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THE ALLIED LANDING AT ANZIO-NETTUNO, 22 JANUARY–4 MARCH 1944

Operation SHINGLE

Milan Vego

The Allied amphibious landing at Anzio-Nettuno on 22 January 1944 (Operation SHINGLE) was a major offensive joint/combined operation. Despite Allied superiority in the air and at sea, the Germans were able to bring quickly large forces and to seal the beachhead. Both sides suffered almost equal losses during some four months of fighting. The Allied forces on the beachhead were unable to make a breakout or to capture the critically important Colli Laziali (the Alban Hills) that dominated two main supply routes to the German forces on the Gustav Line until the main Fifth Army advanced close to the beachhead. Only the naval part of the operation was excellently planned and executed. The decision to launch Operation SHINGLE was primarily based on political-strategic, not operational, considerations. Ironically, the Allied political leaders, Winston S. Churchill in particular, and high operational commanders grossly underestimated the Germans' will to fight and their war-fighting capabilities. Another major reason for the failure of Operation SHINGLE was very poor leadership on the part of the Allied operational commanders. In retrospect, on the basis of the true situation at the time, SHINGLE should not have been planned, let alone executed. It never had a realistic chance of success. It was a vast gamble that ultimately failed.

THE SETTING

In the spring of 1943, the strategic situation in the Mediterranean was highly favorable to the Western Allies. The campaign in North Africa had ended with the surrender of the German-Italian forces in Tunisia on 12 May 1943. At a conference in Washington, D.C., on 12–27 May (TRIDENT) the highest Allied leaders confirmed their decision next to seize Sicily (Operation HUSKY). The Combined

Chiefs of Staff (CCS) directed General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had been Supreme Commander Allied Forces, the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, to prepare options for continuing the war in southern Europe after capturing Sicily.¹ Eisenhower's staff considered three options for the future operations in the Mediterranean theater. One envisaged a seizure of Sardinia and Corsica, followed by a descent on southern France; the main advantage of this option was that it would support the main effort in Normandy. The second option, favored by the British, contemplated a thrust through Italy, to support guerrillas in the Balkans and bring Turkey into the war on the Allied side. The third option was a landing in southern Italy, then an advance northward, using Italy as a logistical base and acquiring airfields for long-range bombing of Germany and the Balkans. It was believed that this option would probably force Italy out of the war, in which case it would remove twenty-one Italian divisions from the Balkans and five from France. The Germans would be forced to take over the defense of the Italian Peninsula and thereby weaken their forces in Western Europe.²

The relative ease of victory on Sicily convinced the British that the Allies should now assume higher risks and invade Italy's mainland and thereby drive it out of the war. The first step, the British argued, should be the capture of Naples, then Rome. American planners hesitated to embark on such a course of action. They were (and as it turned out, correctly) much concerned that an invasion of the Italian mainland would lead to a long and indecisive peninsular campaign. It would also probably require additional resources. This, in turn, would negatively affect the buildup of the Allied forces for the planned Normandy invasion (Operation OVERLORD).³

On 3 September 1943 the Allies signed in Cassibile, Sicily, a secret armistice with the Italian government. This was not made public until 8 September, when Italy's surrender was formally announced.⁴ On 3 September, the British Eighth Army crossed the Strait of Messina and landed in Reggio di Calabria (Operation BAYTOWN). Six days later, the Allies carried out a large amphibious landing in the Bay of Salerno (Operation AVALANCHE). The invading force, composed of the U.S. Fifth Army, commanded by General Mark W. Clark and comprising the U.S. VI Corps and the British 10 Corps, was transported by some 450 ships.⁵ The majority of the Allied invading force was assembled at bases in North Africa and made a "shore to shore" assault. All the Allied landing craft and smaller escort vessels had to be refueled on the way from the North African ports and hence were staged through two ports on Sicily's north coast.⁶

After landing at Salerno the U.S. Fifth Army advanced along the west coast to Naples, while the British Eighth Army moved up the east coast. By the end of September, the Fifth Army had reached the Volturno River. Naples was liberated on 1 October, but its port was virtually destroyed.⁷ The British Eighth Army

seized the Foggia airfield complex intact on 29 September. Despite considerable numerical superiority on the ground, at sea, and in the air, the Allies had suffered over twelve thousand casualties (two thousand killed, seven thousand wounded, 3,500 missing).⁸

The stubborn delaying defense of southern Italy by the Tenth Army convinced Adolf Hitler not to abandon Italy. On 4 October, he decided that a stand would be made south of Rome. At that time, the Germans had only eight divisions of the Tenth Army deployed in the southern part of Italy. In northern Italy were nine divisions of Army Group B, of which by the end of October three were to leave for the eastern front and two for southern Italy. Additionally, two divisions would arrive from southern France.⁹ Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, Commander-in-Chief (CINC) of the South (Sued), was directed to conduct a delaying defense as far as the Gaeta–Ortona line.¹⁰ Hence, the Germans hurriedly constructed several successive defense lines across the Italian Peninsula.¹¹

An important Allied conference was held in Cairo on 22–26 November 1943 (SEXTANT). Churchill, the British prime minister, wanted the Allies to make a more determined effort in Italy. He argued that the Allied forces should reach the Po River by spring 1944, even if that meant weakening or delaying the Normandy invasion. In contrast, the Americans insisted that no new operations in the Mediterranean should adversely affect planned redeployments of the Allied forces to Normandy. The Allies decided at Cairo to cancel a planned landing on the Andaman Islands in the eastern Indian Ocean, releasing forces for other theaters. Admiral Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander, South East Asia Command, was directed to send about half his amphibious craft to the Mediterranean and England.¹²

At the Allied conference in Tehran on 28 November–1 December 1943 (EUREKA), the main topic was whether to focus on the planned invasion of Normandy or intensify Anglo-American efforts in the Mediterranean. Both President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, insisted on an attack across the English Channel, combined with a landing in southern France. Churchill agreed on southern France but insisted on a more determined effort in Italy. For him, it was paramount that the Allies capture the Italian capital, Rome, by mounting a large amphibious landing in the vicinity of Rome. Churchill also advocated intensified efforts to entice Turkey to enter the war against Germany. However, Roosevelt and Stalin were adamant that the focus remain on Normandy. A second conference in Cairo, on 4–6 December, confirmed the decision of the Tehran conference that OVERLORD would be the most important Allied effort in 1944 and nothing was to be done elsewhere to endanger its success.¹³

By 1 December, the Allied armies in Italy had reached the Bernhardt Line, defended by the XIV Panzer Corps (in the Tenth Army). This line was a bulge

in front of the more formidable Gustav Line, constructed to protect the approaches to Rome through the Liri Valley. The Gustav Line consisted of a series of interlocking positions extending across the peninsula from just north of the mouth of the Garigliano River on the Tyrrhenian Sea to the mouth of the Sangro River on the Adriatic coast. It centered on the town of Cassino, near which was a 1,700-foot-high peak, on the top of which stood a sixth-century monastery. The Gustav Line, eighty-four miles long and ten miles deep, consisted of deep underground bunkers, labyrinthine tunnels, machine-gun emplacements, antitank ditches, minefields, and concertina wires.¹⁴ Kesselring promised Hitler to hold the Gustav Line for at least six months.¹⁵

ALLIED THEATER COMMAND ORGANIZATION

The Allied command organization in the Mediterranean was highly fragmented. Various Allied headquarters in the Mediterranean theater were separated by long distances. This in turn made operational planning very difficult. Also, planning procedures in the British and the American staffs were considerably different.

On 10 December 1943, the CCS directed consolidation of all Allied major commands in the Mediterranean theater. All British forces in the Middle East were placed under Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) commanded by General Eisenhower, who was appointed at the same time Allied CINC, Mediterranean Theater. A major problem in the new command structure was the lack of a component commander for all the Allied ground forces deployed in the theater. Eisenhower's deputy was a British general, Harold Alexander, who was also commander of the 15th Army Group, composed of two armies (the U.S. Fifth Army and the British Eighth Army). Directly subordinate to Eisenhower were General George S. Patton, commander of the U.S. Seventh Army (in Sicily); General Alphonse Juin, commander of the French Expeditionary Corps (FEC); and General Władysław Anders, commanding the Polish 2nd Corps.

The decision to consider the Normandy landing the highest priority in 1944 led to several major command changes in the Mediterranean. The most important event was the departure of Eisenhower to become Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces for the invasion of northwestern Europe. The CCS did not request Eisenhower to leave the theater until after the capture of Rome, but he transferred his staff to London right away, believing the immediate prospects of taking Rome to be poor.¹⁶ On 8 January 1944, Eisenhower was replaced by a British general, Henry Maitland Wilson (his title later changed to Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean Theater).¹⁷ General Bernard Montgomery, who had commanded the Eighth Army, was chosen to lead an army group for the cross-Channel invasion; he was replaced by Lieutenant General Oliver W. H. Leese on 1 January 1944. (These command changes had originally been planned to go into

effect in late December 1943.)¹⁸ On 9 March 1944, Alexander became Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean Theater; his 15th Army Group became the Allied Forces in Italy on 11 January 1944. Seven days later it was renamed the Allied Central Mediterranean Force and on 9 March 1944 Allied Armies in Italy.¹⁹

The highest-ranking Allied air commander in the theater was British air chief marshal Arthur W. Tedder, Commander, Mediterranean Air Command (changed to the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, or MAAF, on 10 December 1943). In December 1943, it was announced that Tedder would go to England and become Eisenhower's deputy. He was replaced by Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker, of the U.S. Army Air Forces.²⁰ The principal components of the theater's Allied air forces were the Middle East Air Command (renamed Headquarters, Royal Air Force, Middle East on 10 December 1943), U.S. Ninth Air Force, and Northwest African Air Forces. The latter in turn consisted of the Northwest African Strategic Air Force (title changed to Mediterranean Allied Strategic Air Force on 1 January 1944), the Northwest African Coastal Air Force (as of 1 January 1944, Mediterranean Allied Coastal Air Force), the Northwest African Tactical Air Forces (which became Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Force on 1 January 1944), the Northwest African Troop Carrier Command (disbanded on 1 January 1944), the Northwest African Photographic Reconnaissance Wing (renamed Mediterranean Allied Photographic Reconnaissance Wing on 1 January 1944), and the Northwest African Air Service Command (disbanded on 1 January 1944).²¹

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew B. Cunningham of the Royal Navy was Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. When in October Admiral Cunningham was appointed First Sea Lord, he was relieved by a British admiral, John H. D. Cunningham.²² The most senior U.S. Navy officer in the Mediterranean was Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, whose title had changed for each major amphibious landing operation, including AVALANCHE. On 16 September 1943, Rear Admiral Frank J. Lowry relieved Richard L. Conolly as Commander, Landing Craft and Base, North African Waters (Comlandcrabnaw). Lowry also replaced Rear Admiral John L. Hall as Commander, VIII Amphibious Force, on 8 November 1943.

GERMAN THEATER ORGANIZATION

Field Marshal Kesselring as CINC South had a full command over the forces of all three services deployed in his theater. However, in November, just when the Germans most needed unified command in the Italian theater, Hitler directed a change in command relationships. Naval Command Italy (Deutsches Marinekommando Italien) and 2nd Air Fleet (II Luftflotte) were resubordinated to their respective services and directed thereafter merely to cooperate with Kesselring.²³ As CINC South, Kesselring directly commanded eight divisions, mostly mechanized or panzer (tank). Some of these forces were newly arrived

from North Africa and had not been brought back to full strength. All German ground units had been considerably weakened during the long withdrawal from Salerno.²⁴

On 16 August 1943, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and his Army Group B were deployed to the northern part of Italy. Army Group B's mission was to pacify northern Italy, crush the insurgents in Istria and Slovenia, protect the lines of communication and coastal flanks of the theater, and organize the defense of northern Italy.²⁵ Army Group B's thirteen divisions were mostly reorganized or reactivated units from the eastern front, generally unsuitable, because of a lack of mobility, for combat in the southern part of Italy.²⁶ Normally, Kesselring as a theater commander should have been in control of both army groups. However, he and Rommel were on the same level, directly subordinate to Hitler.

On 6 November, however, Kesselring was appointed CINC of a newly established theater command, Southwest (Suedwest), as well as commander of Army Group C (formally established on 21 November). Army Group B was dissolved.²⁷ Rommel was sent to strengthen the "Atlantic Wall" (*Atlantikwall*) defenses in Western Europe against a large-scale invasion. Part of his staff was assigned to the headquarters of CINC Southwest and the rest to the newly created AOK (Armeeoberkommando) 14 (a level between an army group and army corps), known also as the Fourteenth Army. On 21 November 1943, Kesselring formally took over command of the entire Italian theater.

The Luftwaffe units operating from Italy had been subordinated on 10 June 1940 to the Commanding General of the German Luftwaffe in Italy (Kommandierende General der Deutschen Luftwaffe in Italien). In 1941, this command was changed to "General of the German Luftwaffe at the Supreme Command of the Royal Italian Air Force (ITALUFT)."

German Naval Command Italy controlled surface forces and all other elements of the Kriegsmarine (navy) present. The exception was that the Chief of Naval Transport was directly subordinate to the Supreme Command of the Navy. In February 1943 a special staff was created for the convoying service within the Italian Naval Ministry. After the fall of Tunisia in May 1943, this staff was merged with the German Naval Command Italy. In November 1941, the newly created staff of the Commander, U-Boats, Italy was incorporated into the German Naval Command Italy, where it remained until March 1943. After the capitulation of Italy in September 1943, the Germans took over control of coastal defense of northern Italy. In late spring 1944, the major commands of the German Naval Command Italy were the 7th Defense Division (headquarters in Nervi); Sea Defense Commandant Italian Riviera (La Spezia); and Sea Defense Commandant Western Adriatic (Venice).²⁸

ALLIED AND GERMAN OPERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The main sources of information for Allied intelligence were ULTRA radio intercepts, human intelligence obtained from agents in German-occupied territory, German prisoners of war, air reconnaissance, and various methods of technical intelligence. However, by far the most important source on German orders of battle, states of supply, and plans and intentions was ULTRA intercepts, decoded at Bletchley Park, northwest of London. ULTRA provided a steady stream of accurate and often timely information on the movements of German forces in Italy. Among other things, it revealed the timing of Kesselring's withdrawals to a series of temporary defense positions all the way to the Gustav Line. ULTRA analysts read two or sometimes three messages from the Luftwaffe's liaison officers almost every day. ULTRA also read the situation reports of the Tenth Army, Army Group B, and its successor the Fourteenth Army, as well as messages exchanged among Hitler, the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (OKW), and Kesselring. Divisional reliefs and withdrawals rarely escaped the attention of the ULTRA analysts. ULTRA also intercepted and decrypted supply reports; hence, Allied planners were fully informed about the current state and shortages of fuel, ammunition, and rations.²⁹

ULTRA messages were generally (but with some exceptions) shared only within Allied headquarters at the army level or higher. Moreover, at the army level ULTRA reports were not known to many American planners. For example, only four persons within Fifth Army headquarters were authorized to read ULTRA intercepts (Clark; the chief of staff, General Alfred Gruenther; the staff intelligence officer, or G-2, Colonel Edwin B. Howard; and the deputy G-2, a Major Riggs).³⁰ The Fifth Army's operations officer (or G-3, Brigadier General Donald W. Brann) was not authorized to know about ULTRA, but the 15th Army Group's G-3 (British brigadier general R. B. Mainwaring) was. That put General Clark's G-3 at a great disadvantage in discussions with General Alexander's.³¹

ULTRA decrypts showed in essence how the front line looked to the German side. Very often they revealed what the Germans knew about Allied forces and how they interpreted their own reconnaissance reports. For example, on 10 January 1944, ULTRA revealed that Kesselring had learned on the previous day from a report sent on 3 January by the Abwehr (military intelligence) station chief in Paris that General Maitland Wilson was pushing the preparations of landing operations on both coasts of Italy with all forces available in the Mediterranean. The Germans expected the landings on approximately 15 January.³² In the first three weeks of January 1944 ULTRA revealed that the Germans had repeatedly misinterpreted the movements of Allied naval vessels in the Mediterranean. For example, the Germans were apparently unconcerned about the disappearance

of landing craft from Bizerte and about the presence of the Allied carriers in the eastern Mediterranean, thought to be carrying reinforcements of land-based aircraft.³³

Kesseling and his major subordinate commanders apparently had fairly accurate knowledge of the Allied forces along the Gustav Line and in southern Italy. The Germans knew the approximate size and composition of enemy air and naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean. Their main sources of intelligence were radio intercepts by air reconnaissance and enemy prisoners of war. Their greatest problem was that they did not have information on enemy plans and intentions. Hence, they relied on patterns in Allied actions of the past to make assessments about the future. Specifically, the Germans had only an approximate knowledge of enemy amphibious shipping, enemy preparations for amphibious landings, and possible landing sites. Also, most German air reconnaissance reports pertained to the western and central Mediterranean. Many additionally focused on the sea area between Sicily and North Africa, especially the port of Alexandria.

ALLIED PLANS

The idea of an amphibious landing in the German rear originated when in October 1943 it became obvious that the Germans would fight for the entire peninsula rather than quickly withdraw to northern Italy. Allied planners looked for a way to break the stalemate now produced by the poor weather, rough terrain, and stiffening resistance.³⁴ The British carried out a successful landing at Termoli, on Italy's eastern coast, on 2–3 October 1943. This raised hopes that the Allies might replicate that success on the western coast and thereby outflank the Gustav Line.³⁵

At a meeting at La Marsa, Tunisia, in late October and early November 1943, Eisenhower and his senior commander discussed how to increase the tempo of the lagging campaign in Italy. General Alexander strongly advocated an amphibious landing behind the German right flank, as a part of the general offensive to seize Rome.³⁶ He envisioned landing five divisions, an idea that never got traction, because it was clearly unrealistic. The Allies had neither the troops nor amphibious lift for such a large operation.³⁷

But Eisenhower approved Alexander's idea for a landing south of the Tiber River once the Fifth Army had reached a point from which it could link up with the landing force within forty-eight hours.³⁸ Eisenhower also promised that he would press the CCS to retain enough tank landing ships (LSTs) in the Mediterranean for such a landing. At the Allied conference in Quebec (QUADRANT) on 17–24 August 1943 the decision had been made that sixty-eight of the ninety LSTs in the Mediterranean would be redeployed immediately to other theaters.³⁹ However, the British wanted to retain fifty-six British and twelve U.S. LSTs in the theater until 15 December. They also looked for more troops for a divisional

amphibious assault.⁴⁰ The situation with the smaller tank landing craft (LCT) was little better; out of 201 LCTs in the Mediterranean, some 120 were scheduled to sail for Britain and India. The remainder were all lighter types, operating continuously serving as ferries, supplying the Eighth Army in the Adriatic, and working ports on both Italian coasts.⁴¹

By 17 November, the 15th Army Group had completed plans for a two-phase offensive in southern Italy. The Eighth Army would attack as soon as 20 November. This would be followed after seven to ten days by an attack by the Fifth Army. If opportune, an amphibious landing would be launched in conjunction with the Fifth Army's reaching Frosinone (some fifty miles by road northeast of Anzio). Beaches near Anzio were chosen.⁴² Originally, the landing was scheduled for 20 December 1943.⁴³

The main Fifth Army offensive against the Gustav Line started on 1 December. Yet even in ten days of fighting the Fifth Army failed to reach Monte Cassino or Frosinone.⁴⁴ The British Eighth Army, on the Adriatic front, was also bogged down.⁴⁵ Because of the lack of success in breaking through the Gustav Line, Clark proposed on 10 December that the landing at Anzio not be tied to the advance of the main Fifth Army.⁴⁶ The landing force would dig in, he suggested, consolidate the beachhead, and wait for the main Fifth Army. Clark's proposal required a much larger landing force than previously envisioned. It also placed much greater demands on amphibious lift and logistical support. A major consequence of Clark's proposed changes was that the landing at Anzio would become essentially an independent major operation. In any case, the original timing of the Anzio landing for 20 December was impossible; it was estimated that the earliest that the Fifth Army would reach Frosinone was 10 January 1944.⁴⁷ This delay would complicate the situation with the amphibious lift. After taking all the LSTs to complete the buildup on Corsica (in preparation for invasion of southern France) there would be only thirty-seven LSTs on hand instead of the forty-two LSTs considered necessary by the Fifth Army's staff.⁴⁸ Hence, on 18 December Clark recommended to Alexander that he cancel the landing at Anzio. Four days later Alexander did so.⁴⁹ The Fifth Army's planning staff was reduced, and the 3rd Infantry Division (ID), earmarked for the Anzio landing, recalled its planning personnel to prepare for employment on the main front.⁵⁰

Planning for the Anzio landing was unexpectedly revived by Churchill in late December. The major command changes in the Mediterranean announced in December 1943 had a significant effect on the Allied strategy in that theater. Until then General George Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, had essentially made strategic decisions for that theater, through Eisenhower. However, after Eisenhower moved to England, Marshall's influence in the theater was greatly weakened. The British Chief of Staff, General Sir Alan Brooke, de facto assumed

the primary planning responsibility for the Mediterranean. As a result, Churchill now played a greater role in the Mediterranean strategy.⁵¹

Political-strategic, not operational, considerations were most important in the final decision for the landing at Anzio.⁵² After the Cairo conference, Churchill was both physically and mentally exhausted. He fell seriously ill (pneumonia) for about a week and then spent several weeks recuperating. Hence, he had ample time to review the results of the Cairo and Tehran discussions and the reasons for his failure to persuade Roosevelt to focus on the eastern Mediterranean.⁵³

Churchill convened and presided over a special conference at Tunis on Christmas Day. There he argued, overly optimistically, that a landing at Anzio would cause the Germans to withdraw forces from central and southern Italy and thereby hasten the liberation of Rome. Eisenhower disagreed but was overruled.⁵⁴ Because of his illness, Churchill's subordinates were unwilling to challenge strongly views on which he had already made up his mind. The decision to land at Anzio was eventually made by Churchill. Opposing and skeptical views did not receive proper hearings. Clark wrote in his memoirs that Brigadier Kenneth W. D. Strong, the British G-2 of AFHQ and thus Eisenhower's intelligence officer, was doubtful about the advisability of the Anzio operation. Strong was well aware of the political importance of Rome to Hitler. He also knew that the German divisions in France and Yugoslavia were not busy in the winter months and could be moved to Italy if needed. Churchill disregarded this and believed that the capture of Rome was worth the risk.⁵⁵ Not surprisingly, Alexander deferred to his prime minister. Also, a decision was made to double the original size of the landing force by adding one British division.⁵⁶

On 26 December, Churchill wrote to Roosevelt that the Anzio landing would decide the battle of Rome and probably achieve the destruction of the substantial part of the German army. Churchill also requested Roosevelt's approval not to move LSTs out of the Mediterranean for a few weeks. Two days later, Roosevelt sent a positive response, agreeing to delay redeployment of fifty-eight LSTs scheduled for Operation OVERLORD.⁵⁷ Roosevelt imposed the condition, however, that OVERLORD remain the paramount operation and proposed landings on Rhodes and in the Aegean be sidetracked.⁵⁸ Another condition was that the Anzio landing not interfere with the air buildup on Corsica for the invasion of southern France (Operation ANVIL, later renamed DRAGOON).⁵⁹

Churchill's idea of landing at Anzio complicated the American plan for a supporting drive (a landing in southern France) for the cross-Channel invasion. General Marshall later admitted that the struggle over the size, composition, and timing of ANVIL constituted "a bitter and unremitting fight with the British right up to the launching."⁶⁰

Churchill presided at a conference in Marrakech on 7 January attended by Maitland Wilson, Alexander, Walter Bedell Smith (Chief of Staff, Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces), and Admiral Andrew Cunningham. There a decision was made to move D-day for the Anzio landing ahead as much as possible to gain time before the required redeployment of the LSTs to England. The aim was to give the LSTs time for two trips to Anzio or, in the event of favorable weather, three. This, in turn, would speed up transport of supplies and follow-up forces. At the second and final day of the conference, most of the talking was done by Alexander and Cunningham.⁶¹ Alexander was able to secure retention of twenty-four LSTs until the end of February.⁶² Churchill was very happy with the results of the Marrakech conference, wiring Roosevelt that “unanimous agreement for action as proposed was reached by the responsible officials of both countries and all services.” Churchill left Marrakech on 14 January, having won his argument that the Anzio landing must be carried out.⁶³

THE AMPHIBIOUS OBJECTIVE

Anzio was selected as the amphibious objective because of its proximity to Rome and also to the German front line. Anzio is some thirty-five miles southwest of Rome, and it was about sixty-two miles from the front, on the Garigliano River.⁶⁴ Anzio was a small port enclosed by a six-hundred-yard-long breakwater. Its anchorage could be used for ships with drafts of ten feet and less. It is subject to considerable swell.⁶⁵ North and east of Anzio the coast consists of sandy, gently shelving beaches, with long dunes above the high-water mark. All the beaches are exposed.⁶⁶ With the exception of the beach just southeastward of the harbor, all were too rocky, were too small, or had gradients too shallow for a landing.⁶⁷ No gradient was better than one foot in sixty; the average was 1 : 90. The gradient on the west beach was 1 : 120.⁶⁸

The area between Point Torre Astura, not quite ten miles south of Anzio, and the Tiber, about fifty miles north, and extending inland to the round, volcanic mass of the Alban Hills is generally a low plateau, dropping off to the south to the Pontine Marshes and rising sharply in the north to the Alban Hills. The area is cut by several streams and drainage canals. The coastal plain is very swampy in spots, especially in the rainy season.⁶⁹ The larger coastal plain, stretching from Terracina (about thirty miles south of Anzio) to the Tiber consisted of dry, gently rolling, and often wooded countryside, rising slowly to a railway embankment some thirteen miles north of Anzio. It was cultivated with vineyards and small farms.⁷⁰ The area west of the Albano road is cut by a series of gullies, of which the largest, Moletta and Incastro, run southwest from the Alban Hills toward the sea. Often fifty feet deep, they proved difficult obstacles to armor.⁷¹

Southeast of Anzio were the Pontine Marshes—a low, swampy, malarial bogland, chiefly sphagnum moss and peat. As part of a large reclamation and resettlement project undertaken by Mussolini's Fascist government, the Pontine Marshes had been converted to cultivated fields, carefully drained and irrigated by an extensive series of ditches, canals, and pumping stations. During the rainy season it was impassable for most heavy equipment. In addition, this largely treeless area offered scant cover.

The Padiglione Woods (extending three to five miles north of Nettuno) provided cover where a force might prepare and attack. However, after leaving the forest, a force was vulnerable, its movements easily observable; there was no cover between the woods and the coastal railway.⁷² Eastward from the Padiglione Woods the entire right flank of the planned beachhead line was protected by the Mussolini Canal, which drained the northern Pontine Marshes.⁷³ The main canal was built like an antitank ditch, with steep sides sloping to a shallow, sixteen-foot-wide stream. The combination of the canals and marshes made the right flank of the beachhead a poor avenue for attack.⁷⁴

The 3,100-foot mountain mass of the Alban Hills, about twenty miles inland, controls the southern approaches to Rome, fifteen miles north. East of the Alban Hills is the Velletri Gap. The 5,040-foot Monti Lepini (Lepini Mountains) stretch along the inner edge of the Pontine Marshes southeastward toward Terracina.⁷⁵ Both the Alban Hills and Lepini Mountains protected the Tenth Army's vital supply lines. In operational terms, the Alban Hills were a "decisive point," because they dominated Highway No. 6 (Via Casilina) and Highway No. 7 (Via Appia).⁷⁶

The road network on the Anzio Plain was well developed, but the roads were of poor quality. The most important road used for supplying German troops on the front line was the narrow and easily defensible Highway No. 7. It runs along the coast and passes around the Aurunci Mountains and then through the Pontine Marshes. Highway No. 6 runs from Rome through the Liri Valley. It could be easily blocked by a defender in a narrow defile known as the Mignano Gap some ten miles southeast of the Liri Valley.⁷⁷ The main west coast railway paralleled these highways. Along the network of paved and gravel roads crisscrossing the farmlands were numerous two-story *podere* (farmhouses) for the recent settlers. The provincial town of Aprilia (whose community center would be called "the Factory" by Allied troops) was modern; the twin towns of Anzio and Nettuno were popular seaside resorts.⁷⁸

In January and February the wind in the Anzio-Nettuno area was mostly from the north and east.⁷⁹ Along the coast between the island of Elba and Civitavecchia southerly winds prevail. Gale-force winds lasting two or three days and accompanied by depressions move eastward across the northwestern Mediterranean. Southerly and southwesterly gales bring low clouds, drizzle or continuous rain,

and sometimes snow, until the wind veers to the westward. Southwesterly winds generate heavy seas on the Italian coast.⁸⁰

THE FINAL PLAN

Operation SHINGLE was now essentially an independent operation, to be executed regardless of whether the main Fifth Army was in striking distance.⁸¹ (The modified operation is sometimes referred to as SHINGLE-II.) The landing at Anzio would be a two-division instead of a single-division assault.⁸²

On 2 January, General Alexander issued his Operations Instruction No. 32. The Fifth Army's mission would be "cutting the enemy lines of communication and threatening the rear of the German 14 (Panzer) Corps." The operation would take place between 20 and 31 January 1944. The U.S. VI Corps, under Major General John P. Lucas, was assigned to carry out the landing. The initial landing force would be composed of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, two armored elements (one U.S., one British), U.S. Army Ranger battalions, one regimental combat team (RCT), the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division, the British 1 Division, and two British commandos (units of about four hundred men).⁸³

Lucas asked for a delay to 25 January to allow proper rehearsal. As a compromise, D-day was set for 22 January.⁸⁴ H-hour was set for 0200, to give the landing forces four hours of darkness. Morning twilight would begin a few minutes before 0600, and the sun would rise at 0731.⁸⁵ Sunset was at 1711.

The Fifth Army's headquarters started detailed planning on 31 December. The naval planning staff was headed by Admiral Lowry, commander of the VIII Amphibious Force and commander of Task Force (TF) 81, already formed for the operation. The air plan was prepared by Major General J. K. Cannon, Commander, XII Air Support Command, and his staff.⁸⁶ It was decided that the British contingent would be transported by a separate but subordinate task force under Rear Admiral Thomas H. Troubridge, Royal Navy. Troubridge and his staff worked at the planning section of the 15th Army Group headquarters in Caserta.⁸⁷ However, some key commanders were not involved in planning, specifically General Lucas, who was with his staff at Maddaloni (southeast of Caserta), and Captain E. C. L. Turner, in charge of the Rangers, who spent most of the time at Pozzuoli, on the Gulf of Naples.⁸⁸ Plans for Operation SHINGLE were approved on 12 January, only ten days before D-day.⁸⁹

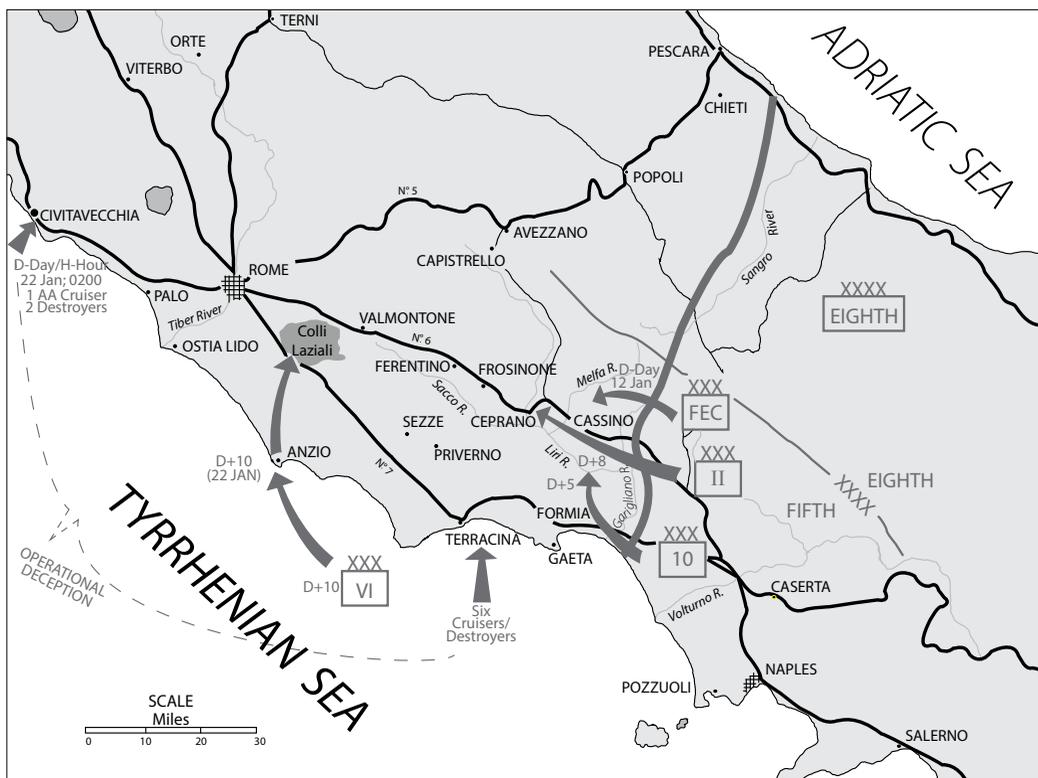
Clark's plan to breach, concurrently, the Gustav Line was based on Operations Instruction No. 12, issued on 16 December 1943 and amended by Operations Instruction No. 13 of 10 January 1944. Clark's intent was that the main Fifth Army, reinforced with two divisions from the Eighth Army, would attack the German Tenth Army across the Garigliano and Rapido Rivers, break through the Gustav Line, and drive up the Liri Valley. This offensive should have sufficient strength

to draw the German reserves. While the enemy was preoccupied defending the Gustav Line, the Allies would land at Anzio-Nettuno (see map 1).⁹⁰

Clark's Field Order No. 5, issued on 12 January, pertained specifically to the Anzio landing force, which was meant to "launch attacks in the Anzio area on H-Hour, D-Day," aimed "(a) to seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio," and "(b) *advance on Colli Laziali*."⁹¹ The word "advance" implied a significant change in the mission.⁹² Clark's order directed Lucas to advance toward the Alban Hills for the linkup with the main Fifth Army seven days after the landing (that is, on D+7). This change of the mission became a major reason for subsequent and continuing controversy.⁹³

Although Alexander knew from the ULTRA intercepts that the Germans had a sizable force in the Rome area (I Parachute Corps, with two divisions), he was not sure whether it would be in the proximity of Anzio on D-day. Hence, he emphasized to Clark the importance of securing the beachhead as the first order of business. Afterward, Clark simply focused on that part of the mission assigned to the VI Corps.⁹⁴ On 12 January, Brigadier General Brann, the Fifth Army G-3 (Operations), visited Lucas to brief him about the final order by the Fifth Army for the Anzio operation, specifically the vague wording of the mission. Brann

**MAP 1
 FIFTH ARMY'S OPERATIONAL IDEA, JANUARY 1944**



made it clear that Lucas's primary task was to seize and secure a beachhead. Clark expected no more. He did not want to push Lucas on to the Alban Hills at the risk of sacrificing the VI Corps. At the same time, it was understood that Lucas was free to take advantage of an opportunity to capture the Alban Hills. Clark did not think it would be possible for Lucas to reach the hill mass and at the same time hold the beachhead to protect the port and landing beaches. The loss of the port and beaches would completely isolate the VI Corps and would put it at the mercy of the Germans.⁹⁵

The VI Corps Plan

The mission of the VI Corps in "phase I" of the landing as stated in Clark's outline plan of 12 January was "by first light D-Day to capture and/or reduce enemy gun batteries capable of seriously interfering with the assault on the beaches and to launch assaults on the beaches north and northeast of Anzio and establish a beachhead." In "phase II," the mission was simply "attack in the direction of Colli Laziali."⁹⁶

The VI Corps's scheme of maneuver (or "operational idea") envisaged a simultaneous landing on the Anzio and Nettuno beaches. The U.S. 3rd ID (under Major General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr.) would land three regiments over X-RAY beach, two miles south of Nettuno. In the center, the 6615th Ranger Force (Provisional), as well as the 83rd Chemical Battalion and the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, would land over YELLOW Beach adjacent to Anzio Harbor, with the mission of seizing the port and clearing out any coastal-defense batteries there. On the PETER beaches, six miles northwest of Anzio, the 2 Brigade Group of the British 1 Division would land. The 2 Special Service Brigade of 9 and 43 Commando would advance eastward to establish a roadblock on the main road leading from Anzio to Campoleone and Albano. The forces landing at Anzio and at Nettuno would link up to consolidate a beachhead seven miles deep centering on the port of Anzio.⁹⁷

The planners assumed initial heavy German resistance and hence provided a strong floating reserve, the bulk of the British 1 Division, with the 46 Royal Tank Regiment. In addition, the 24th Field Regiment, the 80th Medium Regiment, and the 504th Parachute Infantry would land behind the 3rd ID and assemble in a corps reserve.⁹⁸

The 15th Army Group headquarters prepared a "cover" plan (or operational deception plan) aimed to mislead the enemy about the timing and direction of the Anzio landing. Because it was hardly possible to conceal that an amphibious landing was being prepared at Naples, the Germans had to be convinced that the Allied intent was to land further north on Italy's western coast near Civitavecchia or even Leghorn, toward the end of January 1944.⁹⁹ Originally, a naval feint was planned at Ostia Lido, at the mouth of the Tiber River, on D-day. This site was

changed first to Palo—about fifteen miles north of the Tiber River mouth—and then, at General Clark’s insistence, to Civitavecchia. The reason was that most of the German troops were already deployed north of the Tiber River; a deception at Ostia Lido, if successful, would tend to draw the enemy forces closer to, not farther from, the landing area.¹⁰⁰ Hence, one British antiaircraft cruiser and two destroyers would shell Civitavecchia, some forty miles north of Anzio, at H-hour on D-day. At the same time, a force of six cruisers and destroyers would appear off Terracina, again to distract German attention from Anzio.¹⁰¹ Civitavecchia would be bombarded again at midnight on D+1 by cruisers and destroyers.¹⁰² In addition, fishing craft were assembled in Corsican harbors, where army engineers made a great show of “secret” activity, assembling dummy supply dumps and constructing imitation landing craft. Information was “leaked out” from Caserta that the Fifth Army would not advance in January but that the British Eighth Army, with fresh troops, would advance up the Italian Adriatic coast.¹⁰³

A radio deception plan included the establishment of a radio station on Corsica purporting to be the advance headquarters of the VI Army Corps. This station would transmit messages building up plausibly in volume up to H-hour at Anzio.¹⁰⁴ The operational deception plan further included wireless broadcasts to resistance forces and agents in Italy using a cipher it was known the Germans could read. The messages notified the recipients that an invasion was imminent at Civitavecchia.¹⁰⁵

Planning for the logistical support and sustainment for Operation SHINGLE required a great deal of time and effort. Ingenious methods to sustain the landing force ashore had to be found. The possibility of not having clear weather more than two days out of seven dictated that the assault convoy be completely unloaded within forty-eight hours; everything would be combat loaded, ready for quick removal in the sequence in which it would be needed.¹⁰⁶ The available LSTs could carry only seven days of supplies for the troops. Admirals John Cunningham (Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean) and Lowry wanted to warn Lucas that he could not rely on support over the beach, because of the probability of bad weather and the urgent need for the LSTs in other operations, and so should plan for disembarkation of the whole force immediately after the landing.¹⁰⁷ However, Alexander and Andrew Cunningham (the First Sea Lord) insisted that continuous maintenance be provided and that more LSTs be assigned.

At a conference in Marrakech on 7 January, an American army colonel, Edward J. O’Neill, Clark’s assistant chief of logistics, suggested embarking loaded trucks on board LSTs at Naples, disembarking them at Anzio-Nettuno, and then driving them directly to supply dumps on the beachhead. The LSTs would then embark empty trucks of the previous echelon and take them back to Naples. A similar procedure had been successfully used by the U.S. Seventh Fleet in the

Southwest Pacific Area. However, this idea was rejected by Churchill, the First Sea Lord, and General Bedell Smith. Their objections were that because of unpredictable winter weather it could be difficult to land the DUKWs carrying loaded trucks. Also two offshore sandbars might block heavy landing craft. In addition, the Royal Navy was concerned that the port facilities at Anzio-Nettuno might be destroyed by the Germans.¹⁰⁸ As it turned out, the DUKWs (which ultimately were used for other purposes) were able to reach the shore, and the Germans failed to demolish the port facilities.¹⁰⁹

Clark eventually accepted the idea of carrying preloaded trucks on LSTs.¹¹⁰ This method reduced the unloading time from a full day to a single hour. Without it, maintaining the Allied forces at Anzio would have been impossible.¹¹¹ The trucks would load up to their five-ton capacity at Naples dumps, drive onto the LSTs, and then drive off again directly to the VI Corps dumps. Some 1,500 trucks were assembled expressly for this purpose.¹¹²

The assault and follow-up shipping would be mounted from Naples and its satellite ports. Organization of the convoys for the British contingent was the responsibility of the AFHQ Advanced Administrative Echelon, while the Peninsular Base Section had the same responsibility for the U.S. contingent. Because, as noted, all unloading had to be completed within forty-eight hours and the beaches were poor, the port had to be put into operation quickly, or pontoon causeways would have to be used. Some thirty LCTs and all available DUKWs and both U.S. (LCVPs) and British (LCAs) assault landing craft would be used to unload larger ships. Heavy stores and equipment would be loaded in Algiers, instead of the heavily congested port of Naples, on eight Liberty ships. Four of the Liberty ships would sail with the assault convoy, and four others would follow.¹¹³

Naval Plans

Naval planning for the original Operation SHINGLE started on 18 November 1943. It was a joint effort of Task Force 81's planning staff and the headquarters of the Fifth Army at Caserta.¹¹⁴ The chief planner, however, was Admiral Lowry. Admiral John Cunningham set up an advance headquarters at Naples.¹¹⁵

The planners selected two main landing sites. One was the 5,600-yard stretch about five miles west of Anzio. The approach was very shallow (a gradient of 1 : 110), and its sand was too soft for vehicles, especially in the exits through the dunes.¹¹⁶ This sector was selected for the PETER Force. It was divided into three beaches, designated GREEN, AMBER, and RED, each thirty to sixty yards wide. They were composed of soft sand. In some places five-foot-high banks blocked entrances to the dunes in the rear. The dunes were backed by a belt of trees varying in depth between fifty and four hundred yards. Behind the trees were fields and orchards. A "metalled road" (paved with stone chipping mixed with

tar) ran roughly parallel to, and five hundred to eight hundred yards behind, the beach. The beaches would be difficult to locate at night, any heavy winds would seriously impede operations, and sandbars made it likely that soldiers would have to wade the two hundred or three hundred feet to dry land. A sandbar approximately 150 yards offshore extended almost the entire length of these beaches. LSTs could not reach these beaches and would have to unload over four-hundred-foot causeways. These beaches were suitable for LCVPs, LCAs, DUKWs, and possibly LCTs.¹¹⁷ The navy recommended to the army that at the PETER beaches neither troops nor equipment be landed from LSTs, LCTs, or infantry landing craft (LCIs).¹¹⁸

Another landing site was at Nettuno, four miles east of Anzio. The approach to the Nettuno beaches was also shallow (with gradients of 1 : 80 to 1 : 85).¹¹⁹ Designated the X-RAY sector, the Nettuno site was divided into three beaches: RED, GREEN, and YELLOW, 2,860 yards long in all. A sandbar extended 150 yards offshore for the entire length of the beach; a minimum six feet of water over the bar could be expected. These beaches were suitable for LCVPs and LCAs, as well as for LCTs and LCIs in some places. Pontoon causeways were required for LSTs.¹²⁰ YELLOW Beach was rough sand, 820 yards long, forty yards wide, very shallow (gradient 1 : 130 to 1 : 150), and suitable for the LCVPs, LCAs, DUKWs, and some LCT variants; however, craft drawing three feet or more would ground 150 yards offshore.¹²¹ LCIs, LSTs, and some LCTs could not be beached without a thorough reconnaissance of the spot, which would be conducted during the operation.¹²²

TF 81's Operation Plan No. 147-43, issued on 12 January 1944, stated that the task force's mission was to "establish 3rd ID (reinforced) Major General Lucian Truscott in positions ashore near Cape D'Anzio in order to attack the rear of the enemy's right flank." Clearly, TF 81's mission was not consonant with that given by Clark to Lucas; it more resembled the mission issued by General Alexander to Clark's Fifth Army. Plan No. 147-43 also stated that "PETER Force under Rear Admiral Troubridge will operate simultaneously with this force in an area north of line 45° through Capo [D']Anzio." The mission of the PETER Force was simply "the landing of the First British division (reinforced)."¹²³ The plan did not elaborate on what the British contingent's mission would be ashore. The planners assumed that the enemy would offer strong resistance and that "strong enemy submarine, E-boat and air attacks are to be expected." They also assumed that mines would be encountered but that the weather would allow landing through surf on the designated beaches.¹²⁴

For gunfire support of the X-RAY Force, TF 81 planners organized four fire-support groups plus a rocket and AA (antiaircraft) support group to deliver "prearranged fires" prior to H-hour. The British Bombarding Squadron would

conduct fires in support of the PETER Force.¹²⁵ To achieve surprise, no preliminary bombardment would be conducted except for short, intense rocket barrages at H-10 and H+5 by three specially modified craft known as LCT(R)s.¹²⁶ Shore fire-control parties would be provided by the 3rd ID for RED and GREEN Beaches.¹²⁷

Air Plans

TF 81's plan envisaged comprehensive support by Allied air forces during the sea transit and landing. The Coastal Air Force would provide both day and night fighter cover over the loading areas at the Naples and Salerno loading areas, as well as day and night fighter cover and antisubmarine protection from the swept Ischia Channel to the Ponziane Islands. By night, radar patrol aircraft would conduct antisubmarine patrols from the swept Ischia Channel up to the landing beaches. In addition, the Coastal Air Force would ensure both night and day fighter cover over rehearsal areas and convoy routes in the Salerno area. The XII Air Support Command would provide fighter cover over the convoy routes from the Ponziane Islands to the assault areas, plus fighter cover over the transport area and the assault beaches.¹²⁸

Planning by air commands for Operation SHINGLE was completed on 30 December 1943. The effort was divided into three related phases. Phase I (1–14 January) aimed to disrupt enemy communications in northern Italy and deceive the enemy about Allied intentions by supporting the deception plan; Phase II (15–21 January) was the isolation of the landing area by bombing attacks on road and rail communications north of Rome and on the fronts of the Fifth and Eighth Armies.¹²⁹ The focus of attacks in this phase would be enemy airfields, aircraft, and communications. In Phase III (22 January to the end of the operation), Allied aircraft would provide cover to convoys and over the beachhead, and close air support to the landing forces.¹³⁰

ALLIED PREPARATIONS

Orders for the naval part of the operation were issued on 16 January. All commanders taking part were briefed that day at Naples.¹³¹ Admiral Lowry had directed that all landing craft were to arrive at Naples prior to 15 January for a briefing the next day. Prior to that, five (later ten) LSTs and a group of LCIs and LCTs were assembled in the Naples area for training with the British 1 Division and the U.S. 3rd ID.¹³²

The Anzio-Nettuno landing required significant redeployment of forces on the Allied front. The 3rd ID was assembled at Pozzuoli on New Year's Day. The VI Corps turned over its sector of the front to the FEC on 3 January and moved its headquarters to Maddaloni. The most difficult redeployment involved the Eighth Army, which shifted no fewer than three divisions, plus attached units, to

the main Fifth Army front. Between 1 and 5 January, the British 1 Division was moved from Foggia on the Adriatic front to the Salerno area. It was followed by the 2 Special Service Brigade. The British 5 Division was shifted to reinforce the British 10 Corps for an attack across the Garigliano.¹³³ The New Zealand 2nd ID was moved from Orsogna to Venafro to join the 15th Army Group reserve.¹³⁴ To minimize the possibility of enemy detection of these movements, these units were ordered to maintain radio silence. However, they were allowed to move during daylight, because of the absence of the enemy aircraft.¹³⁵ The Eighth Army was to make a demonstration along its front so that the Germans would not move forces toward the main Fifth Army. For that purpose, the headquarters of the Canadian Corps and the 4th Indian Division had to be brought forward from reserve.¹³⁶

Despite the short time available, the VI Corps embarked on extensive large-scale landing exercises between 4 and 19 January. The initial focus was on conducting small-unit, then battalion and regimental rehearsals. Infantry battalions rehearsed tactical landings under simulated fire, removing minefields and barbed wire and knocking out pillboxes. Artillery units rehearsed loading and unloading DUKWs. Assault landings were practiced from landing-craft mock-ups on dry land and then, in the battalion and regimental exercises, with craft provided by the navy.¹³⁷

Preparations for the Anzio landing culminated in a corps landing exercise (dubbed WEBFOOT) six miles south of Salerno on 17–19 January.¹³⁸ It was not really a full-scale rehearsal, although all the assault units, DUKWs with their weapons, and token support weapons and vehicles took part.¹³⁹ The rehearsal went reasonably well for the British contingent. However, the U.S. contingent encountered heavy weather on the night of 17/18 January.¹⁴⁰ Few landing craft arrived at the proper beaches.¹⁴¹ Some landing craft disembarked so far out that the forces arrived at the beach late.¹⁴² About twenty DUKWs sank.¹⁴³ With them were lost a number of 105 mm howitzers. Also, several men drowned.¹⁴⁴ The situation on the U.S. beaches was chaotic. Both Generals Lucas and Truscott insisted on another rehearsal, but Clark rejected the idea for lack of time.¹⁴⁵

In the meantime, the Allied air forces interdicted German road and rail communications beyond the prospective beachhead. These massive “operational fires” were designed to prevent the movement of enemy troops or supplies and in that way to have a major impact on the course and outcome of Operation SHINGLE. German troops in Italy moved mostly by rail, using three main routes: one on the western coast, one on the eastern, and a third in the middle from Florence to Rome. All of them ran through very mountainous terrain. Allied bombers attacked key marshaling yards and bridges almost constantly. The main targets of tactical bombers were rail yards at Florence, Pisa, Arezzo, and Terni and bridges at Orte, Orvieto, and Cecina, on the central and west-coast routes. Closer to the

Anzio area, light bombers, fighter-bombers, and night intruders attacked enemy motor transport.¹⁴⁶

Between 1 and 13 January, Allied bombers systematically struck rail communications in central Italy, with the aim of preventing the supply of German units on the front in southern Italy.¹⁴⁷ They also conducted massive attacks on German airfields, specifically four fighter airfields near Rome and three airfields at Perugia for reconnaissance aircraft.¹⁴⁸ On 21 January, Allied bombers attacked German airfields at Montpellier, Salon, and Istres (used by torpedo bombers and glide bombers) in southern France.¹⁴⁹

By 19 January, the Allied airmen claimed, “all communications from northern Italy to Rome were cut.” In fact, however, this bombing did not do much good for the forces that landed at Anzio-Nettuno. The Germans filled runway craters overnight. Their engineers always kept at least one rail track open. That was all the Germans needed for troop and supply trains, and the civilian population’s needs could wait. Nevertheless, the Allied air attacks did ground the reconnaissance aircraft at the Perugia airfields just before the Allied assault convoy sailed.¹⁵⁰

Complicating the preparations for the Anzio landing were very unsatisfactory Anglo-American military relations in the Mediterranean theater. The problem was especially apparent in the combined headquarters commands, where American and British officers were “clannish” and did not mix freely with their counterparts. The Americans viewed the British as selfish and obstinate. The Fifth Army’s headquarters, however, did not seem to have such British-American friction. Clark was the first American army commander to command large formations of Allied troops. On 7 January 1944 Clark had six British divisions, one Moroccan, one New Zealander, one Indian, and one Canadian division in addition to his four American divisions.¹⁵¹

The chain of command above Clark was a breeding ground for difficult Anglo-American relations. Formally, there was a single chain of command running from the CCS through the British or American theater commanders and then to the American, British, and other Allied forces all the way to the division level. However, there was also an informal but very important personal chain of command, which ran along national lines. For example, General Alexander regularly communicated with General Alan Brooke without going through Eisenhower. Clark also often communicated with Eisenhower without notifying Alexander. Eisenhower attempted to ensure that Clark kept Alexander fully informed about these discussions but did not try to stop Clark from communicating directly with him. Both the Americans and British accepted this informal chain of command. It did not become a problem until Alexander and General Ronald Penney, commander of the British 1 Division, began to discuss the performance of General Lucas during the Anzio landing. Penney complained that Lucas did not inspire

confidence in his subordinates and did not know what to do about the situation after the Allies landed ashore. (Penney had been Alexander's signal officer prior to assuming his command in VI Corps.)¹⁵²

Alexander believed that Clark did not like the British. A probable reason was that Alexander often gave instructions to division-level commanders directly and visited them for discussions. Not surprisingly, Clark did not like Alexander giving instructions to his Fifth Army subordinates. Hence, a certain degree of animosity did develop on Clark's side. On their part, the British generally regarded Clark as extremely ambitious, vain, temperamental, and sensitive. Clark argues in his memoirs that he encouraged cooperation and understanding to strengthen American ties with their British comrades.¹⁵³

Truscott would write in his own memoirs about a lack of understanding between British and American commanders and staffs. This was especially true in the case of VI Corps and its British divisions. Reportedly, Lucas had little trust in British commanders or their troops and the British commanders returned the favor. The VI Corps staff was not familiar with British organization, staff procedures, or tactical methods. Some staff members failed to appreciate the difference in national characteristics. A tendency on the part of Americans was to be critical of all things British and impatient with methods unfamiliar to them.¹⁵⁴

GERMAN PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

The number of German troops in Italy was barely sufficient to hold the southern front and strengthen rear areas. In the case of an enemy landing, reinforcements would have to be sent from adjacent theaters and Germany proper to prevent a collapse of Army Group C. Foreseeing this contingency, the OKW issued orders at the end of December 1943 to the CINC of the West (France and Low Countries), the CINC of the Southeast (Balkans), and the Commander of the Replacement Army (Ersatzheer) specifying the units that would be transferred to Italy in the event of a large enemy landing. Kesselring thus was assured that reinforcements would be on the way shortly; until they arrived, he was to employ all available forces to repulse the landing.¹⁵⁵ The Germans believed that although the enemy landing could not be prevented, they could contain and destroy the enemy forces after they landed.¹⁵⁶

By 20 December 1943 the OKW's Joint Operations Staff (Wehrmacht Fuehrungsstab) had prepared redeployment plans in case of a major enemy landing on the Ligurian coast (MARDER 1) and on the Adriatic coast (MARDER 2). Each of these contingency plans detailed movements of specific units deployed in southern France, southern Germany, and the Balkans to the Italian theater. In addition, Kesselring also prepared five contingency plans in the event of a large enemy landing in his theater. Specifically, these plans pertained to the

turn of 1944, it was clear to Kesselring that the area around Rome from Civitavecchia to Gaeta, and especially Campagna, was highly vulnerable. His chief preoccupation was to create a reserve to counter any large-scale landings. Prearranged code words would bring forces from all parts of the Italian Peninsula to mass at the invasion point.¹⁵⁸

Case RICHARD envisaged the movement of forces subordinate to the Tenth and Fourteenth Armies, as well as the SS & Police Command, Italy; the XI Air Corps; and 2nd Air Fleet. Specifically, the Tenth Army would make available one of its panzer divisions or panzer-grenadier (mechanized) divisions in reserve, and one panzer reconnaissance detachment, plus some other smaller units. The Fourteenth Army headquarters would be relocated from northern Italy to the Rome area. It would move combat-ready forces of the 362nd ID, 114th Light (Jaeger) ID, a reinforced regimental group of the 356th ID, and another from the 65th ID. The SS & Police Command would make available the 16th Panzer-Grenadier Division Reichsfuehrer-SS (less one regiment) and the 35th Panzer-Grenadier Regiment. The XI Air Corps would move the 4th Parachute Division, plus some corps troops. The 2nd Air Fleet would make available four heavy AA detachments.¹⁵⁹

Kesselring's contingency plans for defense against landings on Italy's western and eastern coasts contemplated the organization into reaction forces of rear-echelon troops, such as AA units along the coast, replacement units, engineers, and other support units. They would fight as infantry until maneuver units could reach the beachhead.¹⁶⁰ For the Germans, the main lesson of Salerno had been that the landing force had to be thrown back into the sea within twenty-four hours—that is, before the enemy could deploy its artillery and so consolidate the beachhead. Hence, the German reaction units had to be close to the coast, so they could reach the site in one night's march—being unable to move during daylight hours because of Allied air superiority.¹⁶¹

The Germans considered the entire Italian coast to be potentially threatened by enemy landings ranging in size from tactical (in support of enemy forces on the front line) to "strategic" (actually operational) meant to cut off an entire army group. The Germans accordingly organized five coastal-defense sectors, centered on Genoa, Leghorn, Rome, Rimini-Ravenna, and Istria (in the Southeast Theater). Each was fortified and guarded by small units. In October 1943, the Fourteenth Army consolidated the defenses on the Gothic Line (Pisa-Rimini) and between La Spezia on the west coast and Pesaro on the east coast. The Germans also paid attention to the defense of the Voralpen (Alpine foothills) Line, stretching from the Italo-Swiss border to Istria. In the case of a successful enemy landing these lines would offer prepared defensive positions in the rear of the central Italian front.¹⁶²

Army Group C was well aware of the inadequacy of the fortifications and forces close to the coast. Neither OKW nor Army Group C believed it possible to defend Italy's coast successfully against a large amphibious landing with forces on hand. Nevertheless, the Germans made constant efforts to strengthen threatened sectors. They emplaced additional coastal guns and constructed obstacles; they mined offshore waters and inundated certain coastal areas. But the situation on the Tenth Army's front limited the extent to which forces could be spared for coastal defense. When an enemy offensive caused a crisis on the front, reinforcements were sent from northern Italy, weakening coastal defenses.¹⁶³

The situation west of Rome was especially acute. The Germans always considered it possible that the Allies might land in the rear of the Tenth Army in support of their forces on the front. However, the Fourteenth Army was unable to accept additional responsibilities for defenses south of Rome. OKW was unwilling to further weaken defenses in northern Italy, because of uncertainty about whether the enemy intended to land west or south of Rome, in the Gulf of Genoa, or on the Istrian Peninsula. For this reason the Tenth Army was left to secure the coastal sector in the vicinity of Rome. The I Parachute Corps was specifically responsible for it.¹⁶⁴

In early January, having received more information pointing to a landing in the Rome area, OKW decided to replace the 3rd Panzer-Grenadier Division with the much stronger 90th Panzer-Grenadier Division, then on the Adriatic coast. A lull in the first two weeks of January 1944 allowed the Germans to reinforce their forces in the Rome area.¹⁶⁵ This regrouping started on 10 January.¹⁶⁶ The 29th and 90th Panzer Divisions of the I Parachute Corps were assigned to the coastal sector, and the Hermann Goering Panzer Division was held as a mobile reserve, between Rome and the southern front.¹⁶⁷

OPPOSING FORCES, 22 JANUARY

The Allies had initially a large superiority in forces on the ground, and their strength at sea and in the air was overwhelming for the duration of the Anzio-Nettuno operation. The 15th Army Group, led by General Alexander, was the highest command echelon of the ground forces on the Italian mainland. Alexander himself had intelligence, good looks, and charm—everything came easily to him. An imperturbable coolness made him appear unconcerned even in the most intense moments of crisis. General Alan Brooke would say of Alexander that he never had “the slightest doubt that all would come out right in the end.”¹⁶⁸ Alexander was more persuasive than forceful. His operations were neither daring nor creative. In planning, he always sought the advice of his subordinates.¹⁶⁹

The Fifth Army, led by General Clark, was the command most directly involved in Operation SHINGLE. Clark had never commanded a large formation

before he took over the Fifth Army.¹⁷⁰ For most of his career Clark had been a training instructor, assigned to various staff duties. At forty-eight, he was much younger than most generals of his rank; he had been promoted from lieutenant colonel to lieutenant general in just three years. Clark was aggressive, hardworking, and efficient; Eisenhower thought Clark “the best organizer, planner and trainer of troops that I have met.” Before landing at Salerno, because of his youth and inexperience, Clark had shown great deference to his superiors. However, after Salerno, Clark became more self-assured and less deferential. He was cordial with the British, although he became disenchanted with them. In general, Clark tried to hide his sensibilities behind a mask of coldness.¹⁷¹

The VI Corps was led by General J. P. Lucas. General Marshall characterized Lucas as having “military stature, prestige, and experience.” He assumed command of VI Corps at Salerno on 20 September 1943, when Clark relieved Major General Ernest J. Dawley. General Clark wanted an experienced corps commander who could reestablish leadership of corps operations at Salerno.¹⁷²

As finalized, the initial invasion force consisted of the U.S. 3rd ID, the British 1 Division, 46 Royal Tank Regiment, the U.S. 751st Tank Battalion, the 504th Parachute Infantry Battalion, two British commando battalions, and three U.S. Ranger battalions. (For details see appendix A.) The 45th ID and Combat Command A (a task-organized combined-arms unit of about brigade size) would be in reserve for reinforcement once the lodgment had been established.¹⁷³

Admiral Lowry was responsible for mounting, embarking, and landing the ground force and supporting it until the lodgment was established.¹⁷⁴ His TF 81 consisted of the X-RAY and PETER Forces. Lowry commanded some 230 ships and craft (135 U.S.) of X-RAY Force, carrying American troops. Admiral Troubridge commanded some 150 ships and craft (twenty-two U.S.) of PETER Force, with the British part of the VI Corps. (For details see appendix B.) TF 81 also included one Polish, two Dutch, and four Greek ships.¹⁷⁵

The Mediterranean Allied Air Forces had about 2,600 aircraft, organized in some sixty squadrons (twenty-two fighter, six fighter-bomber, four light-bomber, twenty-four medium-bomber, and two and a half reconnaissance).¹⁷⁶ About 75 percent of the Allied aircraft were operational. In late 1943 they had been moved from North Africa to the new bases on Sardinia, Corsica, and mainland Italy. The MAAF’s B-17 and B-24 heavy bombers were used for strategic bombing. Its B-25 Mitchell, B-26 Marauder, and Wellington medium bombers were used for attacking targets fifty to a hundred miles behind the enemy front. The MAAF’s medium bombers, A-20 Havocs and the Martin 187 Baltimores, were used for destroying installations and facilities closer to the front. De Havilland’s Mosquitoes and A-36 Apaches (also listed as “Invaders”) provided direct support

to the ground troops. Spitfires, Hurricanes, P-38 Lightnings, P-40 Hawks, P-47 Thunderbolts, and P-51 Mustangs escorted Allied bombers and intercepted and destroyed enemy fighters.¹⁷⁷

On the German side, all ground forces in the Italian theater were subordinate to Army Group C, led by Field Marshal Kesselring, who was, as noted, also CINC Southwest. Kesselring was one of the best German commanders in World War II.¹⁷⁸ He was a born leader, highly intelligent and always open to new ideas.¹⁷⁹ Kesselring was by nature genial, optimistic, and cheerful. He had a great and rare ability to grasp what was essential and what could be disregarded.¹⁸⁰ A Luftwaffe officer, he had no experience as an army field commander. But he had a cool head, reacted quickly to unforeseen events, and made sound decisions.¹⁸¹

The German ground forces under Kesselring comprised the Tenth and the Fourteenth Armies, totaling twenty-four divisions. The Fourteenth Army, under General Eberhard von Mackensen, was deployed north of the Grosseto–Ancona line. It consisted of eleven and a half divisions, of which four were in the process of forming and four were in defensive positions. The Tenth Army, led by General Heinrich von Vietinghoff *genannt* (“known as”) Scheel, consisted on 20 January 1944 of two army corps plus one panzer and one infantry division. Opposed to the British Eighth Army was the LXXVI Panzer Corps, with four divisions, while the Fifth Army faced four divisions of the XIV Panzer Corps.¹⁸²

By the end of 1943, the Luftwaffe had in service about 550 aircraft in Italy, southern France, and the Balkans. However, almost all heavy bombers had been withdrawn from Italy, leaving only about fifty Ju.88s in Greece and Crete and some sixty Ju.88s, He.111s, and Do.217s in southern France. Most of the fighters, some 230 Me.109s and FW.190s, were in Italy, about a third of them at fields around Rome.¹⁸³ On 20 January, the 2nd Air Fleet had 337 aircraft, among them two hundred fighters (136 operational), and twenty-five short-range (twenty operational) and six long-range reconnaissance aircraft (two operational).¹⁸⁴ The German Kriegsmarine had in Italy only three torpedo boats and two U-boats.¹⁸⁵ On 1 January 1944, some thirteen U-boats were deployed in the Mediterranean, but only three were at sea during that month.¹⁸⁶

FIFTH ARMY'S JANUARY OFFENSIVE

On 12 January, the Fifth Army resumed its offensive against the Gustav Line. The FEC attacked in the direction of Monte Cassino while the British 10 Corps advanced across the lower Garigliano River toward Minturno-Ausonia (Operation PANTHER).¹⁸⁷ The attackers gained initial successes with the assistance of a surprise landing of strong forces west of the mouth of the Garigliano.¹⁸⁸

On 16 January, the Fifth Army's G-2 gave what proved to be a highly optimistic assessment of the enemy's situation and intentions. Among other things, it stated that "within just [the] past few days there have been increasing indications that enemy strength on the front of the Fifth Army is ebbing due to casualties, exhaustion, and possibly lowering of morale. One of the reasons for this are continuous Allied attacks. His entire strength will probably be needed to defend his organized defensive positions."¹⁸⁹ Moreover, it also asserted,

in the view of weakening of enemy on the front—it would appear doubtful, if the enemy can hold [an] organized defensive line through Cassino against a coordinated army attack. Since the attack is to be launched before Shingle it is considered likely [that] this additional thrust will cause him to withdraw from his defensive positions once he has appreciated the magnitude of that operation.¹⁹⁰

Despite successive attacks, however, neither the French nor the British were able to break through the mountain defenses. On 20 January the U.S. II Corps tried to cross the Rapido River. After two days of bitter fighting and heavy losses, that attack too proved unsuccessful. By 22 January, the attack on the Gustav Line had bogged down in the midst of strong German counterattacks. It would prove fortunate for the Allies at Anzio, however, that the Tenth Army had now been forced to commit most of its operational reserves.¹⁹¹

PHASES

Operation SHINGLE itself can be divided into seven distinct but closely related phases: assembly and loading (19–20 January), sea transit (21–22 January), landing (22 January), establishment of the lodgment and the German reaction (22–24 January), the battle ashore (25 January–4 March), stalemate (5 March–22 May), and breakout (23 May–1 June).

Assembly and Loading, 19–20 January

On these two days activity in the port of Naples and satellite ports was greatly intensified as the troops, weapons, equipment, and supplies were embarked. The loading schedule had been prepared and coordinated by the joint loading board of the Peninsular Base Section, the Fifth Army, and the VI Corps. Each division was responsible for its own loading areas, movement to the docks, and loading. Vehicles were waterproofed in division areas and loaded on 19 January.¹⁹² The troops of X-RAY Force were loaded at four locations in the Gulf of Naples. The PETER Force was assembled in the afternoon of 21 January north of Capri.¹⁹³ The initial assault force of 50,000 men, 5,200 vehicles, and some 375 ships and craft was comparable in size to that which had landed at Salerno in September 1943.¹⁹⁴ General Lucas established his command post on board the small seaplane tender *Biscayne* on the afternoon on 20 January. The weather forecast predicted

negligible swell and a thick morning haze to cover the landing. On 20 January, Task Force 81 was informed that D-day would be 22 January and H-hour, 0200.¹⁹⁵ At 0500 on 21 January the ships of TF 81 put to sea.¹⁹⁶

Sea Transit, 21–22 January

The distance from Naples to the Anzio-Nettuno beaches is some 110 miles. The sorties and rendezvous of the convoys and their approaches to the beaches were carried out exactly as planned.¹⁹⁷ The route of TF 81 from the Gulf of Naples to Anzio was laid out to keep the ships clear of minefields and conceal their destination as long as possible.¹⁹⁸ It passed four to twelve miles seaward of Ischia and the Ponziante Islands. The assault convoy sailed at about five knots on a roundabout track.¹⁹⁹ South of Ischia the LCTs and other landing craft of the X-RAY Force took a shorter course closer to the shore. Minesweepers were positioned ahead of the convoy, while cruisers and destroyers protected flanks against U-boats and torpedo boats. Fighters provided air cover.²⁰⁰ The sea was calm, the temperature about fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit, and the ceiling was six thousand feet, good for air strikes.²⁰¹ TF 81 was not detected during its transit.²⁰² Reportedly, the last German air reconnaissance of the Naples harbor had been on 11 December 1943.²⁰³ At dusk, within five miles of the CHARLIE reference vessel (3.5 miles from the center point of the landing beaches), speed was reduced to allow stragglers to catch up.²⁰⁴

On 20 January, and just prior to the movement to the beach of the landing force, the British Bombardment Group (HMS *Orion*, *Spartan*, *Janus*, *Jervis*, *La Forey*, and *Faulknor*) attacked the coastal batteries at Terracina. The 12th Minesweeping Flotilla cleared mines to enable the transit of the bombardment force through the Gulf of Gaeta.²⁰⁵

The Landing

At 0005 on 22 January, in the darkness of a moonless night, the Allied assault force dropped anchor off Anzio-Nettuno.²⁰⁶ Lucas exaggerated by saying that it had “achieved what is certainly one of the most complete surprises in history.” The factors that had contributed to it, however, included the wireless silence maintained during the transit by TF 81, inadequate German air and sea reconnaissance, a lack of German radar posts on the western coast south of Piombino, and, more broadly, a failure of German military intelligence.²⁰⁷

As described above, Allied troops and landing craft had assembled at Corsica and Sardinia as part of a deception effort.²⁰⁸ During the night of 21 January, one British cruiser (HMS *Dido*), a French destroyer (*Le Fantasque*), and a British destroyer (HMS *Inglefield*) conducted diversionary bombardment of Civitavecchia. At daybreak this force moved south to bombard the coast between Formia and Terracina to check any enemy reinforcements toward Anzio.²⁰⁹ Allied coastal

craft made dummy landings; however, preoccupied by heavy fighting along the Gustav Line, the Germans paid little attention to these.²¹⁰ ULTRA did not reveal whether the Germans believed the deception story, but in any case they moved no troops. The Germans apparently preferred to rely on their aerial reconnaissance to warn of any actual, imminent amphibious attack.²¹¹

The landing at Anzio-Nettuno was carried out as planned (see map 3). All the waves except the DUKWs landed within two minutes of the scheduled times. Some LCIs grounded on the inner bar and unloaded via LCVPs. The CHARLIE reference vessel proved effective.²¹² In the PETER Force's sector, a British submarine (HMS *Utor*) helped minesweepers clear mines starting at 2030 on D-1. However, because of inadequate rehearsal, gear was fouled, and there were near collisions and narrow escapes from floating mines.²¹³

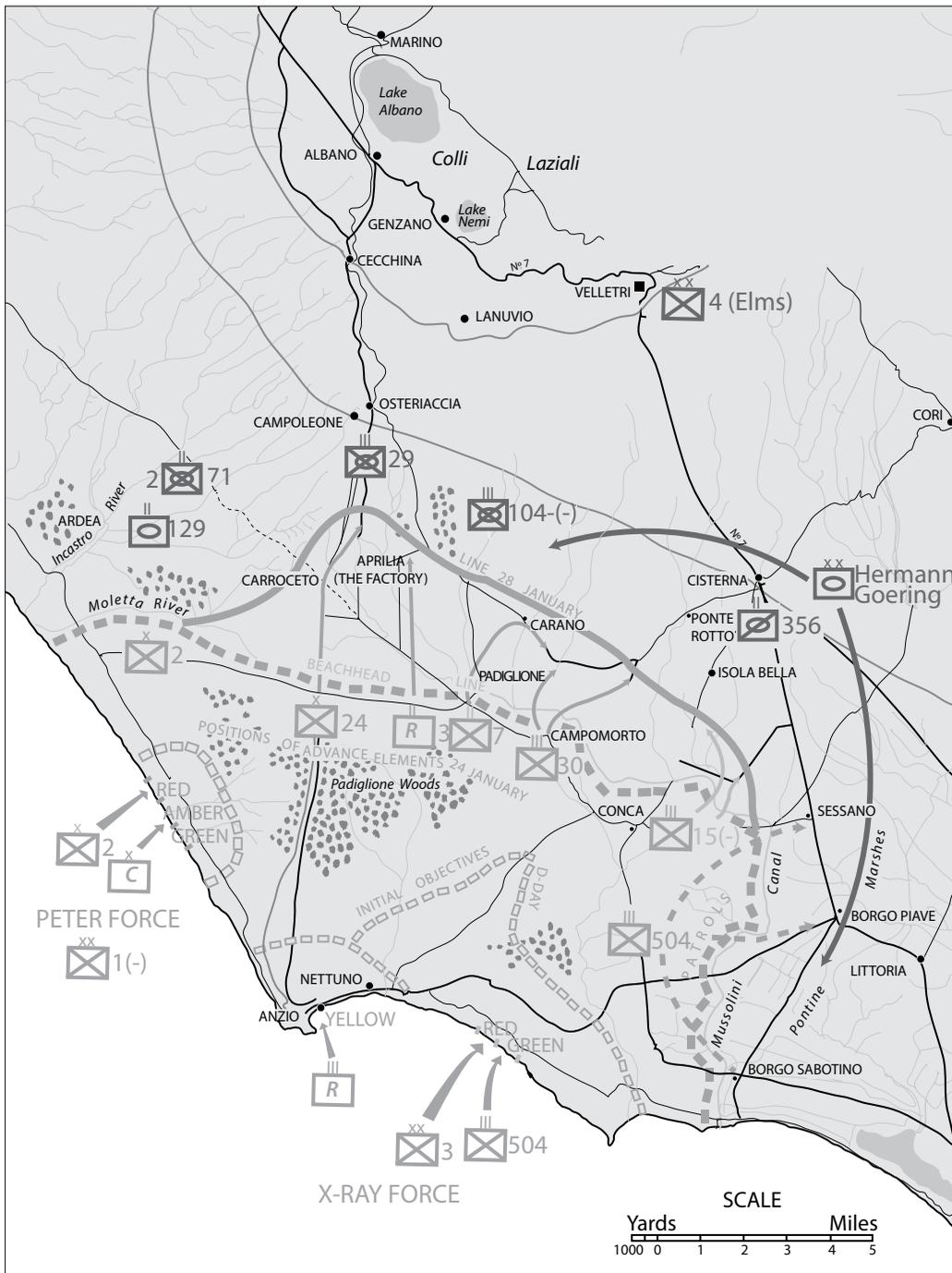
The PETER Force arrived at its landing sector at about midnight.²¹⁴ At H-10 (or earlier than planned) two British LCT(R)s launched a powerful five-minute barrage of five-inch rockets.²¹⁵ Two cruisers (USS *Brooklyn* and HMS *Penelope*) and five U.S. destroyers provided fire support. In X-RAY Force's sector, fire support was provided by two British cruisers, *Orion* and *Spartan*. In reserve were two Dutch gunboats, *Flores* and *Soemba*.²¹⁶ Enemy movements detected on the coast road in the Formia area were shelled by *Dido* and a destroyer.²¹⁷

In the PETER Force's sector, both LSTs and LCTs had to unload over pontoon causeways. Ten LSTs were sent to X-RAY beaches for unloading on D-day.²¹⁸ The first wave reached the beaches at about 0200, but the DUKWs did not roll out until 0400. The LCTs did not beach until 0645. Lack of exits from the beach and serious delay in rigging causeways postponed the unloading of LSTs until 1045.²¹⁹ Because of the unfavorable beach gradient, as noted above, the troops disembarked by the LSTs had to wade over three hundred feet to the shore. Only a single ship could be unloaded at a time. Also, the movement of vehicles on the exit roads was impeded by the soft and boggy ground.²²⁰

The 3rd ID disembarked on the RED and GREEN Beaches. A British submarine, HMS *Uproar*, guided a force of twenty-three minesweepers, which found only a few mines in the approach lanes.²²¹ By 1500 on D-day supplies began to be shipped directly to the VI Corps dumps. The 36th Engineer Combat Regiment cleared the port of Nettuno; by the early afternoon it was able to receive four LSTs and three LCTs simultaneously.²²²

The initial mission of the Luftwaffe was to hinder the enemy buildup and attack supply shipping. The main burden was on torpedo and glide bombers.²²³ The Luftwaffe flew only 140 sorties on 22 January.²²⁴ About 0850, eighteen to twenty-eight German fighter-bombers made three attacks on the unloading areas but sank only a single 160-foot LCI.²²⁵ On D-day, the Allied aircraft flew 1,200 sorties against the targets in the amphibious objective area.²²⁶ Their main targets

**MAP 3
ANZIO LANDING: INITIAL BEACHHEAD**



were the roads leading to the landing beaches. However, the Germans quickly repaired them.²²⁷

Establishing the Lodgment and German Reaction, 22–24 January

All the initial objectives by the VI Corps were captured by noon on 22 January.²²⁸ The only resistance came from elements of two depleted battalions of the 29th Panzer-Grenadier Division.²²⁹ These units had just been withdrawn from hard fighting along the Gustav Line and assigned to what had been expected to be a long rest, coast watching between the Tiber River and Nettuno. A few scattered minefields, mostly in the port and on the PETER beaches, were the greatest hazard.²³⁰ After sunrise on D-day, however, the enemy 88 mm batteries deep inland began sporadically shelling the port and PETER beaches. Despite the support of Allied cruisers and destroyers, these guns were not silenced all day.²³¹

After the landing, the Allied forces advanced and expanded the beachhead. By the evening of D-day advance elements of the 30th Infantry and 3rd Reconnaissance Regiment had seized all the bridges across the Mussolini Canal. However, the Hermann Goering Panzer Division recaptured most of them that night.²³²

Despite claims to the contrary, some ULTRA messages were shared with the commanders taking part in SHINGLE. For example, on 20 January the British Admiralty informed Commander, TF 81 that “service of ULTRA will open for Admiral Lowry and Major General Lucas immediately.”²³³ Three days later the British naval Operational Intelligence Centre in the Mediterranean stated that “naval information for admiral Lowry being passed as Admiralty ULTRA but no service to major general Lucas until the recently requested special party has been formed.”²³⁴ However, it is unclear whether Lowry and Lucas received the same ULTRA messages that General Clark did.

By the end of the 24th, the beachhead was roughly seven miles deep and fifteen miles wide, centered on the port of Anzio. Its twenty-six-mile perimeter was considered the maximum that could be held by VI Corps.²³⁵ The beachhead was too small—all of it could be reached by enemy artillery, and the forces within it had little space for maneuver.²³⁶ German artillery observers in the Alban Hills enjoyed an unobstructed, spectacular view of the beachhead and directed fire to all parts of the congested beachhead (see map 3 and the cover of this issue).²³⁷ By 24 January it had become clear that the main Fifth Army could not link up with the VI Corps as envisaged in the original plan. Accordingly, VI Corps was directed to consolidate its gains on the ground before starting an advance toward the Alban Hills, at which point Lucas’s intermediate objectives would be the capture of Cisterna and Campoleone.²³⁸

Luftwaffe medium bombers, armed with Hs.293 radio-guided glide bombs, and torpedo aircraft conducted frequent raids of the Anzio-Nettuno area. They skimmed at low altitude at dusk through the mist and a hail of AA fire, releasing bombs and torpedoes on the crowded shipping in harbor.²³⁹ The German aircraft

carried out twenty attacks on shipping, with 150 sorties, on the nights of 23/24 and 24/25 January.²⁴⁰ On the 23rd, a radio-guided glide-bomb attack at dark sank the British destroyer *Janus* and damaged heavily another, HMS *Jervis*.²⁴¹ The next day, the anchorage was attacked during daylight by fifteen Luftwaffe fighter-bombers, followed by another forty-three at dusk. After dark, fifty-two aircraft repeatedly attacked the transport area.²⁴² The aircraft attacked three British hospital ships (*St. David*, *Leinster*, and *St. Andrew*), sinking one (*St. David*) and damaging another (*Leinster*).²⁴³ The U.S. destroyer *Plunkett* was hit by a single bomb, killing fifty-three crewmen (however, *Plunkett* reached Palermo under its own power). The light cruiser *Brooklyn* was nearly struck several times.²⁴⁴

The Allies had achieved complete tactical surprise in their landing at Anzio-Nettuno. However, Kesselring and OKW had long anticipated a major landing in the rear of their forces in Italy. Kesselring and his staff had noted the concentrations of troops and ships between Naples and Sicily after 13 January. However, they believed a landing improbable prior to the resolution of the enemy attack on the Garigliano River, because of the German counterattack from the right flank of the Tenth Army against that advance. Kesselring and his staff interpreted the heavy air raids on railways and roads in central and northern Italy as meant to cut off the Tenth Army's supply lines, not as preparations for a landing.²⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Kesselring now took specific and prudent steps to guard against a landing.

On 18 January he ordered alerts for German forces throughout Italy (with the exception of the German Naval Command Italy, which did not alert its forces against the enemy landing, supposedly because of its shortage of personnel). The Allied commanders learned about Kesselring's orders on the 19th, through ULTRA. (Ironically, Kesselring's staff tried to dissuade him from alerting forces on the night of 21/22 January, because constant alerts were wearing troops down.)²⁴⁶ Because of the threat of a breach of the Gustav Line on the Garigliano, Kesselring moved combat forces in the Rome area southward for a possible counterattack; such weak forces remained west of Rome that they could be employed only for coastal observation in the Tarquinia–Terracina sector.²⁴⁷ The only headquarters in the Rome area was that of Army Group C. No other staff was available to organize an emergency defense.²⁴⁸

At 0235 on 22 January, the first report of four or five enemy cruisers in the Anzio-Nettuno area was sent by the 8th Company of the 71st Panzer-Grenadier Regiment to its battalion command.²⁴⁹ Kesselring's chief of staff, General Siegfried Westphal, was awakened at 0300 and informed that the enemy forces had landed at Anzio-Nettuno about 0200. He immediately alerted subordinate forces for Case RICHARD.²⁵⁰ Afterward, the first alerted German units began to move.²⁵¹ Case RICHARD, as noted, called for forces in the Rome area to contain

the beachhead and for uncommitted forces on the Gustav Line to move to the scene. Battalion and regimental forces on the line but in minimal contact with the enemy would be also moved.²⁵²

However, the critical situation at the southern flank of the Tenth Army required deployment of all reserves in the Italian theater. Failure to take immediate countermeasures, in the face of enemy landings south of Rome, could lead to the cutting off of the Tenth Army and the collapse of the entire southern Italian front. Therefore, Kesselring intended to establish a defensive line on the beachhead as quickly as possible. At that point, it had to be assumed that the enemy might seize the Alban Hills before sufficient German troops could be brought up. These considerations made a counterattack necessary, for which reinforcements would have to be transferred from other theaters.²⁵³

Meanwhile, Kesselring immediately alerted the 4th Parachute Division and replacement units of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division, in the Rome area, to block all roads leading to Rome from the Alban Hills.²⁵⁴ ULTRA detected all these movements, except those of two battalions in the Rome area that used telephone instead of radio.²⁵⁵ At 0600 on 22 January, Kesselring reported to the OKW that a landing had taken place and requested that the forces from other theaters earmarked for Case RICHARD be sent to Italy.²⁵⁶

Kesselring decided to take away temporarily some forces from the Tenth Army until the arrival of reinforcements from northern Italy, southern France, and Yugoslavia.²⁵⁷ Hence, the I Parachute Corps, under General Alfred Schlemm, was ordered to stop its attack on the Garigliano River, withdraw the 29th Panzer-Grenadier Division, and move it to the Anzio area. The Tenth Army was directed to release from the Adriatic front various units, especially motorized reconnaissance detachments and infantry divisions, and send them to Anzio.²⁵⁸

At 0710 on 22 January, Kesselring directed General Mackensen to transfer to the assault area all forces involved in Case RICHARD.²⁵⁹ Mackensen accordingly ordered to proceed immediately to the Anzio area the 65th ID (less one regiment) at Genoa, the 362nd ID (less one regiment) at Rimini, and two regiments of the newly formed 16th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division at Leghorn. Their movements started that evening and continued through 23 January.²⁶⁰ At 0830 on the 22nd, Kesselring directed General Vietinghoff to transfer the headquarters and all combat troops that could be spared of the I Parachute Corps to the Anzio area as quickly as possible. The forces most suitable for release by the Tenth Army were the 71st ID and the parts of the 3rd Panzer-Grenadier Division and of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division that were then on the Tenth Army front (the remainder of each was still on the march from the north).²⁶¹ In addition, local reserves were withdrawn from the southern front. Since the enemy had landed tanks, antitank forces and artillery had to be released for Anzio. From the

Adriatic front, the Tenth Army sent 26th Panzer Division and elements of the 1st Parachute Division.²⁶²

Later in the morning of 22 January, the Joint Operations Staff of the OKW issued by phone the code word MARDER 1. CINC West (Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt) was ordered to move by rail to CINC Southeast (Field Marshal Maximilian Reichsfreiherr von Weichs) the partially mechanized 715th ID, the 998th Artillery Battalion (general headquarters [GHQ] troops, directly subordinate to divisional or corps headquarters), the 1st Battalion of the 4th Panzer Regiment (with Panther tanks), the 301st Panzer Battalion, and the 216th Assault Howitzer Detachment. CINC Southeast was ordered to deploy the 114th Light (Jaeger) Division and two artillery battalions of GHQ troops.²⁶³ The Replacement Army in Germany was directed to send to Italy the headquarters of the LXXV Corps, the Infantry Demonstration (Lehr) Regiment, 1026th Grenadier Infantry Regiment, the 1027th Panzer-Grenadier Regiment, the Artillery Demonstration Regiment, the Rocket Launcher Demonstration Battalion, three battalions of security troops, two battalions of Russian “volunteers,” six construction battalions, and the 508th Panzer Battalion (with Tiger tanks). Neither the CINC West nor CINC Southeast could provide a second division as planned in Case RICHARD, because of the transfer of troops to the Russian front. Hence, immediate activation of the 92nd ID in Viterbo, Italy, was ordered.²⁶⁴

On the eve of the enemy landing at Anzio, Luftwaffe strength in the Mediterranean had been reduced to about two hundred aircraft. However, the Luftwaffe reacted quickly and energetically to the new threat.²⁶⁵ After a phone conversation with Hitler, its commander in chief, Hermann Goering, ordered all available aircraft to Italy. In the night of 22/23 January, OKW directed CINC Southeast to send the 1st and 2nd Air Groups (Gruppe) of the 26th Bomber Wing (Kampfgeschwader), the 2nd Air Group of the 100th Bomber Wing (flying Do.17s), and 2nd Air Group of the 50th Bomber Wing (with He.177s).²⁶⁶ To the 2nd Air Fleet would be transferred, from Luftwaffe Command / CINC Southeast, the 3rd Squadron, 1st Group, of the 1st Bomber Wing (Ju.88s); the 1st Squadron of the 3rd Group and the 2nd Group of the 100th Bomber Wing (Do.217s); and the 2nd Group of the 40th Bomber Wing (He.177s).²⁶⁷

Between 23 January and 3 February, some 140 long-range bombers were brought in from northwestern Germany, southern France, and Greece. Antishipping aircraft in southern France were reinforced by fifty to sixty Do.217s and He.177s armed with radio-controlled glide bombs. About fifty single-engine fighters were moved down from northern Italy to the Anzio area by 23 February, and by the end of the month about forty single-engine fighters had been sent (though the Germans never had more than thirty or thirty-five fighters available). Despite all difficulties, Luftwaffe strength in the Mediterranean by March

1944 had grown to 750–75 aircraft, including some six hundred in the central Mediterranean, of which about 475 were available for operations in the Anzio area.²⁶⁸

At 1700 on 22 January, the I Parachute Corps established a defensive line at the Anzio beachhead and took command of all arriving troops.²⁶⁹ That evening it became clear to Kesselring that the landing was a major enemy effort. Vietinghoff recommended immediate withdrawal from the Gustav Line and shortening of the Garigliano–Rapido front to free two seasoned divisions for Anzio. However, Kesselring, perceiving a lack of aggressiveness by the enemy VI Corps, instructed him to stand fast. This was a bold decision, because the first strong contingents from the Tenth Army could not be expected earlier than the 24th. If the enemy tried a breakout before then, Kesselring estimated, German forces would not be strong enough to resist.²⁷⁰

Kesselring moved his headquarters about twenty-eight miles north to underground bunkers at Monte Soratte, a secure and bombproof place.²⁷¹ He directed General Mackensen to take over the defense in the Anzio area; the I Parachute Corps and LXXVI Panzer Corps became subordinate to him. Mackensen's mission was to strengthen the defensive ring and reduce the enemy bridgehead.²⁷²

The Germans anticipated that the landing force would limit itself to reconnaissance and patrol toward the north and artillery fire on German positions. By the 24th Kesselring was convinced that there was no danger of an enemy breakout. By then the German defenders had a total of seventy artillery batteries, including AA. This estimate was supported by the belief that the enemy did not have sufficient troops on the beachhead for a large-scale attack. Kesselring concluded that the enemy would make only local attacks.²⁷³

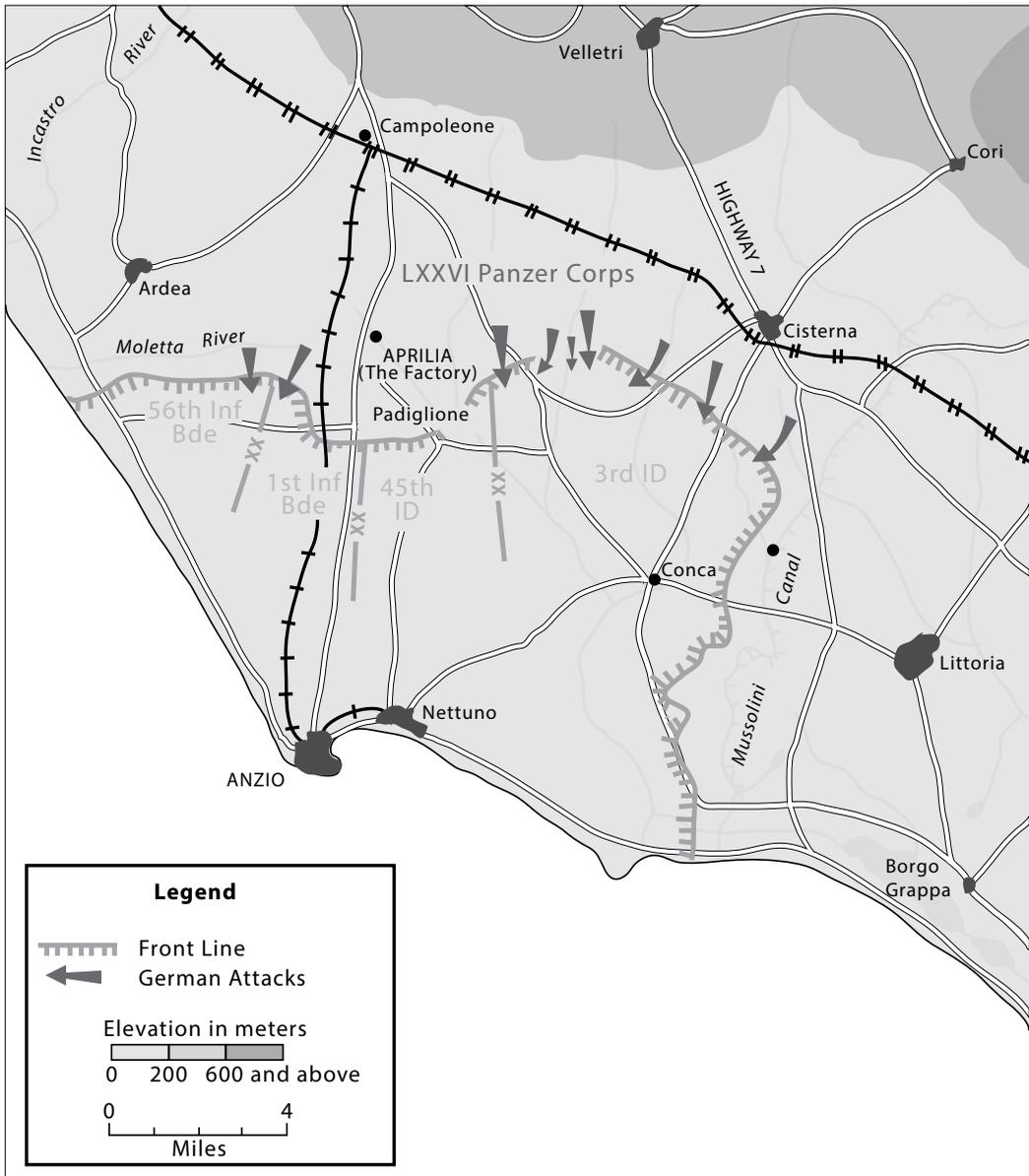
On the basis of these assumptions, Kesselring decided to counterattack, to destroy the enemy landing force or drive it back into the sea. Every effort would be made to deliver this blow before the enemy had completed its initial consolidation. Yet a concerted attack could not start before the 28th, because forces could not be assembled earlier—although if the enemy attacked after all, the counterattack would start immediately, regardless.²⁷⁴

By the end of 25 January, the Germans had almost twenty-six thousand combat troops on the line. Instead of weakening the Gustav Line, the Germans had brought in some thirty-four thousand troops to the area.²⁷⁵ By 25 January, elements of eight German divisions were facing Anzio, and five more, with many supporting units, were on the way.²⁷⁶ This number was much larger than Allied intelligence had believed possible. The Allies had estimated that German commitments in northern Italy and elsewhere would limit reinforcements to only two divisions from north of Rome, and those not for sixteen days.²⁷⁷

The Battle Ashore, 25 January–4 March

By 29 January the Allies had disembarked at Anzio-Nettuno some 69,000 troops, 237 tanks, 508 guns, and about 27,250 tons of supplies.²⁷⁸ By then the Germans had built a strong defensive line in front of Cisterna and Campoleone (see map 4). The terrain, with its gullies and soggy ground caused by rain, worked in their favor. The Germans concentrated about thirty battalions, supported by panzers

**MAP 4
HOLDING THE BEACHHEAD, 28 FEBRUARY–3 MARCH 1944**



and artillery, keeping six battalions in reserve.²⁷⁹ Lucas planned for that day a two-pronged attack: one force would cut Highway No. 7 at Cisterna before moving east into the Alban Hills; the second force would advance northeast up to the Albano road and break through the Campoleone salient. Lucas still believed that a quick linkup with the main Fifth Army in the south was possible. Yet German resistance all along the perimeter was growing stronger, not weaker. Further, and unknown to Lucas, his attack would be aimed directly at thirty-six German battalions massing for their counterattack.²⁸⁰

The attack on Cisterna on 30 January was spearheaded by the two U.S. Ranger battalions. Both were ambushed and trapped by the Germans. Most of the Rangers were captured; out of 767, only six escaped.²⁸¹ In an attack on Cisterna on 30/31 January, the 3rd ID fought stubbornly but was unable to break through—in part because the 3rd ID attacked along a seven-mile front toward an objective three or four miles away. At the same time, the British 1 Division tried to breach the enemy's defense line along a railroad by seizing a crossing at Campoleone.²⁸²

After three days of heavy fighting, growing enemy strength forced Lucas to abandon his assault and prepare for an expected German counterthrust. The Allied attack had failed to reach its stated objectives.²⁸³ Nevertheless, it forced the Fourteenth Army to commit most of its forces and postponed the counterattack intended to wipe out the Allied beachhead.²⁸⁴ By 2 February, VI Corps had taken about 1,500 prisoners and inflicted heavy casualties. Its own casualties were about 6,500.²⁸⁵

The Germans had planned to attack from north to south along the Albano-Anzio road, with the main concentration on either side of “the Factory” at Aprilia. The original date for the attack was 28 January, but on the 26th Kesselring and Mackensen postponed it to 1 February to await the arrival of the reinforcements.²⁸⁶ The German plan called for three main phases: Phase I (3–10 February), preparatory attacks to cut off the British salient at the Albano road and to capture the Factory; Phase II (16–20 February), penetration of the enemy perimeter along the Albano road; and Phase III (28 February–2 March), an attack on Cisterna and penetration of the beachhead defenses along the Mussolini Canal. The counterattack was delivered as planned; the first and second phases were successful, but the third failed.²⁸⁷ The Germans resumed their attack against the weakened British 1 Division on 7 February. In two days of bitter fighting they pushed the British from the Factory and Carroceto. On the 11th American troops tried to retake Aprilia. They failed but inflicted heavy casualties on the German defenders.²⁸⁸

Between 3 and 15 February, the Luftwaffe carried out seven attacks against Allied shipping in the Anzio-Nettuno area. The highest number of sorties on any single night was only about fifty. There were about twenty sorties by Do.217s and He.177s armed with Hs.293 radio-controlled glide bombs. The Ju.88s in northern

Italy were capable of no more than harassing raids, mainly on ground targets. Daylight raids on shipping by fighter-bombers were even less effective.²⁸⁹

The lack of Allied success at Anzio became increasingly a matter of great concern to Churchill and General Maitland Wilson. On 11 February, Churchill wrote Alexander, "I am sure you realize how great disappointment was caused at home and in the United States by the stand-still at Anzio." While he did not know what orders Lucas had, Churchill wrote that "it is a root principle to push out and form contact with the enemy."²⁹⁰ Wilson informed Churchill that as of 10 February, the Allies had in the Anzio bridgehead some eighteen thousand vehicles, including four hundred tanks and more than 1,200 carriers and half-tracks.²⁹¹ This prompted Churchill to say that for him it was a "spectacle" to see eighteen thousand vehicles "accumulated by the 14th day [after D-day] for only 70,000 men or less than four men to a vehicle including drivers and attendants, though they did not move more than 12 or 14 miles"; it was "most astonishing." He also wondered why seventy thousand American and British troops were blocked by at most sixty thousand Germans. Churchill was clearly impressed with "the ease with which the enemy moved their pieces about on the board and the rapidity with which they adjusted the perilous gaps they had to make on their southern front is most impressive." In his view, all that "seems to give us very awkward data in regard to OVERLORD."²⁹² General Wilson noted that the Germans rapidly built up their forces to seal the beachhead. Their troop strength had increased from ten infantry battalions and two reconnaissance units on 24 January to twenty-nine infantry battalions and seven reconnaissance units on 30 January, and to forty infantry battalions and seven reconnaissance units on 5 February. In his view, bad weather was the main factor that prevented Allied air forces from cutting off railway traffic from north Italy to Rome.²⁹³

On 9 February, Mackensen ordered a second major attack (Operation FISCHFANG), aimed to break through the enemy's main defense line, split VI Corps in two, drive to Nettuno and Anzio, and destroy the divided enemy force.²⁹⁴ The attack started on 16 February but was repulsed with heavy losses, achieving only minor penetrations. The Germans launched a larger assault on 18 February.²⁹⁵ However, by noon the next day Allied air and artillery superiority had turned the tide. The final German assault was stopped by air strikes and massed mortars, and machine-gun, artillery, and tank fire. Much weaker attacks on 19 and 20 February were broken up, and the crisis had passed, although harassing attacks continued until the 22nd. The VI Corps now went on the offensive and retook some lost ground.²⁹⁶ The German Fourteenth Army was close to exhaustion.²⁹⁷

Neither Alexander nor Clark was entirely happy with Lucas's performance. They believed Lucas was tired, both physically and mentally. Clark told Alexander that he intended to make General Truscott Lucas's deputy commander and later

to transfer Lucas and appoint Truscott the VI Corps commander. This and other command changes within the VI Corps became effective on 17 February.²⁹⁸ On the 22nd Clark formally relieved Lucas and appointed Truscott. Clark thought that Truscott was the most outstanding of all the Fifth Army's division commanders. A quiet, competent, and courageous officer, with extensive battle experience in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, Truscott inspired confidence.²⁹⁹ He worked well with the British, who had the highest regard for his judgment.³⁰⁰

Apparently, Truscott found the situation in the VI Corps headquarters highly unsatisfactory. He later recalled that the VI Corps staff had never been positive or confident in planning or execution. Although it had many able staff officers, proposals were often made without proper analysis. Conferences often became debating societies, producing decisions that were usually accepted only with reluctance and rarely supported in a way that would have inspired confidence. Orders were based on cursory study of maps and intelligence; few staff officers bothered much about reconnaissance.³⁰¹

The third and last major German effort to throw the Allied forces into the sea started at midnight 28/29 February. The VI Corps and 3rd ID responded strongly; for each German shell they fired twenty, sixty-six thousand on 29 February alone. The Germans' biggest success was an eight-hundred-yard penetration north of Carano, although they suffered heavy losses.³⁰²

Stalemate, 5 March–22 May

On 4 March, Mackensen decided that further German attacks were useless and ordered the Fourteenth Army to revert to the defense. Over five days of fighting the Germans had suffered 3,500 men killed, wounded, or missing.³⁰³ The Fourteenth Army greatly reduced its strength along the beachhead perimeter, withdrawing its best divisions to the area south of Rome as Army Group C's operational reserves.³⁰⁴ Other divisions were sent to northern Italy. By the end of March the enemy force around Anzio had been reduced by more than four divisions, and battle-hardened troops had been replaced with generally second-rate units. A major part of the reinforcements were Italian troops; not trusting their Italian allies, the Germans mixed Italian with German units down to the platoon level.³⁰⁵ The troops of the VI Corps were equally exhausted; the Allies replaced them with fresh forces. The arrival of fourteen thousand fresh reinforcements in March brought the Allied strength up to ninety thousand troops by the end of March.³⁰⁶

After 4 March, there was a lull in fighting for almost three months. Both sides limited themselves to defending their then-held positions.³⁰⁷ The Anzio-Nettuno front now resembled in many ways the western front of World War I. Most Allied casualties were caused by artillery and air attacks. The Germans used with a devastating effect their 280 mm K5(E) Leopold railway guns (called

“Anzio Annies”) mounted on the Alban Hills.³⁰⁸ The VI Corps built up its forces and piled up a huge logistical reserve in preparation for a May offensive, to be followed by a drive to Rome. Allied aircraft and artillery constantly pounded enemy positions.³⁰⁹

Breakout, 23 May–1 June

On the night of 11/12 May, the Fifth and the Eighth Armies launched a long-awaited offensive against the Gustav Line. The main Fifth Army attack was staged from a bridgehead north of the Garigliano River, between the Liri Valley and the sea. The Eighth Army launched an attack on the Cassino front, which it had taken over after the failure of an offensive in February.³¹⁰ After a week of fighting, the Germans abandoned Monte Cassino. By 15 May the FEC and the U.S. II Corps had broken the Gustav Line.³¹¹

By dusk on the 30th, however, the Fifth Army’s drive appeared to have stalled, and the Fourteenth Army fought hard on 31 May–2 June to check the advance. The Germans offered especially stiff resistance to the VI Corps, which had been on the offensive since 23 May. On the night of 2/3 June, the main enemy forces withdrew northward from the Alban Hills, leaving only scattered rearguard elements. At 0800 on the 4th the first American troops entered Rome, and with that the ultimate operational objective of the Anzio-Nettuno operation had been accomplished—but by other forces.³¹²

During the Anzio-Nettuno operation the VI Corps suffered 29,200 combat casualties, comprising 4,400 killed, 18,000 wounded, and 6,800 prisoners or missing. About two-thirds of these casualties occurred in the heavy fighting that ended on 3 March. In addition, the Allies had suffered some 37,000 noncombat casualties (26,000 Americans). Out of the total combat losses, 16,200 were American (2,800 killed, 11,000 wounded, and 2,400 prisoners or missing). During the first thirty days, combat casualties in the VI Corps were 17 percent, for the British 27 percent. During the entire operation, about 33,000 casualties were evacuated by the sea (24,000 Americans). The Fourteenth Army suffered 27,500 casualties (5,500 killed, 17,500 wounded, 4,500 prisoners or missing).³¹³

CONCLUSIONS AND OPERATIONAL LESSONS LEARNED

The Allied amphibious landing at Anzio-Nettuno on 22 January did not itself accomplish its stated ultimate operational objective, despite enormous superiority possessed by the Allies on land, in the air, and at sea. The main reasons for this failure were unsound decisions by Allied political and military leaders and poor performance by operational commanders in planning and execution. The Germans proved much tougher and more resourceful enemies than the Allies anticipated, and the German operational and tactical commanders performed much better than their counterparts.

The Allied command organization in the Mediterranean was fragmented and complex. Some high commanders had two positions or even more. Changes in the names of service components and major tactical commands were frequent, sometimes for no apparent reason. Perhaps the most glaring example of the fragmented command was air forces—there were simply too many tactical commands in the Mediterranean theater, with overlapping responsibilities. The German command organization in the Mediterranean, after the capitulation of Italy, underwent major changes as well, after which it too lacked badly needed unity.

Command organization is one of the key prerequisites of sound command and control. It should be simple and straightforward. It should avoid overlapping responsibilities. Changes in the command structure should not be made often, especially in the course of a campaign or major operation. Optimally, an operational commander should be entrusted with command responsibilities for all forces taking part in a campaign or major operation.

One of the Allies' greatest advantages was their ability to intercept and read high-level German radio messages. ULTRA intercepts provided a steady stream of information about order of battle and statuses of fuel, ammunition, and food. The cryptologists at Bletchley Park were able to read estimates and plans by Kesselring and his subordinate commanders and exchanges between Hitler, OKW, and Kesselring. Allied high commanders were informed in this way about German assessments of Allied forces. However, army commanders could not "sanitize" them—that is, package the information in a way that did not compromise the source—for relay to major subordinates. Also, British intelligence officers in the theater did not share all ULTRA information with their American counterparts (whom they did not trust to protect it properly), creating not only distrust but difficulty reaching agreements.

An ability to intercept and read in a timely way coded enemy messages provides an enormous advantage. Such a capability must be highly classified, yet subordinate commanders directly involved in combat must possess information that would allow them to make sound decisions. As a minimum, higher commanders should have the authority to sanitize received information and transmit to subordinate tactical commanders. In any case, one's operational intelligence should not overly rely on technical means but use other sources as well, human intelligence in particular.

A plan for an Anzio-Nettuno landing was revived by Churchill in late December. His insistence, strongly supported by other Allied commanders, on capturing Rome as soon as possible led to the adoption of Operation SHINGLE. This decision was based primarily on political, not military, considerations—an operational decision made by strategic leadership. It was also based on highly suspect assumptions about the time and scope of the enemy reaction to a landing

in the rear. Allied commanders and their staffs paid more attention to the enemy's intentions than to his capabilities, a common but often fatal mistake.

The operational commander—not high political leaders—should be primarily responsible for preparing, planning, and executing a major operation. Political and other nonmilitary considerations should be always taken fully into account. Yet the operational commander should consult higher political-military leadership about the advisability of a proposed major operation and the availability of the resources that would be necessary for it.

Clark's proposal on 10 December to disconnect landing at Anzio-Nettuno from the progress of the Fifth Army from the south was a radical change. It made the landing an independent major joint operation instead of an integral part of a renewed Fifth Army offensive. It also largely doomed the landing.

An amphibious landing aimed to envelop an enemy flank on the coast should be planned and executed not as an independent major operation but as an integral part of a major offensive joint/combined operation by the main forces on the land front. Hence, timing and amphibious objective area should be selected to ensure a rapid linkup of the landing force and the main force on the land front; otherwise, an amphibious landing would most likely accomplish a major tactical objective but would fail to have an operational impact on the course of the entire operation—the operational commander risks too much and will achieve too little. Such an error can be fatal against a strong and skillful enemy.

The lack of sufficient reserves and the situation on the main Italian front required that the landing force be a mix of American and British units. This in turn created problems in both planning and execution: American and British units used different staff and tactical procedures, and relationships between the Allied commanders and between their staffs were generally poor. The timing and duration of Operation SHINGLE were heavily affected by the need to timely redeploy a large number of the LSTs from the Mediterranean to support the Normandy invasion. Another complicating factor was the need to employ a relatively large number of LSTs for buildup of forces on Corsica for the planned invasion of southern France.

A major problem in the planning and execution of SHINGLE was a divergence of views on the main mission of the VI Corps. Capturing the Alban Hills, as stipulated in Alexander's operations instruction, would clearly have seriously threatened vital supplies to the Tenth Army on the main front and possibly forced a general German retreat toward Rome—an operational objective. In contrast, capture of a lodgment in the Anzio-Nettuno area without an advance toward the Alban Hills, as laid down in Clark's operations instruction, amounted to only a major tactical objective.

An operational commander must formulate missions to subordinate commanders in consonance with the mission given by his higher commander. In a case where he has some reservations about the mission received, he should not change unilaterally and drastically the mission's content received from the higher operational commander. The missions issued to subordinate commanders should be short, clear, and above all militarily achievable. There is perhaps nothing worse than vague or open-ended missions.

The VI Corps was too small to accomplish the mission stipulated by Alexander; it could capture the Alban Hills but would be unable to hold them should the enemy move in large forces. Yet without seizing and holding the Alban Hills it was not possible to endanger seriously the supply routes to the Gustav Line, as would be required if the Germans were to be forced to react operationally—that is, to start withdrawing toward Rome.

One of the most important and fundamental requirements in determining a military objective is to balance the factors of space, time, and force. Any serious imbalance has to be resolved, by scaling down the objective, or reducing distances, increasing the time available, assigning larger forces, or taking some other action. This process is more an art than a science.

The prospects for a landing at Anzio-Nettuno were highly dependent on the ability of the main Fifth Army to break through on the Gustav Line and advance quickly up the Liri Valley in the direction of the Alban Hills and ultimately Rome. However, the renewed offensive should have started much earlier than 12 January, when plans were issued for Anzio-Nettuno. In the interim a decision could have been made whether to go ahead with or cancel SHINGLE. The main Fifth Army's attack on the Gustav Line, although sequenced, lacked a clear main effort. Instead of the majority of forces being deployed in a sector of main effort, each corps attacked within its assigned sector. The 15th Army Group should not have had to carry out, almost simultaneously, attacks on two widely separated objectives—to capture Cassino and to advance toward the Liri Valley.

Lucas's decision to establish and consolidate the beachhead instead of moving quickly to capture the Alban Hills, twenty miles distant, has been heavily criticized by commanders and historians. Yet it should be evaluated on the basis of the information Lucas had at that time. He apparently did not know that the Germans had only weak forces defending approaches to Rome. The most important reason for his decision not to advance to the Alban Hills was that two divisions were inadequate to defend a greatly enlarged beachhead. He might have sent either the Rangers or one regimental combat team to the hills, in the hope that the Germans would be induced to withdraw from the Gustav Line, but it was unlikely that they would. Yet Lucas was apparently quite content to consolidate defenses on the beachhead. A more energetic and aggressive commander like General

Patton would almost certainly have tried to capture the Alban Hills, twenty miles away. One cannot say with a benefit of hindsight whether such a commander would have been ultimately more successful than Lucas was. But perhaps the single biggest mistake was on the part of the Allied high command, in assigning inadequate forces to the Anzio-Nettuno landing and not ensuring that it could join with the Fifth Army within forty-eight hours.

It is hard to understand how Churchill and many higher Allied commanders so late in the war so badly and repeatedly underestimated the German will to resist stubbornly any large-scale threat to the Gustav Line. The Germans, when faced with serious situations in their rear, rarely simply folded their tents and silently stole away.

The VI Corps eventually tied up large enemy forces that otherwise would have been available on the southern Italian front or possibly in France. Yet one wonders whether a better solution to the stalemate in southern Italy in the winter of 1943 might have been an advance through the Liri Valley toward Rome as the sector of main effort instead of almost simultaneous attacks toward Rome and Cassino. By deploying the VI Corps in the sector of main effort it might have been possible to breach the German defenses on the Gustav Line much earlier than mid-May 1944. With four army corps instead of three, perhaps General Clark would have captured Rome much earlier than he did.

NOTES

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283. *Cassino and Anzio*, p. 86.
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288. Laurie, *Anzio*, p. 18.

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310. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
311. Laurie, *Anzio*, p. 23.
312. Center of Military History, *Anzio Beachhead 22 January–25 May 1944*, p. 122.
313. Laurie, *Anzio*, p. 26; Center of Military History, *Anzio Beachhead 22 January–25 May 1944*, p. 116.

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APPENDIX A: VI CORPS COMPOSITION, 22 JANUARY 1944

Maj. Gen. J. Lucas, Commander
HQ/HQ Company

Antiaircraft Artillery

35th Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade
68th Coast Artillery Regiment (Antiaircraft) [minus 3rd Battalion]

Armor:

1st Armored Division (Combat Command B)

(Maj. Gen. Ernest N. Harmon)

6th Armored Infantry Regiment

1st Armored Regiment

27th/91st Armored Field Artillery Battalions [105 mm howitzers]

Attached to 1st Armored Division:

191st Tank Battalion

751st Tank Battalion

81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion

18th Field Artillery Brigade

35th Field Artillery Group

15th Field Artillery Observation Battalion

1st Battalion, 36th Field Artillery Regiment [155 mm guns]

1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment [155 mm howitzers]

141st/938th Field Artillery Regiment [155 mm howitzers]

69th Armored Field Artillery Regiment [105 mm howitzers]

456th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion [minus Batteries C, D] [75 mm pack howitzers]

976th/977th Field Artillery Battalions [155 mm guns]

434th Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion

Infantry:

3rd Infantry Division (Maj. Gen. Lucien K. Truscott)

3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Troops (Mechanized)

9th Field Artillery Battalion [155 mm howitzers]

7th Regimental Combat Team

7th Infantry Regiment

10th Field Artillery Battalion [105 mm howitzers]

15th Regimental Combat Team

15th Infantry Regiment

39th Field Artillery Battalion [105 mm howitzers]

30th Regimental Combat Team

30th Infantry Regiment

41st Field Artillery Battalion

Attached to 3rd Infantry Division:

441st Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion

601st Tank Destroyer Battalion (attached)

45th Infantry Division (Combat Command A)

(Maj. Gen. William W. Eagles)

45th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)

189th Field Artillery Battalion [155 mm howitzers]
157th Regimental Combat Team
 157th Infantry Regiment
 158th Field Artillery Battalion [105 mm howitzers]
179th Regimental Combat Team
 179th Infantry Regiment
 160th Field Artillery Battalion [105 mm howitzers]
180th Regimental Combat Team
 180th Infantry Regiment
 171st Field Artillery Battalion [105 mm howitzers]

Attached to 45th Infantry Division:

 504th Regimental Combat Team
 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment
 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion
 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion

British 1 Division (Maj. Gen. W. R. C. Penney)

1 Division Royal Artillery
2, 19, and 67 Field Regiments Royal Artillery
1 Reconnaissance Regiment
2 Infantry Brigade
3 Infantry Brigade
24 Guard Infantry Brigade
46 Royal Tank Regiment

British 56 Division (London) (Maj. Gen. G. W. R. Templer)

64, 65, and 113 Field Regiments Royal Artillery
100 Light Antiaircraft Regiment Royal Artillery
44 Reconnaissance Regiment
167 Infantry Brigade
168 Infantry Brigade

Tank Destroyers:

701st Tank Destroyer Battalion
894th Tank Destroyer Battalion

First Special Service Force ["Devil's Brigade"]

(Brig. Gen. Robert T. Frederick)
1st Regiment
2nd Regiment
3rd Regiment

6615th Ranger Force (Col. William O. Darby)

1st Ranger Battalion
3rd Ranger Battalion
4th Ranger Battalion

Source: John D. Forsythe, Harris G. Warren, John Bowditch III et al., *Fifth Army History, Part IV: Cassino and Anzio* (Washington, D.C.: War Department, 1944), pp. 254–60; Lloyd Clark, *Anzio: Italy and the Battle of Rome—1944* (New York: Grove, 2006), pp. 274–77.

APPENDIX B: TASK FORCE 81, 22 JANUARY 1944

List of abbreviations

Rear Adm. Frank J. Lowry [flagship *Biscayne*]

Control Force

Embarked VI Corps (Maj. Gen. J. P. Lucas)

3rd Infantry Division (Maj. Gen. Lucien K. Truscott)

British 1 Division (Maj. Gen. W. R. C. Penney)

81.1 Force Flagship

Biscayne (AVP 11) [flagship]

Frederick C. Davis (DD 136)

81.10 Beach Company Group

1st Navy Beach Battalion

81.11 Salvage Group

1 ARS [*Prosperous*]

81.12 Air Navigation Group

2 PTs

81.13 Loading Control Group

81.14 Return Convoy Group

1 LCI(L)

81.2 Ranger Group (Capt. E. C. I. Turner, RN)

2 LSI(M) [*Royal Ulsterman, Beatrix*], 1 LSI(L) [*Winchester Castle*], 1 LST, 32 LCI(L)s, 22 LCTs, 1 LCG, 1 LCF, 1 LCT(R), 4 PCs, 6 SCs

81.3 RED Beach Group, Cdr. William O. Floyd, USN

12 LSTs, 31 LCI(L)s, 22 LCTs, 1 LCG, 1 LCF, 1 LCT(R), 4 PCs, SCs

81.4 GREEN Beach (Cdr. O. F. Gregor, USN)

1 LCI(L) [flagship], 2 LSI(L)s [*Circasia, Ascania*], 2 LSTs, 16 LCI(L)s, 11 LCTs, 1 LCG, 1 LCF, 1 LCT(R), 2 PCs, 2 SCs

81.5 First Follow Up Group (Capt. J. P. Clay, USN)

39 LSTs, 20 LCI(L)s, 7 LCTs

81.6 Escort Group (Capt. J. P. Clay, USN)

1 DD [*Plunkett*] [flagship], 4 DDs [*Gleaves, Croome, Niblack, HMS Themistocles*], 2 DEs [*Herbert C. Jones, Frederick C. Davis*], 1 anti-aircraft vessel [*Ulster Queen*], 2 AMs [*Ready, Sustain*]

81.7 Sweeper Group (Cdr. A. H. Richards, USN)

1 AM [flagship] [*Pilot*], 7 AMs [*Strive, Pioneer, Portent, Symbol, Dextrous, Sway, Prevail*], 14 YMSs, 1 SC

X-RAY Fire Support Group

81.8 Gunfire Support Group (Capt. Robert W. Cary)

81.8.2 Fire Support Group One [*Mayo*, 1 LCG]

81.8.2 Fire Support Group Two [*Woolsey, Ludlow*, 1 LCG]

81.8.3 Fire Support Three [*HMS Penelope, USS Edison*]

81.8.4 Fire Support Group [*Brooklyn, Trippe*]

81.8.5 Rocket and AA Support Group [3 LCT(R)s, 1 LCF, 1 LCF]

81.9 Beach Identification Group-

1 SS [HMS *Uproar* (P-31)], 1 DD [*Crete*], 3 PCs, 2 SCs

PETER FORCE (Rear Adm. Thomas H. Troubridge)

Embarking British 1 Division (Maj. Gen. W. R. C. Penney)

4 transports [HMS *Bulolo, Glengyle, Derbyshire, Sobieski* (Polish)]

3 AA/fighter-direction ships [HMS *Ulster Queen, Palomares*]

8 DDs [HMS *Janus, Jarvis, Laforey, Urchin, Tenacious, Kempenfelt, Loyal, Englefield*]

4 DDs [HMS *Beaufort, Brecon, Wilton, Tetcott*]

2 gunboats [HNMS *Flores, Soemba*]

6 minesweepers [HMS *Bude, Rothsay, Rinaldo, Fly, Cadmus, Waterwitch*]

3 LSTs [HMS *Boxer, Bruiser, Thruster*]

4 PCs [*Two Step, Sheppey, Hornpipe, St. Kilda*]

14 British LSTs, 5 U.S. LSTs, 2 LCGs, 31 LCIs, 1 LCI(H), 1 LCT(R)

1 oiler [*British Chancellor*], 1 net tender [*Barndale*], 2 tugs [U.S.] [*Evea, Edenshaw*],

2 PCs [U.S.], 3 hospital ships [HMS *St. Julien, St. Andrew, Leinster, St. Davis*]

1 beacon submarine [HMS *Ultror* (P-53)]

Force PETER Fire Support Group (Rear Adm. J. M. Mansfield, RN [flagship HMS *Orion*])

81.8.6 British Bombarding Squadron [HMS *Spartan, Orion, La Forey, Loyal, Jervis, Janus*]

Source: Operation Plan No. 147-43, 12 January 1944, Annex F, pp. 1–2, Eighth Phibfor through January 44 to Eighth Phibfor thru Jan 44, box 191, RG 38 Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Records Relating to Naval Activity during World War II, NARA: Gunfire Support Plan No. 153-43, 10 January 1944, app. 3, p. 1, *ibid.*; Morison, *Sicily-Salerno-Anzio*, pp. 395–97.

LUCAS'S DECISION

General Lucas had two course of action open to him after the landing. The first was to move quickly and capture the Alban Hills, twenty miles away. The second was to consolidate the beachheads and await a counterattack. He rejected the first course of action partly because he remembered Salerno landing, where the Germans had reacted quickly to the landing and almost defeated the Allied force. He was completely unaware of the ULTRA report that the two German divisions deployed in the Rome area had been ordered to move to the Gustav Line. He also did not know that the Germans had only two maneuver battalion in the Anzio-Nettuno area. Lucas was further concerned that his two-division force was inadequate to move so far inland and that its flanks would be vulnerable. He was also told by Clark shortly before the start of the operation to remember Salerno and not to "stretch his neck out too far." In the second basic course of action, which Lucas adopted, he essentially could consolidate a small beachhead; expand the beachhead to encompass the towns of Campoleone and Cisterna (both road and railroad intersections); or deploy one regimental combat team to the Alban Hills to occupy, screen, or disrupt German forces approaching the beachhead. In the end, Lucas adopted a combination of the first two limited courses of action: consolidating a smaller beachhead and then gradually enlarging it.^a By 24 January Lucas had decided to consolidate the defense of the beachhead. The VI Corps conducted only limited actions. Lucas showed more interest in capturing the port of Anzio intact and putting it into operation to handle incoming troops and materiel from Naples to Anzio. He considered that his most important achievement.^b

Lucas's decision not to advance and capture the Alban Hills became very controversial. Predictably, Churchill blamed Lucas for failing not only to capture Alban Hills but to take Rome immediately.^c Clark wrote in his memoirs that he had been disappointed by the "lack of aggressiveness of VI Corps [at Anzio], although it would have been wrong in my opinion to attack to capture our final objective [the Alban Hills] on this front. [But] reconnaissance in force with tanks should have been more aggressive to capture Cisterna and Campoleone."^d After the war, Clark offered a more nuanced view of Lucas's decisions: "When he [Lucas] landed, he established himself ashore securely on that little beachhead as far as he could. You can't go way out because you'd get cut off. You just can't spread it that thin with no reserves, you see. So, he did right. I was up there, frequently, and I checked him. We began immediately to get the [ULTRA] intercepts, you see, as to what counteractions the Germans were taking and to have ordered Lucas to go with his two divisions and to start forward march was asinine."^e Clark had at the time believed that Lucas could have captured the Alban Hills but not have held them. The Germans would have cut his extended force in pieces. This was why he rephrased Lucas's mission. Clark believed that it would have not been wise on his part to tell Lucas before the operation to seize the Alban Hills, because doing that would jeopardize Lucas's efforts to secure initial beachhead line.^f

a. Fournier, *Influence of Ultra Intelligence upon General Clark at Anzio*, pp. 98–99.

b. Blumenson, "General Lucas at Anzio," p. 340.

c. Fournier, *Influence of Ultra Intelligence upon General Clark at Anzio*, p. 99.

d. Mark W. Clark, *Calculated Risk* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 296.

e. Fournier, *Influence of Ultra Intelligence upon General Clark at Anzio*, p. 100.

f. Blumenson, "General Lucas at Anzio," p. 346.

Alexander too supported Lucas's decision. In his memoirs, in hindsight, he observed that Lucas was right to consolidate before striking out. He also remarked, concerning the German enemy, "He is quicker than we are, quicker at regrouping his forces, quicker at thinning out on a defensive front to provide troops to close gaps at decisive points, quicker in effecting reliefs, quicker at mounting attacks and counterattacks, and above all quicker at reaching decisions on the battlefield. By comparison our methods are often slow and cumbersome, and this applies to all our troops, both British and American." The Fifth Army's two main efforts, at Anzio and Cassino, could not offer mutual support, and neither was powerful enough to do the ultimate job (i.e., capture Rome) alone. The Allies simply did not have sufficient forces to secure a beachhead, move to capture the Alban Hills, and then seize Rome, simultaneously protecting the lines of communication required to attain these objectives.^g

Eisenhower also approved Lucas's actions. He thought the situation almost a model for the classic battle of destruction: "The Nettuno landing was really not much heavier in scale than an airborne landing would have been during those critical days when time was all-important. The force was immobile and could not carry out the promise that was implicit in the situation then existing. . . . [T]here will be no great destruction of German divisions as a result thereof." General Marshall essentially endorsed the decision made by General Lucas not to move to the Alban Hills, at least not immediately, or until the beachhead was fully secured.^h

Kesselring wrote in his memoirs that Lucas had passed up a great opportunity to cut German lines of communication and thereby place German forces along the Gustav Line in jeopardy.ⁱ Westphal claimed in his own memoirs that the road to Rome was practically open until 25 January.^j

g. Fournier, *Influence of Ultra Intelligence upon General Clark at Anzio*, p. 100.

h. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

i. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

j. Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, p. 249.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	antiaircraft
AM	auxiliary minesweeper
ARS	rescue and salvage ship
AVP	small seaplane tender
DD	destroyer
DE	destroyer escort
LCF	landing craft, flak
LCG	landing craft, gun
LCI(H)	landing craft, infantry (hospital)
LCI(L)	landing craft, infantry (large)
LSI(M)	landing ship, infantry (medium)
LCT	landing craft, tank
LCT(R)	landing craft, tank (rocket)
LST	landing ship, tank
PC	patrol craft
PT	patrol torpedo boat
RN	Royal Navy
SC	submarine chaser
USN	U.S. Navy
YMS	auxiliary motor minesweeper