

Strategic overview

Turn 9: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2633	76510	0
-	Port	126	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	281	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	3067	26	78356	1286550	0
-	Vehicle	140	12	212239	251030	0
-	Heavy Industry	225	9	0	823000	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	512000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	286080	0
-	Resource Production	182	0	0	1490000	0
-	Armaments Production	358	11	720208	673500	0

If last turn was bad for me, this turn is worse. The Germans have advanced straight up to the gates of Moscow and also surrounded a major part of my Southern Front.

German air losses are heavy, with 257 German planes lost for 395 of mine. If the situation on the ground was not so dire, I would consider this a major Soviet victory. As it is, the German losses are more or less irrelevant.

The Germans also lost 169 AFV's this turn, but their panzer divisions still have far too high CV's for me to deal with them.

Axis VP advantage is 2.5 to 1, but that number is worth very little, as the fall of several Soviet cities are imminent.

North



At Leningrad, the Germans moved two Panzer divisions south, out of the Leningrad city area. Instead, three infantry divisions (certainly loaded with pioneers) moved north across the river. By the looks of it, I might still hold for one turn of attacks on the Soviet line, before the city defenses start to crumble.

At the Volkhov line, the newly arrived German Panzers have strengthened the German line considerably. There is now only have one hex defended by less than 15 CV.

East of Lake Ladoga, the Finns are continuing their advance and will reach the "Finnish No Attack line" in a turn or two.

No Luftwaffe is present in the area.

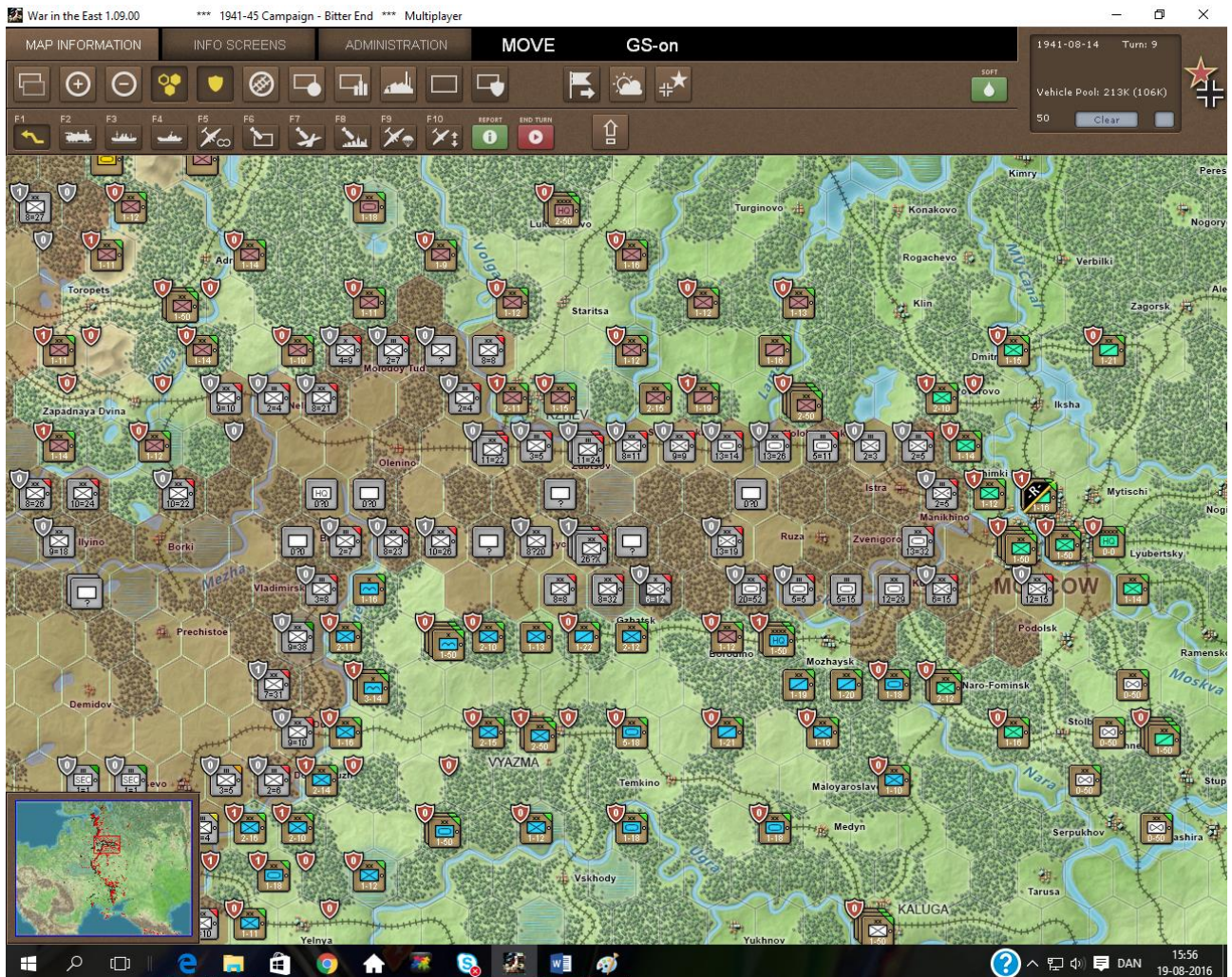
Demyansk Front



At Demyansk, the Germans have cut off two infantry divisions belonging to the Northwestern Front. They have also shifted the direction of their attacks towards the Northeast, advancing towards the rear of my divisions defending the Volkhov line.

To the West, the German FBD has swung south and is now three hexes south of Dno (the unknown unit on the map above). In another two turns this German rail line will be within reach of another partisan unit, but I still expect the German rail loop to be completed in about three turns.

Center, North



The Germans have arrived at the very gates of Moscow, doubling up the costs of evacuating several factories (three Armament Factories, five Heavy Industry and 15 Vehicle factories).

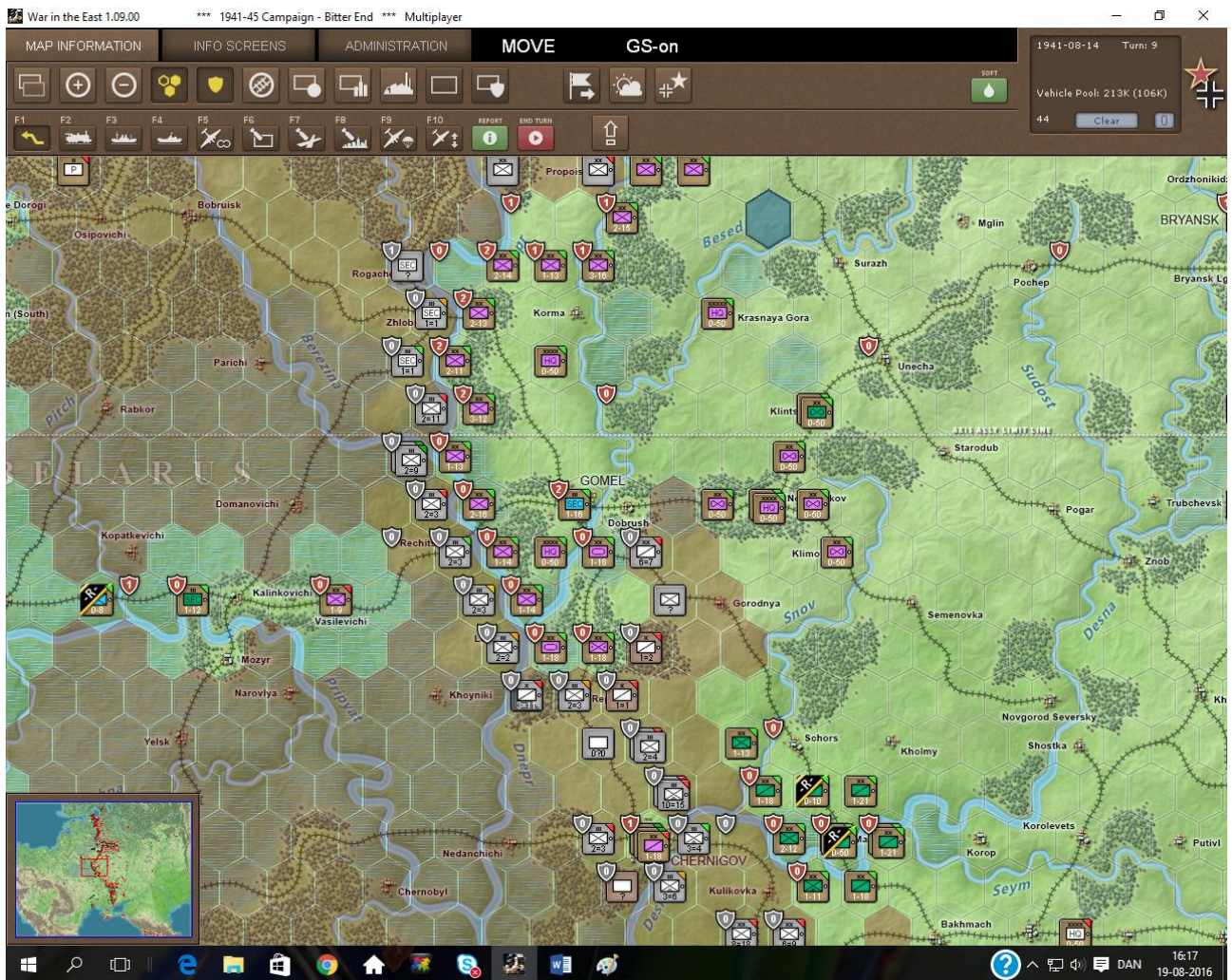
The Germans are now starved of fuel (all in the red fuelwise), but as my partisans have failed miserably, no German unit is more than 27 hexes from their rail head. I do have one active partisan unit within three hexes of the German supply line (morale of 53), so I seriously hope it will start acting with more aggression soon.

I also notice that few German HQ's are in the salient, so most Germans must receive supply directly from the rail heads.

About five hexes northwest of Smolensk the Luftwaffe is massing. I now count 400 fighters and 515 bombers on top of various recon aircraft. I see no Ju/52's however.

The German FBD is halfway between Vitebsk and Smolensk.

Center, South



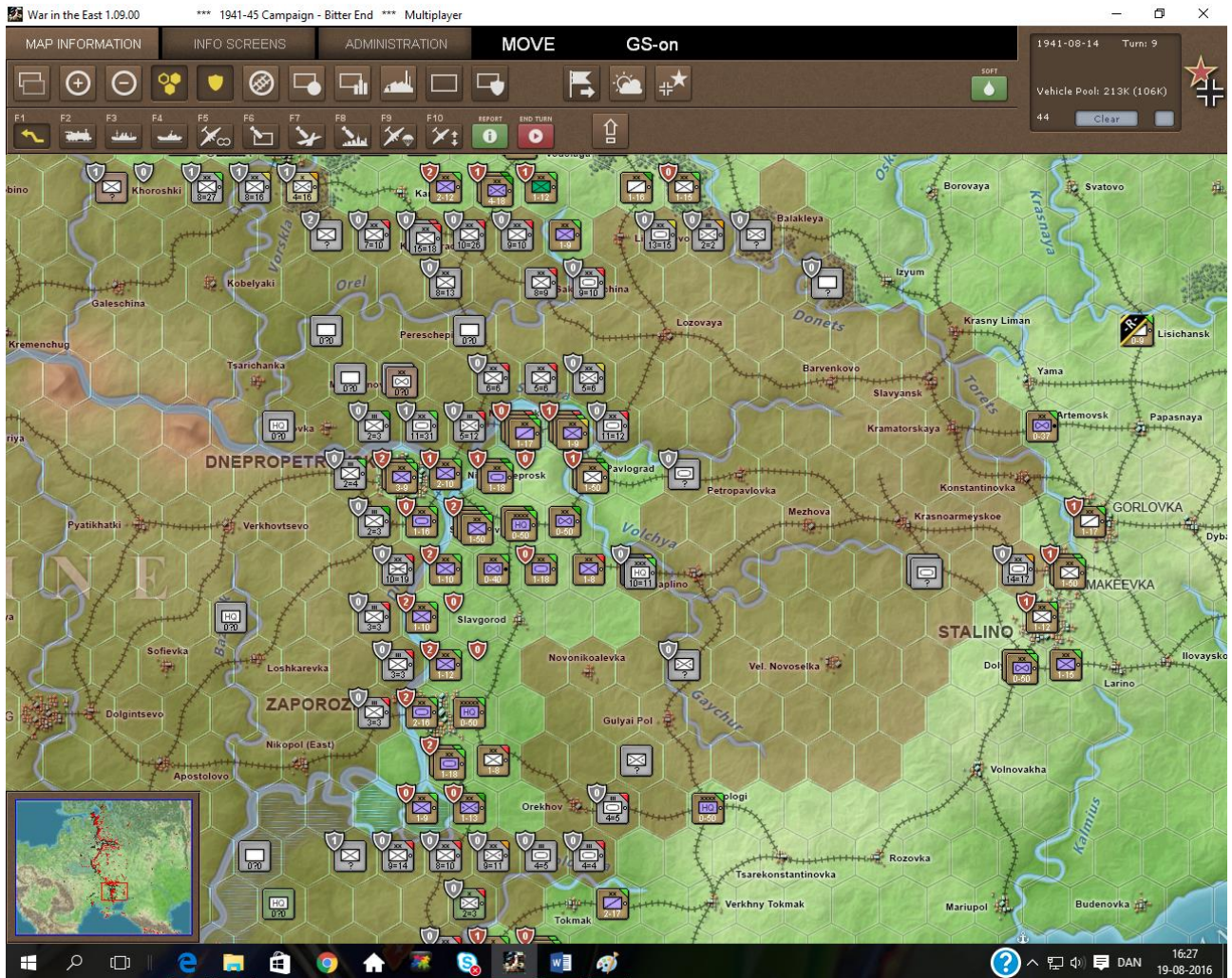
Experience has taught me that the German Cavalry unit is not really affected by being cut off from it's supply sources. It is also able to continuously break off into regiments encircling a few Soviet divisions every time it does so.

The Chernigov pocket has held, but is likely to fall shortly, unless I can find a way to relieve it.

In the Pripyat Marshes, my last remaining divisions have been left alone.

I will speak no more of this Front, as events further south demand much more attention.

Southern Front



The Germans have broken through my southern Front in two locations, encircling a massive portion of the Southern Front. In the process, they have also reached Stalino, making the evacuation of industry from Stalino, Makeevka much more expensive than it would otherwise be.

The Germans are very far advanced in relation to their supply sources (one division being 37 hexes from it's closest railhead. However, there are also German HQ's in the area, one showing green in fuel. I should expect the Germans to have enough movement next turn to conduct further offensive operations.

The Germans have conducted four air transport operations to the Romanian airfield north of Dnepropetrovsk. The Ju/52's involved were covered by large numbers of German fighters, but otherwise it seem there is little Luftwaffe presence in the area.

Planning

Apart from recycling air units to the National Reserve as always, I now have four U-2VS and four IL-2 units ready for deployment. In accordance with last turns plans, I will use the U-2VS's at Moscow and the IL-2's in the south. I will spend a few Admin Points on mustering new Air Transport units as these will help in resupplying my partisans keeping them alert. Other than that, I will muster some five fighter air units or so.

I will have to leave a lot of industry behind in both Moscow and Stalino. I plan to evacuate the factories that are not "double cost" because of the presence of German units next to them. Other than that, I will focus on the Armament Factories, as I stand to lose a lot of those in the near future.

North

While the fight for Leningrad will continue, I will stop the offensive south of the city. Instead I will pull a few units north to hold the Finnish No Attack line. I will also move one of the armies of the Northwestern Front to the south, in order to contain the Germans advancing south of Lake Ilmen. Other than that, I will be gathering the armies together, as they have been mixed up over the last couple of turns.

Demyansk Front

The reinforcements from north of Lake Ilmen will be used to takeover some portion of the northern part of the line here. I intend to relocate units of the Northwestern Front southwards, in order to free up units of the Reserve Front to the south.

Center, North

The Reserve Front will pull out of the salient at the far west of the front they hold. As they face only German infantry, I deem it to be ineffective to let them be surrounded and destroyed. They will not delay the German advance significantly this way.

The army I will dislodge from the front will move eastwards taking up new positions close to the German salient. I will focus my setup on the forested areas, as the German panzers will just slice through any infantry set up in the open. The aim of the setup is to do what I can to prevent a German pincer passing Moscow to the north.

The Moscow MD will do what it can to strengthen the defense of Moscow, while also cutting off that lone advance German motorized division.

From the Western Front I will pull the 20th Army eastwards as this is probably the strongest army I have on this section of the front. Their task will be to prevent both a southern pincer and a German all out attack on Tula to the Southeast.

The airforces in the area, including the 1 BAK will be conducting heavy bombing raids on the German motorized and armored divisions.

Center, South

I intend to finally leave the last parts of the Dnepr I hold, establishing a new line running north from Gomel. I will use the "spare" divisions to take over some of the Western Fronts southern frontline freeing up those units in return.

Further south, the divisions of the Southwestern Front will be used to create a thin screen of units delaying the German advance. I mostly rely on the German supply distance to “defend” myself in this area, as the Germans are at around 25 hex range to their nearest railhead.

Southwestern Front

On the southwestern Front, I will pull one of my armies east, to create a new screen preventing the Germans from advancing to the northeast, although I doubt their intention to do so. This army will also try to assist in future battles in this area.

I will need to rail a few strong divisions south, in order to occupy the defenses of Stalino and Makeevka adding to their CV total.

Southern Front

My absolute first priority is to reestablish contact with the units surrounded between Zaporozhye and Dnepropetrovsk. I’m a little unsure as to the exact costs in MP to enter enemy hexes, as my cavalry seems to run by the formula $((115\text{-unit morale})/4)-2$. That move is stated in my manual as $((115\text{-unit morale})/4)-1$. Even with this uncertainty, I should be able to push my cavalry through at Gulyai Poi.

Second, with units from the Southwestern Front occupying Stalino and Makeevka, I will move units to cut off the easternmost Germans in a separate pocket.

Third, I will position my units in the Zaporozhye pocket so as to be better placed for trying to break out over the next turns. This will likely be impossible, but I will have to try.

Fourth, while not strictly a part of the Southern Front, my divisions guarding the Crimean will be moving north, so as to threaten linking up with the Zaporozhye pocket from the west. The objective of this is to force the Germans to deal with this threat, thus leaving fewer units available for the immediate push east. I will displace a couple of HQ’s doing this, as well as possibly doing a hasty attack on the Romanian armored division. As I have a few new divisions mustered in the Crimean, I will not leave the crossings unguarded, but instead move units up to the fortified line.

Finally, as the Odessa port is at 26% damage, I will leave the city garrisoned for now.

Execution

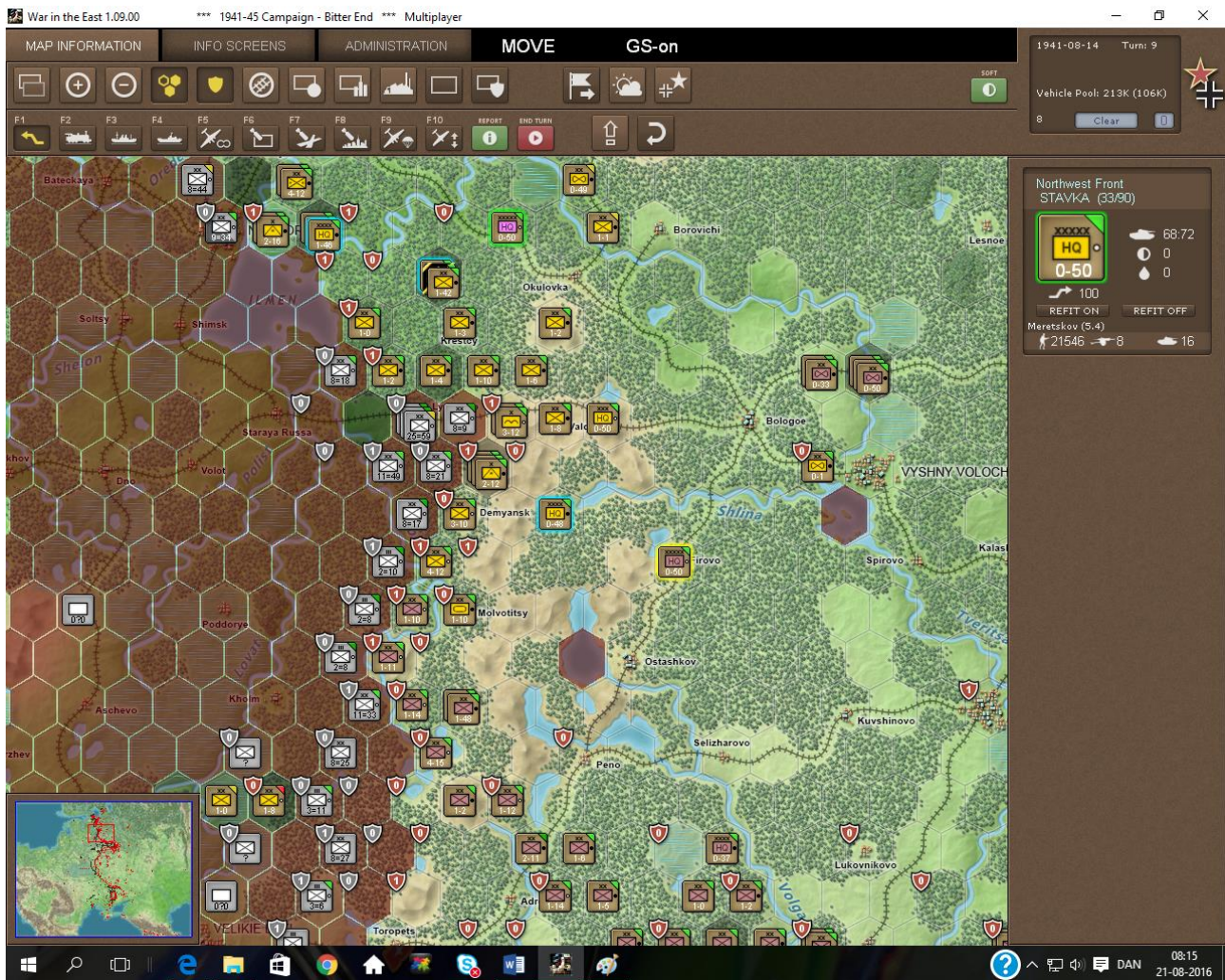
North



Little has happened in the north. I have moved a few units to the army fighting east of Lake Ladoga and have moved an army of the Northwestern Front south to the area east of Lake Ilmen.

In Leningrad the Germans will probably launch two ground attacks on Osinovets next turn. But there is little I can do to stop them, except (ineffective) bombing of the divisions north of the river and making sure a few units are set up with 'Reserve' status. I did move the Northern Front airbases forward a bit, and strengthened them with an airbase with five Pe-2 units.

Demyansk

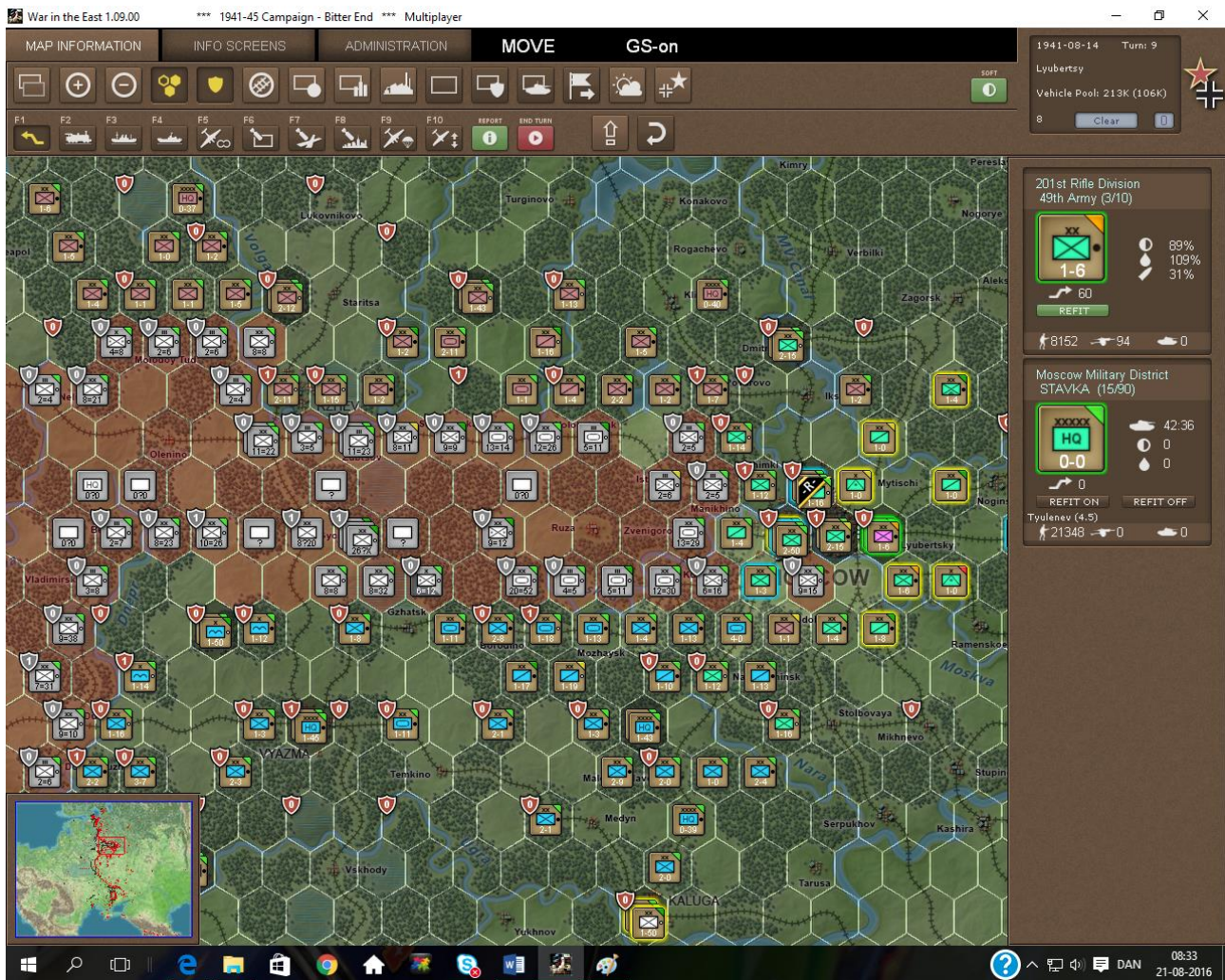


At Demyansk, I have deployed the Northwestern Front army I have pulled south from the line on the Volkhov. The area in the forests directly east of Lake Ilmen is still thinly held, but in the roughs at Demyansk, I have a few fortifications by now as well as units with more than one CV.

As the Fronts in this area is almost static and no Panzers are present, I have assigned an airbase with four U-2VS's to this area. On a whim, I also decided to test if Motorcycles assigned to Front HQ's would be able to effectively reinforce combat, so I assigned to motorcycle battalions to the Northwestern Front.

I expect the Germans will continue to push on in this area, but I expect little to happen of significance, except the loss of the two surrounded divisions.

Center, Northern part



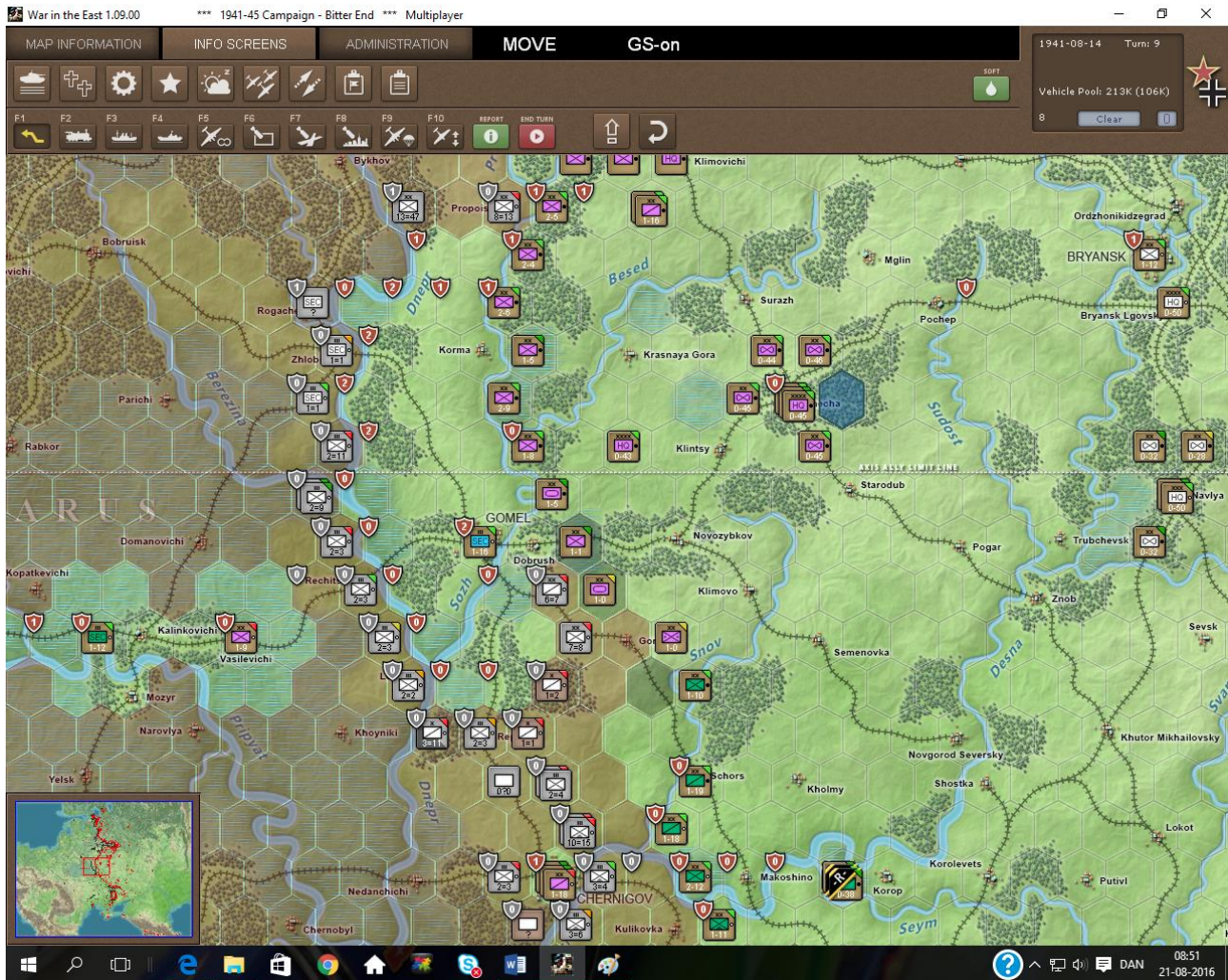
I have done only one attack in the area, beating back a motorized regiment but with virtually no losses for the Germans. Other than that, I have restricted myself to the usual bombing raids (costing the Germans about 150 guns and 8 Vehicles). I have also cut off the advance German motorized division.

I have pulled a number of both Reserve Front and Western Front divisions east, in order to strengthen my faltering lines around Moscow. I have also strengthened the Moscow MD with what I have been able to pull forward from behind. Interestingly, even though the Germans are only two hexes from the Moscow MD HQ, it is still inactive.

In the rear of the Germans, I still have a partisan unit at 'Ready' status. In order to strengthen it's chances of actually doing something, I have reassigned my STAVKA leadership with Voroshilov (Morale: 7) and also 'bought' two new Li-2 air units for assigning to VVS airbases next turn (I should have done this several turns ago).

I am unsure as to the German intentions for next turn to be honest. The German divisions are all in the red fuelwise and at 20+ range to railhead, so I guess their actions will be decided by the amount of fuel delivered. With partisans in the rear and positions well east, they may not get fuel enough for the broad sweeps.

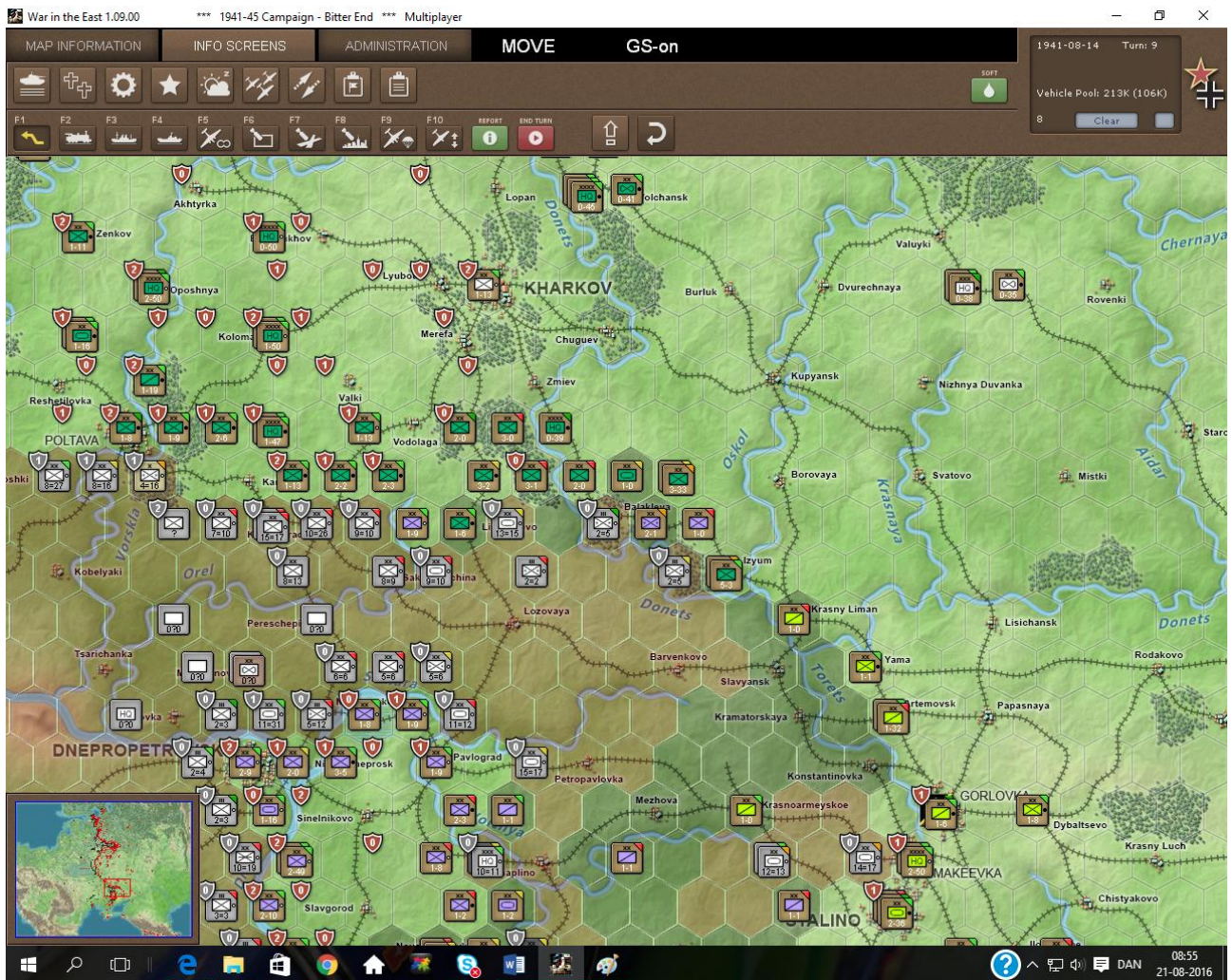
Center, Southern part



At the Bryansk Front, my main action has been to shorten the line a little, freeing up Western Front divisions for the move east. I have made no attempt to break the Chernigov pocket, and I expect it to fall next turn.

Attacks by the Bryansk SB-2's have been ineffective.

Southwestern Front

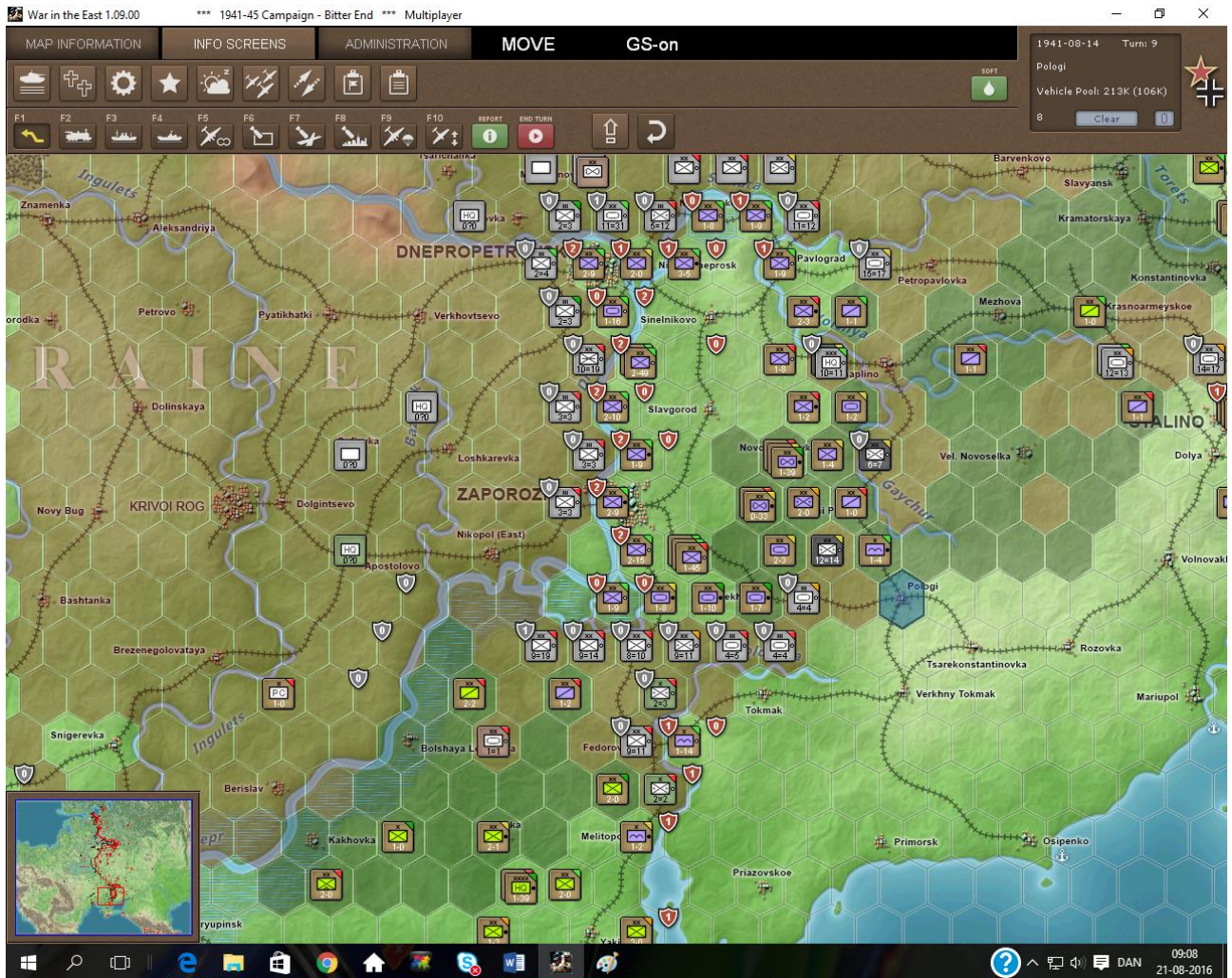


Again, my main effort has been to pull units east to strengthen my faltering lines. At Stalino, I have reassigned the local STAVKA forces to an army under North Caucasus MD control and proceeded to encircle the forward German Panzers. I have also conducted air attacks on the to forward HQ's, but they will both be able to distribute fuel to their units next turn. I have positioned cavalry units around the area in order to respond to next turns German movement.

The Germans are well beyond 25 hex range to their Rail heads, so the question is whether they will continue straight on attacking Stalino, if they will move even further east attacking Rostov (I doubt it) or if they will focus on encircling Soviet units (I guess this is what they will do). This will probably be combined with movement of units south to the sea of Azov in order to change the status of all the area south of the German salient.

Finally, I have put 4 BAK with 80 Yak-1's and 100 IL-2's in the area, and will commence bombing next turn.

Southern Front



I have reestablished contact with the Southern Front pocket and set up divisions for further movement east, as the German reseal the pocket. I have also moved forward with the North Caucasus MD divisions guarding the Crimean. This has generated a threat of sorts to reconnect to the Southern Front pocket from the west.

I think it slightly amusing, that the Romanian armored division has once again been placed in front of a Soviet counterattack, even if this time they have suffered less losses. It is of no importance to the larger game, but the Romanians have lost 30% of their total AFV's since the start of the campaign.

The Germans have quite a long way to their nearest railhead (the motorized divisions south of Zaporozhye have at least 23 hexes and 56 Movement Points).

Conclusion

I am in deep trouble. Apart from Leningrad and Dnepropetrovsk, I still have 35 Armament factories, 13 Heavy industry and 20 Vehicle factories in location adjacent to the German spearheads. This brings my total of factories not forced to pay double evacuation costs to 294 Armament factories, 199 Heavy Industry and 114 Vehicle Factories. I also have cities like Rostov (15 Armament Factories and four heavy industry) and Tula (25 Armament Factories and two Heavy Industry) that are close enough to the Germans to demand evacuation. As there is still a lot of time before the muddy season, I will focus on evacuating the factories not costing double evacuation costs, leaving the rest behind for the Germans.

In the air, I have purchased two Li-2 transports and six LaGG-3 fighter units. My fighter production went further down this turn, as I evacuated the LaGG-3 '11 Series' plant in Taganrog this turn. However, as I still have more than 1000 non I-type fighters in my pool, this is certainly not my primary concern.

Thankfully, my production of new divisions is starting to kick into gear. For the foreseeable future, I will be receiving somewhere between 15 and 20 new divisions per turn. With the expected losses in the south, I need to replace lost divisions.