

Strategic overview

Turn 1: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2723	12288	0
-	Port	150	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	297	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	3580	60	399183	173313	0
-	Vehicle	140	0	82881	91400	0
-	Heavy Industry	236	0	0	118000	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	64000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	35760	0
-	Resource Production	196	0	0	196000	0
-	Armaments Production	370	0	1293610	92500	0

Primarily, I have noticed that the Axis has done quite a few bombing runs versus both airfields and ground units without fighter escorts. As I get my I-types in place along the front, I hope to put a stop to this practice.

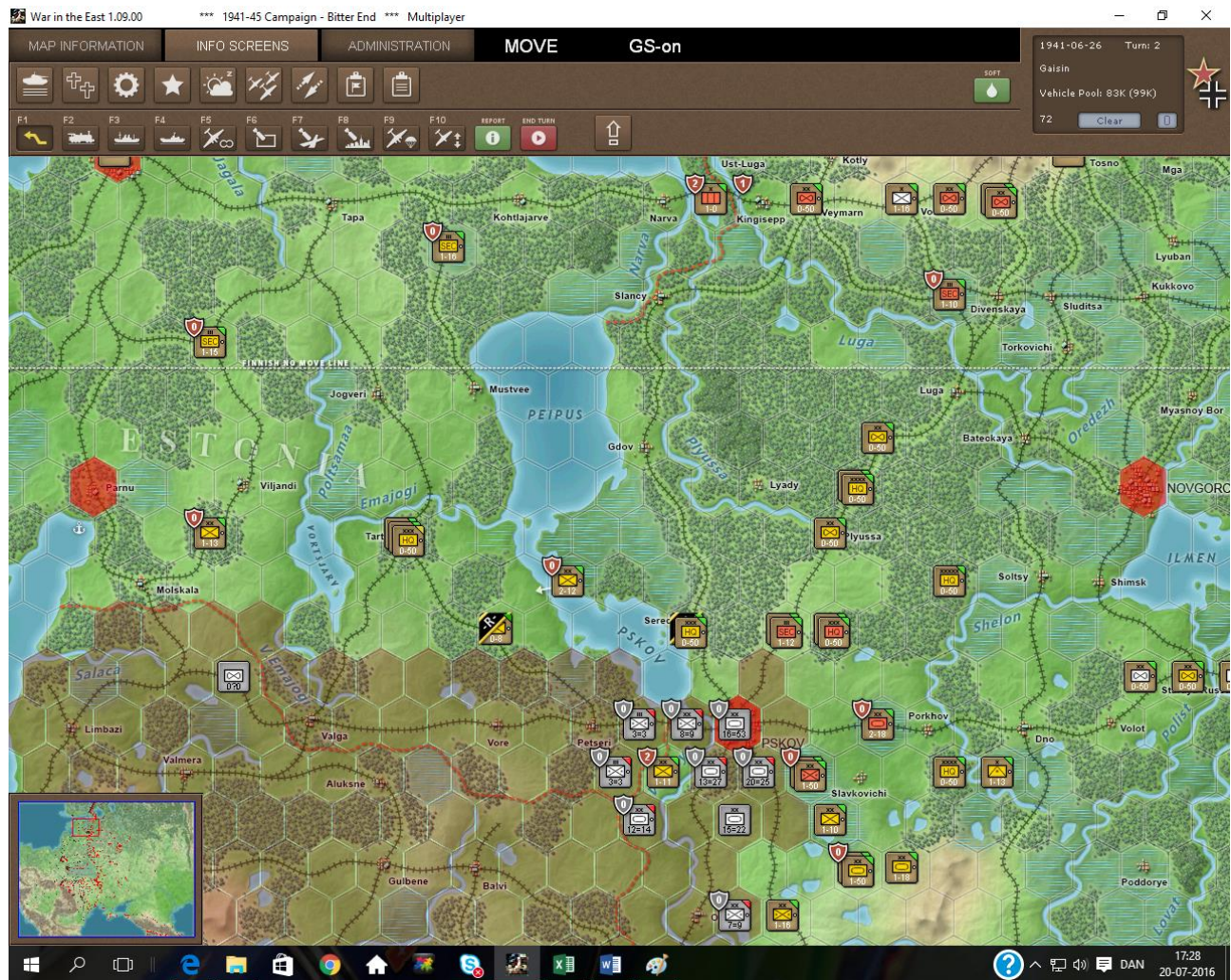
I also notice that the Axis has used their security units for covering the western sides of various pockets. This, in turn, has led to the creation of a few partisan cadre units, as there are no garrison units in many of the cities conquered by the Germans. Obviously, this is of absolutely no importance during the next many turns.

The relocation of HQ's last turn has been a success. I have gotten no less than 11 artillery, 5 AA, 3 motorcycle and a sapper regiment out of their respective pockets. How much of this would have been lost I wonder, had I kept the HQ's in place, so they could die with their men?

There are still no Axis fuel drops anywhere according to commander's report.

Axis VP advantage is 5.4 to 1.

North

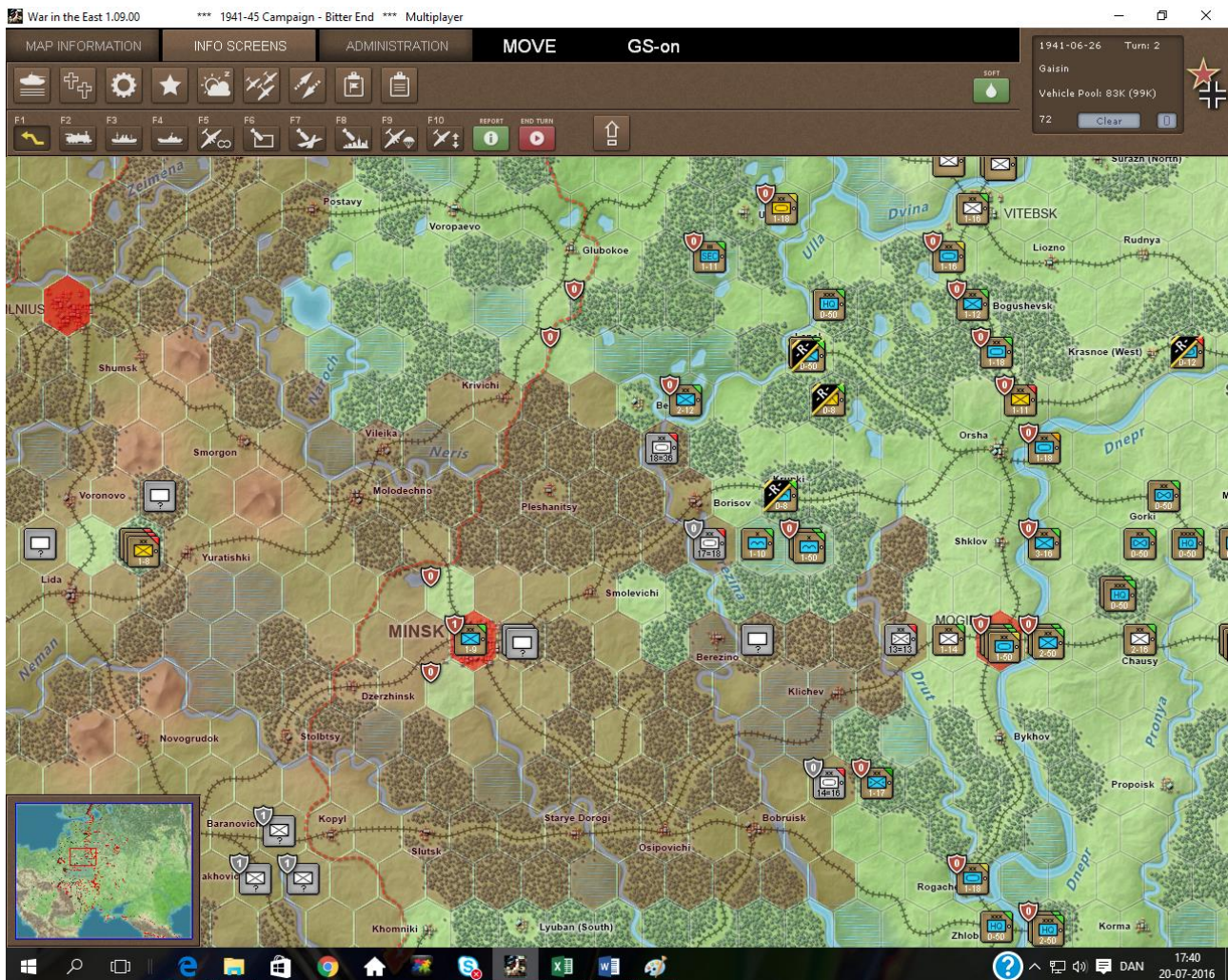


The turn one pockets in the north has all been annihilated. The german panzer push hit Pskov as I feared, and managed to cut off one infantry division. I have no hope of prolonging the fight in the Pskov area, and will need to withdraw northwards protecting Leningrad as best I can.

The good news are that the german panzers are all in the red fuelwise. I think the Axis FBD's have reached Siauliai and Radviliskis, although I have no intelligence in the area. The germans thus should all be in supply, but will hopefully end up with slightly fewer MP's than they had in the previous turns. I still expect a full scale push towards the Luga river next turn.

Next turn I will receive seven division "shells" in the area around Leningrad.

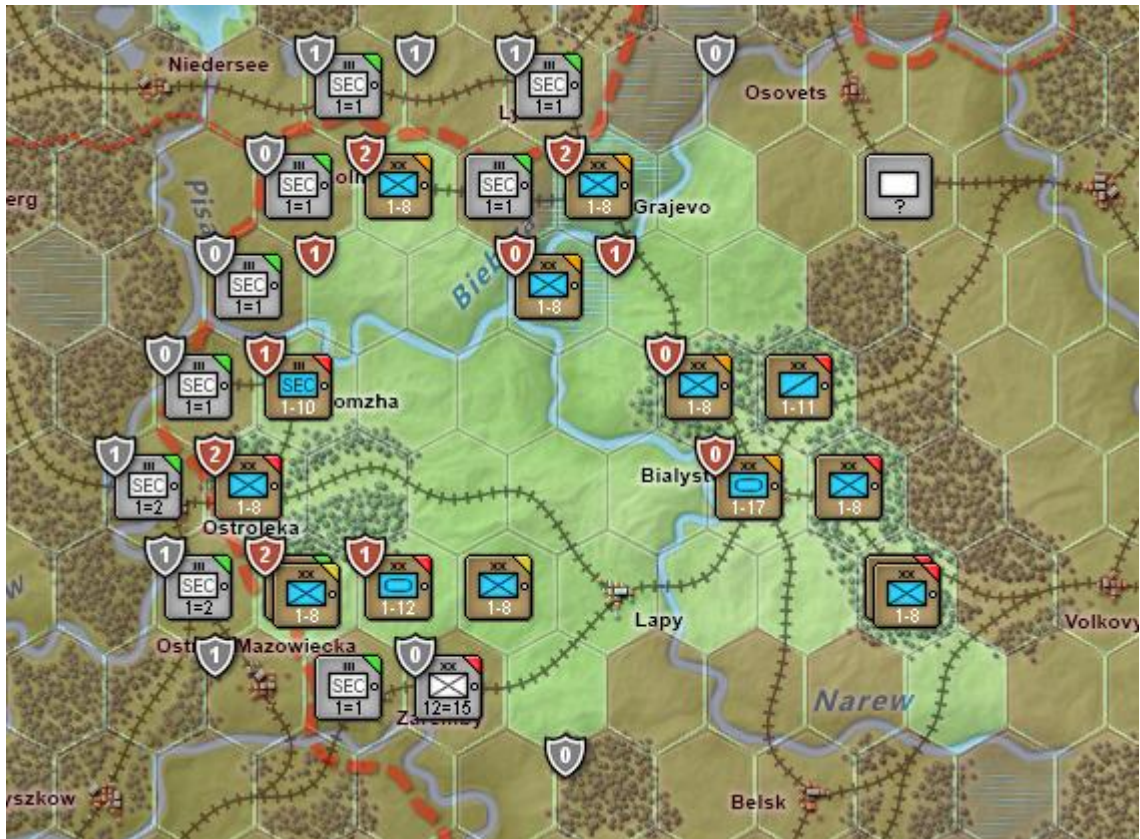
Center



The Germans have advanced further east and surrounded Minsk. I have enough supplies in the city for the garrison to last until approximately the summer of 1943, should the Germans decide not to attack. I guess the local kommissar should start handing out supplies to the civilian population in order to stop them from falling into German hands.

I notice forward panzers are in the red fuelwise and although I have no intelligence, I think FBD's have reached the vicinity of Vilnius and the edge of the Baltic rail zone. If so, the German supply lines should not be stretched too thin and the panzers should receive enough fuel to pose a threat. However, from here on, the FBD's should advance no more than three or four hexes per turn.

I am expecting a continued German thrust up towards my defensive lines in order to test if the Dniepr can be forced. Also, with the possible advance of an FBD from Radviliskis straight east to Drissa (at six hexes per turn) will soon threaten the area around Velikie Luki greatly. I need to put at least some skirmish forces on the Dvina in this area to stop that threat from materializing. Thankfully, the troops around Smolensk and Velikie Luki have been activated, giving me a little more troops to help establish a defense.



The Bialystok pocket is in it's deaththroes. There are no more supplies in the pocket and this will be one of my primary concerns for prolonging the fight here.

South



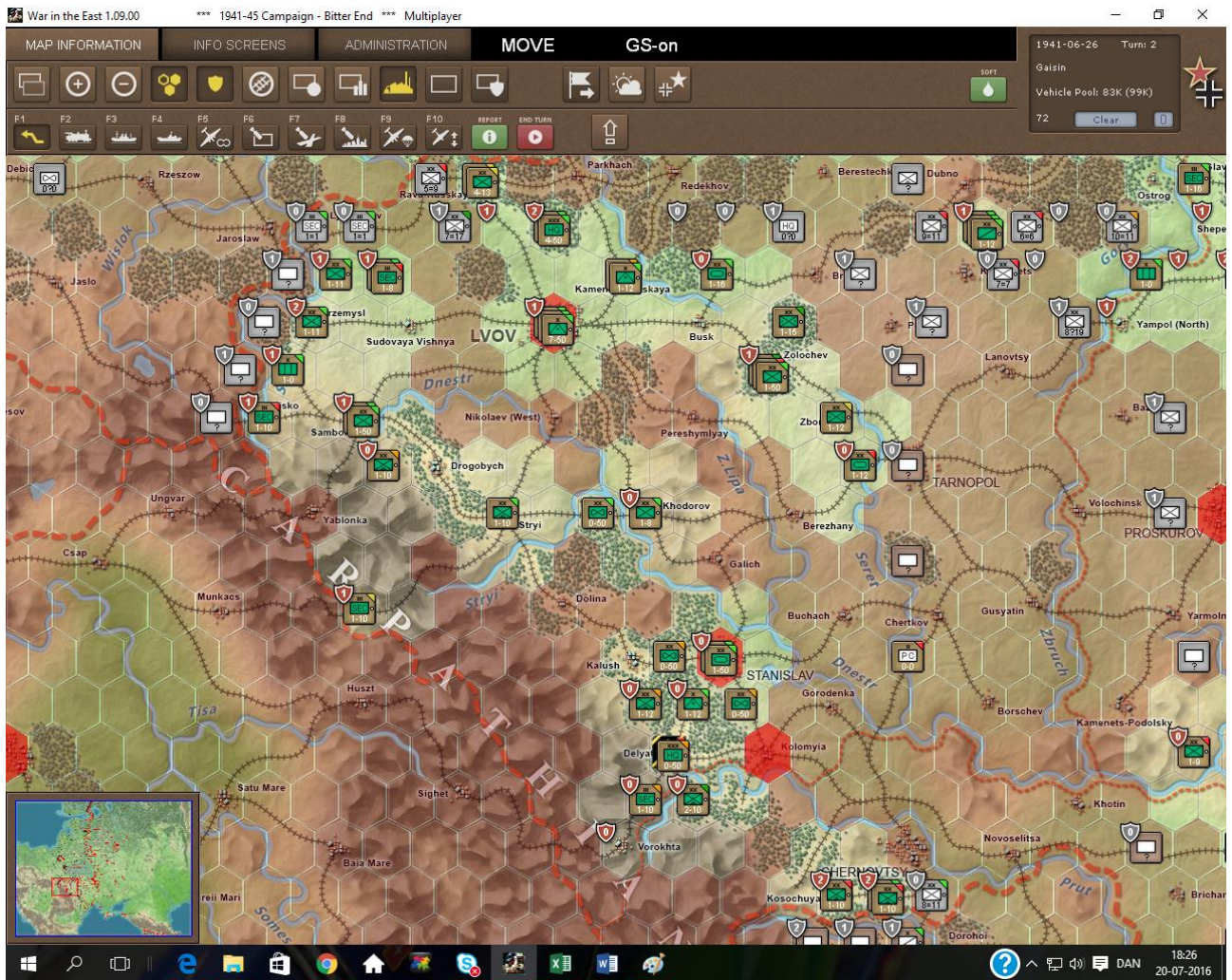
The german panzers have pushed southeastwards as expected and established a short supply line to the Romanian border. I have little fuel intel on his units, but the short supply line should ensure that enough fuel reaches his panzers to be a huge threat to me.

The withdrawal of the Southern Front was mainly successful, although a few infantry units were simply too slow and too far from railheads to get out in time.

I expect a continued push into the Dnepr bend taking Krivoi Rog and pushing on towards Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye next turn. This is also consistent with the organization of Axis supply lines. Changing the direction of attack back towards Kiev holds little threat to me and will place him far from his railheads.

I will need to plan towards delaying the Dnepr bend thrust long enough for my factory evacuation to get underway, but I must not forget to defend the Dnepr line. If the germans can cross the Dnepr next turn, I fear I will be hopelessly outmaneuvered as I simply cannot shift troops fast enough to counter where he decides to attack.

The fortified regions west of Kiev have not changed their TOE as ordered. Their relevance however, has gone with the german attacking southeast and away from this area.



The Lvov pocket is becoming more and more interesting. I am out of fuel but still have supplies left to conduct a defense. Based on the position of german troops north of the pocket, I no longer think any FBD's are present in that area.

I realize I made a mistake here by allowing the automatic splitting of the pocket into two minor pockets as I have not placed any units to prevent this. I don't think this is terribly important in this case, but I have to keep such things in mind. Intel seems to suggest, that a german HQ unit is undefended at the northern edge of the pocket.

Planning

I plan to continue to pour my airforces back into the airfields they have been assigned for.

I will also start the reassignment of units and leaders to different commands where needed. But my primary objective is still force preservation as I want the Germans just a little further east before I make my stand.

North

I will try to withdraw what I can from the mess at Pskov and establish a new "line" along the Luga. This is obviously not going to be a "final stand" line, but is only meant to delay the German delay ever so slightly. I intend to pull the newly activated 22nd Army up from Velikie Luki in order to help with this task.

I will also leave the grand total of one NKVD regiment in Tallinn in order to prevent the Germans from just marching in.

Center

In the center, I will try to keep the line hinged on the Dvina and the Dnepr for one more turn. I will do this by establishing a "picket line" in front of my main line and then establish defenses behind both major rivers. This will all be done as part of the Western Front.

I expect the Bialystok pocket to hold out only for a few more turns. The only reason I think it will be there this long, is that the Germans have deployed only one or two divisions against it, leaving the pocket for some security units. As I am desperately short on supplies, I will go into a general offensive, trying to capture whatever towns in the vicinity I may, hoping they hold a few supplies for my troops.

South

I still have a few smaller pockets besides the Lvov pocket, but these will die very shortly I guess. One good thing is that when the Germans reclosed the Brest Litovsk pocket, they did so in such a way that one of the divisions in the first turn pocket is now outside the new pocket. A little thing, I know, but I have to value the little successes at this point in the game.

On the Kiev front I will disband my fortified regions as they no longer serve a purpose and just wait for the German infantry to come and mop them up. I will maintain troops in Kiev for now, but will start preparing for its evacuation as German troops push further into the Dnepr bend. For some reason the Germans have thrown a cavalry division several hexes in front of their other units just south of the marshes, and I can now encircle it by using no more than an NKVD regiment.

Along the Dnepr I intend to place troops in such a way, that the Germans will be unable to cross. In the Dnepr bend itself I intend to create a screen in front of Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye. I don't relish the thought of defending Krivoi Rog in strength as the Germans can certainly push past and threaten to "lock up" both Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye. Trying to hold Krivoi Rog for just one turn would risk a lot for no real gain, as I see it (as I will need my rail capacity to evacuate other factories anyway).

In the far south I will pull back those units that can not escape to Odessa, and evacuate those that can.

I will also appoint Zhukov to be in command of the Southern Front, if I'm not short on Administration Points. I'm hoping that no more units from this Front will be encircled and lost, and I need a good

commander to protect the industry in the Dnepr bend until evacuation. The defense units in the Dnepr bend will be assigned to one of the local armies.

In the Lvov Pocket I will fly in fuel from the Li-2 behind the Southwestern Front using one of the airfields left behind. This should deliver up to 80 units of fuel. I will not explain how this relates to the need of 300-400 units of fuel for each of four or five the tank divisions still in the pocket. I intend to pull those tank divisions into the supply dumps to act as static defense units. Further active moves in the area will be made by my infantry.

Obviously, I will try to dislocate that HQ that intel says is unguarded at the edge of the pocket.

Execution

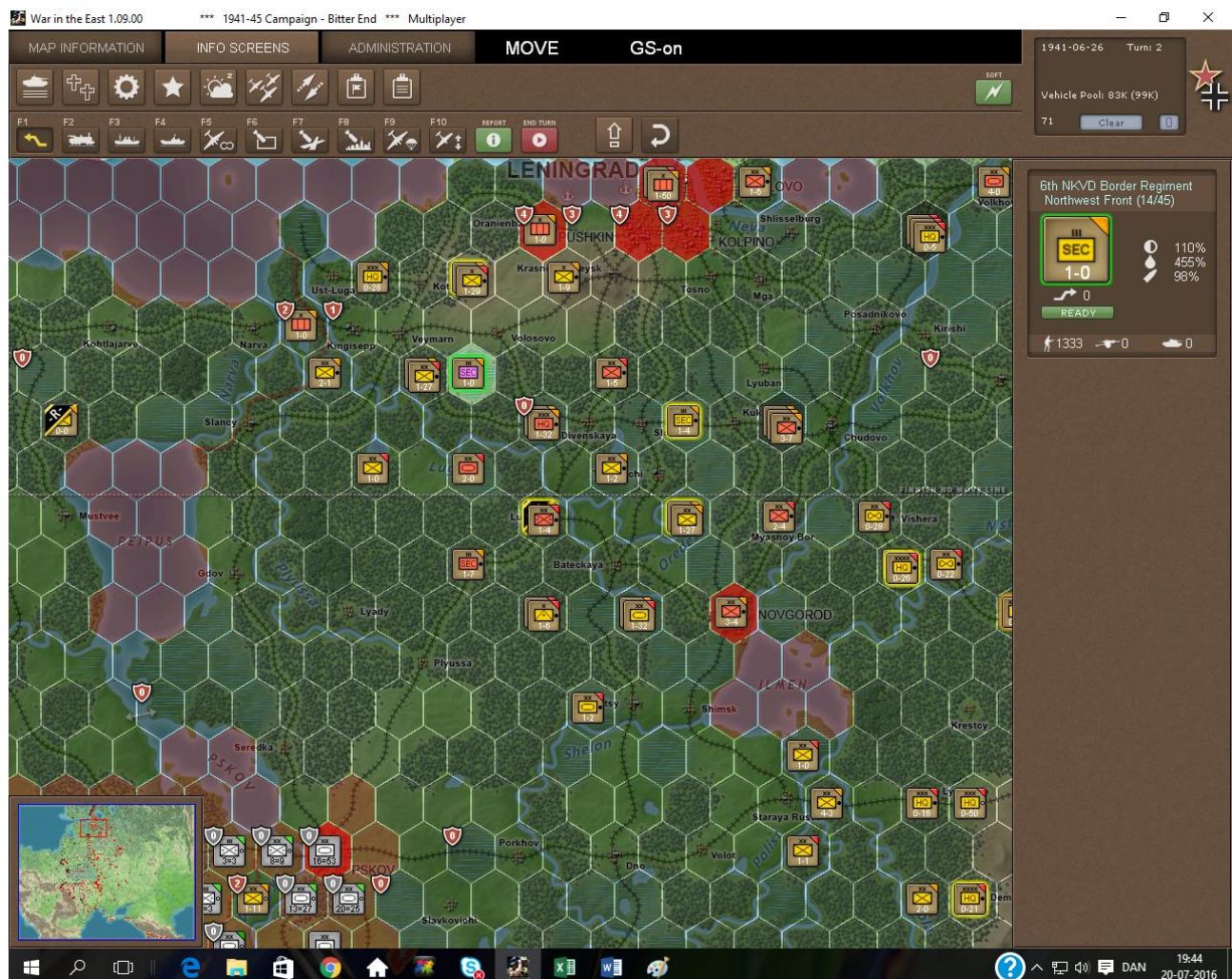
Having put a LOT of airunits back on airfields this turn, I expect to begin to see some more airbattles fought as of next turn (when my planes get a new movement allowance).

I spent a lot of administration points on assigning units to various commands. This has occurred all along the front.

Short term, I think the greatest threat facing me is the situation in the north. The Germans are far advanced, and I do need to slow down the German advance if I can.

Strategically, the major threat is to my production. With the threat to both Leningrad and the Dnepr bend, I can end up woefully short of rail capacity to evacuate my factories. As I have not yet been able to evacuate anything, I'm concerned.

North

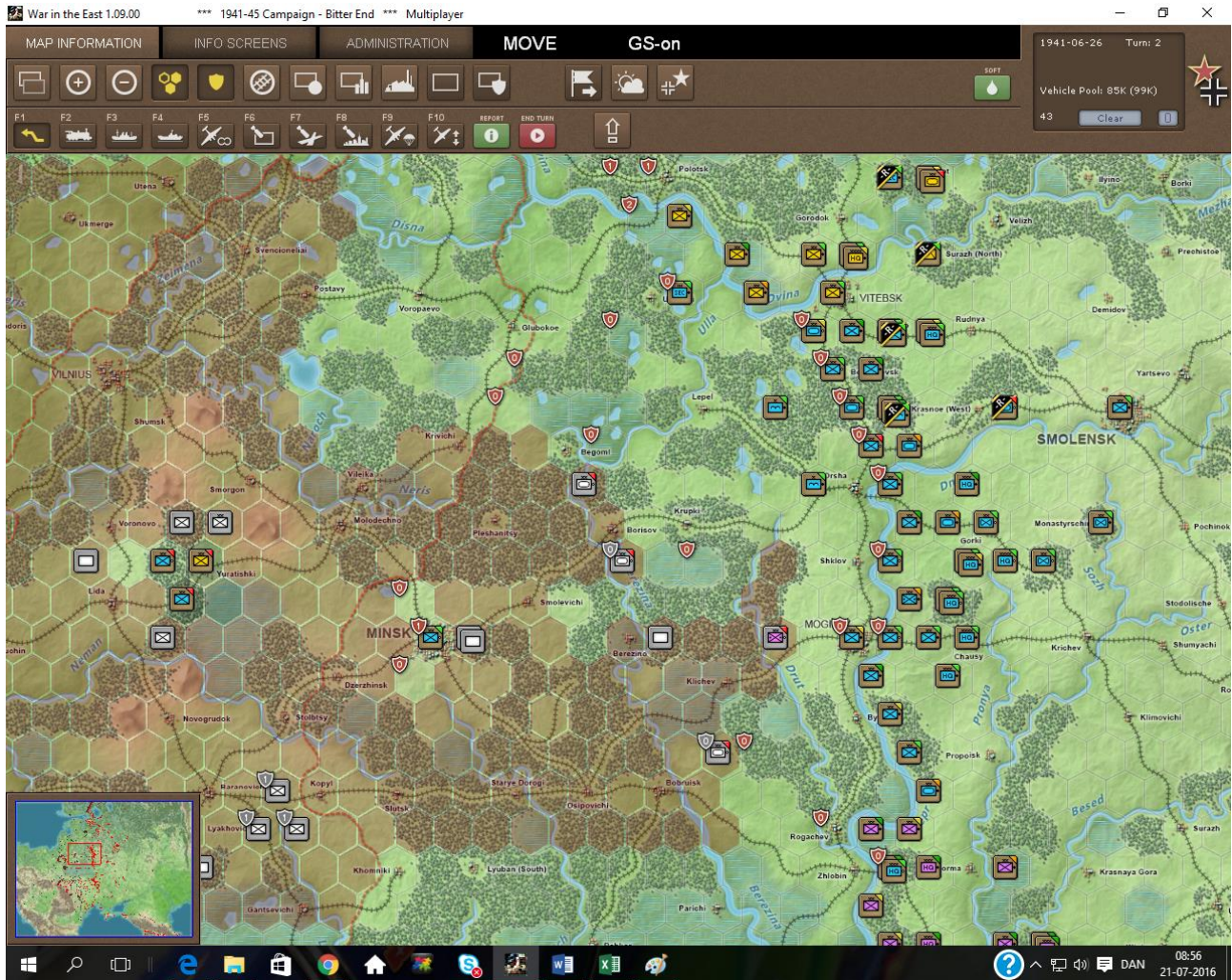


In the north, I have established an alternate line in depth rather than a thin compact line of units that can be broken through and surrounded. None of the units I have here have anything approaching a decent CV, so the deciding factor for the upcoming turn will be, how many MP's the Axis can muster for his panzers.

I had to move up two newly activated armies in order to establish this semblance of a defense.

Although I regard it as an impossibility for the Germans to cut off Leningrad next turn and unlikely they can do it in two turns, I'm still not happy with the situation in the north.

Center



In the center I'm beginning to reassign units to the three armies I currently have in place here. That process is far from over, but if I stack more units with the individual armies here, they will end up with more than they can hold without penalty. Next turn or so, I will start getting empty armies back from the Pripyat Marshes (those relocated from the Bialystok pocket).

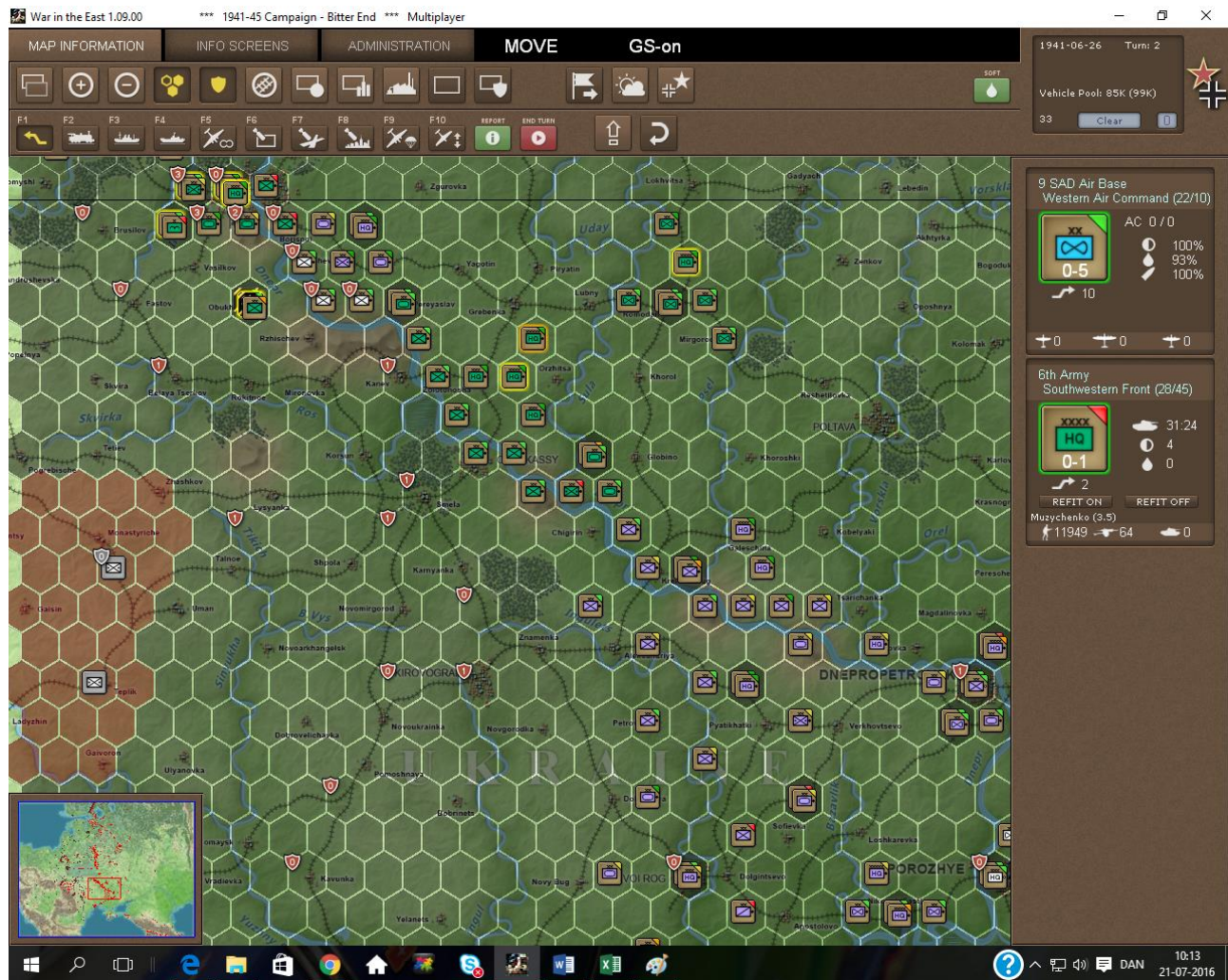
I am expecting the Germans to push on towards the Dnepr and/or the Dnepr/Vitebsk line, but I hope and think they will not be able to cross this turn. This hope is based more on the expected amount of German MP's than on the ability of my forces to actually prevent a forced river crossing.

I think the Bialystok pocket will be almost cleared next turn. It turned out, that there are in fact, several more German divisions around that intel led me to believe. I have captured no supplies in my desperate attempt to do so.

I also expect the Minsk pocket and the one west of Minsk to be done for. Leaving troops in Minsk was a mistake, after all.

Finally, I have done a few night bombing runs against the advance german panzers using IL-4's already in place. No german fighters flew interception flights. Nothing much has come of this, but if I can add just a few disrupted units (which will turn into fatigue) I'm happy with the result.

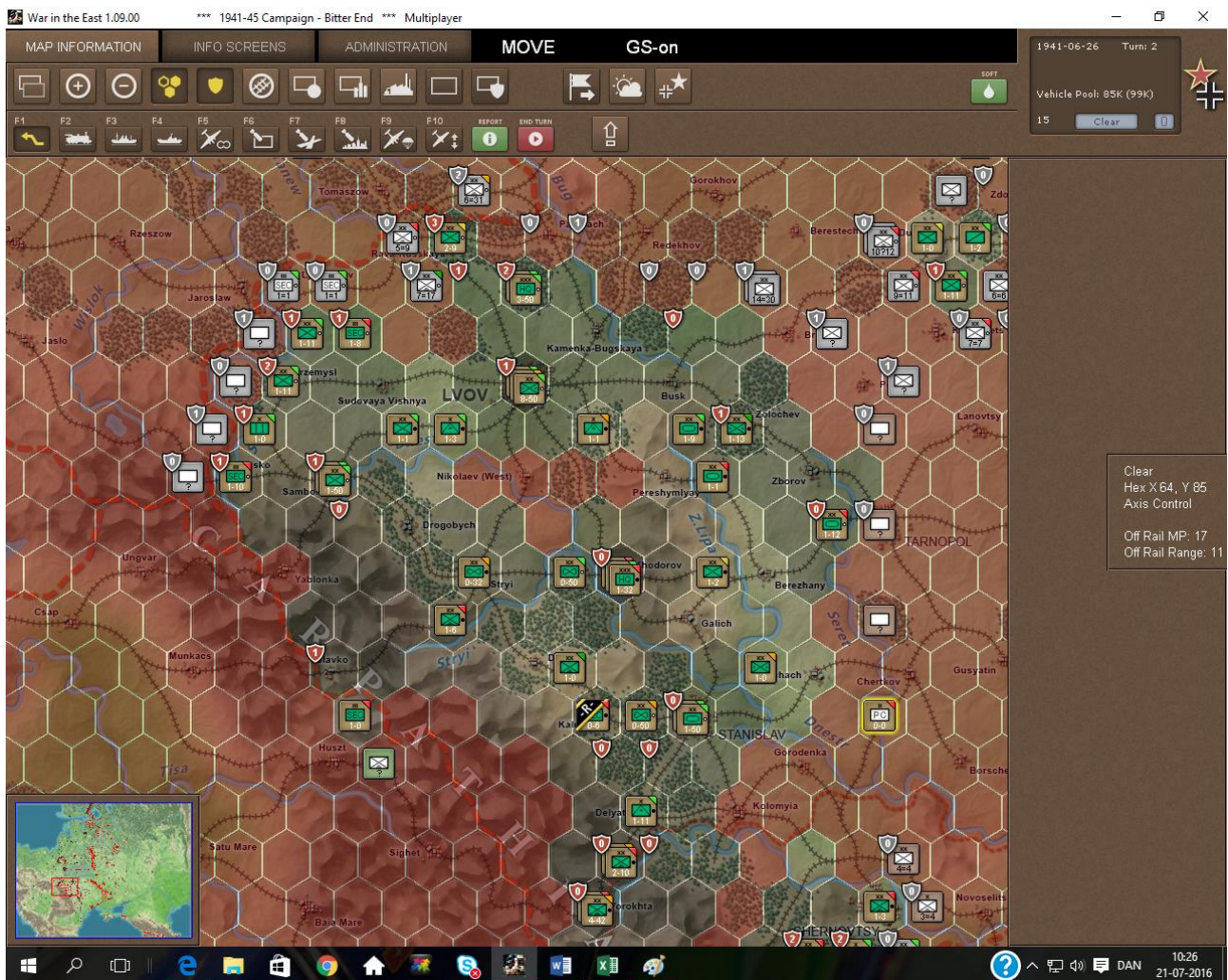
South



I have manned the Dnepr line and set up an alternate hex defensive line to protect the Dnepr bend. I have also begun the task of reassigning units to their proper commands, although this task is far from over. I have appointed Zhukov to be in charge of the Southern Front, although this cost me 18 Admin Points.

I still have units in and around Kiev, but I have withdrawn my best units to either protect the Dnepr or the bend. I fully expect the Germans to push further into the Dnepr bend, as an attack on Kiev doesn't hold any strategic threat as I see it (it will just give me one more turn to evacuate factories for no real result). If the Germans push into the bend as expected, I will probably evacuate Kiev more or less entirely next turn.

In the far south, the defense of Odessa is taking shape. I have five infantry divisions and a few NKVD regiments here, that did not have the Movement points to get back to the main line. I expect to try to hold on to Odessa for a while, and if the Germans start bombing the port en masse, I might inflict some Luftwaffe casualties here.



In Lvov I am beginning to concentrate my defenses around Lvov city and Delyatin/Vorokhta in the south as these are the only places with supplies enough to conduct some sort of defense. I have flown in some fuel, but I expect this will prove of little value.

The “unguarded” german HQ turned out to be stacked with the 56th Infantry division which had not shown on my intel reports. This does make me happy that my airfields with recon planes are getting operational all along the front.

One thing I’m wondering though is whether it is actually smart to be defending the pocket (or for the Axis to clear it). The units I lose here will come back in the east, and I certainly need as many units defending there as possible. The units in the pocket pose no more threat, so if the Axis just leave them alone, my eastern defense will be weakened. I do however, consider a strategy of throwing away units in order for them to pop up elsewhere to be “gamey”. Consequently, I will be defending the pocket to the best of my ability.

I expect the Axis will start to methodically mop up the defenses here, and I believe the battle will last for several turns to come.