

I - Survey of activity in November

(a) NAVY -

Submarine warfare was on a small scale but there was considerably more activity than in the previous month. Two or three merchant ships were sunk by U-Boats in the north Atlantic and two in the Indian Ocean. One was torpedoed in the St. Lawrence River but did not sink. Against these losses, two or three U-Boats were sunk in European waters.

(b) ARMY -

With the fighting on the west bringing allied forces up against the Siegfried line, prospects for a major break-through in the immediate future may be discounted. In the north, the flooded country, not yet frozen sufficiently to permit major movement, strengthens appreciably this weakest section of the prepared defences. Thus in the British - Canadian sector, the thinning out of the opposing forces is a logical development.

United States forces are heavily concentrated east of Aachen where small daily gains have been made in bitter fighting. As the fighting in this sector has been carried out within the Siegfried defences against the heaviest concentration of German forces, and since the area is the key to the Rhur Valley, it is significant that even slow progress has been made. The advances made to the south by French and United States troops have carried them up to the main Siegfried defences in some places but no penetration of the line has yet been made in these areas.

The enemy has continued to lose heavily during the month (estimated at the rate of some 4,000 men per day) but it is probable that his overall strength has not yet been appreciably affected. Meanwhile he has been able to build up a small mobile reserve of four panzer divisions which is held southwest of Cologne.

On November 28th a convoy of large ships entered the port of Antwerp. The opening of this important port will have considerable influence on the build-up of any projected allied offensive.

In Italy progress has been slow, but it is probable that the overall enemy plan for this front is to hold long enough to enable the divisions in Yugoslavia to be gradually extracted to the north, when eventually a southern line will be established, linking the Alps-Carpathian Mountains to the Vistula line in the east.

The 1st Canadian Corps in Italy are now (December 15th) committed to intense activity which is likely to be protracted but there are no indications that the First Canadian Army, now patrolling an extensive front in Holland with few divisions, will be involved in early operations on a major scale.

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