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OFFICE OF THE SUPREME COMMANDER

31 December, 1944

OUTLINE PLAN



My outline plan of operations, based on the current situation and prospects, is as follows:

Basic plan - to destroy enemy forces west of Rhine, north of the Moselle, and to prepare for crossing the Rhine in force with the main effort north of the Ruhr. The several tasks are:

- a. To reduce the Ardennes salient by immediate attacks from north and south, with present command arrangements undisturbed until tactical victory within the salient has been assured and the Third Army and Collins' Corps have joined up for a drive to the northeast. Bradley then to resume command of the First U.S. Army. (Enemy action within the salient indicates his determination to make this battle an all-out effort with his mobile forces. Therefore we must be prepared to use everything consistent with minimum security requirements to accomplish their destruction.)
- b. Thereafter First and Third Armies to drive to northeast on general line Prum-Bonn, eventually to Rhine.
- c. When a is accomplished, 21st Army Group, with Ninth U.S. Army under operational command, to resume preparations for "Veritable".
- d. All priorities in building up strength of U.S. Armies in personnel, material and units, to go to 12th Army Group.
- e. The front south of Moselle to be strictly defensive for the present.
- f. I will build up a reserve (including re-fitting divisions) which will be available to reinforce success.
- g. As soon as reduction of Ardennes salient permits, Hqs 12th Army Group will move north, in close proximity to 21st Army Group Hq.
- h. From now on, any detailed or emergency coordination required along Army Group boundaries in the north will be effected by the two Army Group commanders with power of decision vested in C.G., 21st Army Group.

The one thing that must now be prevented is the stabilization of the enemy salient with infantry, permitting him opportunity to use his Panzers at will on any part of the front. We must regain the initiative, and speed and energy are essential.

At conclusion of the battle for the salient, assignment of Divisions to Army Groups and changes in boundaries will be announced.

*copy # 3, my files,*

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