

BOX 167.

1. Report: "Probable Developments in the German Reich": April 2, 1945,
in form of an 8 page memorandum, General Marshall to FDR
(with map).

Map Room Files.

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BOX 167. (Continued)

2. A-16 WARFARE-- GERMANY AND GERMAN OCCUPIED COUNTRIES: September 9,
1942 - April 2, 1945.
 - a. Included is report of the Morgenthau Report on partition
of Germany.
3. A-16 JAPAN AND JAPANESE ISLANDS: including a report ". . . On the
Role of the Air Forces in the Defeat of Japan:" April 21,
1942 -February 5, 1945.
4. A-16 LONDON WAR COUNCIL: July 20, 1942 - July 25, 1942.
5. A-16/3 WARFARE -- Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean: June 12,
1942 - February 3, 1943.
6. A-16/3 WARFARE -- "TORCH" Northwest Africa: July 13, 1942 - June 11,
1943.
7. A-16 OVERLORD OPEPATION: August 8 - February 16, 1944.

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- Report of the President and Vice President to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1942-1945, 10 pages.
2. A16-3 BOLERO (Build-up in U.K. for Overlord operation): 1942 -
April, 1943.
 3. A/16 CASABLANCA CONFERENCE: January - March, 1943.
 4. A/16 CRIMEAN CONFERENCE:
 - a. Undated reports on Haile Selassie, Ibn Saud, etc. and

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WAR DEPARTMENT
THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 2, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

SUBJECT: Probable Developments in the German Reich

Following is a study prepared in the War Department concerning probable developments in the German Reich which I believe will be of interest to you. I have furnished the Secretary of State with a copy of this.

A. Military.

By about the end of April 1945, military operations on the continent of Europe will probably have reached the final stage -- mopping up. The month of April will likely prove to be the transition period for Germany between organized resistance and utter defeat.

United States armored forces, taking advantage of military vacuums which will probably develop at numerous points, as has already been the case during the past week, should be able to press forward deep into Germany, and by 20 April should be able to reach the Elbe River between Magdeburg and Halle. To the north, the British advance is likely to be slower and shallower. In South Germany, Nuremberg and Stuttgart will probably be in Allied hands by 20 April and Munich by 1 May.

The Russians should be able to begin their general offensive by 10 April and by about 1 May should be in contact with American forces along the Elbe and Saale, south of Berlin. Most of Saxony and Czechoslovakia will probably have been overrun. German troops will probably still be resisting within a large north German pocket, including the provinces of Berlin, Mecklenburg, Schleswig-Holstein as well as the peninsula of Jutland and the Danish Islands.

In Austria, the Russians by 1 May probably will have cleared Hungary, captured Vienna and should be moving towards a junction with American forces near Linz.

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On 1 May, neither a cohesive West nor East Front will probably exist. It is more likely that there will be a series of western and eastern pockets in which encircled fragments of the once formidable German armies will be fighting on with dogged fanaticism -- so long as Hitler leads them. Several small pockets commanded by less determined leaders already will have surrendered or will have been overrun.

The German High Command will probably still be in existence, but its influence probably will be limited to one or several of these pockets. In one of these pockets its headquarters will be located. Communication between pockets will be limited to radio traffic and occasional airplane flights. No general effective supply system will remain in existence; rather, each pocket will be depending on its local stock, which every day will be diminishing, without hope of ever being refilled. Armament, petroleum and aircraft plants, with insignificant exceptions, will in all probability be in Allied hands. Under such circumstances, the end cannot be far off.

It is of importance to recognize now, where on 1 May such pockets of resistance will probably be located. However it is impossible to go further at this time than to suggest the likelihood of resistance in certain areas. Chance will play a leading role. Still unmade decisions of the Russian and Allied supreme commanders, and perhaps Allied logistical difficulties, will have much to do with the size and location of the resisting elements.

It is not believed that either Hitler or the German High Command have detailed plans at this time to continue resistance after the collapse of the German armies in any specific area. The probability is that a very large pocket will develop in north Germany. This pocket will develop, not as a result of German forethought but as a result of Allied and Russian advances from east and west towards Halle. It may contain fragments of many units, the equivalent of between 20 and 30 divisions. The many rumors as to German preparations for the defense of the "Alpine Redoubt" are believed to lack substance. No reliable information has reached the War Department of unduly large storage of supplies in the "redoubt area" and there are no indications that any fortifications are being constructed in Bavaria or Austria to prevent an Allied ingress into the "redoubt area" from the north. The Alpine terrain of the "redoubt area" lends itself to defense and is also highly suitable for guerilla operations. It is however a food deficit area and contains only a few armament works. A single large or several minor pockets may well exist in this area after 1 May and important troop fragments from Italy, the Balkans, Hungary, and the Upper Rhine fronts may be defending themselves within the "redoubt", possibly a mixed force, equivalent to between 30 and 40 divisions.

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The "will to fight" of these troops will depend largely on whether Hitler and his subordinate Nazi leaders, or the German High Command will have transferred their headquarters into the "redoubt" area. If Hitler does so, a fairly formidable military task requiring a considerable number of divisions may still confront the Allies in the "redoubt" area. If no fanatic Nazi leadership is present in this area, resistance may have faded by 1 May, or can be diminished to a guerilla level.

A third potential pocket of resistance in the West is the "fortress Holland". This area is by nature extremely strong defensively and even with the present small German garrison its reduction will force a serious Allied operation, provided that the Germans are inspired to fanaticism by the presence among them of high Nazis. On 1 May, the garrison may amount to five divisions. There are indications that the garrison of the fortress Holland area has been strengthened recently and that the Germans are seeking to transfer still more troops into Holland. Possession of the fortress of Holland has great importance because while held by the Germans, the supply of the Allied forces in central and southern Germany will be difficult.

A fourth area in the West, the Black Forest, may contain a pocket of resistance, comprising about three divisions, which may be able to hold out until 1 May. This is considered a less likely area as it is limited in extent and the Allied forces available for its reduction are formidable in size and well located to crush resistance. Still another pocket may exist on 1 May in Thuringia, with the equivalent of two divisions. This, too, will be small and call for no more than a minor Allied operation.

The pockets of resistance which may be expected to exist on the Eastern Front are less easy to locate and to evaluate their strength. There is not a single area in the East except the Bohemian table-land in which nature favors an all-round defense. This latter area is populated by Czechs, who are traditionally hostile to the Germans and would attempt to impede their defensive efforts at every turn. Inasmuch as a complete Bohemian mountain front would be too long for the number of troops available, and exposed to attack from all directions, it is not believed a major center of resistance can be built up in this area for any appreciable period of time.

The direction of the probable Russian attacks probably will be such that as many as 20 to 30 German divisions may be isolated on 1 May in the north-western Bohemian table-land, in the general areas of Eger and Pilsen.

The successful German defense of northwestern Latvia over several months suggest that a large pocket of resistance probably will still exist there on 1 May, though with ever diminishing supplies at

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its disposal. Its reduction will only depend on when Russia will free sufficient troops from other tasks to crush this isolated German army.

Elsewhere in eastern Germany, the location of large or small pockets will depend on the direction and weight of future Russian and Allied thrusts.

The fortresses of Heligoland, Borkum, Wangeroog, Nordency and Sylt will probably be holding out on 1 May, thus barring Allied access from the sea to Emden, Wilhelmshaven, the estuaries of the Elbe and the Weser, and the ports of Bremen and Hamburg. The continued resistance of these island fortresses will make exceptionally difficult both our military supply problem in the interior of Germany as well as that of feeding the civil population in the occupied areas.

Other areas of potential resistance outside Germany must also be reckoned with:

Norway

Italy (in connection with troops in Alpine regions)

Western French ports, channel and Aegean Islands.

Norway now contains 11 German divisions. Italy has 24 German and 4 Italian divisions. Both areas contain sufficient airdromes to base an appreciable reinforcement of airplanes which could and probably will be sent to these areas from Germany, as pockets within Germany become restricted. In Norway, the defense may be further reinforced by dispatching the surviving naval units from Germany. Neither area contains adequate industrial resources to maintain a prolonged defense and resistance could be continued only as long as the existing reserve stocks last. The ammunition supplies in both areas are probably considerable, but the oil shortage in Italy is known to be acute and in Norway the reserves probably are not large.

In Norway and Italy, however, there is no evidence that the Germans have planned for continued resistance after the collapse of their main armies. Such resistance may well occur but it can be measured only in terms of weeks or months, as there has been no known advance stockage of supplies for this eventuality.

In all pockets of resistance, leadership or lack of leadership will prove a determining factor to how long the fighting will continue. Where Hitler goes, the strongest resistance will be encountered. The bulk of the army commanders will gradually yield as they come to feel that they have fulfilled their patriotic duty.

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Once the debacle becomes generally apparent, probably only 100% Nazis and certain Nazi generals will possess sufficient control of their troops to keep them fighting. There are enough of these "last-ditch" leaders to warrant the prediction that a number of pockets will still be resisting beyond 1 May.

B. Economic.

No cohesive economic structure is expected to exist in Germany on 1 May. Some plants will still probably be manufacturing weapons and other essential ammunition in unreduced pockets. Most of these plants will not have access to adequate raw materials and their complete closing down will require only a matter of weeks.

Economic conditions in the Anglo-Saxon occupied areas will be chaotic and growing constantly worse, although the existing stocks of food, well administered, are sufficient to prevent actual starvation, except in isolated areas. Actual starvation conditions may exist in certain Ruhr and West German cities. Few railroads will be operating. River traffic will be paralyzed. The governmental and food rationing systems will have collapsed and a highly organized modern society will have been transformed into an infinite number of local economies, each somewhat similar to a medieval village. Allied Military Government by 1 May probably will be more nominal than real and will already be encountering difficulties in recruiting from the civil population a non-Nazi petty bureaucracy efficient enough to serve the needs of the Allies.

Crop prospects in Germany for 1945, projected beyond April, may be regarded as fair. Disregarding seasonal fluctuations, at least a 10% decline from 1944 is to be expected as the result of lack of fertilizer and manpower. One of the most critical factors influencing the future of Europe will be to get every possible acre into intensive production.

It can already be foreseen that unless drastic measures are taken, starvation conditions will prevail over much of West Germany by September. This condition will be caused by the following:

1. Paralysis of railroad transportation.
2. Cessation of river traffic.
3. Breakdown of food rationing system.
4. Breakdown of civil government.
5. Hoarding by peasants.
6. Overpopulation of West Germany.

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7. Cessation of food exports from the German eastern provinces, which normally send their surplus to West Germany. (Russia will certainly embargo food exports from her portion of occupied Germany.)
8. Possible requisitions by Allied forces.

C. Political.

For all practical purposes, a central German political authority in all probability will have ceased to exist about 1 May. Hitler and his principal Nazi subordinates will still be nominally exercising the powers of government, though outside the still unreduced pockets, Nazi influence will be limited to what can be exerted through the radio. Hitler's theme probably will be that the German youth must stand firm to preserve both their national pride and love of country, no matter how catastrophic conditions may be. No attempt is expected to be made by Hitler in these last days of national catastrophe to surrender, abdicate, or attempt to negotiate with the Allies. Hitler has the creation of his myth of the future ever uppermost in his mind, and he knows full well that his future reputation with the German people, and his place in the history of the world, depends on the dignity of his exit. Any cowardice, faltering, or negotiating with the Allies in this last hour would destroy the great tragic myth he is seeking to create. If Hitler is true to the character he has shown in past crises, he will make his exit bravely and dramatically and thus remain a psychological force for his enemies to reckon with for decades.

It is believed that no attempt will be made by either the German military or civil elements to overthrow the Nazi government in the final stages of the catastrophe. No group in Germany has an interest any longer in negotiating unconditional surrender. The situation was very different last summer when General Beck attempted to seize power, believing that he still possessed the chance of negotiating peace with Great Britain and the United States. The German opposition elements today are aware that surrender will not benefit them individually or collectively and that if they so act, they will compromise themselves with the German people -- both the living and the generations still unborn.

An astonishing lack of interest in politics will be discovered in the Anglo-Saxon occupied areas. Liberal, democratic, socialist and communist elements will be weak in numbers and lack leaders of ability. Here and there small communist or other groups will be found to have seized power in towns and villages. Strange political ideas and formations may have appeared.

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On the whole, however, the Communist Party will be weak and making headway only because of the political vacuum.

Hitler will continue to have the secret respect of a large part of the population and, undercover Nazism actually will be the most potent force our military government operatives should expect.

D. Social.

The German civil population, both in unreduced pockets of resistance and in the Allied occupied areas, will be dazed, bewildered and apathetic. The bulk will be thinking only of where to obtain food to live out the morrow. Resistance to the Western Allies will be on a decreasing scale. There will be no formidable large-scale guerilla activity as in Yugoslavia and France. Germans serving the Allies, however, will be in constant danger of assassination and a considerable number will actually be killed. Both rural districts and cities probably will be preyed upon by armed bands composed of ex-soldiers, criminals and Hitler youths who will pillage both Allied and German property. These gangs will be regarded as "patriots" by elements of the population, who will conceal and succor them if they are pressed too hard by Allied military forces.

The area of Anglo-Saxon occupation will be found filled to overflowing with evacuees from Berlin and the eastern provinces. The present total population of Western Germany is thought to be several million above normal. The city elements of these millions will perforce be living a communal existence, oblivious to the concept of private property as understood in the United States.

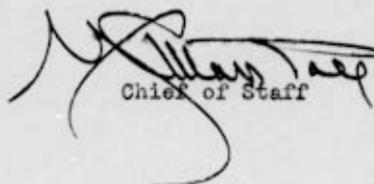
Housing will be desperately short and such as exists in the cities will be deplorably bad and infinitely congested. While disease, by 1 May, will not have reached epidemic proportions, it will be in process of developing into a serious threat to the health of the Allied armies. The German public health service will have largely disintegrated and our attempts to recreate it will have achieved by this date only a small measure of success.

E. The Weather Factor.

The weather factor in April will prove no great barrier to Allied air and ground operations. In North Germany, 15 days suitable for high-level bombing may be expected; in South Germany, 16 days. However, due to the expected constant decline in the effectiveness of German anti-aircraft defense, the Allies will be able, more and more, to conduct their attacks at a low level. Some such low-level

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attacks can be conducted almost every day in April (28 in North Germany - 29 in South Germany). The weather factors by the law of averages will not greatly impede Allied ground operations on either the East or West Fronts.


Chief of Staff

1 Incl.
Map

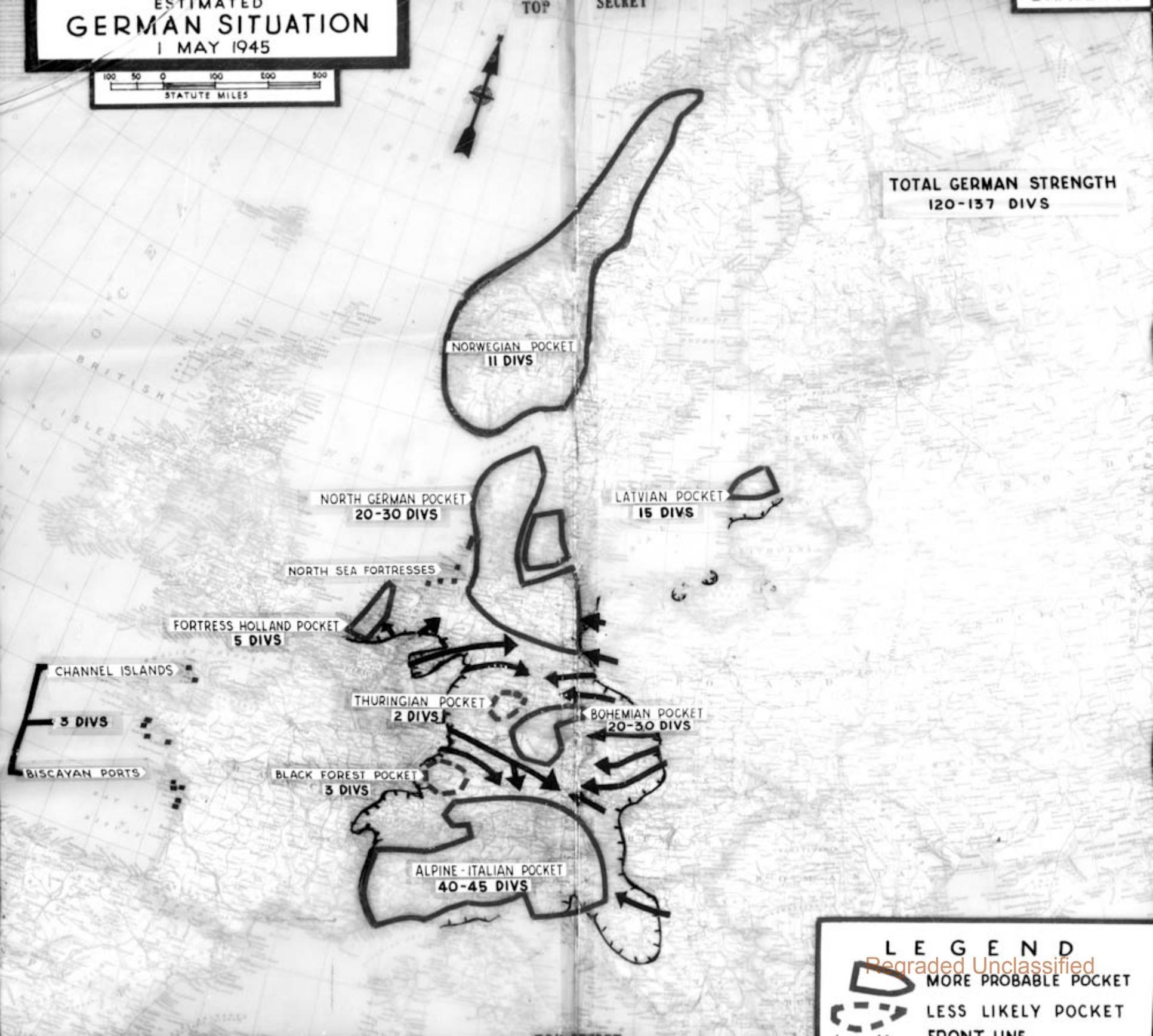
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ESTIMATED
GERMAN SITUATION
1 MAY 1945

100 50 0 100 200 300
STATUTE MILES

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TOTAL GERMAN STRENGTH
120-137 DIVS



LEGEND
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MORE PROBABLE POCKET



LESS LIKELY POCKET
FRONT LINE