western ridges, they also ensured that any attacking armored force would lose speed, cohesion, and effectiveness and find itself unable to conduct a truly coordinated attack.[481] Even without their anti-tank guns, which Porter noted "were not due to land until the middle of the second day because of the shipping schedules" (one of the factors Allen could not control), hastily dug foxholes and trenches on these positions offered the best protection against the enemy's anticipated counterattacks.[482]

It is likewise important here to note that the scheme of maneuver selected by the division commander was not the most direct route to the unit's 7th Army-designated objective of the Ponte Olivo airfield. If speed was Allen's only concern, he could have chosen to order the 26th Infantry to rush directly forward across the Gela Plain from their landing zones on the Blue and Yellow beaches. However, in addition to contending with scattered minefields, such a course of action would have left the American infantrymen exposed in open terrain against armored threats from the airfield's mobile group as well as expected counterattacks from the *Livorno* and *Hermann Goering* divisions. Simply put, Porter's analysis revealed, and Allen concurred, that the Gela Plain was not suitable for anti-tank defense. High ground to the west and east of the division's area of

[481] Porter interview, 292-293.

[482] Ibid., 288.

operations offered far better opportunities for tactical success at a lesser cost of casualties.

Of course, Allen's battle plan was not without risk. By weighting the division's maneuver combat power almost exclusively on the far left (Force X and 26th RCT) and far right (16th RCT) flanks, no infantrymen stood between enemy forces on the northern edge of the Gela Plain and the 1st Infantry Division's Blue, Yellow, Red 2, and Green 2 beaches. Still, backed by a well-developed plan for responsive naval gunfire support which could serve to blunt such an armored thrust in the center, this was a more preferable alternative to placing lightly armed infantry in poor defensive positions.[483] In addition, Allen expected that support would arrive from Gaffey's Kool Force armor by the end of D-Day.[484] All these factors, chief among them a clear understanding of the terrain and enemy presented by his G-2, shaped Allen's concept of operations.

Commensurate with his preference for decentralized command and control, however, Allen declined to let his preconceived concept of operations, no matter how well informed by Porter's estimative intelligence, stifle the initiative of his subordinate commanders in combat. As an attendee of the 1st Infantry Division's operations order briefing just days before the Sicily invasion, Colonel James Gavin, the 505th PIR commander, recalled Allen's guidance:

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[483] Western Naval Task Force, "Annex 'B' to Operation Plan No. 2-43: Gunfire Support Plan," Algiers, Algeria, U.S.S. *Monrovia* (flagship), 26 May, 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-4; Morison, *Naval Operations*, 103, 118.

[484] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 4.

> Having spent years learning how to issue an appropriate order, I was looking forward to hearing the seasoned and legendary Terry Allen tell us what to do. When his staff got through explaining what was expected of us, he concluded by saying, 'I don't want any God-damned bellyaching. I want you to do your job and let me know what you are doing.' So much for the five-paragraph field order.[485]

If nothing else, Allen's simple if underwhelming missive to his regimental commanders demonstrated both his trust in their judgement and his understanding that the chaotic and uncertain nature of combat would necessitate real-time adjustment and deviation from even the best laid plans. Allen's comments also reflect his trust in the competence of his well-trained, veteran division. As an important element adding to Allen's confidence in the soundness of his assault plan, the 1st Infantry Division's hard-earned reputation for toughness in North Africa cannot be ignored. After placing his units where he and the G-2 deemed most appropriate, the division commander counted on his soldiers to fight resolutely against the expected armored counterattacks, as they had done at El Guettar.

Furthermore, in asking his subordinates to "let me know what you are doing," the 1st Infantry Division's commander touched on the requirement for timely and accurate reporting from his infantrymen along the line of contact.[486] He would subsequently rely on Porter's G-2 section to use those reports to update its assessment as to where, when, and how the enemy would attempt to collapse the division's beachhead in the Gulf of Gela. Estimative intelligence had sensitized the division commander to the terrain and the enemy threats; he had a clear idea of what to expect on D-Day. During the fight itself, the

[485] Gavin, *On to Berlin*, 8.

[486] Ibid.

G-2's current intelligence effort would reveal how closely the enemy's actions matched Porter's predictive analysis and when new decisions were necessary.

Conclusion

It is no exaggeration to state that the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence effort ahead of Operation Husky would not have been as effective as it was, or even possible at all, without the information collection resources and analytical insight of senior intelligence staffs. In this way, the Allied intelligence enterprise and the 7th Army chain of command performed exactly as designed in enabling the success of subordinate G-2s and S-2s down to the tactical level. The complexity and requirements for nested synchronization associated with planning and orchestrating a massive expeditionary operation demanded nothing less from the Allies' strategic and operational headquarters. Developing his own assault plan under the many constraints imposed by the Western Naval Task Force and the 7th Army, Allen nonetheless had important decisions to make regarding how he would maneuver his infantrymen once they arrived on the beaches near Gela.

To that end, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 section refined the assessments provided by the 7th Army and II Corps intelligence staffs as it produced accurate and detailed estimative intelligence concerning terrain and the enemy's likely courses of action in the first few days of the operation. Most of all, Porter's terrain study and predictive analysis made it clear to Allen that one of his most pressing requirements early in the assault would be to place his subordinate units in the best possible positions to defend themselves against Axis tanks, at least until Gaffey's armor arrived. Thus, the G-2 contributed directly to Allen's impactful decision to seize, defend, and maneuver along

the high ground on the eastern and western edges of the Gela Plain. With his well-informed plan further underpinned by confidence in the toughness and skill of his veteran troops, Allen had every reason to believe that he and the 1st Infantry Division were prepared for the trials that awaited them in Sicily.

CHAPTER 6

SEIZING AND DEFENDING THE GELA BEACHHEAD: 10-11 JULY 1943

Introduction

As accurate and influential as the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence was in informing Terry Allen's battle plans, upon landing in Sicily he urgently required equally effective current intelligence to inform new decisions as enemy forces attempted to push his division back into the sea. Between 10 and 11 July 1943, Allen's division defeated four major counterattacks by various Italian and German units, one of which, on the 11th, reached within several hundred meters of the division's landing beaches and directly threatened the integrity of the entire 7th Army lodgment. Though other factors played a role in the success of the division's hasty defense near Gela, effective tactical intelligence was a critical input to Allen's decision-making during the fight to secure the division's beachhead.

In their first hours ashore, however, Robert Porter and his intelligence staff faced their share of challenges. On D-Day, the G-2 section and every unit within the division struggled to establish a functional current intelligence reporting system as they contended with the danger and friction inherent in the opening stages of expeditionary combat operations. As a result, the 1st Infantry Division's defeat of the enemy's initial counterattacks on 10 July is more attributable to the estimative intelligence that placed Allen's infantrymen in excellent defensive terrain, as well as timely and accurate fire support from the Western Naval Task Force. Added to these considerations, poor synchronization between Italian and German forces helped to deliver the division its first victory in Sicily.

On 11 July, however, the division's current intelligence effort was fully engaged and played a pivotal role in permanently securing the Gela beachhead. Throughout the day, the G-2 remained at the center of an information collection and intelligence dissemination architecture that provided rapid early warning of enemy counterattacks and emergent threats. On the basis of these reports, Allen and his headquarters staff made decisions regarding where and when to maneuver their forces and direct support assets on the battlefield.

It was also a critical piece of current intelligence, obtained through interrogation of enemy prisoners, that heavily influenced Allen's decision to launch what was ultimately a decisive spoiling attack on the night of 11 to 12 July. However, as on D-Day, while tactical intelligence clearly mattered on D+1, it is likewise important not to understate other the essential elements that factored into combat decision-making and the outcome of the fight. These include the skill, bravery, and sheer will to win demonstrated by Allen's soldiers during the savage fighting on 11 July as well as Patton's prodding demands for aggressive offensive action. All these conditions, tactical intelligence included, were prime considerations in Allen's thought processes and instrumental to the overall success of the 1st Infantry Division during its auspicious start to the Sicily Campaign.

D-Day: 10 July

With near-perfect precision, and despite the high surf conditions that almost postponed the entire invasion, during the early morning hours of 10 July 1943, from 0243 to 0247, infantrymen from each of the division's assault formations disembarked from

their landing craft along the shore of the Gulf of Gela.[487] Almost immediately, however, friction took hold of the 1st Infantry Division's battle plans. On the far left, in front of the two "Force X" Ranger battalions, Italian defenders demolished the Gela pier, instantly denying Allen and his unit the most rapid and viable off-load point for heavy vehicles, such as AT guns and armor, which were critical to defeating anticipated enemy counterattacks.[488] Further east, in the 26th RCT sector, massive, un-forecasted minefields in the dunes ringing the Blue and Yellow beaches, which did not appear in the G-2's estimative intelligence, similarly prevented the division from landing large vehicles and equipment according to its pre-drawn schedules.[489] Facing the most determined local opposition on the far right, the 16th RCT struggled to silence enemy bunkers and gun emplacements along the shoreline.[490] Compounding all these difficulties, accurate artillery fire swept each of the landing beaches for several hours as successive waves of landing craft delivered more troops into the approaching dawn.[491]

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[487] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 102; Division G-3 event entries: 0243, 0245, 0247, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log, in *G-3 Journal, 1st Infantry Division, Sicilian Campaign, 1-21 Jul 43*, by G-3, 1st Infantry Division, 301-3.2, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp (hereafter referenced as: "G-3 Log").

[488] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 137, 159.

[489] Ibid., 158-159.

[490] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 103; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 137.

[491] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 158-159.

Around 0500, just as Porter's G-2 section was transferring from the USS *Barnett* to landing craft which would take them ashore, enemy aircraft launched the first of many attacks against the Gela beachhead and the Western Naval Task Force.[492] In addition to sinking the destroyer USS *Maddox*, Axis aircraft pounced upon Dime Force's only supporting aerial observation platforms, the U.S. Navy's cruiser-launched "Seagull" scout and observation aircraft (SOCs), destroying two of four planes and perhaps confirming the worst fears of Army leaders concerned over similarly vulnerable L-4 Piper Cubs.[493] Nonetheless, by 0700, the G-3 recorded that the 1st Infantry Division's advance command post was operational just 400 meters beyond the waterline in the 16th RCT sector.[494]

Unpacking maps, overlays, and journal sheets under intermittent enemy artillery fire as the infantry regiments moved inland, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 worked through a backlog of reports and coordinated with the G-3 to establish firm situational awareness concerning both the friendly and enemy situation. Among the first reports processed by Porter's intelligence section was a key piece of early warning sent in code from the II

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[492] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 147; Division G-2 location data entry, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log, in *G-2 Journal, 1st Infantry Division, Sicilian Campaign, 10-14 July 43*, by G-2, 1st Infantry Division, 301-2.2, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp (hereafter referenced as: "G-2 Log").

[493] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 147; Morison, *Naval Operations*, 103.

[494] Division G-3 event entry, 0700, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

Corps floating CP aboard the USS *Ancon*.[495] Transmitted at 0256 but not recorded by the division G-2 until 0800, the message stated: "Advice received indicate an attack airfields Gela area night ten dash eleven July in strength one German Bn."[496] Almost certainly derived from SIGINT, while the exact source—Ultra or otherwise—is unclear, the significance of the report was unmistakable: the division must be prepared to defend itself against enemy's most capable mobile reserves by nightfall, earlier than Porter expected.[497] Coincidentally, only 15 minutes earlier, the 26th RCT S-2 sent a radio message directly to the division G-2 stating that his unit had already taken five German prisoners, a further indicator that the division would soon face tougher opposition than the demoralized Italian coastal defense units.[498]

This first example of effective collaboration between intelligence and operations staffs at different echelons demonstrates the potential benefits of a well-established communications and information-sharing architecture to generating useful tactical intelligence. It also serves to reinforce the paradigm of the nested current intelligence effort familiar to modern tactical intelligence professionals. In this model, higher headquarters, such as at the corps and field army level, maintain a responsibility to use their wide area collection capabilities to provide early warning on the disposition and

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[495] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 125.

[496] Radio message, Commander, II Corps to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, transmitted 0256, recorded 0800, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[497] Porter interview, 288.

[498] Radio message, Dextrous-2 [26th RCT S-2] to division G-2, 0745, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

deployment of enemy operational reserves and other important elements in locations beyond the reach of division-level information collection assets. Similarly, subordinate units at even the lowest tactical levels (e.g. battalion S-2s, as above) pass upwards detailed information which also helps to add context and insight into the broader intelligence mosaic. Even though the following days would highlight problems with information latency and reporting timeliness, especially dealing with tactical air reconnaissance, the 1st Infantry Division G-2's operational records reflect a continuous effort to maintain an uninterrupted flow of information between echelons and adjacent units throughout the campaign.

While the G-2 logged II Corp's message, each of the division's three assault elements were on or near their initial objectives. Having just secured the town of Gela, Darby's Rangers consolidated around 200 prisoners while the 26th RCT continued north to the Highway 117 road and rail bridges over the Gela River.[499] Simultaneously, on the right flank, the 16th RCT, though not yet in contact with the 505th PIR, was nearing the Piano Lupo ("Y") junction, about six kilometers northeast of the division's advance CP.[500] In the face of this offensive progress, at 0830 one of the USS *Boise's* remaining SOCs identified enemy tanks and other vehicles moving south from Niscemi, directly towards the 16th RCT.[501]

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[499] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 139.

[500] Courier message, 16th RCT S-2 to division G-2, 0734, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[501] Morison, *Naval Operations*, 103.

Shortly after the *Boise* began its interdiction fire on the basis of the SOC's report, artillery observers from the division's 7th Field Artillery attached to the 16th RCT, specially trained and equipped as one of a number of "fire control parties" able to direct naval gunfire, also identified the threat and coordinated additional support from the USS *Jeffers*.[502] Even though the 1st Infantry Division's advance CP contained a dedicated naval gunfire liaison officer, the observation reports and requests for support from the SOC aircraft and the 7th FA's observers travelled directly to *Boise* and *Jeffers*, bypassing the division headquarters.[503] This reality may help to explain why neither the division G-2 or G-3 logs from 10 July contain early warning reports from the 16th RCT or naval elements. It is far more likely that the division's naval gunfire liaison officer related the information directly to Porter and Gibb, the G-3, as it was transmitted over naval radio networks and thus never recorded by the advance CP's message center.

This first enemy attack also coincided with an accurate and effective artillery barrage against the division's advance CP at 0836, which doubtless caused at least temporary degradation to the routine current intelligence work of the G-2 section.[504] With the command post situated almost directly under the gun-target line for *Boise* and *Jeffers*, the jarring effects caused by such a high volume of incoming and outgoing fire must have

[502] Western Naval Task Force, "Gunfire Support Plan," 1, 3; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 106, 151.

[503] Western Naval Task Force, "Gunfire Support Plan," 1-2.

[504] Division G-3 event entry, 0836, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

been jarring.[505] The division's operational records also make it clear that Allen himself was away from his headquarters during this time, leaving coordination and communication of the fight largely to Gibb and Porter. Given these sources of battlefield friction, it took 45 minutes for Porter to send an urgent radio message "in the clear" to his division commander with a situation update.[506]

The G-2's 0915 report to Allen described the unidentified enemy force then under the Navy's fire as between 10-15 tanks moving south from Niscemi against the division's right flank.[507] Porter's message also informed Allen that the 16th RCT was in contact with paratroopers but that the airborne operation had not gone as planned, with many units missing their intended drop zones.[508] Finally, the message indicated that the 26th RCT was proceeding generally according to schedule on the left flank.[509] Here, in a short, three-sentence radio report, Porter fulfilled one of the critical responsibilities of any staff officer, and certainly a good G-2, as he provided situational awareness regarding both the friendly and enemy situation to his commander in a clear, succinct format.

As exemplary as Porter's initial report to Allen may have been, however, it still contained gaps that would not be identified until after this first counterattack was

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[505] In his description of a similar naval bombardment on 11 July, Atkinson describes the sound of the *Boise's* outgoing fire as akin to a "locomotive shriek." See: Atkinson, *The Day of Battle*, 103.

[506] Radio message, division G-2 to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 0915, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[507] Ibid.

[508] Ibid.

[509] Ibid.

defeated. While the 0915 message accurately captured the situation on the division's right flank, the same could not be said for the situation on the left. In fact, the 26th RCT and Darby's Rangers in and around Gela were simultaneously engaged with an even larger tank-led enemy force which briefly penetrated into the town of Gela itself.[510] Despite these dramatic developments, it was only after the assault on the left flank was decisively defeated with critical help from the USS *Shubrick*, around 1100, that the Ranger headquarters sent a situation update to the 1st Infantry Division CP stating that Gela was secure for a second time.[511]

While it is again likely that Porter and the G-2 gained at least some situational awareness about the fighting on the left along Highway 117 from their naval gunfire liaison officer, they still lacked timely reporting from the division's own maneuver units. Far from unusual in ground combat, the 1st Infantry Division's early information gaps reflect the unavoidable tactical reality that enemy action and the cumulative effects of friction will always serve to produce some degree of fog as to the actual situation on the battlefield. This is all the more true during the precarious initial phases of an amphibious assault as infantry units fight localized actions to solidify their landing zones and the division command post struggles to establish its own operations after several hours out of contact during its own ship-to-shore movement.

Following the enemy's unsuccessful 0830-1100 counterattack, unit identifications from initial prisoner of war interrogations streamed into the division's advance command

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[510] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 152-153.

[511] Message, Ranger task force to division G-3, 1100, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

post. It was soon clear to the G-2 that this first attack was led by two columns, split between the eastern and western roads leading south along the two ridgelines bounding the Gela Plain, of the Italian XVI Corps' "Mobile Group E," the rapid reaction force stationed at the Ponte Olivo airfield and anticipated in Porter's estimative intelligence assessments.[512] In addition, as subsequent reports would later confirm, one battalion-sized element from the *Livorno* Division, operating under separate orders, had also joined in the assault against the Rangers.[513] The enemy tanks so easily repulsed by naval gunfire were likewise confirmed to be small, lightly armed 11-ton Renault 35s.[514]

At the same time, information from civilians and Italian prisoners alike indicated that strong German forces were gathered to the northeast of the division's beachhead, confirming the general estimative intelligence supplied by 7th Army and II Corps.[515] Though Allen was unaware, his adversaries were also contending with a high level of battlefield confusion and friction. Movement delays and a distinct lack of tactical cooperation and synchronization between German and Italian commanders combined to produce a piecemeal counterattack effort on 10 July.[516] As a result, the 1st Infantry Division gained several hours of valuable time to land more combat power between the

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[512] Radio Message, division G-2 to G2, II Corps, 1440, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[513] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 152-153.

[514] Courier message, 16th RCT S-2 to division G-2, 1300, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[515] Radio message, Commander, 1st Infantry Division to Commander, II Corps and 16th RCT, 1440, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[516] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 147-148.

morning's Italian-led assault and a separate advance by German columns that were still moving south from Caltagirone.[517]

In the relative quiet that descended on the Gela coast around noon, Allen's infantry regiments resumed their forward movement. Patrols from the 26th RCT and the 1st Reconnaissance Troop advanced north along Highway 117 as the lead battalions of the 16th RCT continued toward Piano Lupo.[518] Meanwhile, Allen communicated with 7th Army's headquarters aboard the USS *Monrovia* regarding his concern over the continued absence of armor and AT guns, neither of which were yet ashore in his division's area of operations.[519] Finally, after further confirmation that the 82nd Airborne's paratroopers were too widely scattered to serve as an effective shielding force, at 1340 Patton ordered Hugh Gaffey's "Kool Force" floating reserve to land immediately in support of the 1st Infantry Division.[520] Unfortunately for Allen and his division, offshore naval maneuver problems, closed beaches, and eventually sand conditions which immobilized the first tanks to land, all caused additional friction which prevented Kool Force from playing any part whatsoever in the fighting on 10 July.[521]

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[517] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 147-148.

[518] Message, 1st Reconnaissance Troop to division G-3, 1315, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, DIVARTY CP to division G-3, 1325, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, 16th RCT to division G-3, 1355, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[519] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 158.

[520] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 4; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 158.

[521] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 158-159.

At 1400, just as Gaffey was en route to Allen's command post to coordinate the disembarkation of his forces, two battalion-sized combined arms battlegroups of the German *Hermann Goering* Division finally launched their much-delayed attacks against the II Corps beachhead.[522] With his battlegroups split on either side of the Acate River, the boundary between the U.S. 1st and 45th infantry divisions, *HG* Division Commander, *Generalmajor* Paul Conrath, arrayed the majority of his armor (Mark III and IV tanks), with only minimal infantry support, to the west against Allen's 16th RCT.[523] To the east, against the 45th Infantry Division's 180th RCT, Conrath deployed another imbalanced force based around an infantry battalion with support from one company of the large and heavily armored Mark VI ("Tiger") tanks.[524]

Once again, like the earlier Italian counterattack, close combat between the south-bound enemy and the 1st Infantry Division began unexpectedly when Conrath's western battlegroup came into contact with the 16th RCT and its accumulated collection of paratroopers on the road to Niscemi. As in the morning attack, there is no evidence that the 1st Infantry Division's command post received any form of specific current intelligence or early warning from its own units or higher headquarters about the mass of enemy armor bearing down on the division's right flank. James Holland suggests that the 16th Infantry, as well as Allen himself, were somewhat surprised by the strength of the enemy forces south of Niscemi because they lacked awareness that Gavin's 505th PIR

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[522] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 147-149, 154.

[523] Ibid., 149.

[524] Ibid.

shielding force was widely dispersed instead of concentrated north of the 1st Infantry Division's beaches.[525]

In any event, the sudden nature of the threat and the need to react to the emergency probably made instant reporting a secondary concern for the 16th RCT. Located close behind the 16th Infantry, it was most likely the sounds of heavy combat to their front which prompted Allen's G-3 to demand a situation report from Colonel George Taylor's regiment at 1450.[526] Responding quickly, the 16th RCT reported that its 1st battalion was in a hasty defense against up to 20 enemy tanks and that its 2nd battalion was moving forward in support.[527]

In terms of decision-making, Gibb made several earnest, if unsuccessful, efforts to marshal enabling resources for the 16th RCT throughout the day. First, based on information that ultimately proved incorrect, the G-3 informed Taylor and his regiment that they would shortly receive medium tank support.[528] Similarly, at 1520, the G-3 erroneously informed the 16th RCT that a sortie of P-51s was inbound to conduct an air strike on the German armor.[529] Thus, despite the best efforts of the division staff, the 16th RCT was left to fight Conrath's western battlegroup alone.

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[525] Holland, *Sicily '43*, 225.

[526] Transcript of conversation between division G-3 and 16th RCT, 1450, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[527] Ibid.

[528] Message, division G-3 to 16th RCT, 1400, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[529] Message, division G-3 to 16th RCT, 1520, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

Fortunately, thanks to the 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence and terrain analysis that informed Allen's scheme of maneuver, the 16th RCT was able to instantly anchor its defense into the rocky, undulating slopes of the ridgeline paralleling the Acate River. As predicted, the ground was entirely unsuited to armored operations, a challenge that was only compounded by the fact that the German battlegroup's poorly trained engineers-turned-infantrymen could not keep up with or effectively support the faster-moving Mark III and IV tanks.[530] Years later, Porter provided a detailed description of the decisive effects of terrain on the right flank:

> [The 16th RCT's] units moved through the wadis and the tanks had no way of depressing their guns enough to get at them. The eroded wadis were so deep that tankers without infantry, that first day, would have had to get out of their tanks and fight on foot. This a tanker won't do if he can help it. So, that was one reason why the German tank attack was a failure. The infantry just got in tank-proof terrain.[531]

In this action, the dual factors of disruptive terrain and inadequate coordination, to which Taylor's troops and the 180th RCT on their right added bazookas and effective naval gunfire, proved to be the death knell of Conrath's 10 July counterattack.[532] By 1845, after defeating two successive German assaults, the 16th RCT informed the division G-3 that the enemy to their front was withdrawing, ending the most serious threat to the division's beachhead on D-Day.[533]

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[530] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 149, 154.

[531] Porter interview, 292-293.

[532] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 154; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 283.

[533] Message, 16th RCT to division G-3, 1845, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

Following its recovery from the enemy counterattack, the 16th Infantry cleared the remaining Italian strongpoints around Piano Lupo, finally securing its initial objective.[534] Meanwhile, prisoner of war interrogations had already revealed to the G-2 that the *Hermann Goering* Division was responsible for the afternoon assault against Taylor's regiment.[535] On the division's left flank, however, the 26th RCT's reconnaissance patrols encountered only "slight opposition" along Highway 117 and succeeded in guiding the regiment's 2nd and 3rd battalions onto their own day-one objectives.[536] During the same time period, and despite additional Axis air attacks on Allied shipping, three of four divisional artillery battalions—the 5th, 7th, and 33rd FA—came ashore and established firing positions.[537] Thus, shortly after sunset, Allen was in possession of all his pre-identified key terrain and, with the support of his own artillery, could turn his attention to seizing the division's most important D+1 objective—the Ponte Olivo airfield.

In assessing the impact of tactical intelligence on decision-making and the 1st Infantry Division's overall success on D-Day, it is impossible to ignore the fact that little to no specific, early warning current intelligence was generated prior to either of the enemy's two separate counterattacks. Even though the division G-2 received generalized reports on enemy composition, disposition, and even intentions from various sources

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[534] Message, 16th RCT S-2 to division G-2, 2120, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[535] Radio message, division G-2 to II Corps G-2, 1715, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[536] Message, 26th RCT to division G-3, 1208, 10 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[537] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 160; Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 104.

such as II Corps, prisoner interrogations, and civilian tip-offs, none of that information was useful or actionable enough to predict precisely when and where Axis rapid reaction forces would strike. However, when Italian and German mobile reserves did launch their counterattacks, the division's infantry units were nonetheless able to leverage highly favorable defensive terrain and a responsive, decentralized naval fire support plan to stand their ground and turn back the enemy's assaults. In this way, the division G-2's estimative intelligence dating back to early June was probably more impactful to the unit's success on 10 July, given that it was the basis upon which Allen decided on his scheme of maneuver which placed his RCTs in the best possible defensive terrain, where they would remain no matter the timing of any anticipated enemy attacks.

This is not to say that the G-2's current intelligence effort on D-Day was worthless or wasted. Rather, it was not yet fully operational. Between the many hours lost during ship-to-shore movement and setup of the advance CP, as well as frequent disruptions caused by enemy indirect fire, Porter's intelligence section faced myriad obstacles to its own internal operations.[538] Moreover, though interrogators and translators were active in the division's rear, very few of the division's information collection capabilities were actually deployed on 10 July. Early on, because the infantry regiments were justifiably more concerned with launching bold, aggressive assaults to reduce enemy strongpoints and secure their initial objectives, few if any dedicated observation posts, especially critical for early warning, were established before nightfall. With their

[538] Modern U.S. military doctrine acknowledges the difficulties associated with maintaining situational awareness while transitioning command and control responsibilities from ship to shore during an amphibious assault. See: JCS, JP 3-02, IX-1.

L-4 Piper Cubs still packed aboard ships and all requests for tactical air reconnaissance denied, neither could the G-2 rely on any form of organic or direct support aerial observation (SOCs flew at the direction and discretion of the Western Naval Task Force). However, with the tactical pause afforded by the 16th RCT's successful defeat of the *HG* Division counterattack in the early evening, each of the division's assault units finally gained the opportunity to regroup, establish local security, conduct information-gathering patrols, and emplace static OPs.

Nor was the division's estimative intelligence without its flaws. As accurate and important as its terrain analysis was, the G-2's pre-invasion assessment of enemy courses of action clearly underestimated the speed with which Axis forces would commit their mobile reserves—an eventuality the intelligence staff did not expect until around D+2 or D+3.[539] Porter himself later stated: "I, frankly, was very surprised to find that the tanks appeared in the middle of the afternoon on the first day. They almost overran our position."[540] He was not alone. While Bradley and Koch tended to underplay the significance of the enemy's D-Day counterattacks in their memoirs, Eisenhower's personal observer from AFHQ, Major General John Lucas, provided a contemporaneous report noting: "while [the *HG* Division counterattack] came from the direction from which I had personally anticipated it would come, it was a day earlier than I had expected."[541] Here, Lucas's statement touches on the previous chapter's discussion

[539] 1st Infantry Division G-2, "G-2 Estimate #1," 1.

[540] Porter interview, 288.

[541] Lucas, memorandum for: The Commander-in-Chief (21 July 1943), 2.

surrounding the divergence of opinion on weighting potential enemy courses of action according to either capabilities or intentions.

The wealth of surviving operational records and documents, many of which were referenced in the previous chapter, make it clear that intelligence staffs at every Allied echelon understood the capability of Axis forces to launch immediate counterattacks on D-Day against the Gela beachhead. Ultra and two months' worth of photo reconnaissance missions provided reliable supporting data on the location and approximate strength of the enemy's mobile reserves, including the *Hermann Goering* Division. Armed with the same information as to what the enemy could do, each G-2 was then left to subjectively assess what he thought the enemy would do.

However, even though Porter's assessment of enemy intentions missed the mark by one or two days, the impact of the discrepancy appears minimal. This is because it is difficult to discern what, if any, changes Allen would have or could have made to his battle plans in response. It was beyond the 1st Infantry Division commander's control to affect the terrain, his internal resources, or the external planning constraints and landing timetables imposed by 7th Army and the Western Naval Task Force. Therefore, on D-Day, the division G-2's imperfect estimative intelligence was good enough to allow Allen and his infantry regiments to successfully fight on favorable ground with the resources they had, even against strong enemy assaults launched sooner than expected. That the various Italian and German commanders failed to coordinate or synchronize their poorly executed attacks was certainly a welcome and helpful development for the 1st Infantry Division as well. Nevertheless, the enemy threat was far from neutralized.

D+1: 11 July

Within most standard works on the Sicily Campaign, the 1st Infantry Division's defensive stand on 11 July features prominently. As the following analysis reveals, the Division's deep penetration into Allen's positions and the exemplary demonstration of American firepower and determination that likewise defeated the attackers was not short on drama. Nothing less than the integrity of the 7th Army's lodgment was at stake. Throughout these noteworthy events, the division's current intelligence effort raced to identify threats and keep pace with rapid changes on the battlefield.

While tactical intelligence contributed to the division's defense along with a host of other factors, it was most impactful after the main German counterattack was defeated. It was then that prisoner of war interrogations presented Porter and Allen with critical current intelligence concerning Conrath's plans to continue attacking the 1st Infantry Division after nightfall. Based on this important piece of tactical intelligence, Allen decided to preempt the next German assault with his own nighttime offensive action, the success of which secured the Gela beachhead once and for all. Seen in this light, if the division G-2 was unable to implement fully functional current intelligence operations on D-Day, its successes on D+1 represent well the ways in which tactical intelligence can enable decision-making during high intensity ground combat operations.

By the late evening hours of 10 July, Porter's G-2 section was firmly established within the advance CP and already posturing itself for a more effective current

intelligence effort in anticipation of renewed enemy assaults on the 11th.[542] After passing old information to its forward units from tactical air reconnaissance earlier in the day that reflected a buildup in enemy combat power heading south, Porter again asked for air support.[543] At 2240, the division G-2 submitted a request for tactical air reconnaissance through II Corps which was aimed at identifying the approach of additional enemy counterattack forces moving south from known assembly areas in Riesi, Caltanissetta, and Caltagirone.[544] Even though subsequent records indicate that this request was never fulfilled and speak to larger problems with the USAAF's responsiveness, the logic behind the request demonstrates Porter's emphasis on providing early identification of the enemy's next major assault. In this way, Allen's G-2 was both anticipatory and proactive.

Similarly, after nightfall on D-Day, infantry commanders from the division's forward battalions showed enhanced concern for security and early warning as they established observation posts which soon began relaying information up the chain of command to the division G-2. On the left flank, the 26th RCT reported enemy infantry advancing southwest of the Ponte Olivo airfield while 16th RCT observers on the right

[542] Just after midnight, Porter's G-2 section published its first periodic report. This was only a short summary of the day's action without any additional predictive analysis. See: G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Periodic Report," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division: 11 July 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1.

[543] Radio message, division G-2 to Ranger task force, 16th RCT, 26th RCT, 2225, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[544] Radio message, division G-2 to II Corps G-2, 2240, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

noted continued enemy tank activity to their front along the road to Niscemi.[545] Never one to waste the opportunity to gain additional ground at night, Allen ordered both his lead RCTs to advance, triggering chaotic, small-unit engagements in the dark.[546] The limited objective attack brought the 26th Infantry forward to the base of Monte della Guardia (still nearly four kilometers short of its airfield objective) and the 16th Infantry to Casa del Priolo and Abbio Priolo, disappointingly only around two kilometers northeast of Piano Lupo.[547] Settled into their new positions, infantrymen in both regiments once again established simple defensive positions and observation posts before dawn.

Along with the division's artillery battalions, during the evening of 10 July and early morning of 11 July, many of the infantry's 37-mm and 57-mm anti-tank guns were off-loaded from landing craft and rushed forward to join their embattled regiments on the division's right and left flanks.[548] More than anything, however, Allen desperately urged on the arrival of Gaffey's Kool Force tanks.[549] Contrary to the division commander's hopes for rapid armor support, however, the 18th RCT and an additional company from the 41st Armored Infantry Battalion were the first units to land from the floating reserve

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[545] Message, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 1920, 10 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[546] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 165.

[547] Message, 16th RCT to division G-3, 0400, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 165.

[548] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 159-161, 167.

[549] Holland, *Sicily '43*, 246.

at 2130 on 10 July.[550] Addressing the glaring gap in the center of the division's frontage, Allen ordered these infantry reinforcements to defend the base of the Gela Plain in front of the Blue and Yellow beaches, to the left-rear of the 16th RCT which occupied the Piano Lupo high ground.[551]

At 0200, the first ten M4 "Sherman" medium tanks from Company I of the 3rd Battalion, 67th Armored Regiment finally did land at the Red 2 beach.[552] However, loose sand prevented the tanks from gaining traction and moving off the landing zone for a further nine hours—a surprising and disheartening development.[553] According to an official report from the 2nd Armored Division, these soil conditions as well as continued "high surf and congestion," drove Gaffey's decision not to disembark any additional armor until after dawn.[554] This important source of friction dealt a serious blow to the 1st Infantry Division's and 7th Army's pre-invasion battle plans, both of which assumed friendly armor would be ashore in force early on D+1.[555] Therefore, when major combat began again just after first light, Allen and his subordinate commanders resumed the fight while still shorthanded on the morning of 11 July.

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[550] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 159-160.

[551] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 104.

[552] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 5.

[553] Ibid.

[554] Ibid.

[555] Ibid., 4.

Demonstrating a marked improvement in current intelligence reporting, at 0600 on 11 July the division's radio networks suddenly buzzed alive with messages from artillery forward observers embedded with the 16th RCT.[556] After describing the 20 enemy vehicles moving southeast near the Ponte Olivo airfield, the observers from the 5th FA added commentary and urgency to their report by stating: "Apparently counterattack."[557] Within seconds, the G-3 broadcast his own warning to the division's subordinate units on the beaches: "Alert troops in case of break-through. Have all anti-tank guns and grenades ready."[558] Infantrymen in foxholes and wadis, now supported by AT guns, were thus warned of the imminent enemy assault.

Acting in concert with the Italian *Livorno* Division for this second, slightly more synchronized counterattack, Conrath again split his *Hermann Goering* Division, this time into three battalion-sized battlegroups.[559] Having brought south additional units overnight, the German commander formed two battlegroups from an armored regiment, which he employed against the 1st Infantry Division, while his third force, an infantry-

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[556] 1st Infantry Division Artillery S-2, "S-2 Report, From: 0001, 11 July 43 To: 2400, 11 July 43," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division Artillery: 11 July 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1.

[557] Message, forward observer, 5th FA to DIVARTY CP, 0600, in 1st Infantry Division Artillery S-2, "S-2 Report, From: 0001, 11 July 43 To: 2400, 11 July 43," 1.

[558] Message, division G-3 to 531st Engineer Shore Regiment, 0600, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[559] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 164.

based formation, attacked the 45th Infantry Division east of the Acate River.[560] With the goal of penetrating all the way to the Gela shoreline and then exploiting success to the east, the German attack began shortly after 0600, as observed by Allen's forward OPs, when the westernmost battlegroup uncoiled from its assembly area and began movement parallel to the eastern slope of the ridge which bordered the Gela Plain.[561] To the northwest, two columns of Italian troops from the *Livorno* Division also began a supporting if somewhat de-synchronized attack aimed at ejecting Darby's Rangers from Gela.[562]

In less than an hour, and concurrent with yet another strong Axis air attack against ships and beach operations in the Gulf of Gela, the *HG* Division's western battlegroup easily breached the 26th RCT's front line along Highway 117 between its 2nd and 3rd battalions.[563] This prompted the Assistant Division Commander, Roosevelt, himself co-located on the left flank at the 26th Infantry's command post, to report the imminent threat to the 1st Infantry Division's advance CP.[564] Similar messages also travelled over DIVARTY radios, making their way into the division's headquarters by 0720.[565] For the

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[560] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 164.

[561] Ibid., 164-166.

[562] Ibid., 164.

[563] Message, 531st Engineer Shore Regiment to division G-2, 0807, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log; Message, Commander, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, transmitted 0945, recorded 1000, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[564] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 105.

[565] 1st Infantry Division Artillery S-2, "S-2 Report, From: 0001, 11 July 43 To: 2400, 11 July 43," 1.

next hour, the tanks of Conrath's western battlegroup struggled more with the terrain along the eastern slope of the Highway 117 ridgeline than they did with seemingly impotent resistance from Allen's outgunned infantrymen.[566] Making slow but steady progress, the *Hermann Goering* armor gradually moved eastward away from the high ground and towards the center of the Gela Plain.[567]

Based on current intelligence reporting from artillery observers, the 26th RCT, and the assistant division commander regarding the enemy situation on the left flank, Allen quickly sensed an opportunity to apply his "find 'em, fix 'em, fight 'em" tactical methodology to defeat the enemy attack. At 0900, the G-3 relayed instructions from the division commander to the 18th RCT to be prepared to use one of its battalions "to act as a buffer to surprise the Germans," thereby fixing the enemy and enabling the 16th RCT to launch a similarly surprising and decisive flank attack from the northeast.[568] In this instance, since the 26th Infantry had found the enemy, Allen envisioned the 18th Infantry as a fixing force in the center while Taylor's 16th Infantry finished the fight against the German battlegroup's exposed eastern flank. Just 15 minutes later, the G-3 issued a final warning to the 18th RCT: "[Tank attack] coming your way, alert your men. Give them all you got."[569] While Allen's hasty plan was a tactically sound maneuver based on the

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[566] Message, Commander, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 0942, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log; Holland, *Sicily '43*, 252.

[567] Message, Commander, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 0942, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log

[568] Message, division G-3 to 18th RCT, 0900, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[569] Message, division G-3 to 18th RCT, 0915, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log

available information, he was missing a key piece of data which, when shortly revealed, prevented its implementation.

As seen in the division G-2's journal from 11 July, current intelligence supplied by infantrymen and forward observers on the left flank painted a clear picture of the threat on the western edge of the Gela Plain. During the two hours it took for this engagement to develop, neither the G-2 nor the G-3 message logs reflect any communication regarding the enemy situation on the right flank from the 16th RCT. Thus, with an apparently unengaged infantry regiment in perfect position, Allen developed his plan for a hasty counterattack. However, intervening hill crests masked the deployment of the *HG* Division's second armored battlegroup from the 16th RCT's observation posts, limited as they were to a ground, line-of-sight perspective. Without any available means of aerial observation, Allen and his G-2 were therefore blind to this critical threat.[570]

[570] The 1st Infantry Division's G-2 Log from 11 July indicates at least one Navy SOC was active around 0800, but that the division did not receive a report until 1300 when information was relayed through the 26th RCT. See: Message, Commander, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 1300, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

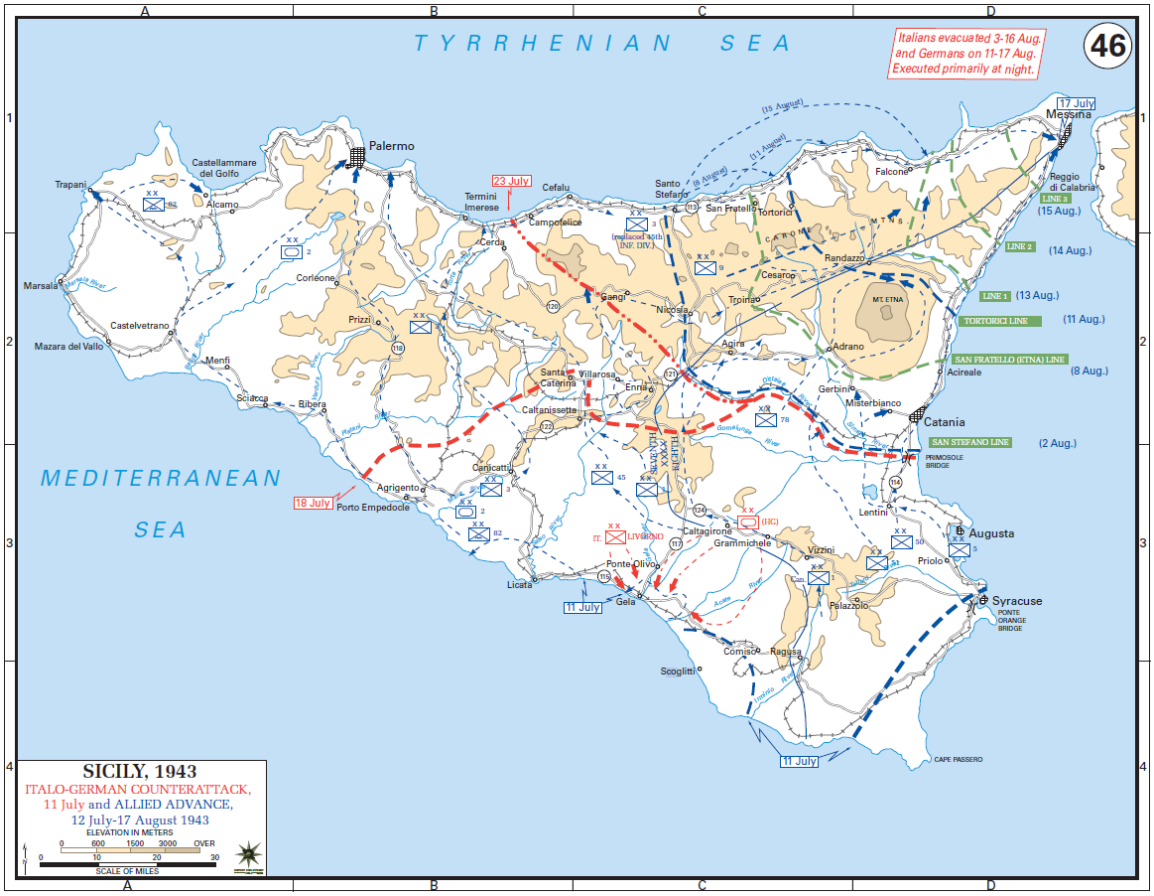

Figure 5. Campaign in Sicily, 11 July, 1943

Source: Department of History, United States Military Academy, "Campaign in Sicily, 11 July, 1943," https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic_departments/history/WWII%20Europe/WWIIEurope46.pdf.

Probably because it remained purely hypothetical and was quickly overtaken by events, Allen's attempt at using updated information on the enemy's deployment to facilitate his own rapid decision-making does not appear in any of the published works on the Sicily Campaign. Still, it serves as an excellent vignette on the utilization of current intelligence in combat. Here, with just 15 minutes of early warning concerning the threat on the division's left, Allen adjusted his defensive plans and sought to exploit what he saw as an opportunity for maneuver. The fact that the division commander lacked a

complete understanding of the enemy's dispositions, due in no small part to the lack of air reconnaissance support, likewise highlights the reality that tactical leaders are unable to wholly eliminate the impact of fog on the battlefield.

Instantly negating Allen's nascent plans, at almost the exact moment the 18th Infantry prepared to defend itself against the *HG* Division's westernmost battlegroup, Conrath's center task force finally crashed into the 16th RCT's 1st and 2nd battalions at Abbio Priolo on the 1st Infantry Division's right flank. As they did on 10 July, German tank crews again struggled to negotiate the disruptive terrain along the Acate River's western ridgeline but still succeeded in forcing the 16th Infantry and its supporting paratroopers back to Piano Lupo before turning west onto the Gela Plain, mirroring the maneuvers of their sister battlegroup on the other side of the small valley.[571] Further to the east, Conrath's infantry force, supported by additional Mark VI tanks, pressed hard against the 45th Infantry Division's 180th RCT on the eastern side of the river near the Ponte Dirillo, which remained a critical vulnerability on Allen's right flank.[572]

Meanwhile, to the west and northwest of Gela, by 0900, the Rangers and the 26th Infantry's 1st battalion were actively engaged with three columns of tanks and infantry from the *Livorno* Division, though these turned out to be a relatively minor threat and were easily repulsed.[573] An hour and a half later, II Corps passed a message to Porter's G-2 section assessing that the *Livorno* Division was beaten and withdrawing to establish

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[571] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 171.

[572] Ibid., 149.

[573] Ibid., 166.

defensive positions.[574] As it happened, Patton was finally ashore and observed the action in Gela personally before departing to seek out Allen during the most intense combat of the day.[575]

At the division's advance CP, Gibb and Porter received a string of urgent current intelligence from nearly all subordinate units beginning around 0930 indicating that there were upwards of 40 enemy tanks on the Gela Plain.[576] Even the 531st Engineer Shore Regiment, responsible for operations on the division's landing beaches, was close enough to for its OP to report what it called a "major break-through" of enemy armor headed directly toward the Blue and Yellow beaches.[577] In response to the desperate situation in the division's center, Clift Andrus, the DIVARTY commander, instantly ordered all his field artillery battalions to engage the German armor via line-of-sight direct fire.[578] A few minutes later, Porter himself sent an urgent situation update to II Corps along with a corresponding request for air support, which was never fulfilled.[579] At this point, despite his division's extreme peril, Allen had few, if any, decisions to make. With no ability to

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[574] Radio message, Commander, II Corps to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 1035, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[575] Patton, diary entry, 10 July 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 277-279.

[576] Message, division G-2 to II Corps G-2, 0940, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[577] Message, 531st Engineer Shore Regiment to division G-3, 1036, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[578] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 12.

[579] Radio message, Commander, 1st Infantry Division (through division G-2) to Commander, II Corps, 1145, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

maneuver and no reserves beyond the individual pieces of equipment and their crews, which were slowly disembarking, there was little left to do except fight as hard as possible to retain every inch of the beachhead.

Simultaneously, on the beaches, a herculean effort was unfolding as small unit leaders rushed howitzers and anti-tank systems directly into positions along the east-west Coastal Highway which now served as a final line of defense against the German counterattack.[580] Around 1100, at the apex of the battle on the Gela Plain, four of the previously immobilized tanks from Kool Force's 67th Armor finally moved off the Red 2 beach and into the fight, adding their fire to the collection of guns pounding away against the enemy's Mark III and IV tanks at close range.[581] In the end, this makeshift defense proved just effective enough to turn back the *HG* Division's lead elements by 1200, leaving what an initial report counted as 13 destroyed enemy tanks strewn across the Gela Plain.[582] Encouraging the German withdrawal, naval gunfire chased Conrath's remaining armor back toward the northern edge of the valley.[583]

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[580] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 170-171.

[581] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 5.

[582] Message, 2nd Armored Division to 1st Infantry Division G-2, 1430, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log; Note: It is unclear exactly how many total German tanks were destroyed on 11 July. The official U.S. Army history puts the figure between 26 and 45 for all of II Corps out of a total enemy strength of 90 tanks. Blumenson claims that anywhere from 40 to 60 were destroyed in the 1st Infantry Division area of operations alone. See: Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 171-172; Blumenson, *Sicily: Whose Victory?*, 66.

[583] Blumenson, *Sicily: Whose Victory?*, 66; Holland, *Sicily '43*, 256.

In another similarity to the previous days' fighting, while the German tanks initially succeeded in penetrating or bypassing the 26th and 16th RCT defensive positions, Allen's infantrymen remained in their foxholes and easily defeated the dismounted German troops lagging behind their fast-moving armor.[584] Overall, on the morning of 11 July, the 1st Infantry Division's victory against Conrath's tanks had just as much to do with the fighting skill and bravery demonstrated by Allen's infantrymen, in addition to supporting fire from the field artillery, the 67th Armor, and the Western Naval Task Force, than it did with Allen's tactics or the G-2's intelligence effort. Far from uncommon, the course of events within the Gela beachhead on D+1 reflected the chaos, uncertainty, and friction inherent in ground combat.

Before the battle, and despite Allen's fervent pleas for tanks, friendly armor remained stuck on the beaches or left afloat overnight. At first light, current intelligence identified the enemy's western battlegroup, but not the additional one south of Niscemi. As the enemy deployed, Allen tried to maneuver, but found his units were fixed. By the time the two *Hermann Goering* tank forces massed on the Gela Plain, all that was left was for the attackers to drive forward while the American defenders threw up a wall of protective fire. Crew drill efficiency and willpower were, at that moment, the determining factors. At no time was this reality better expressed than at 1036 when the G-3 replied over the radio to concerns over the enemy's advance towards the waterline: "All you have to do is give us all you got from the beaches."[585] Though the G-2 continued to log

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[584] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 131.

[585] G3 radio message to 531 Engineer Shore Regiment, 1036, 11 July, G-3 Log, p. 1

reports and provide current intelligence support during the climax of the morning's fight, there were no immediate decisions left to influence. This would quickly change as the division regrouped in the early afternoon.

Two hours after the enemy's withdrawal, and as small local actions continued across the 1st Infantry Division's frontage, interrogation teams were hard at work screening and questioning numerous newly captured German and Italian prisoners. The 16th RCT S-2 relayed several accurate reports indicating that there was an entire *HG* Division armored battalion to their north, near Niscemi, and that interrogators were attempting to exploit captured German map overlays and operations orders.[586] Similarly, the 26th RCT and the division's artillery battalions also noted that up to 35 remaining enemy tanks were regrouping on the northern end of the Gela Plain.[587] The current intelligence that came into the division's advance CP between 1300 and 1430 thus served to create uncertainty as to whether or not the Germans would soon renew its attack against Allen's beleaguered infantrymen. Of course, there was no way for the 1st Infantry Division to know that, as of 1400, Conrath had finally issued orders to suspend offensive operations.[588] Wasting no time, however, Allen, Roosevelt, and Gibb worked to shuttle

[586] Message, 16th RCT to division G-2, 1300, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log; Message, 16th RCT S-2 to division G-2, 1350, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[587] Message, 26th RCT to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 1300, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log; Message, DIVARTY S-2 to division G-2, 1310, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[588] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 171.

individual platoons of Kool Force armor directly off the beaches and into forward battle positions rather than waiting to establish company or battalion integrity.[589]

During this time, one report in particular caught the attention of the G-2. At 1355, having moved from the left flank to the right, Roosevelt sent a radio message to Porter from the 16th RCT command post stating that interrogation of German prisoners revealed the *Hermann Goering* Division planned to launch a second counterattack after dark.[590] Thirty minutes later, Porter sent an uncoded message on behalf of Allen to Bradley describing the enemy strength in front of the division and relating the information on the enemy's planned night attack.[591] After informing his higher headquarters, Porter disseminated the same current intelligence to each of the division's subordinate units along with a directive to immediately report activity that might confirm the report.[592] Within minutes, the DIVARTY S-2 responded with a message stating that 45 tanks and infantry with armored half-tracks were still visible to the north.[593] As Allen considered this information and mulled his options, the staff officers at his advance CP were left to

[589] Message, Commander, 1st Infantry Division to 16th RCT, 1250, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, Assistant Commander, 1st Infantry Division to division G-3, 1355, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[590] Message, Assistant Commander, 1st Infantry Division to division G-2, 1355, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[591] Message, Commander, 1st Infantry Division (through division G-2) to Commander, II Corps, 1405, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[592] Message, division G-2 to Commander, Ranger task force and Commander, 26th RCT, 1530, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[593] Message, DIVARTY CP to division G-2, 1540, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

react on their own to yet another emergency identified through the current intelligence effort.

Just as the threat to the division's center receded, at 1435 the G-3 relayed a report from the 531st Engineer Shore Battalion to the 26th RCT warning of a potential enemy infiltration on the right flank near Lake Il Biviere, one kilometer northeast of the Red 2 beach.[594] Gibb acted quickly to marshal a response force. Pulling a team from the advance CP's own defense platoon as well as elements of the 1st Engineer Battalion, the G-3 dispatched this makeshift force behind the 16th RCT's right-rear flank toward the Acate River.[595] Several kilometers further north, C Company of Kool Force's recently arrived 82nd Armored Reconnaissance Battalion also searched for evidence of enemy activity along the boundary with the 45th Infantry Division.[596] Given the G-2's straightforward assessment in its terrain analysis about the vulnerability of the division's right flank at the Ponte Dirillo, it is fair to wonder if Porter reinforced the gravity of the threat to Gibb as the division staff formulated a response. By 1705, the 531st Engineer

[594] Message, division G-3 to 26th RCT, 1435, 11 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[595] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 12; S-3, 1st Engineer Battalion, "S-3 Report," Headquarters, 1st Engineer Battalion, 12 July 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1.

[596] Colonel Paul A. Disney, "Operations of the 82nd Armored Reconnaissance Battalion in Sicilian Campaign, July 10-22, 1943 (Personal Experience of Battalion Commander)," Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, School of Combined Arms Regular Course: 1946-1947, reference number N-2253.53, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 8-9.

command post reported that its 3rd Battalion was in contact with the same presumed enemy infiltration force.[597]

In the end, there is no indication that the division's landing beaches were seriously threatened by what was later confirmed to be a small and unorganized group of German infantry.[598] However, the size and composition of the enemy force remained unsettlingly vague for some time. It was therefore impossible for the division's leaders not to take the threat seriously. Like the earlier discussion surrounding the historical omission of Allen's decision-making regarding a possible maneuver by the 18th Infantry, only two published works, Knickerbocker et al.'s *Danger Forward* and Atkinson's *The Day of Battle*, briefly mention this development.[599] Given the benefit of hindsight regarding what turned out to be a minor event, this is perhaps unsurprising.

Because the division, and in particular the G-3 staff officers who dispatched the reaction force, did not enjoy such an advantage, they relied on the G-2's current intelligence to guide their response. Since the reports of the enemy's infiltration concerned the area immediately adjacent to the division's Red 2 and Green 2 beaches, the threat posed by an enemy force operating in the vicinity was not insignificant. If that element was in fact larger or better-equipped, it could have massively disrupted the landing of Gaffey's armor and inflicted punishing casualties on the support units

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[597] Message, 531st Engineer Shore Regiment to division G-2, 1705, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[598] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 12.

[599] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 106-107; Atkinson, *The Day of Battle*, 102.

supervising beach operations. Amid the uncertainty of combat, this risk, identified through timely and accurate reporting, was not one that the division could afford to underplay.

Demonstrating Gaffey's own emphasis on neutralizing any further threat to the 1st Infantry Division's right flank, Kool Force also subsequently deployed several tanks from Company G, 67th Armor to defend the western side of the Ponte Dirillo.[600] On the eastern bank of the river, the 180th RCT continued to struggle against remaining German infantry and Mark VI tanks.[601] Eventually, in alignment with the II Corps directive to secure the seam between the 1st and 45 infantry divisions, Bradley assigned Gaffey an explicit mission to close the gap and protect the 1st Infantry Division's right flank.[602] This caused Kool Force to shift the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry east to the bank of the Acate River by late evening.[603]

While Gibb straightened out the situation on the right, Patton arrived at the division's advance CP and awaited Allen's return.[604] Instead of offering praise for the 1st Infantry Division's dramatic defense, as Bradley did later in the day, Patton was unhappy that Allen had not yet secured the Ponte Olivo airfield.[605] He demanded immediate

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[600] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 171.

[601] Ibid.

[602] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 306.

[603] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 108.

[604] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 297.

[605] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 174; Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 130.

offensive action to get the 1st Infantry Division back on schedule.[606] Even though Blumenson cited Patton's admonition as the impetus for Allen's subsequent decision to launch an attack during the night of 11-12 July, there is no evidence to suggest that the 7th Army commander was engaged in anything other than what Carlo D'Este termed as "his long-standing habit of baiting his old friend," while reinforcing his proclivity for maintaining relentless pressure on the enemy.[607] Allen, however, knew the danger his division still faced.

Accordingly, it is far more likely that Allen based his forthcoming decision upon the disconcerting current intelligence he received several hours earlier regarding the planned evening counterattack by the *Hermann Goering* Division. Disseminating his decision to the 26th and 16th RCT commanders after Patton's departure, Allen reinforced his intent to: "Sock the hell out of those damned Heinies, before they can get set to hit us again."[608] Through his bravado, Allen painted the hastily planned assault as a spoiling attack to seize the initiative from the *HG* Division, rather than the type of general advance envisioned by Patton.[609] To be sure, Allen certainly hoped to also make progress towards seizing the Ponte Olivo airfield. In fact, as Rogers reveals, Allen met personally with the 26th Infantry's commander before the attack and asked him what help he needed

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[606] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 174.

[607] D'Este, *Patton*, 507.

[608] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 12.

[609] Holland also appears to agree that Allen's motivation for his night attack was probably more defensive than offensive. See: Holland, *Sicily '43*, 279.

to seize the objective.[610] Soon after that conversation, Allen sent Bowen the 18th Infantry's 2nd Battalion to support the 26th RCT's advance.[611] Still, Ponte Olivo likely remained a secondary concern to the division commander's central goal of decisively eliminating the enemy threat to the Gela beachhead.

Adding urgency to Allen's decision-making, confirmatory current intelligence began pouring into Porter's G-2 section. First, at 1805, the16th RCT S-2 provided information regarding enemy tanks and infantry maneuvering in close proximity to Taylor's forward infantry battalions.[612] This was followed an hour later by a report of 33 enemy trucks disgorging additional infantry north of Piano Lupo on the road to Niscemi.[613] These notifications of German reinforcements and tank activity, at least on the right flank, directly correlated with the afternoon's interrogation report indicating an impending renewal of the *HG* Division's counterattack after dark. It is therefore likely that the division's available current intelligence only served to strengthen Allen's decision to conduct his spoiling attack.

Between 2000 and 2300, as the 26th and 16th RCTs made their final preparations to attack, prisoner of war interrogation teams issued more short, preliminary reports up to the division G-2 relating to critical, time-sensitive information. Ominously, one German

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[610] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 44.

[611] Rogers, "A Study of the Leadership in the First Infantry Division," 44; Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 13.

[612] Message, 16th RCT S-2 to division G-2, 1805, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[613] Message, 16th RCT and DIVARTY S-2 to division G-2, G-3, and LNO, received 1935, recorded 1940, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

prisoner held in the division's detention center generally "stated that further [Allied] advance would be difficult owing to terrain and major [Axis] forces held as reserve."[614] More specifically useful to the current intelligence effort, Italian prisoners captured in the Ranger sector yielded a comprehensive map of minefields in the local area as well as detailed order of battle information on enemy forces to the northwest.[615]

Most fortuitously of all for the division, however, at 2030 the G-2 received notice of each of the *Hermann Goering* Division's challenge-password combinations through 15 July.[616] Probably obtained through interrogation or document exploitation, this information was especially useful ahead of a surprise night attack where Allen's infantrymen would seek to remain undetected for as long as possible. While there is no specific information on when or how the G-2 disseminated this data, it was recorded in the daily G-2 log over three hours before the 1st Infantry Division's assault on 11 July. It is consequently hard to believe that such advantageous information did not make it down the chain of command before the lead infantry battalions crossed their lines of departure.

Finally, an hour after a tragic friendly fire incident during the 82nd Airborne's attempt to drop in additional reinforcements, Allen ordered his attack forward as D+1

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[614] G-2 entry by Captain Smith, 2300, 11 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[615] Lieutenant Colonel Darby, memorandum to Commander, 1st Infantry Division (delivered by Col. Chaffee), 11 July 1943, in *1st Infantry Division G-2 Journal, 10-23 July 1943*, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1.

[616] G-2 entry, recorded 2030 (11 July), logged 0710 (12 July), 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

turned into D+2.[617] His "Situation and Operations Report" later offered a summary of the sweeping results:

> The 1st Division picked itself up by its boot-straps, and launched an aggressive coordinated attack at midnight, with concentrated artillery and naval gun fire support. The surprise effect was instantaneous. By 3:00 A.M., July 12th, the 1st Division attack was rolling along in high gear, with a resultant up-surge of combat morale throughout the Division… Intelligence reports, from German prisoners, indicated that the Germans had been caught by surprise, while preparing to make their own renewed coordinated attack at dawn; and that they had suffered heavy losses and considerable disorganization. Before the enemy could 'get set,' the 'Fighting First' had beaten them to the punch.[618]

By sunrise, the 26th RCT controlled the dominating heights overlooking the Ponte Olivo airfield, with a Ranger task force protecting Bowen's western flank.[619] On the right, the 16th RCT occupied its previous positions at Casa del Priolo, a substantially smaller gain but one which was accomplished against stronger opposition including recently redeployed German Mark VI tanks.[620] Though Allen's attack ended up just short of Patton's prized airfield (the installation would fall into the 26th Infantry's hands by 1200), it achieved its primary purpose.[621] Set back firmly on the defensive, German and

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[617] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 13; Note: In the immediate wake of an enemy air attack in the Gulf of Gela, Allied sea and land-based anti-aircraft crews shot down multiple friendly transport aircraft and inflicted 229 total casualties on the 504th PIR as it attempted to conduct an airborne drop to reinforce the 7th Army beachhead. See: Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 175-184.

[618] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 13.

[619] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 187, 185.

[620] Ibid., 187.

[621] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 13.

Italian units could no longer influence the continued buildup of 7th Army combat power within the Gela beachhead.

In reviewing Allen's decision to launch the attack, other factors beyond current intelligence certainly played a role in his thought process. These included Patton's exhortations for Allen to finally seize his objectives and the division commander's own general preference for night attacks. However, by this point in the operation, the division's infantrymen, especially those within the 16th RCT, had endured almost 48 hours of sustained combat and were nearing the point of exhaustion.[622] Given his well-documented regard for the welfare of his soldiers as well as his observations on the effects of fatigue from the end of the Tunisian campaign, it is fair to wonder if Allen would have pushed his forward units into another attack without the overriding requirement to forestall Conrath's next assault.[623] Seen in this way, the division's current intelligence on the planned German night assault, as identified through the interrogation of prisoners during the afternoon of D+1, was likely a critical, and potentially decisive, input to Allen's impactful decision.

Overall, 11 July was a day of extreme ebb and flow for the 1st Infantry Division. It began with a crushing German counterattack that drove to within direct fire range of the Gela shoreline, and it ended with sorely tired American infantrymen surging forward into the darkness from their foxholes to deny the *Hermann Goering* Division any further chance of rupturing the Gela beachhead. In between, the division G-2 led a successful

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[622] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 188.

[623] 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 20.

effort to gather and disseminate critical, time-sensitive information and provide current intelligence that identified both emergent threats and opportunities for the unit's combat leaders. Even so, there was much for the division and the G-2 section left to accomplish as they contemplated their next steps toward reaching 7th Army's Blue line, and what the enemy would do to delay and disrupt their progress.

Conclusion

Thus ended two exhausting days of piecemeal but withering Axis counterattacks that unfolded in a manner similar to the way Porter envisioned in his estimative intelligence generated the previous month. In particular, the G-2's terrain analysis ensured that Allen's infantrymen were in the best possible defensive positions by the time enemy counterattack forces arrived on D-Day. However, once the division was in contact with the *Hermann Goering* Division and operating under the strain of myriad sources of battlefield friction, it was then Porter's responsibility to manage the collection and analysis of updated information to drive new decisions in the face of uncertainty.

Ultimately, Allen used this information effectively to identify when and where he could finally wrest the initiative from the enemy and set conditions for a further breakout from the Sicilian coast. His subsequent decision to launch a night spoiling attack on the evening of 11 July was therefore essential to solidifying the division's beachhead and the 7th Army's position on the island. Considering that current intelligence concerning another planned German counterattack was likely the deciding factor supporting Allen's decision to attack, there is no doubt that the division's tactical intelligence effort directly impacted combat decision-making during the first two days of fighting in Sicily.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSITION TO OFFENSE: 12-14 JULY 1943

Introduction

Following the success of the 26th RCT's night attack on the evening of 11-12 July and, to a lesser degree, the more limited advance made by the 16th RCT, the 1st Infantry Division was finally postured to capitalize on its forward momentum and begin a full transition to offensive operations. Indeed, most secondary sources treat the division's breakout from its beachhead as a foregone conclusion and paint it as an uninterrupted continuation of Allen's spoiling attack at the end of D+1.[624] Yet this was hardly the case.

On 12 July the division gained little ground and Allen was hesitant to launch large-scale attacks across his front in the afternoon and evening. As the analysis below demonstrates, this caution was at least partially attributable to the division G-2's uncertainty regarding the enemy situation. Amidst intermittent bouts of intense combat between the 16th Infantry and the *Hermann Goering* Division, Porter and his staff remained unsure whether Axis forces would continue assaulting the Gela beachhead or else begin a general withdrawal. As a result, and without the benefit of accurate information concerning the operational-level enemy situation, the division G-2 failed to issue new estimative intelligence predicting the enemy's retrograde. Also taking into account the general fatigue of his infantrymen after two days of hard fighting, Allen declined to take aggressive action.

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[624] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 185; Blumenson, *Sicily: Whose Victory?*, 67, 82; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 329-330.

In fact, by the late afternoon of 12 July, the enemy was already committed to a withdrawal.[625] Considering Allen's emphasis on the negative effects of fatigue, and the division's painful lessons from North Africa with respect to losing contact with retreating enemy forces, it is fair to ask whether the division commander would have initiated a pursuit sooner, had he known the true situation. Instead, it was the 7th Army commander who served as the catalyst to propel the 1st Infantry Division forward into the offense. Though the G-2's understanding of the situation did improve on 13 July, Porter's section cannot avoid its share of the blame for the division's halting transition into the high-tempo offensive operations that marked the conclusion of the first phase of the Sicily Campaign.

D+2: 12 July

In terms of the 7th Army's pre-established timeline and initial landing plan for Operation Husky, by mid-morning on 12 July, the 1st Infantry Division was largely back on schedule. Even so, a cloud of uncertainty hung over Allen and his unit during the afternoon and early evening. Continued engagement with the *Hermann Goering* Division and lack of clarity regarding the operational situation of both friendly and enemy forces served to produce indecisiveness within the G-2 section and in the mind of the division commander. Also weighing on Allen's thoughts was the extreme tiredness of his infantrymen, as they had fought near-continuously for two straight days. Accordingly, even as Axis forces began to withdraw in large numbers away from the Gela beachhead,

[625] Frido von Senger, *Neither Fear nor Hope: The Wartime Career of General Frido von Senger Und Etterlin*, trans. George Malcom (1963; repr., New York: Presidio Press, 1989), 139-141.

the 1st Infantry Division did not implement anything resembling a vigorous pursuit. On this day, more than any other examined by this case study, battlefield fog and friction worked to the detriment of the division's tactical operations.

After dawn on 12 July, just as the 26th RCT was preparing to close the last few hundred meters between its positions on the division's left flank and the Ponte Olive airfield, yet another local counterattack by the *Hermann Goering* Division slammed into the 16th RCT. Within an hour, by 0730, the 16th Infantry urgently reported to Allen's advance CP that its 1st Battalion was nearly encircled by enemy infantry and tanks on the road to Niscemi.[626] Over the next few minutes, several other pieces of current intelligence poured in from across the division's frontage, highlighting the challenge faced by Porter and his staff in making an accurate assessment of the entire situation.

First, the predicament of the beleaguered 16th RCT appeared dire. At least on the right flank, it was not clear that Conrath and the *HG* Division intended to give up the fight for the Gela beachhead. On the left, however, artillery observers from the 5th FA passed messages to the division headquarters stating that they were calling for fire on trucks and vehicles moving north and northeast, away from the coast—potential indicators of an enemy withdrawal.[627] Adding to the general confusion, Andrus' DIVARTY CP informed the division G-2 that Western Naval Task Force cruisers were firing at "something" north of Gela, but clearly without prior coordination.[628]

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[626] Message, 16th RCT to division G-2, 0730, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[627] Message, DIVARTY CP to division G-2, 0745, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[628] Message, DIVARTY CP to division G-2, received 0730, logged 0830, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

Complicating Porter's search for clarity, while those events unfolded, the 1st Infantry Division's attached air support party informed the G-2 that technical communications problems prevented any air reconnaissance or strike requests from being executed in less than three hours from their time of submission.[629] Therefore, still without eyes in the air, the G-2 was left to wade through friction and conflicting reporting on the morning of D+2 as it tried to determine when and if the enemy would begin a general withdrawal away from the landing beaches, or if the renewed *HG* Division attack was yet another attempt to penetrate into the depth of the 7th Army's lodgment.

Far from abnormal even today, the air support party's struggles to ensure rapid and reliable communication between air and ground forces highlights the disparity between the theory and actual application of an intelligence architecture in combat. On the typed pages of operations orders, the concept certainly made sense. Without direct control over tactical and photo reconnaissance assets, divisions and corps would still have access to a steady stream of current intelligence disseminated through XII ASC's air support parties embedded within their headquarters. In reality, competing priorities held by the air component and unreliable communications systems failed to deliver acceptable results for the 1st Infantry Division during the first days of the Sicily Campaign.

[629] Message, XII ASC Advance CP to 1st Infantry Division ASP, received 0025, logged 0830, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log; Wheeler, *The Big Red One*, 236; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 303-305.

The simple statistics were telling. Between 10 and 11 July, the 1st Infantry Division received one of ten requested air support missions.[630] Though the problem is well-documented by historians, D'Este offers especially pointed words, describing the USAAF's close air support effort as "virtually useless."[631] He also highlights that on 12 July, massive numbers of Allied aircraft were dedicated to long range air interdiction missions, yet there is little evidence of meaningful support for ground units locked in combat with the enemy.[632]

For example, XII ASC tactical reconnaissance aircraft identified "moderate heavy traffic on roads leading into [Niscemi]" during the evening of 11 July, an indicator of the enemy's capability (and likely intent) to continue its assaults against the 16th RCT on 12 July.[633] However, it took 13 hours for this report to make it to Porter's G-2 section, by which time the hard-pressed 16th Infantry was again under sustained enemy pressure. It is impossible to say what decisions Allen may or may not have made with regard to the situation on his right flank had he possessed this information, especially in light of the subsequent success of his night spoiling attack. Regardless, this incident reflects a broad and distinctive trend of deficiency in execution of the Allies' intelligence architecture which disproportionally affected ground units at the tactical level.

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[630] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 167n; Note: the statistics reflect requested close air support missions, but the same trend of non-support held with tactical air reconnaissance requests.

[631] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 305; See also: Morison, *Naval Operations*, 17.

[632] D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 305.

[633] Message, ASP to division G-2, 1045, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

As described in Chapter 4, the USAAF's information collection and targeting priorities for Operation Husky were designed first and foremost to serve the needs of the air plan, leaving support for ground and naval forces as a secondary consideration.[634] With field army headquarters already on the short end of the resource competition, it is no surprise that corps, let along divisions, were granted even fewer assets. Adding to this difficulty in the initial phase of the invasion was the insurmountable factor of distance between air bases in North Africa and the advance CPs of ground forces on the southern coast of Sicily. Until the XII ASC could establish operations on Sicily following the capture of airfields like Ponte Olivo, air support parties engaged in a constant effort to overcome the technical limitations of 1940s radio technology in order to stay keep their division G-2s connected to current intelligence from the air component.

Communications with adjacent divisions—the 3rd Infantry Division to the west and the 45th Infantry Division to the east—were hardly better for much of 12 July. Though a patrol from Truscott's 30th Infantry Regiment briefly made contact with the 1st Infantry Division on the afternoon of 11 July, the 3rd Infantry Division's widely dispersed units were already pressing forward to the north and south, away from Allen's division.[635] As a result, and without the benefit of wire communications that were not yet emplaced, the link between the two units was strained at best.[636]

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[634] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 106-107.

[635] Truscott, *Command Missions*, 228; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 200.

[636] Signal Corps Historical Section, *Signal Communication in the Sicilian Campaign*, 72; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 200.

Similarly, sharp skirmishes on the right flank near the Ponte Dirillo precluded use of the Coastal Highway that connected the 1st and 45th Infantry divisions, as well as the II Corps headquarters, for much of the day.[637] Furthermore, though small radio communications detachments from the 7th Army began operating near Gela late on 11 July, it was not until 1715 on 12 July that Patton officially established his command post ashore.[638] In sum, these unstable lines of communication likely ensured that Allen and his staff remained relatively isolated and cut off from anything other than fragmentary radio messages regarding the friendly situation throughout the majority of 12 July.[639]

Considering the compounding negative effects an underperforming intelligence architecture and intermittent ground lines of communication, the uncertainty faced by Porter and Allen early on 12 July serves as an illustration of the confusing milieu of information and decision-making typical at the tactical level. In this environment, unchanged in the modern era, the Clausewitzian effects of fog, friction, and chance are magnified to degrees not experienced at the operational and strategic levels of war. As McLachlan and Handel make clear, this provides senior headquarters, with greater standoff from the enemy, far more time to analyze and react to changing events.[640] At the

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[637] Signal Corps Historical Section, *Signal Communication in the Sicilian Campaign*, 61; 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 5.

[638] Signal Corps Historical Section, *Signal Communication in the Sicilian Campaign*, 59; Lucas, memorandum for: The Commander-in-Chief, 21 July 1943, 4.

[639] Signal Corps Historical Section, *Signal Communication in the Sicilian Campaign*, 63.

[640] McLachlan, "Intelligence: the common denominator/1," 56; Handel, "Intelligence and Military Operations," 12.

tactical level, however, as battalions, companies, and squads grapple with their enemies in chaotic, small-unit combat, unforeseen emergencies arise with frequent regularity and demand rapid reaction, often within minutes. Though combat units ultimately win or lose battles, a successful current intelligence effort can still provide an outsized impact on decision-making through anticipation and identification of these emergent threats.

This dynamic was already on display the previous day, 11 July, when the division G-2 informed decisions by Allen and the G-3 to strong-arm recently landed armored units directly from the beaches toward the Acate River boundary with the 45th Infantry Division. On 12 July, additional reinforcements from Kool Force, including the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, ensured that adequate friendly forces were similarly present in the morning to repulse yet another tank-heavy assault by the *HG* Division. On the basis of the G-2's current intelligence effort, Kool Force rushed yet more tanks to the 16th RCT sector between 0630 and 1100 on 12 July, providing the 1st Infantry Division with the means to defeat what would turn out to be Conrath's final offensive thrust.[641] After nearly six more hours of violent exchanges of fire at close range, Allen's infantrymen and their supporting armor on the right flank finally defeated the last significant German attack, though of course this fact would not be known for some time as Taylor's regiment regrouped from its latest hard-fought defensive stand.[642]

By noon, with the Ponte Olivo airfield firmly in the 26th RCT's possession and the *HG* Division's attack on the right culminated, indicators of a full Axis withdrawal

[641] Porter interview, 288.

[642] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 188.

continued to pile up in reporting to the division G-2. This was especially true on the left flank where aggressive reconnaissance patrols by the 26th and 18th Infantry, as well as Kool Force elements, revealed further enemy retrogrades and, tellingly, the first information concerning bridge demolitions and newly emplaced minefields.[643] These reports of the enemy's counter-mobility operations were significant because such measures in this context are almost always designed to delay and disrupt any potential pursuit during the adversary's transition in its operations.[644]

In line with the division's experience in North Africa, Porter understood the imperative to rapidly disseminate such information as soon as possible.[645] To that end, following many hours of translation and exploitation of captured documents by the 1st Infantry Division's CIC detachment, at 1200 on 12 July the G-2 published a comprehensive overlay of all known enemy minefields.[646] The report and its graphics included not just the Gela area but also extended deeper towards the island's interior.

In fact, German and Italian units were intensifying all manner of demolition and materiel destruction across their forward positions. As the sun began to set, the DIVARTY CP passed Porter and his staff additional messages from artillery observers who witnessed enemy units destroying their own vehicles and equipment before

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[643] Transcript of conversation between division G-3 and 2nd Armored Division, 1515, 12 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[644] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication 2-01.3, 6-19.

[645] 1st Infantry Division, "Report on Combat Experiences and Battle Lessons," 7.

[646] The Counter Intelligence Corps School, *Counter Intelligence Corps History*, 22; Division G-2 entry and overlay publication, 1200, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

proceeding north.[647] In addition, during the night of 12 July, the division's attached prisoner of war interrogation teams submitted their first long form written reports to the G-2, revealing not only order of battle and tactical information, but plummeting morale within Italian units.[648] Hoping to capitalize on the opportunity, Allen and Porter urged the II Corps commander to conduct a leaflet drop and intensify messaging operations to encourage enemy soldiers to surrender en masse.[649] In this way, the G-2's operational records demonstrate that by the end of the day on 12 July, the 1st Infantry Division's intelligence section was increasingly aware of information indicating that the enemy could be seeking to break contact.

Even so, the forward progress of the division's infantry regiments on D+2 remained slow and tentative, representative of both the effects of two days of hard fighting and residual uncertainty surrounding the enemy's intentions. On the right, the 16th Infantry, still supported by Kool Force tanks, ended 12 July behind schedule and one kilometer short of its objective of Niscemi.[650] However, given the regiment's 298

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[647] Message, DIVARTY CP to division G-2, 1825, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[648] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "Preliminary Interrogation Report of Italian Officer," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 12 July 1943, in *G-2 Journal, 1st Infantry Division, Sicilian Campaign, 10-14 July 43*, 301-2.2, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL. https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-2; Message, 1st Infantry Division G-2 to II Corps G-2, 1915, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[649] Message, 1st Infantry Division G-2 to II Corps G-2, 1915, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[650] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Periodic Report," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 13 July 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL,

confirmed casualties and 66 soldiers still missing in action from combat on 11 and 12 July, the fact that Taylor's unit gained the five kilometers that it did is impressive.[651] It is also hardly surprising that in a radio conversation with the G-3 that night, Taylor reiterated twice that "the boys are too tired to do anything." In authorizing the 16th RCT to halt short of its objective, Allen recognized the harsh reality that even against decreasing enemy resistance, there was only so much that exhausted infantrymen could accomplish before they required a period of rest and recovery.

This most likely weighed on Allen's mind as he conferred with Porter to make sense of the indicators stacking up in favor of a major Axis withdrawal. The division commander's decision to transition from the defense to broad offensive action and pursuit entailed asking his battle-worn soldiers to leave the relative safety of their foxholes and move rapidly forward while exposed to potential enemy fire. It was therefore important for the current intelligence informing such a decision to be accurate and practically incontrovertible. If his severely fatigued infantry battalions were caught out in the open against renewed local enemy counterattacks, the results could be devastating in terms of casualties and lost momentum.

Such logic may help to explain the cautious tone of the division G-2's periodic report issued in the early morning hours of 13 July. While recounting the previous day's events, unit identifications, and battle damage inflicted on the enemy, Porter declined to issue new estimative intelligence or predictive analysis stating that the enemy intended to

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https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 5; Transcript of conversation between division G-3 and 16th RCT, 2020, 12 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[651] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 189.

withdraw.[652] In doing so, his omission made it clear that the G-2's previous assessment attached to the field order for the amphibious assault, which included the possibility of continued enemy counterattacks, was still in effect.

The 7th Army G-2 reached similar conclusions. Around the same time that Porter and Dickson issued their assessments, Koch's staff predicted that Axis forces would establish a hasty defense in front of 7th Army, rather than withdraw.[653] Though Koch noted the advances made by the 3rd and 45th Divisions on the left and right respectively, like Porter, he was concerned by the *Hermann Goering* Division's continued resistance in front of Allen's infantrymen on 12 July.[654] In fact, though it was not known to the Americans, Conrath had executed his attacks on D+2 in contravention to orders from his higher headquarters.[655] Described by Mitcham and von Stauffenberg as an attempt by the German general "to conduct his own private war," Conrath's disobedience nonetheless served a purpose, albeit unwittingly.[656] Working out almost perfectly for Axis forces, friction within their own operations in this way unintentionally enhanced uncertainty in the minds of multiple American intelligence staffs.

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[652] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Periodic Report," 13 July 1943, 1-7.

[653] G-2, 7th Army. "G-2 Periodic Report," Headquarters, 7th Army: 13 July 1943, in *Report of Operations of the United States Seventh Army in the Sicilian Campaign: 10 July – 17 August 1943*, Annex 5: C-32, by U.S. 7th Army Staff, Headquarters, 7th Army: September 1943. Reference number 940.514273 U56ro, Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, C-32.

[654] G-2, 7th Army. "G-2 Periodic Report," 13 July 1943, C-32.

[655] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 205.

[656] Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily*, 130.

Thus, it is worth reconsidering the disappointing progress made on the 1st Infantry Division's right flank in light of these assessments and the inside perspective on Axis operations. Together, they help to explain why, when the *HG* Division did finally disengage during the late afternoon of 12 July, the 16th Infantry's subsequent advance north up the road to Niscemi bore none of the hallmarks of a spirited pursuit. Instead, beset by fatigue and certainly anxious not to stumble headlong into yet another German counterattack, Taylor's infantry battalions moved tepidly. Unaware that Conrath's remaining forces were already making haste towards Caltagirone, the 16th RCT dug in south of Niscemi as the gap between it and the retreating German units widened during the night. This was not yet a pursuit.

For most historians of the Sicily Campaign, the 1st Infantry Division's transition to the offense between 12 and 14 July is treated as inevitable and unremarkable. Blumenson, for one, notes only that the division secured its remaining objectives up to Patton's Blue line and then moves directly into his discussion of the next phase of the campaign.[657] Garland and Smyth's official history similarly paints a picture of uninterrupted success following Allen's night spoiling attack, though it does mention the fatigue of Taylor's 16th Infantry.[658] Even Bradley's memoir skips over the 1st Infantry Division's struggles on 12 July, jumping ahead to focus on the controversy with Montgomery's 8th Army over access to key roads and the town of Enna on 14 July.[659]

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[657] Blumenson, *Sicily: Whose Victory?*, 67, 82.

[658] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 185, 188.

[659] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 131-135.

From an operational perspective, this makes sense. The 7th and 8th Army lodgments were fully secure and there was nothing that Axis forces could do to prevent more Allied forces from landing. In the long-run, victory seemed assured.

At the tactical level, however, the events of the day mattered a great deal to Allen and it remained for him, at least at that moment, to decide when and how to advance further towards the Blue line and beyond. Here, during the course of 12 July, two central elements of the division commander's leadership philosophy clashed. On the one hand, Allen was reticent to cede the initiative to the enemy. Every piece of written evidence and the division's records from North Africa make it clear that he was an offensively-minded commander who sought always to maintain pressure on the enemy. Allen was naturally predisposed to aggressive action.[660] Still, as Liebling, Astor, Atkinson, and many others have pointed out, he was also loathe to incur any casualties other than those that were unavoidably necessary.[661] Allen was not one to gamble with the lives of his men. If, as it appears, he was caught in a dilemma between these two divergent inclinations on 12 July, his G-2 provided no ready answers to help determine if rapid, relentless pursuit or cautious consolidation of gains was more appropriate.

Interestingly, in his post-war "Situation and Operations Report," Allen characterized the 16th RCT's operations on 12 July as "aggressive" while erroneously

[660] Liebling, "Profiles–I," 22-26.

[661] Liebling, "Profiles–II," 25; Astor, *Terrible Terry Allen*, 180; Atkinson, *The Day of Battle*, 99.

claiming the regiment took Niscemi the same day.[662] Though such embellishment may be expected in what could be seen as an attempt to preserve the triumphal narrative of the division's amphibious assault, it nonetheless fails to match up with the division's own contemporaneous records. As described above, these clearly demonstrate the limited progress made by the 16th Infantry, which ended the day short of its objective.

Perhaps more tellingly, Allen's decision not to reposition his own command post speaks directly to the reality that he was not yet fully committed to the offense. His staff remained near the shoreline, far from the lead infantry regiments and hardly postured to exercise effective command and control over fast-paced offensive operations into island's central mountain range. Such inactivity stands in contrast to the hard-charging advance of the 3rd Infantry Division to the west.[663] Truscott's own description of his many encounters with subordinate commanders throughout 12 July found him "prodding" them forward against diminishing enemy resistance.[664] On the 7th Army's left, the pursuit had already begun. This was not the case in the center.

Therefore, even though the tide of the battle near Gela had certainly turned in favor of the 1st Infantry Division, Allen's slow and tentative progress on 12 July reflects the uncertainty that shrouded his decision-making as well as the G-2's inability to provide updated estimative intelligence. Without a clear understanding of the operational situation, and lacking air reconnaissance support, the 1st Infantry Division's operational

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[662] Allen, "Situation and Operations Report, North African, and Sicilian Campaigns," 13.

[663] Truscott, *Command Missions*, 229-231.

[664] Ibid.

tempo ground almost to a halt by the end of the day. Climbing casualty figures and overall fatigue also weighed on Allen's mind. It is consequently far from surprising that he allowed his division to idle, however briefly, before he was ready to push them forward yet again.

D+3-D+4: 13-14 July

If uncertainty still clouded the assessments of multiple G-2 staffs as well as Allen's understanding of the relatively narrow tactical situation in his area of operations, the 7th Army commander's broad view of the operational picture soon provided him with a new perspective. Patton sensed a distinct opportunity, offered by position of 3rd and 45th Infantry divisions following their rapid gains on 12 July, to both pressure the enemy and perhaps even cut off large Axis formations before they could retreat.[665] Unlike his reflexive insistence for offensive action on 11 July, this time Patton, as opposed to Allen, possessed a clearer understanding of the overall battlefield situation.[666] He was determined to jump-start the 1st Infantry Division's pursuit, and in so doing, took the decision out of Allen's hands.

Soon, however, Porter and Allen regained much of their situational understanding, thanks in part to support that finally arrived from aerial information collection assets both inside and outside the division. Seen in this way, though Patton was undoubtedly the catalyst for the division's forward progress early on 13 July, by the end of the day and into the 14th, Porter and his intelligence team finally possessed a solid

[665] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 189, 206.

[666] Ibid., 206.

read on the enemy situation and updated their estimative intelligence. Falling in step with his G-2, Allen likewise was once again making decisive and well-informed decisions regarding his division's offensive maneuver north into the next phase of the campaign.

Customary to his style of command and relationship with Allen, Patton was frustrated with the 1st Infantry Division's comparatively small gains on 12 July, all the more so because he sought tacit permission from 15th Army Group to launch a general offensive immediately.[667] Accordingly, Patton stepped into the decision space left open by Allen's hesitancy to continue his attack on 12 July and issued direct orders for all his units, including the 1st Infantry Division, to advance aggressively on the morning of 13 July.[668] Though his orders were transmitted through II Corps as an intermediary headquarters, Patton's diary entry from the same day makes it clear they were aimed at spurring progress by Allen's division in particular.[669]

With Truscott's 3rd Infantry Division making rapid progress against negligible resistance on the 7th Army's left, Patton grasped that sudden changes in the operational-level friendly situation had already outpaced the estimative intelligence offered by his own G-2. Koch had previously assessed, just hours before, that enemy units were likely to maintain their present positions and establish a temporary line of defense.[670] However, successful advances by the 3rd and 45th Infantry Divisions, on either side of Allen's

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[667] Patton, diary entry, 13 July 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 184; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 197.

[668] Message, division G-3 to 16th RCT, 0730, 13 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[669] Patton, diary entry, 13 July 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 184.

[670] G-2, 7th Army. "G-2 Periodic Report," 13 July 1943, C-32.

beachhead, in addition to progress by Montgomery's 8th Army, soon negated this prediction.[671] Wary of major gaps between units and anxious to deny Allied forces the ability to cut off entire German and Italian divisions, Axis leaders were already committed to a withdrawal.[672] The 7th Army commander sensed the opportunity this development presented.[673]

In this instance, Patton's intuition had much to do with the reality that enemy forces do not choose their courses of action in a vacuum. Rather, opposing commanders are always accounting for the actions and maneuver of friendly forces. Most of all, they are constantly seeking to adapt their own operations to avoid threats and seize opportunities, just as a friendly commanders might. As Schwien so stridently warned before the Second World War, G-2s and commanders who failed to recognize this truism flirted with disaster.[674]

Here, the implication understood by Patton was that Truscott threatened to slice through ineffectual Italian resistance to drive into the gap between the German 15th *Panzergrenadier* and *Hermann Goering* divisions, making continued enemy counterattacks too dangerous and likely forcing an accelerated Axis withdrawal away

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[671] von Senger, *Neither Fear nor Hope*, 139-141; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 191, 205-206.

[672] Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily*, 132-133; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 191, 205; von Senger, *Neither Fear nor Hope*, 139-141.

[673] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 206.

[674] Schwien, *Combat Intelligence*, v, 8-11.

from the Gela beachhead.[675] In fact, though unknown to the Allies at the time, this was almost the exact calculus considered by the enemy's senior commanders.[676] The 3rd Infantry Division's rapid advance as well as similar gains by Montgomery's 8th Army in the east led Guzzoni, with German concurrence, to initiate a retrograde in the afternoon of 12 July.[677] By the early morning hours of 13 July, most enemy units were well on their way to new positions further north of the coast.[678]

Therefore, at 0730 on D+3, Gibb relayed the 16th RCT its instructions: "[General] Patton has given the order to push."[679] Included in the same message was also an erroneous report that the 3rd Infantry Division occupied Caltanissetta, 50 kilometers northwest of Gela, offering further proof that the impetus for Patton's guidance was based on the emergence of a new Allied salient plunging inland.[680] It is likely that one of the three message centers through which the order was processed mis-transcribed Caltanissetta for Truscott's true forward position at Canicattì, 20 kilometers closer to the coast.[681] In any event, and despite its inaccuracy, Gibb's message served as an important reminder that the division was not fighting the Sicily Campaign in isolation, even if the

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[675] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 197-198, 206; Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily*, 132-133.

[676] von Senger, *Neither Fear nor Hope*, 139-141.

[677] Ibid.

[678] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 205.

[679] Message, division G-3 to 16th RCT, 0730, 13 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[680] Ibid.

[681] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 200.

island's disruptive terrain made continuous contact between adjacent units tenuous much of the time. Moreover, the G-3 correctly recognized the opportunity that the 3rd Infantry Division's success presented for his own division.

Shortly thereafter, for the first time in the Sicily Campaign, a 1st Infantry Division artillery air OP took flight.[682] Within minutes the Piper Cub delivered current intelligence concerning large numbers of enemy tanks and wheeled vehicles moving north toward Caltagirone.[683] This information also confirmed optimistic morning reports from II Corps citing "extremely light resistance" to the north.[684] By noon, the situation was manifestly clear to Allen. With all doubt as to the enemy's intentions now gone, he ordered the rapid northward advance of his 18th and 26th RCTs, while the 16th RCT finally limped into Niscemi around nightfall.[685]

During the evening of 13 July, Porter received the first positive information from the XII ASC air support party regarding a requested tactical air reconnaissance mission.[686] While issues of responsiveness continued to plague the air-ground integration effort in the following weeks, the division now possessed at least some means of looking

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[682] Message, division G-2 to 16th, 18th, and 26th RCTs, 1115, 13 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[683] Message, division G-2 to 16th RCT, DIVARTY, and II Corps G-2, 1130, 13 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[684] Radio message, II Corps to Commander, 1st Infantry Division, 1200, 13 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[685] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 111.

[686] Message, ASP to division G-2, 2135, 13 July 1943, G-2 Log.

deeper beyond its forward line of troops.[687] Already leaning forward into the pursuit, that evening Allen instructed his regimental commanders to advance as far as possible on the following day; they were to press the enemy relentlessly.[688]

In addition to the ground gained on both the right and left flanks, 13 July was also a day of organizational transition for the 1st Infantry Division. By early afternoon, the division formally regained the 18th Infantry but was officially relieved of responsibility for Darby's Ranger force, its naval gunfire liaisons, and all tank support, which reverted back to Gaffey's Kool Force.[689] Allen was thus temporarily without direct armored support as his infantrymen began climbing the steep terrain towards the mountain towns along the 7th Army's Blue line, though the G-3 conducted preliminary coordination with advance elements of the 70th Tank Battalion, which was just then coming ashore.[690]

Cementing this full transition to the offense, both the II Corps and the 1st Infantry Division G-2s issued new estimative intelligence in their periodic reports just after midnight on 14 July. Predicting a continued enemy withdrawal to the north and northeast, Porter anticipated that up to 90 enemy tanks and one *panzergrenadier* regiment from the *HG* Division would establish new defenses centered around the important junction town

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[687] Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 150.

[688] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 111.

[689] 2d Armored Division, "Historical Record – Operations 2d Armored Division," 6; Note: At this time, Kool force dropped its code name and reverted to its "2nd Armored Division" designation; Message, G-3 to Ranger task force, 1045, 13 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[690] Message, G-3 to Ranger task force, 1140, 13 July 1943, G-3 Log.

of Caltagirone.[691] In agreement with II Corps' less specific assessment, the 1st Infantry Division G-2 explicitly laid out the enemy's most likely course of action as well as a most dangerous course of action involving additional local counterattacks against the weary 16th RCT.[692] Along with their written product, Porter's staff also issued a new overlay depicting the current known positions of major enemy units.[693]

Now equipped with new estimative intelligence predicting that Axis forces would continue their northward retrograde, Allen was probably not pleased to learn that his division had lost contact with the enemy as of dawn on D+4.[694] After further reports of minimal enemy opposition on the left flank from the 26th RCT, at 0834 the G-3 relayed verbal orders by radio to each of the division's RCTs with instructions to begin aggressive reconnaissance and continue advancing north until they met strong enemy resistance.[695] Gibb subsequently directed the 16th Infantry toward Caltagirone while the

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[691] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Periodic Report," Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, 14 July 1943, 301-0.13, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL, https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 2-3.

[692] G-2, 1st Infantry Division, "G-2 Periodic Report," (14 July 1943), 2-3; G-2, II Corps, "G-2 Periodic Report," Headquarters, II Corps, 14 July 1943, in *G-2 Journal, 1st Infantry Division, Sicilian Campaign, 10-14 July 43*, 301-2.2, First Division Museum at Cantigny Collection, Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center Digital Archives, Wheaton, IL. https://firstdivisionmuseum.nmtvault.com/jsp/PsBrowse.jsp, 1-2.

[693] Division G-2 daily overlay, issued 2400, 13 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[694] Message, 1st Infantry Division G-2 to Commander, II Corps, 0620, G-2 Log, 14 July, 1943.

[695] Message, division G-3 to 26th RCT, 0730, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, division G-3 to 18th RCT, 0750, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, division G-3 to 16th RCT, 0800, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log.

18th RCT moved up into the center to fill the gap between Taylor's and Bowen's regiments.[696] Less than an hour later, the 26th Infantry reported that its 2nd Battalion was in Mazzarino, a development the division G-3 promptly relayed to 7th Army.[697] The 1st Infantry Division now occupied Patton's Blue line and was in possession of all its assigned objectives.

In mid-afternoon, Porter requested air reconnaissance to identify enemy forces in vicinity of Barrafranca, Piazza Armerini, and Santo Cano—the division's presumed next objectives.[698] With pursuit of the enemy in full swing, infantry battalions across the division's frontage alternated in bounding forward to seize subsequent hilltops or ridgelines paralleling the few improved north-south roads on their axes of advance.[699] Finally, Allen saw fit to reposition his advance command post in trail of the 26th Infantry, 12 road kilometers northwest of Gela.[700] Meanwhile, reports from civilians and prisoners indicated that the 1st Infantry Division, in particular the 26th RCT, would fight its next major action at Barrafranca, where German and Italian units were reportedly preparing to defend the town and stall Allen's forward progress.[701]

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[696] Transcript of conversation between division G-3 and 16th RCT, 0834, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, 18th RCT to division G-3, 1210, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[697] Message, division G-3 to 7th Army, 0930, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log; Message, G-3 to II Corps, 0940, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[698] Message, division G-2 to ASP, 1440, 14 July 1943, G-2 Log.

[699] Knickerbocker et al., *Danger Forward*, 111.

[700] Message, division G-3 to II Corps and 7th Army, 1705, 14 July 1943, G-3 Log.

[701] Message, Porter to division G-2, 1915, 14 July 1943, G-2 Log.

Though Patton's decisiveness on 13 July had initiated the 1st Infantry Division's sweeping offensive drive, by the end of 14 July Allen and his G-2 were once again in synch with the operational-level situation. Through the remainder of the day, ground and air reconnaissance missions confirmed the enemy's retrograde and brought back volumes of data on the expeditious withdrawal of German and Italian units to the north and northeast.[702] Most importantly, Allen's aggressive and unqualified orders for vigorous pursuit demonstrated his confident read on the situation. As it moved far beyond Patton's Blue Line, the 1st Infantry Division's complete transition to the offense represented the culmination of the first phase of the Sicily Campaign, though it was far from the last major combat the unit would see on the island.

Conclusion

Porter's and Allen's struggles with battlefield friction, uncertainty, and mixed indications of enemy intentions on 12 and 13 July highlight the importance as well as the difficulty of using tactical intelligence to inform decisions about when and where commanders should transition from one form of operations to another. The division's shift from defense to offense between D+2 and D+3 also exposed the limitations of the G-2's organic information collection capabilities. These were unable to provide definitive evidence to support Allen's decision on when to transition, especially given the outright failure of tactical air reconnaissance to support or communicate with lower tactical headquarters.

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[702] Message, DIVARTY S-2 to division G-2, 2020, 14 July 1943, G-2 Log; Message, ASP to division G-2, 2100, 14 July 1943, G-2 Log.

As a consequence, the division G-2 maintained large gaps in its understanding of the operational-level picture as it pertained to both friendly and enemy forces on 12 July. It therefore failed to identify the *Hermann Goering* Division's commitment to its withdrawal and influenced Allen's decision to allow his sorely tired forward infantry regiments to settle for meager gains as opposed to pressing the attack against diminishing enemy resistance. The reality of the division's limited advance on 12 July was, in this way, far different from the broad generalization of unbroken offensive action portrayed in most secondary historical sources.

It was ultimately Patton himself who anticipated the correct moment for his army's wholesale transition to offense. That he did so before Koch, let alone Porter and Allen, possessed their own overwhelming confirmatory information on the enemy's retreat is a testament to the field army commander's ability to visualize the battlefield at the operational level of war despite the presence of uncertainty. At the tactical level, Porter and Allen saw far less, at least until they had eyes in the air. Nor would this be the last time perspectives from different levels would differ. Over the coming days and eventually weeks, the 1st Infantry Division would strive to maintain, or, more frequently, regain contact with Axis forces determined to delay and disrupt the unit's advance.[703] There would be many more transitions and centers of enemy resistance for the division G-2 to anticipate and identify. A further 23 days of grinding mountain combat for junction towns like Enna, Petralia, Gangi, Sperlinga, Nicosia, and most famously, Troina, would prove as much and take Allen and his division to the limits of their endurance.

[703] For an overview of the 1st Infantry Division's pursuit of Axis forces between 15 and 31 July 1943, see: Wheeler: *The Big Red One*, 239-249.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Perspectives on a Battle Won

Separated from the fighting on Sicily by nearly 100 kilometers, Eisenhower and Alexander tracked the progress of Operation Husky from the island of Malta on 10 and 11 July 1943.[704] While radio reports offered some indication of the strong enemy counterattacks faced by the 1st Infantry Division, the Supreme Allied Commander was not overly concerned that the outcome of the invasion was in doubt.[705] In both his wartime report and his memoirs, Eisenhower credited the staunch defense of Allen's division against "heavy opposition," but highlighted most of all the decisive weight of combat power thrust ashore by the Allies in only 48 hours: 80,000 troops and 7,000 vehicles.[706] Even so, the clean lines and operational graphics placed on the AFHQ situation map failed to accurately convey the chaos, uncertainty, and friction encountered by units at the tactical level.[707] Ground combat is not so linear or easily comprehensible

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[704] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 24; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), 174.

[705] Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 174.

[706] Commander, Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch," 25; Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 174.

[707] In his analysis of the 1967 Arab-Israeli "Six Day War," Eric Hammel offers a stern reminder that "a map is a *representation* of a battlefield, and not the battlefield itself." While he was referring to the misjudgment of terrain, the same logic is easily applied to battle-tracking on situation maps. See: Eric Hammel, *Six Days in June: How Israel Won the 1967 Arab-Israeli War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992), 315.

as it may appear to a senior headquarters at the time, or to historians years after that fact. In this regard, Patton was prescient in his insistence that future researchers consider the decisions and actions of "lesser tactical units" to better understand the campaign as a whole.[708]

For Allen and the 1st Infantry Division, there was nothing inevitable about the course of events that played out during their desperate but successful defense of the Gela beachhead. Nor was it entirely clear when, or if, Conrath's *Hermann Goering* Division had finally given up its attempts to push the Americans back into the sea. Throughout these trials, the division commander depended on timely and accurate tactical intelligence, provided by his G-2, to make a series of effective decisions under stress and despite the continued influence of residual uncertainty. Though these events and their outcomes may have seemed minor to Eisenhower in the overall strategic context, or foregone conclusions to historians in hindsight, they were nonetheless extremely pressing and consequential concerns for the 1st Infantry Division. This was not the least because soldiers' lives hung in the balance.

Evaluating the 1st Infantry Division's Tactical Intelligence Effort

This case study began with a discussion surrounding the relative importance, or lack thereof, that multiple generations of military writers and professional historians have assigned to tactical intelligence operations. Before proceeding with a final evaluation of the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort in the first phase of the Sicily Campaign, it is important to revisit that discourse. Viewed in the context of the delicate

[708] Patton, diary entry, 5 May 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 241.

interplay between elements of art and science supporting both combat decision-making and tactical intelligence activities, there remains considerable divergence of opinion on the subject between practitioners and military historians.

Soldier-scholars recognize the utility of tactical intelligence as the foundation of any military endeavor and tend not to question its impact on the battlefield. They are generally certain that disaster awaits either a poor intelligence effort or a good one whose predictions are ignored by commanders.[709] The average historian writing on intelligence, however, is far more likely equivocate or else directly discount the importance of intelligence at the tactical level, especially in relation to what they see as more significant efforts at the operational and strategic levels of war.[710] What, then, can this case study add in terms of evidence that may contribute to the overall academic dialogue on the topic? A review of the preceding chapters reveals several potential answers.

By the time it reached Sicily, the 1st Infantry Division was a highly competent and well-trained unit whose experience in the North Africa Campaign provided it with a veteran cadre of seasoned infantrymen. Moreover, as a division commander beloved to his soldiers, Allen was both a reflexively aggressive combat leader as well as a thoughtful tactical theorist who prioritized and deeply valued the contributions of tactical intelligence on the battlefield. His selection of Porter to lead the division G-2 section as well as his unwavering commitment to improving the division's capacity for information

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[709] Schwien, *Combat Intelligence*, 22; Chandler and Robb, *Front-Line Intelligence*, 7; Glass and Davidson, *Intelligence is for Commanders*, ix; Koch with Hays, *G-2*, 132; Oliver, *Practicing Intelligence*, foreword.

[710] Handel, "Intelligence and Military Operations," 32; Bennett, "Intelligence and Strategy," 445; Keegan, *Intelligence in War*, 25.

collection and dissemination are proof positive of Allen's belief in the efficacy of tactical intelligence to deliver battlefield results.

Because the U.S. Army's early Second World War tables of organization made its Triangular divisions primarily reliant on infantrymen and cavalry scouts for information collection, the 1st Infantry Division possessed inherently sparse means with which to orient itself in combat. Limited as it was to a mostly ground-based, line-of-sight perspective through its organic information collection elements, Porter's small but efficient G-2 section relied on the broader Allied intelligence enterprise to provide Allen with the vital information necessary to plan and execute tactical operations. Only with support from the USAAF's aerial collection platforms as well as reports derived from external signals intelligence assets, could the division hope to maintain situational awareness on critical enemy threats outside its local area of operations.

Within the confines of the static, established headquarters and communications infrastructure found in its Algerian staging base in June 1943, the 1st Infantry Division was firmly connected to this expansive intelligence structure as it prepared for Operation Husky. As a result, the division G-2 leveraged information collected at the direction of AFHQ and detailed analysis from the 7th Army G-2 as the foundation of its own estimative intelligence effort aimed at the terrain and enemy forces located near Gela. Based on his G-2's assessments, Allen selected the most appropriate scheme of maneuver and key terrain from which to defend against what he knew would be strong enemy counterattacks spearheaded by armor soon after his soldiers landed in Sicily. This effort represented a realization of the best that the Allied intelligence enterprise could provide to a tactical unit.

More importantly, the estimative intelligence it engendered through the 1st Infantry Division G-2 proved immediately impactful on the battlefield. On D-Day, when the *Hermann Goering* Division's first tank attack arrived earlier than expected, Allen's lightly equipped infantrymen shielded themselves in wadis and among rocky hills—the exact "tank-proof" terrain templated by the division G-2.[711] Aided by responsive fire support from the Western Naval Task Force, Allen's division thereby secured its toehold on the island.

The following day, 11 July, with the division's advance command post and information collection capabilities fully operational, forward observers provided early warning of even more extensive German counterattacks as Allen raced to improvise new defensive solutions. Despite continued friction and unforeseen challenges, the division's soldiers fought with courage, skill, and determination, turning back the enemy yet again in dramatic fashion. While current intelligence continued to identify and trigger responses to local enemy threats, prisoner of war interrogators gained information concerning Conrath's plans for another attack against the division's positions during the night.

Reacting to this critical piece of tactical intelligence, Allen formulated his own plan for a preemptive night spoiling attack. Though he was under pressure by Patton and the operational timeline to seize the Ponte Olivo airfield, Allen made it clear that his attack, based on solid intelligence, was designed first and foremost to prevent the *Hermann Goering* Division from posing any further threat to the 1st Infantry Division's beachhead. The successful advance that followed on the night of 11 to 12 July rolled back

[711] Porter interview, 292-293.

the German lines, set Conrath on his heels, and provided much-needed time and space for the continued inflow of 2nd Armored Division tanks. All these outcomes ensured that the 7th Army's lodgment on Sicily was thereafter impregnable.

If Axis forces could no longer hope to decisively rupture the 1st Infantry Division's positions shielding its landing beaches, on 12 July it was far from clear that they were ready to begin a general withdrawal. Sharp local counterattacks by small elements of *HG* Division armor left Porter as well as the II Corps and 7th Army intelligence staffs in doubt as to the enemy's intentions. Furthermore, the structural faults of the Allied intelligence enterprise now revealed themselves fully. This was seen clearly in the USAAF's lack of responsive tactical air reconnaissance support and communications disruptions that left the division without key information concerning the operational-level enemy situation. The friendly situation on the left and right was similarly murky for extended periods of time.

Mired in uncertainty, Porter and his staff offered no definitive changes to the division's estimative intelligence, falling in line with similar assessments by the corps and field army G-2s who anticipated enemy units would continue to at least maintain their present positions. In this instance, ambiguity and lack of access to wide area information collection capabilities handicapped the division's intelligence effort. Accordingly, Allen's decision-making suffered as he lagged in transitioning to an offensive pursuit of enemy units that were, in fact, conducting a retrograde. Instead, he allowed his tired and battle-worn soldiers to settle for modest gains and rest where they were. It fell to a frustrated and energized Patton to correctly deduce the opportunity

presented by the operational-level situation, especially the rapid advance of the 3rd Infantry Division, and press for immediate offensive action on 13 and 14 July.

Considered in its totality, the division's tactical intelligence effort during the first phase of the Sicily Campaign shaped key decisions by Allen and his subordinate leaders that impacted both how the 1st Infantry Division conducted its operations and the end results of the unit's combat actions. Accurate intelligence, particularly before the invasion and during the first two days, led to well-informed decisions with positive outcomes, such as Allen's designation of key terrain and decision to undertake a night spoiling attack. By contrast, the G-2's lack of certainty regarding the enemy's withdrawal from the coast contributed to Allen's hesitation in transitioning his unit from defensive to offensive operations between 12 and 13 July. To be sure, numerous other factors and considerations detailed in the preceding chapters also exerted their influence over Allen's combat-decision-making. Such is the inescapable reality of close combat. There is no doubt, however, that tactical intelligence mattered to the 1st Infantry Division's commander and its soldiers at the outset of Operation Husky and that, one way or another, the results of the division's intelligence effort manifested themselves tangibly on the battlefield.

Without delving into the sort of wild speculation that may attend uncontrolled counterfactual argument, it remains necessary to place the two most significant outcomes of the 1st Infantry Division's expeditionary combat between 10 and 14 July 1943 into their proper operational and strategic context. These are: the successful seizure and defense of the Gela beachhead on 10 and 11 July and the division's subsequently slow transition into its pursuit from 12 to 14 July. Understanding where these events and their

ramifications fall within the broad mosaic of the Operation Husky landings is essential to concluding this case study's assessment of the division's tactical intelligence effort.

It is difficult to argue with any degree of certainty that the collapse of the 1st Infantry Division's defense on 10 or 11 July would have necessarily led to a spectacular and operationally catastrophic exploitation against the 45th Infantry Division and British 8th Army by the *Hermann Goering* Division. Still, it is equally hard to downplay the importance of the Gela beachhead as an integral part of the 7th Army's flank protection for 15th Army Group's main effort. If Allen and his infantrymen did not have accurate pre-invasion estimative intelligence that allowed them to understand the threat posed by Conrath's division, and what terrain would give them a defensive advantage against enemy armor, it is possible they may have been caught out of position and suffered the psychological shock of battlefield surprise. Even if changes to this variable alone would not have been enough to produce defeat, it would very likely have resulted in increased, unnecessary casualties and probably had negative secondary effects at least up to the field army level.

Similarly, it is worth briefly exploring how the 1st Infantry Division's sluggishness on the afternoon and evening of 12 July may have forfeited the opportunity that Patton sensed to keep pressure on Axis forces and allow the 3rd Infantry Division to thrust into an emerging gap from the west.[712] Senior German and Italian commanders were unambiguously anxious over just such a potential development.[713] Accordingly,

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[712] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 191, 205-206.

[713] Ibid., 205.

they were justifiably relieved at the somewhat unexpected ability of the *Hermann Goering* Division to disengage "without appreciable interference" from the 1st Infantry Division, as recounted by *Generalleutnant* Frido von Senger.[714]

Had Porter and his intelligence staff correctly identified the enemy's wholesale withdrawal on the afternoon of 12 July, it is fair to wonder if the always-aggressive Allen would have launched his exhausted RCTs into a full-fledged pursuit. Such a decision may have enhanced the ability of the 3rd Infantry Division to cut off the 15th *Panzergrenadier* Division to the west. Indeed, Mitcham and von Stauffenberg highlight the very real danger the two German divisions faced on 12 July.[715] From an operational-level perspective, the potential removal of one half of the enemy's most capable combined arms maneuver force could have opened a pathway to conclude the Sicily Campaign much more rapidly and at far less cost in terms of lives and resources. Of course, this is not how events transpired, and, in any event, the fatigue of Allen's infantrymen may have precluded an effective advance on 12 July no matter how hard the division commander pushed them.

Even considering the discussion above, this study is not prepared to claim that tactical intelligence was singularly decisive to the operational or strategic results achieved during Operation Husky, or that a better effort would have produced different outcomes. Such a proposition involves too many "what ifs" and would distract from the purpose of the work. However, what the preceding analysis does reflect is that the 1st

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[714] von Senger, *Neither Fear Nor Hope*, 139-140.

[715] Mitcham and von Stauffenberg, *The Battle of Sicily*, 132-133.

Infantry Division's tactical intelligence operations were an inextricable element driving decisions that directly impacted the fight to secure and break out from the Gela beachhead. That the success of division's combat on the south coast of Sicily between 10 and 14 July was important to the 15th Army Group's operational scheme of maneuver to shield the 8th Army is also a fact.[716] These two realities were, and remain, linked.

Thus, it is likewise inappropriate to wholly discount the division's tactical intelligence operations as less valuable or operationally influential than similar efforts at the field army or Allied command level. Rather, they were part of a mutually supportive, interconnected intelligence enterprise designed to produce unity of effort and meet the needs of commanders and staffs at every echelon. As the battlefield experience of the 1st Infantry Division from 10 to 14 July 1943 demonstrates, this system informed consequential decisions that impacted the outcome of the unit's engagements as well as the lives of the soldiers tasked with carrying their orders through to execution. These contributions to the division's operations were by no means insignificant. Instead, they underscore the truth that tactical intelligence undoubtedly influenced the 1st Infantry Division's combat decision-making and the results of its battles during the opening phase of Operation Husky.

Implications and Opportunities

The 1st Infantry Division's estimative intelligence produced ahead of its amphibious assault in June 1943 represented the best of what the Allied intelligence enterprise could provide to enable the success of tactical G-2s. It was accurate and helped

[716] Alexander, *The Alexander Memoirs*, 107-108.

Allen to devise what turned out to be an effective initial scheme of maneuver. Conversely, the wholesale failure of the enterprise, specifically the USAAF's XII Air Support Command, to furnish the division with timely current intelligence during its fight in and around Gela constituted a realization of the system's greatest limitations. When internal air component requirements out-prioritized its tactical air reconnaissance support for ground units, and communications problems prevented the timely dissemination of information, Porter and Allen were left with an incomplete understanding of the operational situation.

Today's military professionals would do well to consider how similar flaws endemic to the modern intelligence enterprise and its reliance on an inherently vulnerable digital communications architecture may affect the ability of tactical units at the division level and below to gain and maintain situational awareness. Indeed, in the same way that the 1st Infantry Division relied on the intelligence staffs of senior headquarters and the USAAF to compensate for its noticeably one-dimensional information collection capabilities, so do contemporary U.S. Army divisions depend on more exquisite, low-density higher echelon assets to collect information in the deep areas beyond their forward maneuver brigades. Just as in 1943, when the USAAF assured ground force leaders that it would provide adequate support to meet their needs, today's intelligence enterprise is specifically designed to centralize control over the military's most effective aerial collection platforms under the Joint Force Air Component Commander.[717] Because

[717] Patton, diary entry, 22 June 1943, in Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 267; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 106-107; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 17 January 2017; Change 1, 22 October 2018), III-8.

ground forces are, ideally, constantly connected to digital networks that provide a widely distributed and uninterrupted flow of data from these assets, they will theoretically always receive a sufficient and timely supply of wide area, near-real-time information.

The most current U.S. military doctrine offers an overview of the benefits of this system and how it is designed to work:

> The success of joint and multinational operations and interorganizational coordination hinges upon timely and accurate information and intelligence sharing. To prevail, the [Joint Force Commander's] decision and execution cycles must be consistently faster than the adversary's and be based on better information. Being faster and better requires having unfettered access to the tasking, collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of information derived from all available sources . . . This type of collaborative intelligence sharing environment should be capable of generating and moving intelligence, operational information, and orders to users quickly. The architecture supporting this intelligence environment should be dynamic and capable of providing multinational and interagency participants rapid access to appropriate data.[718]

In a perfect world, free from battlefield friction and adversary countermeasures, modern technology may appear poised to deliver the type of results espoused in doctrine. There is a danger, however, as seen in the 1st Infantry Division's experience in Sicily, in conflating what the architects of such a system state on paper that it must do, with what it actually can do when operating under the stress and strain of actual combat conditions.

It is no coincidence that the division G-2's greatest success in leveraging the Allied intelligence enterprise took place during May and June 1943 in the calm, static planning environment of coastal Algeria. Headquarters were easily connected by telephone and courier while face-to-face meetings among intelligence staffs and commanders were regular and unhurried. Most of all, the enemy had no real means of

[718] JCS, JP 2-0, V-1.

denying or degrading the dissemination of information from senior staffs down the chain of command to tactical G-2s and S-2s. That paradigm changed on 10 July 1943.

Striving in Sicily once again to prove, as Samuel Morison charges, that air power could deliver decisive operational and strategic results on its own, the XII ASC devoted the vast majority of its air assets, both strike and reconnaissance, to its own objectives far beyond the tactical "close fight" of the 7th Army's ground units.[719] The result, borne out in evidence by the nature of message traffic from the 1st Infantry Division G-2 and frequent denial of the division's tactical air reconnaissance requests, again reflected the reality of sporadically available and untimely air support.[720] Communications disruptions and the tyranny of distance between headquarters only made matters worse.[721] Overall, the system was too unreliable to deliver predictable and consistent benefits in support of the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort.

Nor was the division's experience in Sicily unique. A 1946 U.S. Army study on "Combat Intelligence" in the Second World War listed tactical air reconnaissance as simultaneously the most valuable non-organic collection asset to division G-2s but also one marred by habitual underperformance and lack of timeliness.[722] More often than not,

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[719] Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, 17; Smyth and Garland, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 106-107; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 304-306.

[720] Wheeler, *The Big Red One*, 236; D'Este, *Bitter Victory*, 305.

[721] Radio Message, XII ASC Advance CP to 1st Infantry Division ASP, received 0025, logged 0830, 12 July 1943, *1st Infantry Division G-2 Journal, 10-23 July 1943*; Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 150.

[722] 2nd Command Class, U.S. Army Command and Staff College, "Memo: For the Director Command Class: Combat Intelligence," Appendix A, 2.

divisions relied far more on their vulnerable and technologically inferior L-4 Piper Cub air observation posts to at least partially make up for a lack of support from the USAAF, albeit with reduced capacity.[723] Of course, as in the 1st Infantry Division's first few days of expeditionary operations, even these directly controlled aircraft were not always immediately available.

In some ways, the Second World War employment of the Piper Cub offers a parallel to the current role of the Army's fleet of MQ-1C "Gray Eagle" unmanned aerial systems, which serve as the primary organic, deep area information assets for divisions.[724] Like 1940s artillery air OPs, Gray Eagles have a dual-purpose responsibility for both fire support and information collection.[725] In another similarity to the Second World War, these modern unmanned systems have more limited range, duration, and sensor capabilities, not to mention greater vulnerability, in comparison to the robust suite of platforms held under the control of the air component commander. The Army, by design, remains a junior partner in the business of high-performance aerial information collection.

Today, exponentially improved technology exists to once again build an intelligence architecture that bridges the divide between the superior capabilities of the total Joint Force and the ground units actively engaged in close combat. However,

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[723] U.S. Army Command and Staff College, "Memo: For the Director Command Class: Combat Intelligence," Appendix A, 3.

[724] Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 3-04, *Army Aviation* (Washington, DC: Army Publishing Directorate, 6 April 2020), 5-5.

[725] Ibid.

potential adversaries have met rapid advances in the means of digital dissemination with similarly new methods of disruption and denial, both physical and electronic.[726] Therefore, while modern ground commanders and their staffs exercise their digital systems for command, control, and especially intelligence, they should remain cognizant not just of its potential benefits but also its vulnerabilities.

This is all the more important because the U.S. Army's evolving concept for warfighting anticipates that its divisions and brigades will fight widely dispersed actions with the requirement to rapidly seize fleeting "windows" of opportunity for maneuver.[727] As a prerequisite, they must be able to recognize when such windows are open in the first place. Here, the experience of the 1st Infantry Division between 12 and 14 July 1943 is particularly instructive. At least partially because of the breakdown in support and communication from the USAAF, Allen and his G-2 were cut off from accurate information on the enemy situation in the division's deep area. They subsequently failed to identify the opportunity for offensive pursuit presented by the withdrawal of the *Hermann Goering* Division on the afternoon of 12 July. Given the potential frailty of even the best information technology, along with competing demands for a small number of Air Force and national collection platforms, a similar chain of events could easily occur on a modern battlefield.

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[726] U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (Washington, DC: Fort Eustis, VA: TRADOC, 6 December 2018), vi.

[727] Ibid., ix-x, C-3.

It is not within the scope or purpose of this historical case study to make specific recommendations for changes to current doctrine, tables of organization, command relationships, or technological procurement plans. Nevertheless, by highlighting the areas where this work's observations intersect with the dilemmas faced by modern ground forces, it leaves open the possibility that other researchers may explore the associated implications in greater depth. The U.S. Army's renewed emphasis on large scale maneuver and readiness for expeditionary combat operations, such as those fought by the 1st Infantry Division in Sicily, ensures that there will be a no shortage of interest in historical comparisons and eagerness to revisit lessons learned.

Still, there is much more to be examined just within the context of the Sicily Campaign and the division's subsequent advance leading to its dramatic and costly assault on Troina. Since it is often cited as a prime example of tactical intelligence failure, a continuation of this study that considers not just that action, but also the two weeks of exhausting mountain combat that preceded it, will likely yield more substance in the endeavor to understand the impact of intelligence at the tactical level of war. In this way, and taking into account Allen's relief from command immediately following the debacle at Troina, a more expansive work may stand in stark contrast to this study's limited conclusions concerning the relative success of both the 1st Infantry Division's tactical intelligence effort and Allen's effective decisions early in the campaign.[728] No matter when it is offered, such a study will find a ready audience. The timeless, cognitive arts of combat decision-making and intelligence analysis lend themselves to constant,

[728] Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 346-347.

pressing relevance for every professional soldier preparing for their inevitable entanglement with fog, friction, and uncertainty on the next battlefield.

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