

HEADQUARTERS 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff G-4

11 May 1945.

MEMORANDUM:

TO : Chief of Staff, 80th Infantry Division.

PERIOD FOR HISTORICAL RECORDING
1 MARCH - 31 MARCH 1945

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SECTION I

SUPPLY

1. Class I

a. During the period seventy four (74) percent of the rations drawn (571,145) for the period 1 March 1945 to 29 March 1945 were of a "B" type.

b. On the 30th of March the balanced "A" ration component became unavailable and at the close of the period units were consuming 100% operational rations. The three (3) day reserve was increased to a five (5) day reserve pending the anticipated fast moving situation.

c. The automatic issue of RAC kits was normal on a basic factor of five (5) packs of cigarettes per man per week.

2. Class II

a. There was no improvement in the resupply of Ordnance parts, Engineer, QM and Signal items during the period. To alleviate the situation temporarily, captured items of Ordnance were used, however the receipts were not in such quantities as to effect the losses ensued during the period.

b. A new type 60mm Mortar was released to the Division. Eight (8) were issued to each Infantry Regiment and one was held by Ordnance as a replacement. No report as to the extent of its effectiveness has been ascertained.

c. Shoepacs and overshoes were turned in to QM since a change in the weather did not require the use of this seasonal equipment. Other items of winter clothing were scheduled to be turned in but no date had been specified as of the close of the period.

d. Two additional Carrier, Cargo, M29 were issued to each Infantry Regiment, and one for each Artillery Battalion. This item of equipment at this time proved of little advantage. The nature of the terrain and the good weather did not require the service of such a vehicle.

e. List of CL II and V shortages at the end of the period is attached.

3. Class III

a. The supply of Class III was normal with the Division QM operating an advance Division Supply Point.

b. The QM reserve was increased from 15,000 to 25,000 gallons.

4. Class V

a. There were 3,000 Baseball grenades received from XII Corps for allocation prior to leaving the Corps. The grenades were drawn and issued to Units. At the end of the period these new grenades were declared unsafe and all remaining were returned to Ordnance.

b. Through lack of transportation facilities the 702nd Tank Battalion was forced to place its tank rocket ammunition on the ground. Third United States Army agreed to relieve the Tank Battalion of this problem by accepting the ammunition at the location of the dump.

SECTION II

TRAFFIC

1. The road net in the Division Sector throughout the period was extremely limited and consisted of second and third class roads. Heavy rains initially caused a general breakdown of the surface. Improvised drags and one way circulation plans provided little improvement. Class I roads became available as the operation progressed to the Rhine River.

2. A prevalent obstruction throughout Germany were road blocks placed at the entrance to Towns and Cities. These, in most cases, were built by the civilians, hence the responsibility of removing the road block was placed on the civilian populace.

3. To prevent unauthorized traffic from entering the road net to the East of Kainerslautern it became necessary to establish a road block west of the city until the Division had cleared the area. It became necessary to establish another block south of the city of Bad Durkheim to again prevent unauthorized movement into the area until the Division had completed its move.

4. This swift moving situation prevented proper control of the traffic and the adopted policy of initially freezing of non-divisional units until the Division cleared was the only solution to prevent confusion and congestion.

5. Traffic teams gave priority attention to the forward areas. Two (2) traffic teams were attached to each Infantry Regiment for use in the area between the Regimental and Battalion Command Posts. This system insured the tactical units from unnecessary congestion in the area that must be kept open at all times.

6. The plan adopted for traffic control across the Rhine River Bridge is attached as Annex I.

7. Initially, the Navy by the use of LCI (Landing Craft Infantry) and LCM (Landing Craft Mechanized) and Pontoon Ferries assisted the crossing of vehicles prior to and after the construction of the Bridge. Considerable difficulty ensued from the standpoint of faulty equipment and insufficient loading space. Of the total of twelve (12) boats allotted for the operation not more than 1/2 were in operation at any one time. The tactical operation was hampered considerably by an unusual rush of administrative vehicles of higher echelons which carried priority clearance certificates. This ferrying continued throughout the operation. The Bridge traffic was extremely heavy and the same priority problem for administrative vehicles of higher echelons ensued. However, the system provided excellent control of both facilities and at no time was there any semblance of confusion or congestion at the bridge site.

SECTION III

EVACUATION

Evacuation for the period was normal. Comparatively few casualties were experienced. The use of the Field Hospital Platoon attached to the Division was negligible. Speed of movement and distance left the Hospital too far in the rear and to transport them the Division was required to furnish organic vehicles.

SECTION IV

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Initially a Shower and Bath Unit supported the operation closely, however, the speed of the operation and the swiftness of movement did not lend itself toward the use of this facility.

2. To provide adequate transportation for the Security Guard Section of the Military Police, each Regiment was required to turn in one (1) 1-1/2-ton truck to the Provost Marshall.