

Turn 12, Strategic Considerations

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2184	94843	0
-	Port	121	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	279	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	3025	0	102180	1792627	0
-	Vehicle	140	0	237478	276600	0
-	Heavy Industry	232	0	0	1174000	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	704000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	393360	0
-	Resource Production	182	0	0	2102000	0
-	Armaments Production	366	2	567651	920750	0

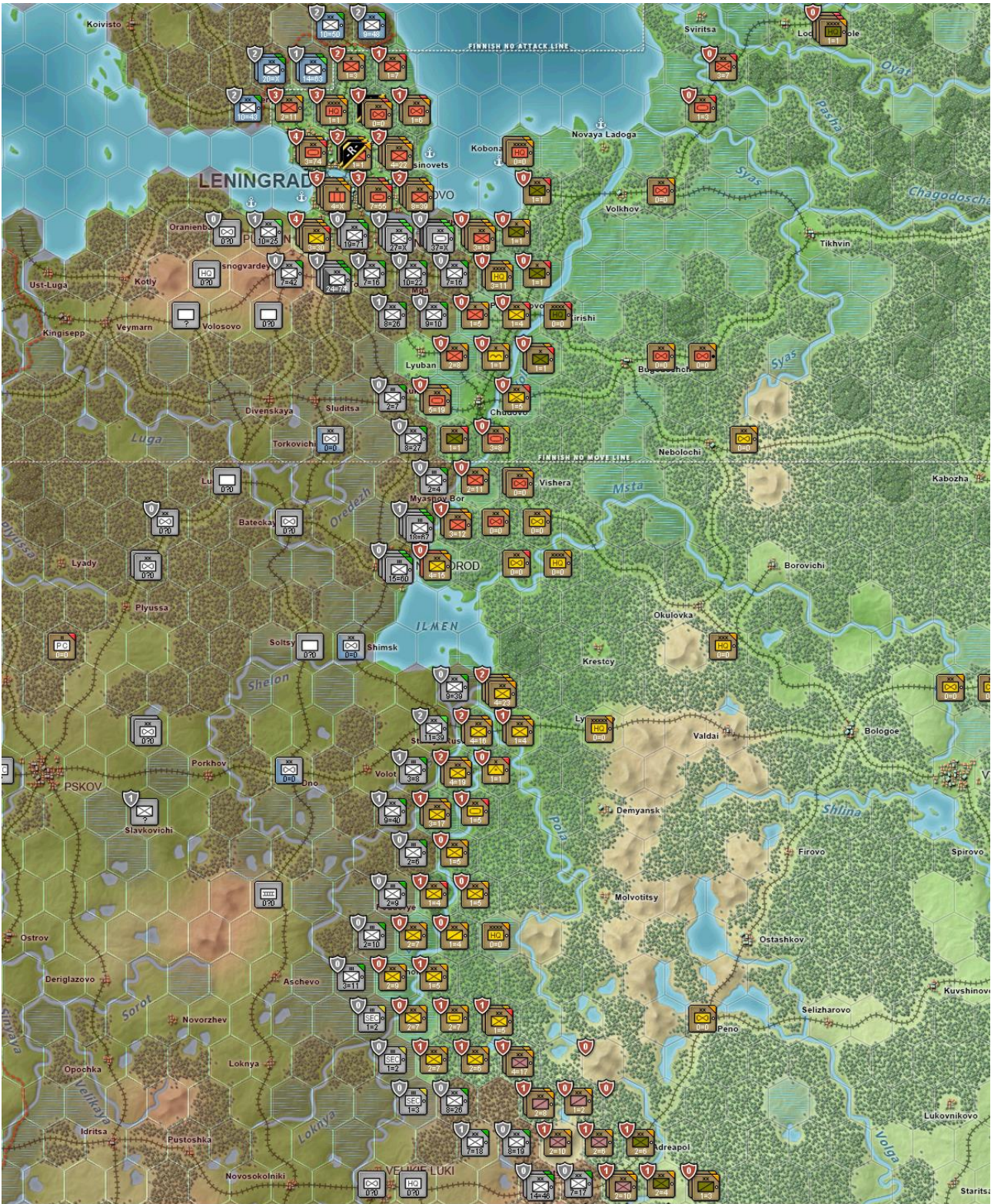
I have been a major fool last turn. Being annoyed by the constant small scale losses of Soviet fighters to German interdicator groups, I set the Fighter intercept to nil last turn. This turn, the Germans have responded with a major bombing campaign against Leningrad, and my fighters chose not to fly. It seems I constantly make minor cockups in the defense of Leningrad, that might eventually cost me the city.

Other than that, I have now received my first three Guards divisions. That is good news, at least.

Finally, weather predictions are mud for North Soviet Zone next turn. If that happens, it will certainly have some impact on the German offensive towards Moscow.

Axis VP's are 181, which would mean a minor Axis win should the game end here.

The North



Situational Assessment

The Germans have taken two more of the hexes south of the Neva. Thus they now threaten both Pavlovo and the "Neva river hex". Fortunately, the Germans across the river are all Motorized and Panzer divisions, and should they choose to attack, they will suffer from disruption due to the major river.

The Neva river hex is now fortified to 2+32%, which is a 22% increase even with the Germans standing next to the defenders. Pavlovo stands at 3+48%. I hope to be able to keep repairing the damage to my fortifications, even in the face of German attacks.

The Germans have made no real attempts to get at the Volkhov river, leaving even my 1=1 CV units on the front alone. That is another piece of good news.

The Germans have been partisan hunting this turn, but the damage to their rail lines persist. I expect the German Panzers across the Neva river to have a max of 27-29MP's next turn, which will effectively render a deliberate attack across the Neva river impossible next turn. The Panzers may well turn east instead to give room for the infantry that is sure to come forward to replace them.

Planning

First thing I will do is to rectify my mistake with the air settings. The Germans should not fly unopposed over Leningrad.

Next, I will reorder my defenders of Leningrad, so that I have a better chance of holding at the Neva. This includes setting two of the 16th Army infantry in Osinovets on "Reserve" so that they may push forward, and help holding back the expected German attack. The remaining one should ensure, that fortification work is still progressing in Osinovets. I expect the main body of work to be done by those four Sapper Regiments supporting construction by the 16th Army. Those regiments now share 51 Construction points between them.

South of Leningrad, I will continue to bring the 7th Independent Army towards Leningrad, but otherwise do little other than some reshuffling of my units north of Lake Ilmen.

South of Lake Ilmen, I will use the 22nd Army in an attack against a lone German Security Regiment. My only plan is to give the Soviet units a little experience, and possibly convince the Germans to start using better units than Security Regiments for holding the front. I will move my units back into their current positions after the attack is done.

In the air, I will do a massive I-Type attack on the Soviet airfields northeast of Plyussa. Those airfields are not yet protected by flak assigned to the towns (they are not in towns), and so I hope to draw out a few German fighters to a 200 vrs 10 dogfight. I have little hope of success, but then again: I only risk some I-Type fighters.

Execution

For the first air attack on the German airfields, I used some 255 I-Type fighters and 26 Pe-2's. Surprisingly, the attack was intercepted by four Finnish fighters and no German ones. Losses on my side were high due to AA fire. The result can be seen below.

1 of 1 76,25 - Light Woods - Clear Turn: 12 1941-09-04		
Axis Forces Defending:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Attacking:
I Fliegerkorps	DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0	Northwest Air Command
4 Brewster 239(F)	DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0	
11 : 11 Fi 156C	LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0	
23 -> Sdkfz-10/4 SP Flak	DEF: ftr 4, bmr 0, utl 0	
31 -> 20mm Anti-aircraft Gun	LOST: ftr 1, bmr 0, utl 0	
	ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0	14 I-153
	DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0	15 I-15bis
	LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0	80 I-16 Type 24
	ATK: ftr 127, bmr 6, utl 0	18 I-16 Type 5
	LOST: ftr 16, bmr 4, utl 0	6 Pe-2
	airfield was BOMBED	
	Show Details	Exit

As the German fighters were not to be drawn into a dog fight, I decided to change all I-Type's in the area to bomber mode, and start bombing the local German infantry forces. That, unfortunately proved utterly useless, with 200+ bombers on a mission killing less than 30 men.

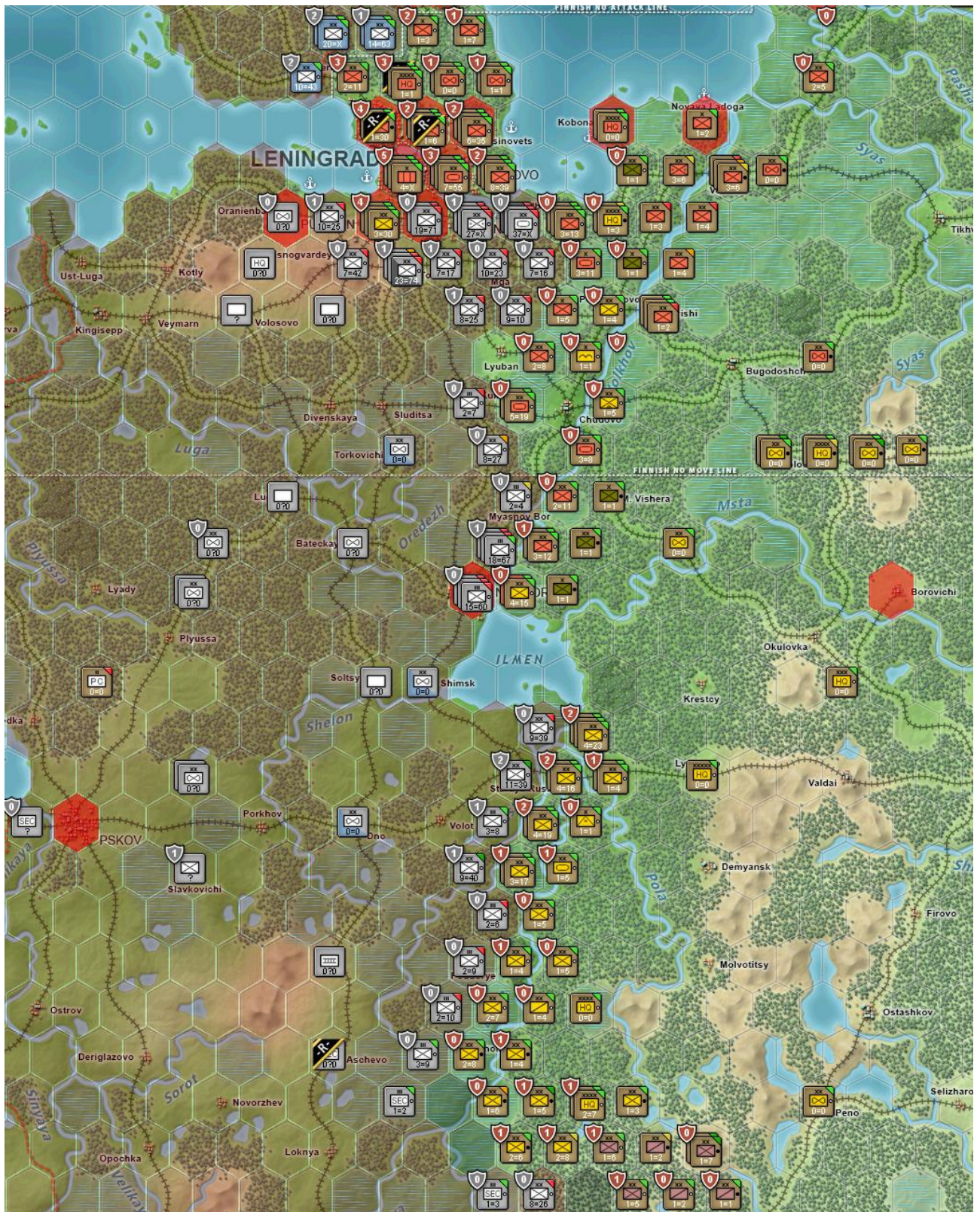
I then swapped the local U-2VS night bomber to daylight bombing and resumed bombing the local infantry once more. That proved more successful, with kills like 30-40 men and three guns pr attack. In short, 9 U-2VS Air Groups doing daylight bombing are more effective than 25 to 30 Air Groups of I-Type Fighters doing the same thing.

The I-Types have all been set back to fighter duty and the U-2VS have been assigned to the Northwestern Front.

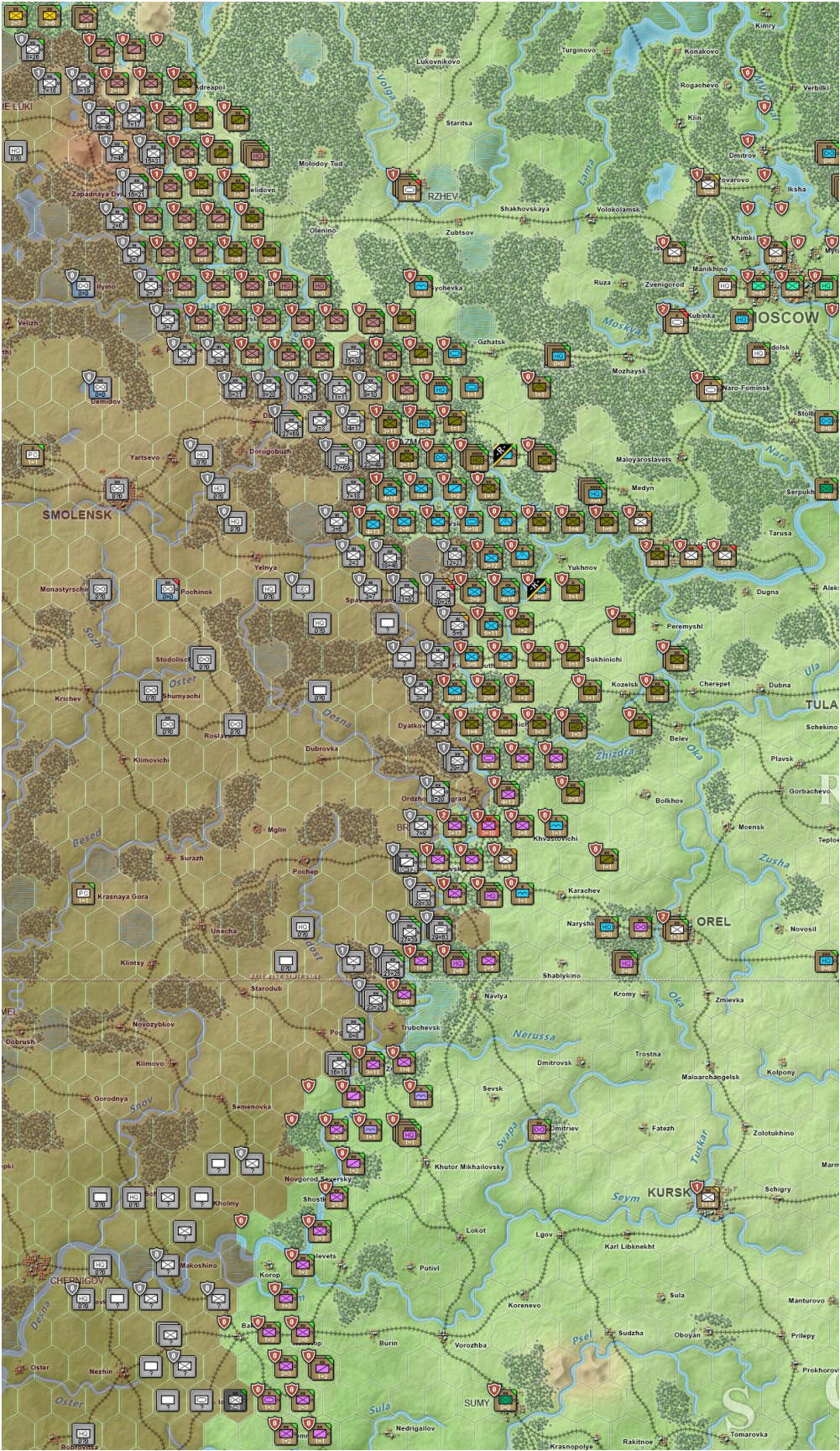
South of Leningrad, there has been little ground action.

At the Northwestern Front, the first attack on the lone German Security Regiment was a success, and I decided to follow it up by a second attack.

Below is an Image of the situation south of Leningrad, as I give the turn to Hermann.



The Center



Situation Assessment

In the center, the slugging match continues.

To the north, the German infantry are still battling their way through the forests, while further south a force of four German Panzer divisions and two Motorized divisions are battling through my positions at Vyazma. This section of the front is predicted to end up in mud come next turn.

South of Vyazma, a single German Panzer division and three Motorized divisions supported by infantry are attempting to form a wedge of their own.

Of more concern are the three German Panzer divisions and one Motorized division supported by cavalry and infantry divisions that are forming up south of Bryansk. I have too few forces in the area to prevent a breakthrough if I stand my ground.

Planning

At the northern end of the center, I am simply going to stand firm, as I do not believe the Germans will be able to create and exploit a breakthrough. I might be forced to withdraw the Northwestern Front behind the Pola river next turn.

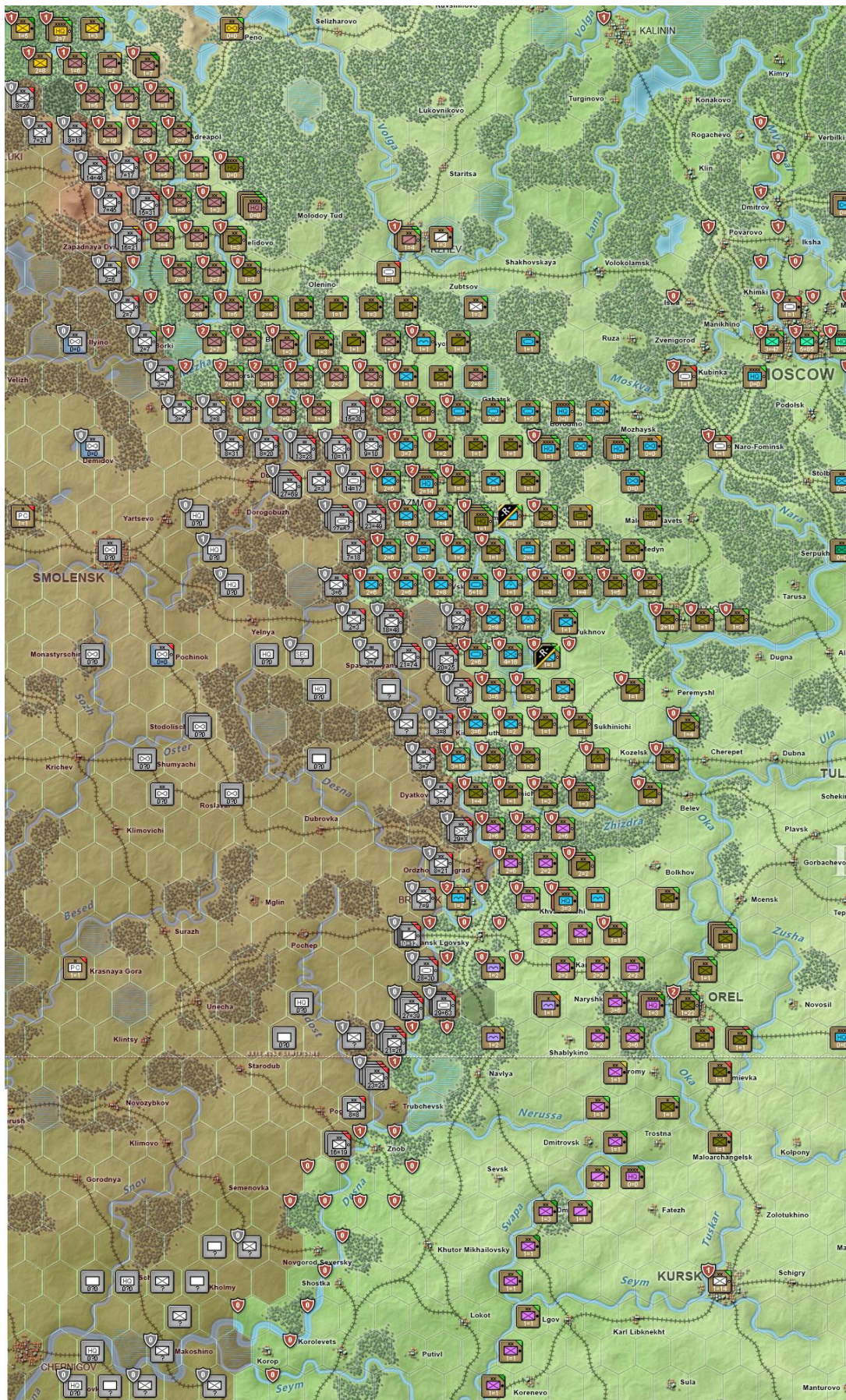
Further South, at Vyazma, I am going to withdraw a few of the forward Rifle divisions north of the German wedge, but am otherwise going to stand firm. South of Vyazma, there is a chance of a minor German encirclement of Soviet divisions, but I can hinge some defensive strongpoints on Vyazma itself and some of the nearby swamps. If the weather predictions prove correct, this area will drown in mud next turn. If not, I do not think the Germans will be able to enact a real breakthrough.

At Bryansk, I will create a strong line running southeast from Bryansk for a few hexes. South of this area, I will withdraw my forces, so that there is a distance of three hexes between the German lines and the Soviet ones. If the Germans attack with their Panzers to the southeast, they are not getting closer to any high value Soviet targets, and I will have plenty of time to evacuate both Poltava and Kharkov before the arrival of the Germans.

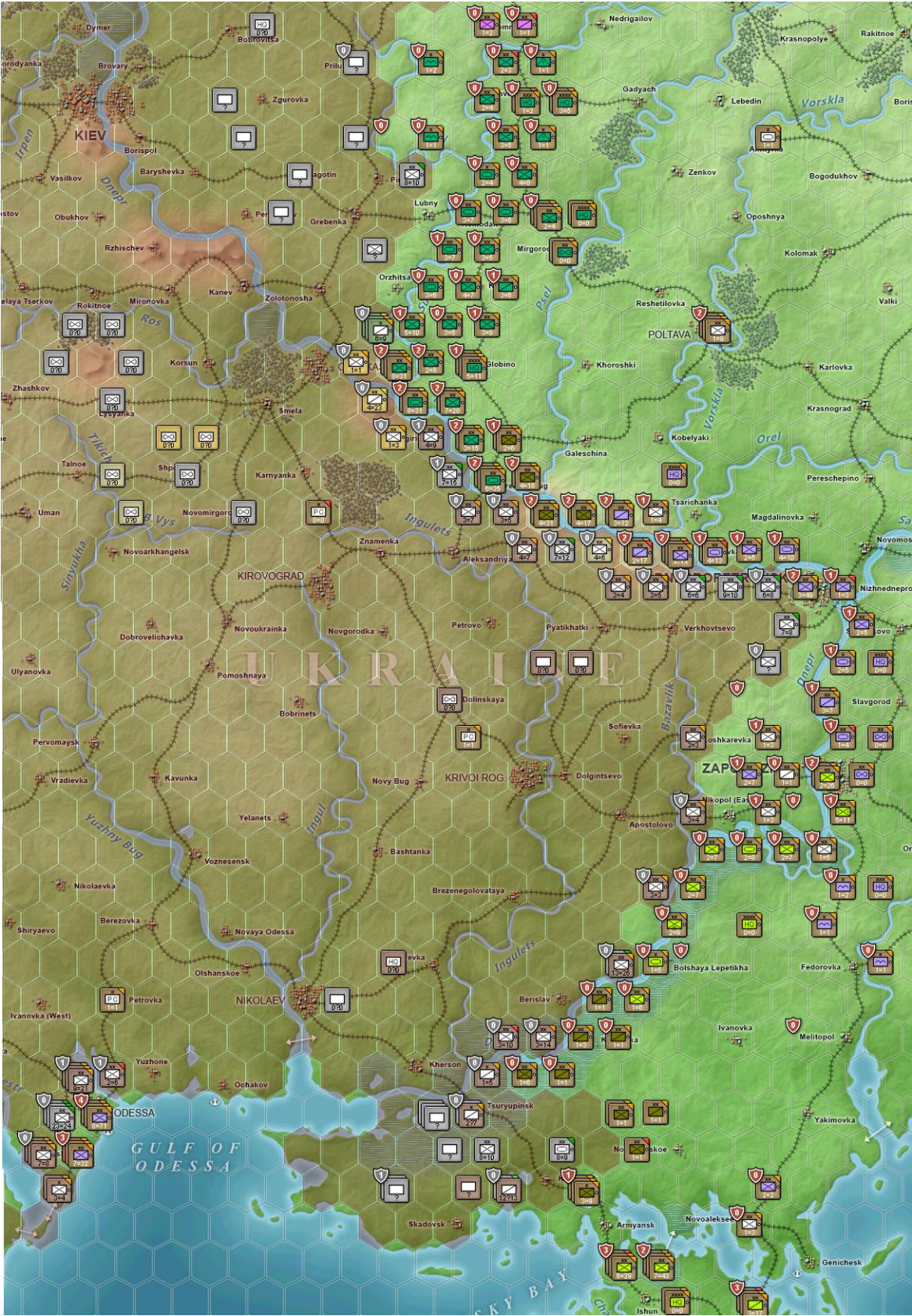
Execution

In the center, I have used my tactical bombers to do a little damage to the German Panzers, but otherwise mainly maneuvered my divisions according to the plan, I have laid above. The only difference is that I ended up pulling the Bryansk Front slightly further back, as I can hinge the defenses on a minor river if I do.

Below is an image of the central front, as I give the turn to Hermann:



The South



Situational Assessment

At the Southwestern Front, the German Panzers have continued to relay north and the German infantry have not yet reached the Soviet lines. The western point of the Southwestern Front line is held by Hungarian and Italian units.

At the Crimean, my defenses are quite strong, so I am little worried about the presence of a Panzer division north of the crossings. That panzer division has got quite a long supply line and can expect no more than 27 or so MP next turn.

At Odessa, the Axis attack has cleared yet another hex, and the fortress is now down to two hexes.

Planning

The southwestern Front remain in position, but I will attack the hungarians and Italians, hoping to inflict some losses and give some morale to the Soviet divisions.

Along the northern Dnepr, I will make a few adjustments to my defense, but will remain in position. South of Zaporozhye, I will continue to withdraw, as I am confident in my defenses at the Crimean.

At Odessa, the evacuation of Soviet troops will continue.

Execution

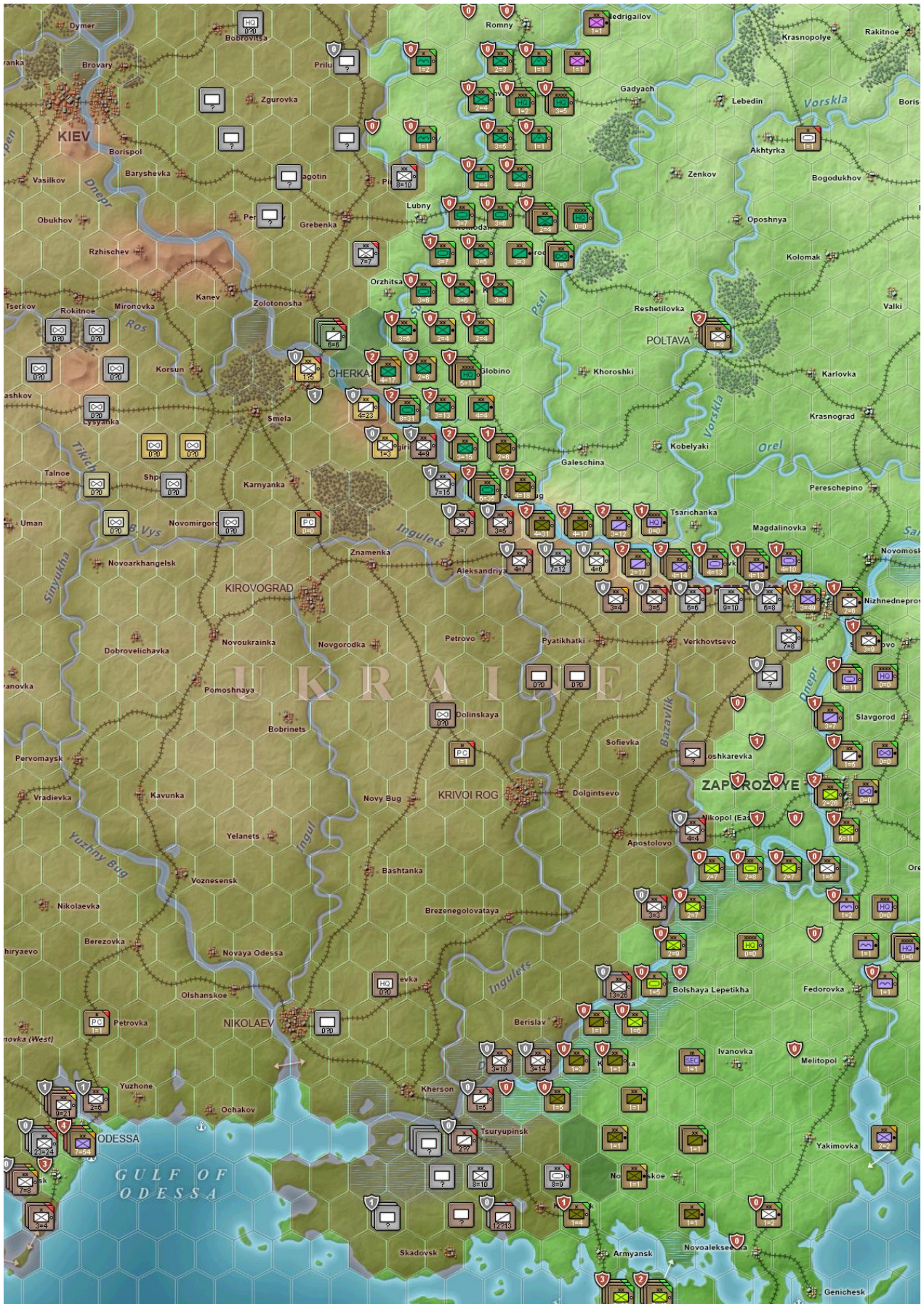
The southwestern Front have conducted the attacks I have ordered them to do, the main result being the one against the Hungarians, as can be seen below. That one attack has cost the Hungarians about 4% of their current AFV strength, which says more about the Hungarians than it does about the attack itself.

1 of 1		88,87 - Clear - Clear	Turn: 12 1941-09-04
Axis Forces Defending: Mobile Hun. Corps 1st Hun. Motorized Brigade (31) 2nd Hun. Motorized Brigade (31) 1st Hun. Cavalry Brigade (31)	Forces Engaged		Soviet Forces Attacking:
	DEF: men 28483, art 229, afv 149	ATK: men 105342, art 1112, afv 67	5th Army
	DAM: men 128, art 13, afv 9	DAM: men 176, art 2, afv 4	193rd Rifle Division (15)
	LOST: men 423, art 6, afv 13	LOST: men 733, art 1, afv 1	200th Rifle Division (31)
CV: 93->44.8 Fort: 0.08->0.00 Comm HQ: Mobile Hun. Corps E Bela Miklos	DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	ATK: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	228th Rifle Division (27)
	LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	197th Rifle Division (24)
	1st Hun. Cavalry Brigade RETREATED		199th Rifle Division (17)
	2nd Hun. Motorized Brigade RETREATED		139th Rifle Division (30)
Show Details	1st Hun. Motorized Brigade RETREATED		23rd Motorcycle Regiment (1) [v]
	Odds 10.69 : 1		CV: 233->479.2 Eng Val: 10
	Exit		Comm HQ: 5th Army GM Mikhail Potapov

North of the Crimea, I have moved my divisions into an open defensive position in order to simply delay the advance of the Germans. I have kept the defenders of the Crimean crossings in place where they belong.

At Odessa, I have evacuated three divisions this turn. Should the Germans close the ring around the remaining three divisions, I will not have to fear a withdrawal in the wrong direction, and I can then leave the three divisions in place to keep far stronger Axis forces occupied.

Below an image of the situation east of Kiev, as I give the turn to Hermann:



Conclusion

I have evacuated the industries from both Kursk and Poltava this turn, and also brought out all the T-34 factories in Kharkov this turn. While this is strictly not necessary, bringing out all the T-34 production mean that the facilities will only be 50% damaged, and thus will produce again full time by the 1st of January or so (and at 50% on average until then).

As I have now evacuated the full production of heavy tanks from Leningrad as well as the full production of Medium tanks from Kharkov, I expect to have some well equipped tank formations early in the coming winter.