

HEADQUARTERS 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO #80, U. S. Army

G-2 AFTER ACTION REPORT

1 - 9 May 1945

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I - GENERAL SUMMARY

The absolute and complete disintegration of German resistance during the last days of the war in EUROPE was never more apparent than in the 80th Division's drive through AUSTRIA from BRAUNAU to LIEZEN. With the end in sight, thousands of German soldiers threw down their arms with the realization of the hopelessness of further resistance. During the Spring campaigns the idol of Nazism had been beaten to dust on all fronts and with each succeeding Allied victory, greater doubt was cast in warped minds for Nazi victory.

On 6 May 1945, the garrison of the town of KIRCHDORF surrendered (strength 350). On the evening of the same day, representatives of the 80th Division met with August Eigruber, Gauleiter of OBERDONAU, who desired to surrender his Gau to U.S. forces, providing all German troops in this Gau were permitted to disengage with U.S. forces and be allowed to move East to fight the Russians. This proposition was denied. The morning of 7 May, General Major (US Brig Gen) SOETH surrendered his Corps of 20,000 troops, formed two days previously in the National Redoubt area.

On 8 May 1945, General der Panzer Truppen BAUCK, Commanding General, 6th German Army, and former commander of German Army Group "G", surrendered his command, 102,000 strong, to the 80th Division.

II - ADVANCE TO THE INN RIVER

(1 - 3 May 1945)

With our bridgehead established South of the ISAR River in the vicinity of MAMMING, our troops advanced to the South against moderate resistance from small arms, automatic weapons and mortar fire. After the initial assault in

our expanding bridgehead, enemy resistance decreased sharply as our troops advanced and crossed the GROSS VILS River. All vehicular bridges over the river between FRONTENHAUSEN and ALTERSBURG were blown. In the vicinity of WALDING, our infantry met stubborn resistance from an estimated 150 enemy infantry fighting from dug in defensive positions. Reconnaissance elements encountered small groups of enemy infiltrating back into NEUOTTING, armed with machine guns and mortars. A fire fight ensued with no loss of ground and heavy casualties inflicted upon the enemy. Enemy air was active during this period, but no casualties were reported as a result of this air action.

### III - ADVANCE THROUGH AUSTRIA

(4 - 6 May 1945)

4 May 1945 the 80th Infantry Division attacked to the East from positions South and East of the INN River vicinity BRAUNAU and advanced rapidly against negligible resistance until late in the afternoon when forward elements encountered enemy strong points in the vicinity of SCHWANNSTADT and VOCKLANBRUCK. On 5 May the enemy attempted to resist our advance with small arms and bazookas at three widely separated points in the vicinity of REDHAM, SALHOLZ, and GRUBE. Outside of these three points, no enemy resistance was reported in the Division zone of advance.

### IV - TYROLEAN FINALE

(6 - 9 May 1945)

On 6 May 1945, Task Force SMYTHE was formed North of KIRCHDORF to clear the 80th Division zone West and North of the ENNS River. At 061200B May 1945, the town of KIRCHDORF and troops in that vicinity surrendered to the task force. It was learned that an unknown number of SS troops were holding KLAUS and intended to fight at the entrance to the STEYR River Valley. Prepared for stiff opposition, Task Force SMYTHE jumped off from KIRCHDORF at 061700B May 1945. Ten minutes after the jump off, a representative of the Defense Commissioner requested representatives of U.S. forces to meet with August Eigruber, Gauleiter of OBERDONAU, in WINDISCHGARSTEN to discuss surrender. The meeting took place as requested. Eigruber desired to surrender his Gau to U.S. forces, and be allowed to withdraw to the East to fight the Russians. This proposition was rejected. Eigruber was informed that all movement must stop and that the unconditional surrender of all troops be given. To this ultimatum, Eigruber requested four hours to contact Army Group Headquarters for a decision, and stated that he would send his representative to MICHELDORF by midnight with the answer. The emissary arrived with a negative reply.

During the trip 35 miles behind German lines to WINDISCHGARSTEN, our representatives observed some 10-15,000 enemy troops of all descriptions - horse-drawn artillery, tanks, mechanized equipment. As a result of these observations and the negative reply to the unconditional surrender terms, our

forces jumped off at 070800B May 1945 from KIRCHDORF, prepared to fight at KLAUS. Upon reaching this objective our troops encountered a blown bridge which blocked, temporarily, further access to the STEYR River Valley.

At this point, a representative from General Major SOETH approached our lines, and stated that the General desired to unconditionally surrender his Corps of 20,000 troops to U.S. forces. Corps SOETH had been formed tow days previously in the Eastern sector of the National Redoubt. Task Force SMYTHE accepted the surrender and continued their advance without opposition to SPITAL.

Also on 7 May 1945, SS Brigade KEITEL, under the command of SS Major KEITEL, surrendered to our forces. Brigade KEITEL, strength 3,000, was an element of the 6th SS Panzer Armh. KEITEL's report that SEPP DIETRICH still commanded the 6th SS Panzer Army was the first knowledge of the Allies that DIETRICH still lived. He had previously been reported dead by the Russians.

On 8 May 1945, General der Panzer Truppen BALCK, Commanding General, 6th German Army and former commander of Army Group "G", arrived in LIUZEN from the Southeast. He asked to surrender his entire army to the 80th Division. He was told that all troops West and North of the ENNS River by 090001 May 1945 could surrender to U. S. forces. The strength of the 6th German Army at the close of the war was estimated to be approximately 200,000 and consisted of the following units: 1st and 3d Panzer Divisions, 1st and 9th Mountain Divisions, 5th SS Panzer Division VIKING and 14th SS Grenadier Division (1st UKRANIAN). Approximately 102,000 of them were across the ENNS River by 090001 May 1945. In addition, elements of the 2d Panzer Army, 6th SS Panzer Army, 7th German Army and the 7th SS Mountain Division (Prinz Eugene) of Army Group "F" surrendered.

It is noteworthy that 30 days after cessation of hostilities, the 80th Division was still picking up an average of 1,000 PW's daily, evidencing how extremely scattered the German Army was at the war's end. The nature of the terrain in the Eastern portion of the National Redoubt makes for excellent defensive positions. Had the enemy been able to collect his forces and defend the two passes leading into this sector, he could have prolonged the war in this sector for some time, inflicting heavy casualties on our troops.

An analysis of the 212,295 PW's captured by the 80th Division while operational follows. It will be noted that the number of PW's captured varies inversely with the intensity of the fight. The hardest fighting produced the least number of PW's.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Average PW's per day</u>	<u>Total PW's</u>
9 Aug 44 - 19 Dec 44	FRANCE	9,694	9,694
20 Dec 44 - 6 Feb 45	LUXEMBOURG	2,880	12,574
7 Feb 45 - 9 Mar 45	SIEGFRIED LINE	4,688	17,262

<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>TOTAL FOR PERIOD</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE TOTAL</u>
10 Mar 45 - 27 Mar 45	SAAR-PALATINATE	7,495	24,757
28 Mar 45 - 22 Apr 45	Central GERMANY	38,257	63,014
23 Apr 45 - 9 May 45	Southern GERMANY and AUSTRIA	102,126	165,140
9 May 45 - 12 Jun 45	AUSTRIA	47,155	212,295

#### V - SPECIAL SECTIONS

#### CIC DETACHMENT

O/C Captain Thomas R. McMillen

During the month of May, 1945, the 80th CIC Detachment directed most of its attention toward eliminating counterintelligence personalities from the Saltskammergut sector of the National Redoubt. The net result of this operation in terms of arrests, is as follows:

Agents	13
Security Arrests	111
Political Arrests	648
Total	772

The most notable individual apprehended was SS Obergruppenfuhrer, Dr Ernst KALTENBRUNNER, Chief of all police agencies in the Reich, who was apprehended along with his adjutant, Arthur SCHEIDLER, and two SS guards. Information was received that the party was hiding out with false papers, heavily armed, in a remote cabin near Alt Aussee. Special Agent Robert E. Matteson, of the 80th CIC Detachment, organized and led a patrol to effect the arrest, climbing over mountainous and glacial terrain for six hours in darkness, and personally confronted his suspects alone and unarmed. For this exploit, Agent Matteson was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Subsequent investigation also implicated Dr. Rudolf PRUMARA in the hideout plot. This physician, who was director of an SS hospital in Alt Aussee, and was Orts Kommandant of the town, had been secretly active in several Nazi and SS plans and was evacuated as a security threat. Likewise evacuated after subsequent investigation was KALTENBRUNNER'S wife, Elizabeth.

In the same area as KALTENBRUNNER and operating under his direction was a group of Sicherheitsdienst officials led by Wilhelm WANECK, chief of Amt VI-E of the SD. Along with him was Werner GOLSCH who was the leader of an SD Group whose mission was to draw the United States into war against RUSSIA, and Dr Wil HOETTL, a representative from this group who assertedly had met with members of the U. S. State Department in Switzerland. All were arrested along with five other SD officials and a radio transmitter which had been in contact with Washington and other capitals. Simultaneously Paul NEUNTLUFEL, GOLSCH'S Chief of Staff, were arrested, operating three more radio sets in another valley some 50 miles away from the original group.

Members of the Gestapo and Sicherheitsdienst, the most sought after group in Nazi Germany and probably the key to Allied control of underground activity, contributed other personalities in addition to the above. All told, fourteen members of the Gestapo were apprehended, including the former head of the Budapest office Othmer TRINKA, and the head of the Vienna office, Franz HUBER. Several key figures of the SD were likewise located, among them the actual chief of the Oberdonau sector.

Several members of Reich central government were located including Prince Friedrich Christian Zu SCHNUEBURG-LIPPE, Ministerialrat in the Reich Propaganda Ministry and former adjutant to GOEBBELS; Dr Wolfgang MUGLBERGER, head of the press bureau of the German legation in Berlin; and Victor MOCKESCH, a former Yugoslavian priest who turned Nazi and became an official in Fremdsprache, a news agency of the Reich Propaganda Ministry.

The area also proved to hold several ranking members of the Reich Foreign Office, most notable of whom was Gunther JETTIBURG, Minister Plenipotentiary to Greece. Wilhelm KNOTHE, Nazi General Consul to Paris was likewise arrested as was Franz ROTHEN, advisor to the chief of the Radio Political Department of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. More are reported below concerning Hungary and Croatia.

Among the high ranking political officials of the area apprehended were Hans BLASCHKE, the stadtrat and acting burgermeister of Vienna; Dr Edmund SCHEITFBERGER, the Oberburgermeister of Wiener-Neustadt; and Friedrich KNAUS, Oberburgermeister of Marburg/Brau. SS Gruppenfuhrer Walter SCHUMINA, the kohere SS and Polizei Fuhrer of Wehrkreis XVII and formerly holding the same position in Greece, his chief of staff Horst KUNZ; SS Standartenfuhrer Dr Rudolf MILLNER, assistant Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und SI of Vienna, holding the position of Regierungsdirektor; Johann VURM, Bezirksruppenfuhrer of RLB for Whr XVII and adjutant to Gauleiter of Oberdonau; and Dr Johannes MEISSNER, state prosecutor for Gau Styria and Corinthia, were all arrested during the period. Among the other political personalities evacuated were the Kreisleiters of Graz and Liezen, several Gauhauptauleiters, the wives of two gauleiters (their husbands both having committed suicide according to reports from other headquarters), and the assistants to the same gauleiters.

Four German generals were arrested in civilian clothes, one of whom was in charge of all PWE's in Austria. Another interesting personality was Norman BAILEY-STEWART, an English officer who had joined the German secret Service and later originated the Lord Haw Haw Program for the Reich Propaganda Ministry. He was wanted by British authorities for treason and was hiding under an assumed name.

Interesting Hungarian Nazis were arrested, beginning with Laszlo TEMESVARY, who was appointed President of the Hungarian National Bank by his good friend Ferenc SALASEI, the Hungarian quisling. Interned with him was the personnel manager of the bank, Emil FAYEXAS, whose real job was to

organize bank employees into the NSDAP. Seized at the bank was 30,000,000 worth of gold bullion, \$300,000 worth of foreign currencies, and many unanalyzed strong boxes of valuables. Later Gavor VAJNA, Minister of Interior under the Salaszi government, was arrested, as was Dr Karcly KISS, head of the Hungarian equivalent of the RAD.

Several personalities representing the German influence in Hungary were also seized, including Frank GASCY, and Dr Georg GOUISCHILLER, respectively the leader and vice-president of the Volksbund, German National Party in Hungary, whose organization formed the liaison between the Hungarian government and the Reich Foreign Ministry. Dr Kurth JESERICH, chief of the Speer Ministry's German Industrial Board in Hungary, Clames MARX, chief of the Financial Section of the Board, and Heinz von OPOEN, chief of the Raw Material Production Section of the Board were likewise interned. These three men had directed the agency by which the Nazis were economically draining Hungary.

Other Hungarian personalities arrested were Captain Marton ZOENEL, an SS officer previously sentenced to death for the responsibility in the Ujvidek massacre of civilians, and Dr. Sigmund de KOTANYI, interpreter for the Hohere SS and Polizei Fuhrer of Hungary.

When Germany created the puppet state of Slovakia in 1941, Hans LUBIN was withdrawn from the Wehrmacht and made ambassador to this new "Country", likewise bearing the rank of Obergruppenfuhrer in the SA. He was arrested at the same time as Prime Minister Stefan PISO, the Minister of Finance Dr Wikulas PRUZINSKY, the Minister of Education Aladar KOCIS, and the Minister of Commerce Gajza MEDKICKY. Later the Detachment arrested Kostenac IRGUTIN, the Croatian Consul General in Berlin, and Alexander MACH, the Croatian secretary of Interior. The highest ranking member of the Volksgruppe in Croatia arrested during the period was its economic chief Ferdinand GASTEINER. The head of The Estonian government during German occupation, Dr Kjalmar MAE, was likewise arrested.

Two investigations of special interest were conducted by this office. The first was concerned with a large counterfeiting plant controlled by the Abwehr at Zipf. Operated by conscripted Jewish engravers and professional counterfeiters, this unit was equipped to turn out excellent reproductions of British, American, and other currency, as well as false credentials and official stationery. Personnel from the plant was located at various concentration camps in the area, and its products have been recovered from the Enns River, Toplitz See, and Lake Garmunden. The investigation has been taken over by higher headquarters.

The second matter of interest was the Chemical and Physical Experimental Laboratory for Rockets (underwater) which was found at Gruhl See at Gossl. Under the direction of Dr Herman DETERMANN, this unit had moved from Keil and was working among other things, to perfect a rocket which could be fired from a submerged submarine. Beside DETERMANN and a dozen of his technicians, the Detachment arrested Walter Riemen, who had been chief of the construction



section of the V-2 experimental plant on the island of Usedom in the Baltic Sea.

During this period, about half of the Detachment personnel was occupied in screening over 100,000 German PWs who were being discharged. A large number of arrests were and are being made at this point, the final results of which are not included in this report.

IPW Team #75 and MII Team #444-C

C/C Captain Paul Loeser

Since MII Team 444-G was attached to this team for the entire period, this report accounts for the activities of both teams.

PWs processed during May:	136,129
PWs discharged during May:	23,338

The prisoners processed during May constituted in general, the Sixth German Army with all its subsidiaries and attached units as of VE day. Numerically they constituted three times the amount of prisoners captured by this Division during the entire operational time.

The greatest number of these prisoners arrived prior to VE day and were located in 9 camps throughout the area under the administration of their own officers. The IPW personnel was spread far and wide over an area comprising over 100 kilometers in each direction in guiding all the Germans to the concentration area. Once assembled, the IPW and MII combined with the CIC in the Merculean task of screening this conglomeration of German soldiery. For this purpose reinforcements were called upon from the 13th Armored Division as well as IPW Team #202 which reported direct from MIS. With the combined force of 30 interrogators, 16 discharge stations were operated, where each and every PW prior to discharge was interrogated for his military, political, industrial and geographical background. They were classified and then either rejected, deferred or discharged on the spot. For the discharge machinery nearly 1,000 Germans were employed in Medical, linguistic, clerical and labor capacities under supervision of U.S. personnel. Once the machinery was set up, a maximum of 8,000 prisoners could be handled daily.

OB Team #34

O/C Team - 1st Lt Armand V. Paolino

The Order of Battle Team continued to perform routine tasks. Of particular interest was the active participation of a member of this team with Task Force SMYTHE which was formed on 6 May 1945. As interrogator of prisoners of war and as interpreter, he took part in various surrender talks which led to the surrender of the Sixth German Army. He also served as interpreter for the Division Commander.

After cessation of hostilities a member of this team was attached to the Division Prisoner of War Enclosure, where his services were used for the discharge of German officers and enlisted men. During the same period he served as an Order of Battle Analyst to the Division CIC and IPW Teams.

Public Relations Section

O/C Captain Bernard Didinsky

In addition to routine releases the Division Public Relations Office prepared four news stories, five photo stories and two special features, "Heroes" and "Battles."

Routine duties included the release of eighty human interest stories, ten hundred twenty-seven decorations, one hundred seventy-five citations and six hundred twenty-one promotions submitted to appropriate agencies.

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Lt. Colonel, G.S. C.  
AC of S, G-2.