

Strategic overview

Turn 16: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2165	122275	0
-	Port	88	15	0	0	0
-	Railyard	198	1	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2580	31	70881	2251728	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	238166	280690	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	10	0	1372000	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	960000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	536400	0
-	Resource Production	164	0	0	2696000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	13	276524	1059000	0

Several bad things happening this turn. The Germans have surrounded most of the Southwestern Front, advanced to the doorstep of Voronezh and also done some attacks in the far north.

German AFV+SP/AC losses this turn are 132, while they have also lost 54 fighters and 84 bombers. Soviet losses in the air are 283 fighters (including 45 Yak-1's and 26 LaGG-3's) and 248 bombers (including 15 IL-2's).

Axis VP advantage is 2.3 to 1.

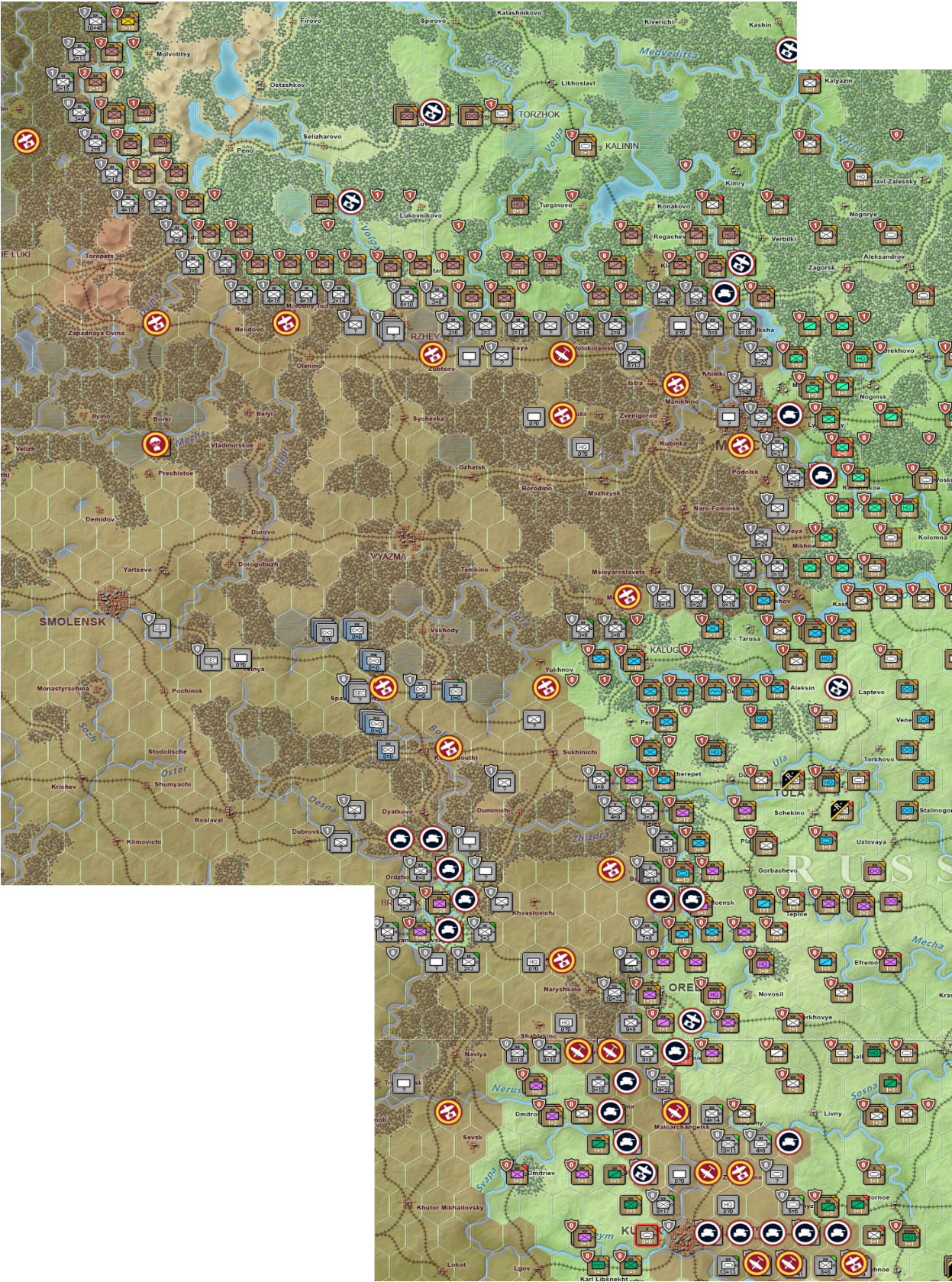
The North



Leningrad has finally fallen. The Finns have then proceeded to attack in the far north, in effect teaching me that the “Finnish No Attack Line” is not really an accurate phrase. By rereading the manual I have learned, that it is only valid for as long as the Soviets hold Leningrad. This is bad news, as all my units along this line is at MaxTOE 20%.

Another important fact is that the Finns can now attack along the Volkhov, although no attacks have materialized yet.

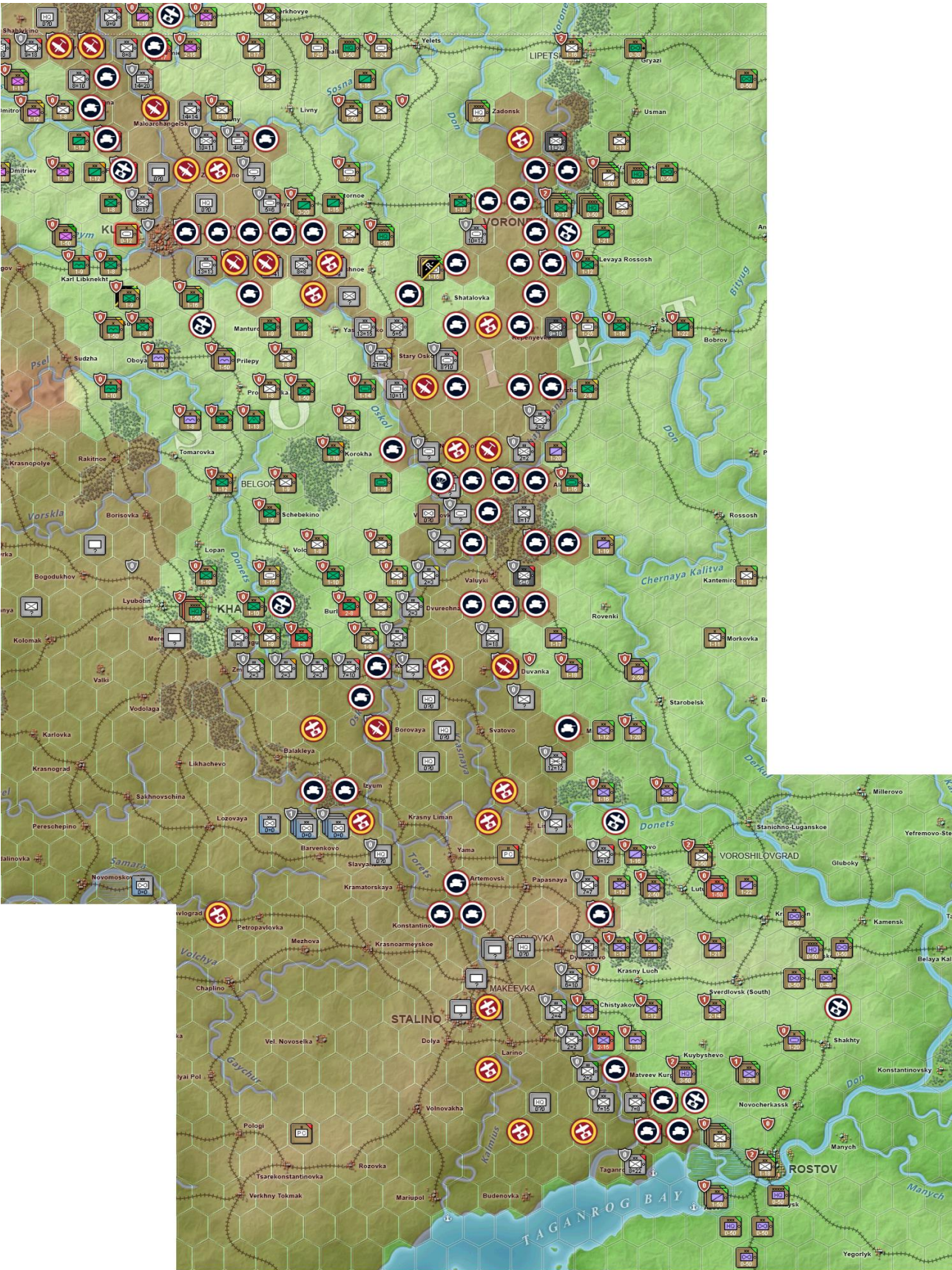
The Center



In the center, the Bryansk Front has taken a major hit and a huge pocket involving it and the Southwestern Front has been established. More information about this disaster will be given in the section regarding the Southern part of the front.

The Reserve Front has continued to strengthen, and I now have several divisions there with a CV of three or more. The Moscow MD and the Western Front has been left mainly alone this turn.

The South



The Southwestern Front has been surrounded and the Germans are at the gates of Voronezh. While I can probably reopen the pocket this turn, I will not be able to prevent the German Panzers northeast of Kursk from pushing straight east to Voronezh enlarging the pocket and making any further breakouts impossible. Even worse, the Germans will have sufficient movement left to surround Voronezh itself.

The Southern Front has seen a few infantry attacks, while the North Caucasus MD has observed the Axis Minors settling in to create a line one hex back from the Soviet lines.

Planning

In the air, my reserves of MiG-3's and I-Types 18 and 24 are drying out, so I will produce no new fighter Air Groups this turn. As I will also be evacuating the remaining production of IL-2's, their production facilities will also take a major hit and I will produce no Air Groups of IL-2's either. I will however, need to supply a potentially huge pocket through the muddy season, so a number of transport Air Groups might come in very handy. I will produce eight of those.

I will also evacuate the remaining production from Voronezh, Lipetsk and Tambov. This mean I will take a major hit on the production of IL-2's, as I will only be able to evacuate very few of these, possibly only one point.

The North

The 7th Independent Army will be put back on MaxTOE and have two Artillery and a Sapper Regiment assigned. I will also disengage the 22nd army from its positions along the Volkhov and move it north towards the Finns east of Lake Ladoga.

The Center

The Reserve Front and the Moscow MD will continue their campaign of attacks against exposed German units.

As the Bryansk Front will have to be used fighting the German Panzers in the south, it will be pulled off it's current position and the Western Front will thus have to take over a considerable stretch of its front. As it faces no German Panzers, this should work out. The Bryansk Front will also provide some muscle for the breakout attempt of the pocketed Southwestern Front.

However, the Bryansk Front itself will be pulled into the open and placed in unfortified positions against the majority of German Panzer divisions. I have little hope they will avoid major losses over the coming turn. I need to do this to prevent the Germans from simply swinging north, into the back of the Western and the Bryansk Fronts cutting them both off in the area southwest of Moscow. Meanwhile, the Stavka units on the Oka will be pulled south, to defend Voroneszh and its surroundings.

The South

The Southern Front will be attacking and cutting off the northernmost German divisions on the Voronezh pincer, mainly to prevent them from getting any fuel and to increase German fuel costs for the next turn.

In front of Rostov, I will do what I can to to strengthen my defenses.

In the air, my bombing campaign against the Ju/52's will continue. I will restrict it to night bombing attacks though.

Finally, I spot a minor chance of cutting off a Hungarian motorized regiment at the North Caucasus MD. If I push east with those units that have movement, I might be able to push far enough that the southeasternmost Hungarians will be cut off. I doubt it will work, but I will attempt it nonetheless.



Execution

Northern Front

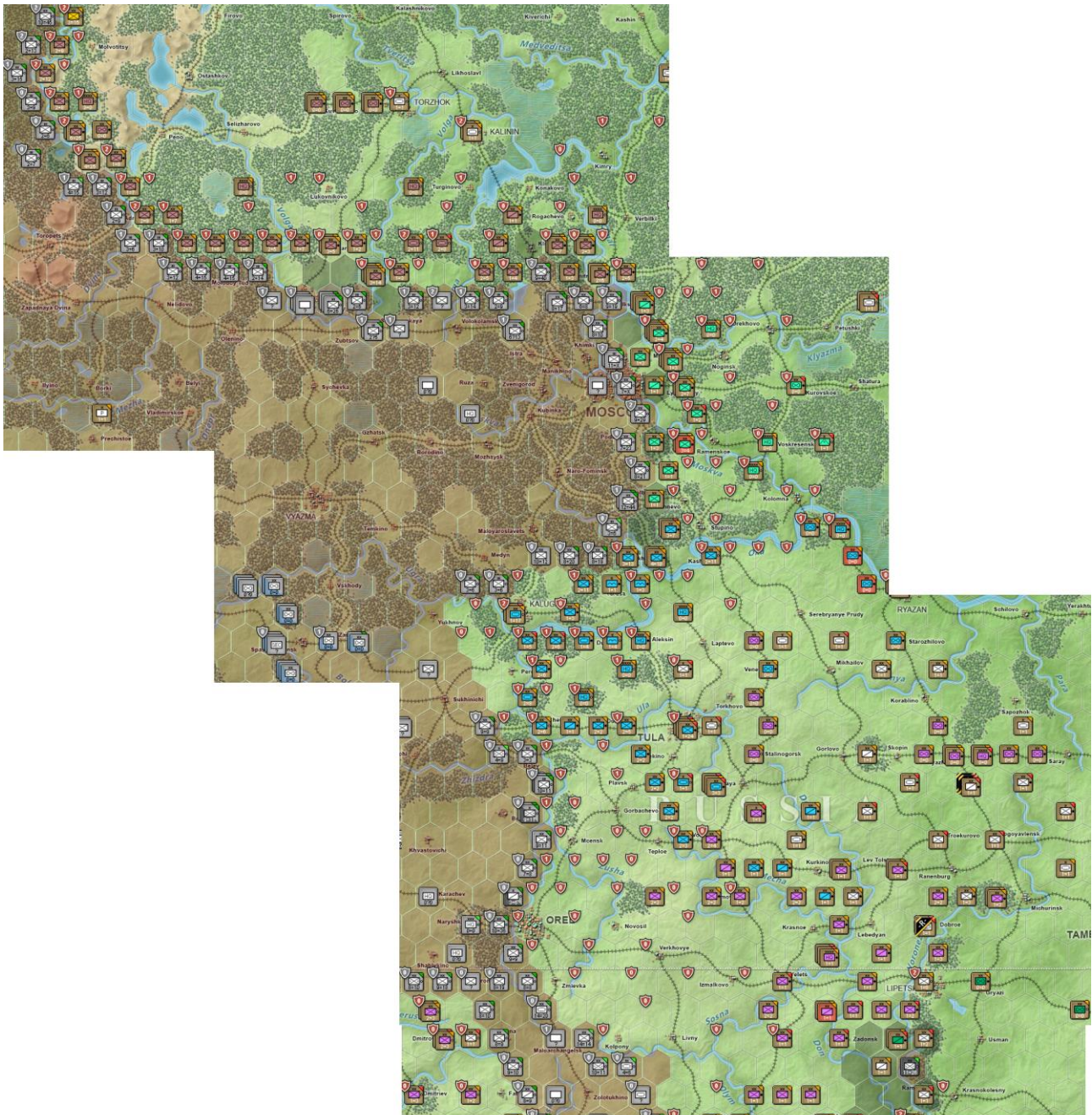


In the north, I have relieved the 22nd Army on the Volkhov, moving them northeast to intercept the oncoming Finns. Moreover, another army from the STAVKA forces northeast of Moscow, has been moved northwards to help resealing the area.

The Finns may move their cavalry southwards in order to cut the northern rail line, but doing so involves a risk of becoming encircled and destroyed far from the main Finnish forces.

The 7th Independent Army has also been reset to 100% TOE and issued with more support units.

The Center

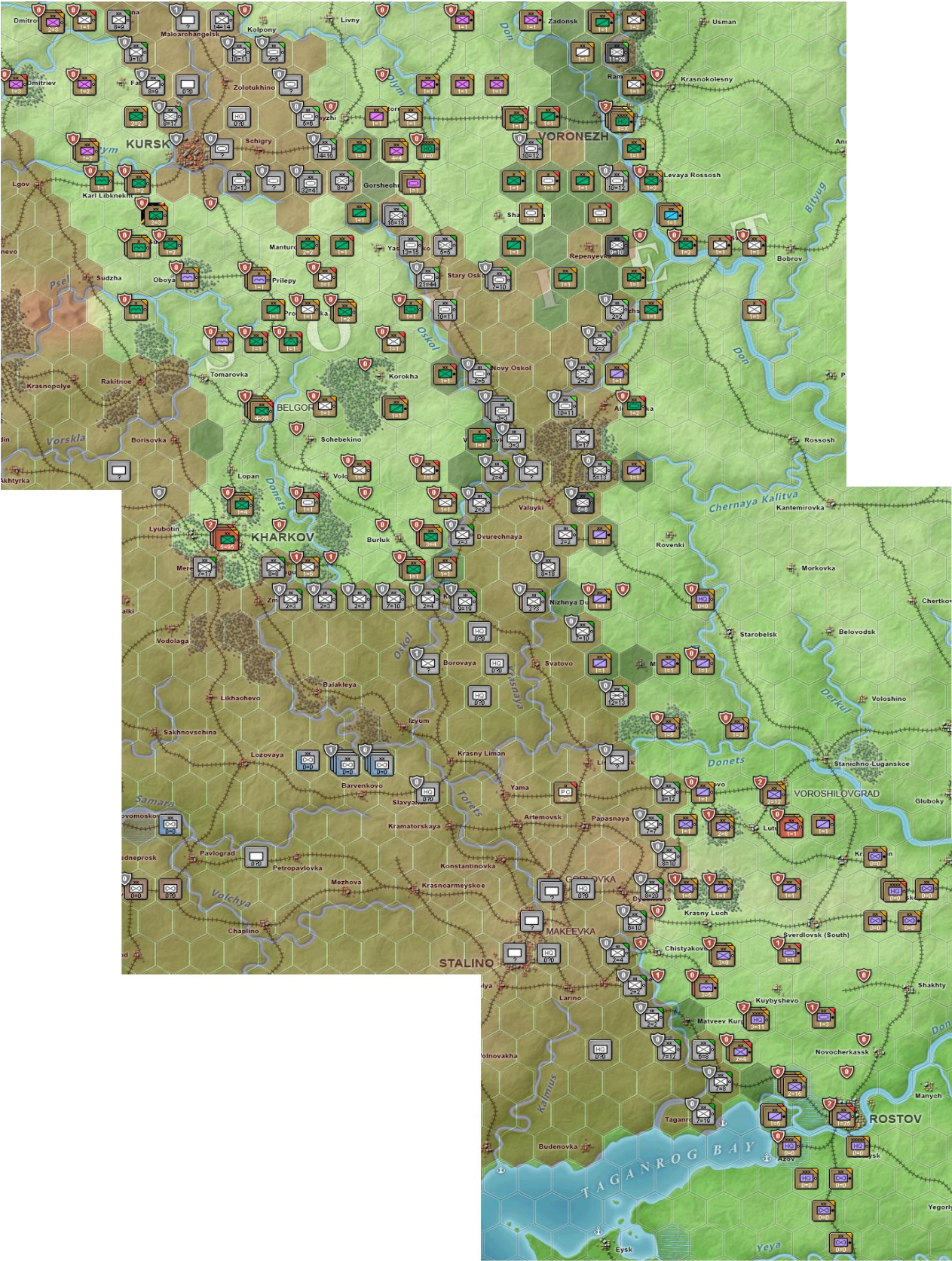


The Western and Bryansk Fronts have done some relocating in order to present some sort of line preventing the encirclement of the entire Western Front. I am very uncertain as to the actual capabilities of the Germans for far reaching thrusts at this point, but have been as careful as I can. I hope it will be enough, although I expect the southernmost units of the Bryansk Front to be encircled and Voronezh to be surrounded this turn.

Outside Moscow, the Moscow MD and the Kalinin Fronts have conducted a series of attacks (seven in total, I think) in order to reduce the German fortification modifiers in the upcoming winter battle for Moscow.

Finally, I have reassigned some fighter airfields from the Western to the Bryansk Front.

The South



In the South, the Southwestern Front has broken the huge pocket engulfing Kharkov and the entire Southwestern Front. The pocket will certainly be resealed without further hopes of opening it on the next turn. After the Mud, we will be entering November, and the divisions lost in the pockets will not be respawned. This will lead to a major drain on my Admin Points as I scramble to recreate the divisions I need.

Further south, I have decided against attacking the German infantry advancing on Rostov. I will be building fortifications in the area instead.

Finally, the North Caucasus MD has encircled two Hungarian Motorized brigades, but they both have plenty of fuel left, so they will be able to easily break out of the weak encirclement. The good news are that the attacks did inflict some casualties on the Axis Minors.



In Odessa, I'm happy with having three Soviet divisions occupying one German and five Rumanian divisions.

Conclusion

In the air, casualties this turn were 32 German for 135 Soviet planes. The Germans have also lost 261 guns and 50 AFV/AS/AC's. I did notice one strange thing. When bombing the German Panzers tying up the Southwestern Front pocket, I inflicted heavy Nebelwerfer losses. The Germans lost a total of 35 this turn, which is more than half of their total losses for the entire campaign.

I am sad to say that my IL-2 production has taken another hit, as I could only evacuate a total of ten production points from Voronezh after having evacuated the factories and heavy industry from Tambov, Lipetsk and Voronezh.

I expect the Germans to reseal the Southwestern Front pocket this turn, and if they have sufficient movement available, I expect them to cut off Voronezh. During the mud, the Germans can then move up infantry to take the city while moving their panzers south to deal with Rostov. I have no doubt I will find it hard to defend Rostov for three turns of snow against the entire force of German Panzers. In effect, this spells "Game over" I think. I will try to position myself to avoid this end, hoping that there are factors at work I do not see, but I am not optimistic.

I think that there is a real chance that I will suffer the German Autowin conditions during the snow turns after the mud. I will do what I can to avoid this, but we will have to see if I can remain in the game.