

Turn 33, Strategic Considerations

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	6618	348208	0
-	Port	111	10	0	0	0
-	Railyard	275	18	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2999	127	62014	4682520	0
-	Vehicle	140	0	206159	307986	0
-	Heavy Industry	232	0	0	3292550	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	2048000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	1144320	0
-	Resource Production	182	0	0	5984000	0
-	Armaments Production	366	26	100977	2701200	0

I have begun producing armament points for the pool. Last turn, my reserve was some 94.000 Armaments Points, while this turn it is 100K+. According to logistics report, I have produced 104.000 Armament Points this turn, and spent a total of 94.000. As I evacuated the majority of armament production from Stalino last turn, this speaks of how large a surplus I actually have.

I have also received my first Guards Army this turn. In a few turns, I guess I will move that army from the western Front into my strategic reserve, so that it may be used wherever the Germans decide to become active during the summer.

On the ground, the Germans are pretty much pulling back across the entire line, while in the air, the German Luftwaffe has increased its numbers by a massive 1100 aircraft this turn. It seems the Luftwaffe is reordering its aircraft to be able to make a move in February.

Axis VP are 181.

The North



Situational assessment

In the north, the Germans have withdrawn their units along the entire front. The distance between the Germans and the Soviets is now up to four hexes. In several of the hexes abandoned this way, lies rail lines repaired by the Germans, so I need to take them to create even more of a buffer between the Germans and Leningrad.

Planning

I have decided to move a thin screen of units forward in this area. I wish to move one division close to the Germans in every hex to ensure that attrition still takes its toll on the Wehrmacht, and I also wish for the Germans to have to take back more space before they can become threatening.

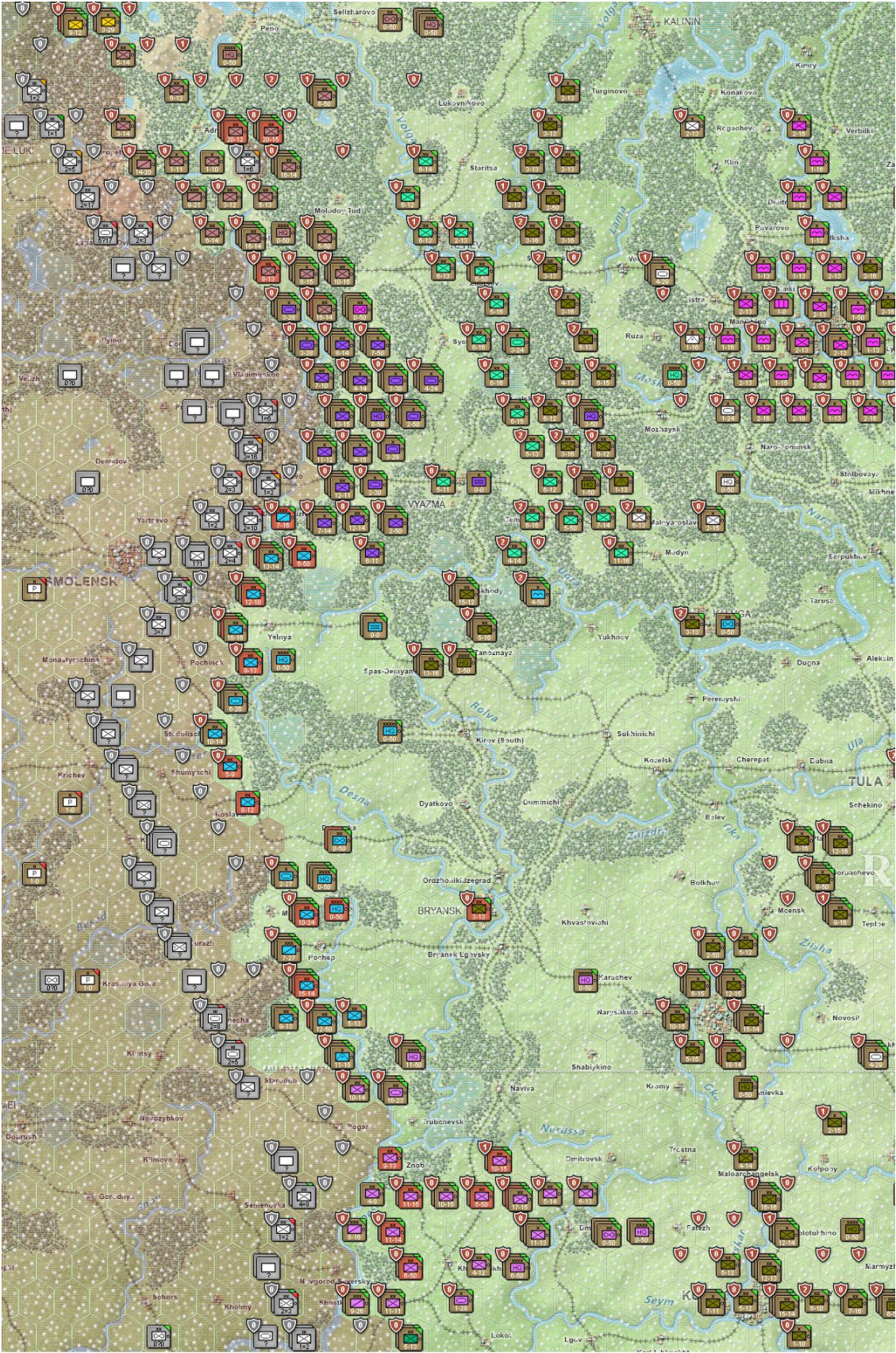
My main forces will start preparing the defensive lines for the spring and summer.

Execution

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



The Center



Situational assessment

In the center, the Germans are still pulling back in front of Moscow along the entire area, except for a three hex wide front east of Smolensk. Why they have chosen to stand firm here while withdrawing everywhere else, is beyond my understanding.

Planning

Once again, I will follow the retreating Germans with a few divisions, so that the area vacated swap to Soviet control and the Germans are once again subject to attrition. I am getting so far away from my rail heads that any further major advances will seriously hamper my ability to keep the troops properly supplied.

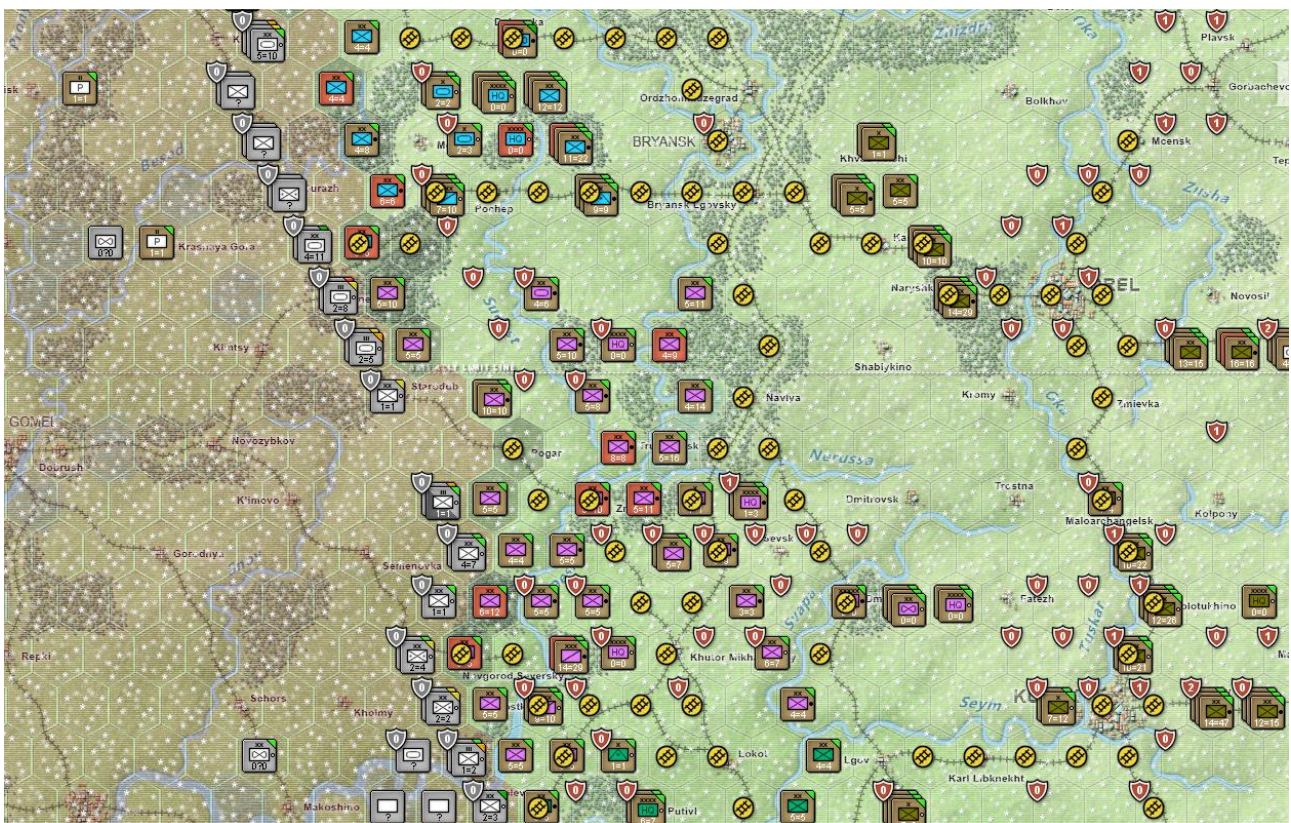
The main body of my forces will settle in more or less where they are, and start digging.

Execution

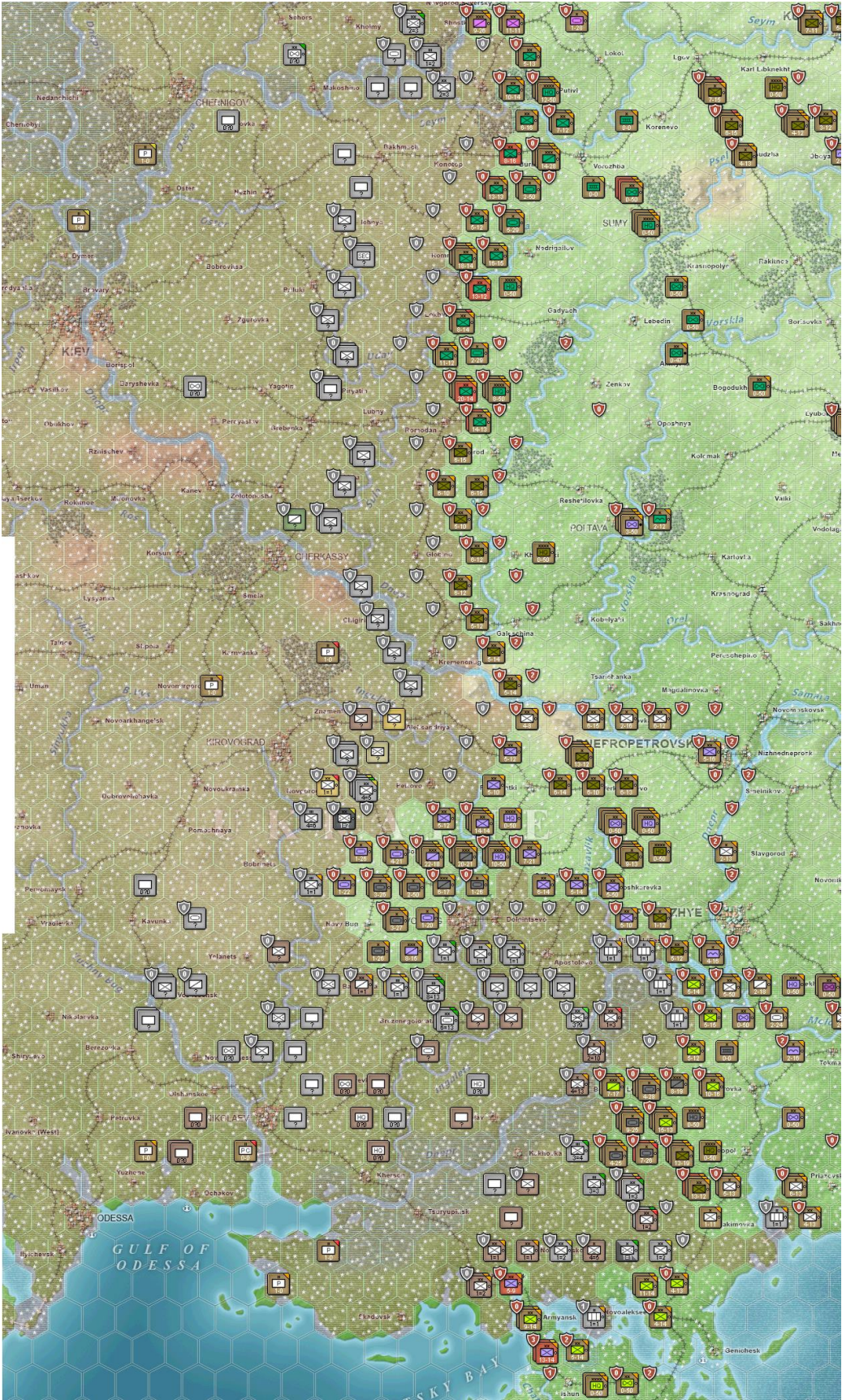
Very little fighting has taken place in the area, as the Germans are simply withdrawing too fast for my units to keep up.

In order to help with repairing the rail lines, I have built three Rail Repair Brigades for the Bryansk Front.

Below is an image of the rail status around Kursk, as I give the turn to Hermann.



The South



Situational Assessment

North of the Dnepr, the Germans have pulled back some two or three hexes along the entire area held by the Southwestern Front.

South of the Dnepr, the situation is more complex. East of Kirovograd and northeast of Krivoi Rog, the Germans are pulling back, which means that I can easily expand the base of my attack wedge. In front of the attacking forces are some very weak German and Rumanian units in the front line, and then several units of unknown composition in the rear. I count at least two Motorized units and one infantry unit with several more units rushing up from the west.

Southeast of Zaporozhye, the Axis forces have also been pulled back, leaving behind four Fortified Zones.

North of the Crimean crossings, the encircled Axis forces have reestablished contact with the main lines, but it looks as if it may very well be possible to cut off those units once more.

Finally, my advances in the area have cut off every rail line supplying the Germans but one. This one rail line runs from Odessa to Nikolaev and then on to support the troops. I should have spotted this a while ago, but I did not, which is a mistake on my part.

Planning

If I make a naval landing in Odessa (which is within the historical 1939 borders of the Soviet, and thus legal terrain to make amphibious landings), I create a situation where the German Panzers should get at least 11MP or so less to work with come next turn. I will do so, and see if the German supply system in the south collapses as a result.

At Krivoi Rog, I will continue the assault southwards, hoping to get close enough to the sea to close the pocket in early February. Whether I will actually be able to do so, depends partly on the lessened blizzard effects and partly on how badly the Germans in the area have been beat up already.

North of Crimea, I will try to reencircle the withdrawing Germans. If I can do so, those units will probably be dead, regardless of what happens to the north with the main attack.

Finally, I will begin moving in some of the STAVKA Armies from Kursk to the area in order to build up rear area defensive lines for the coming battles.

Execution

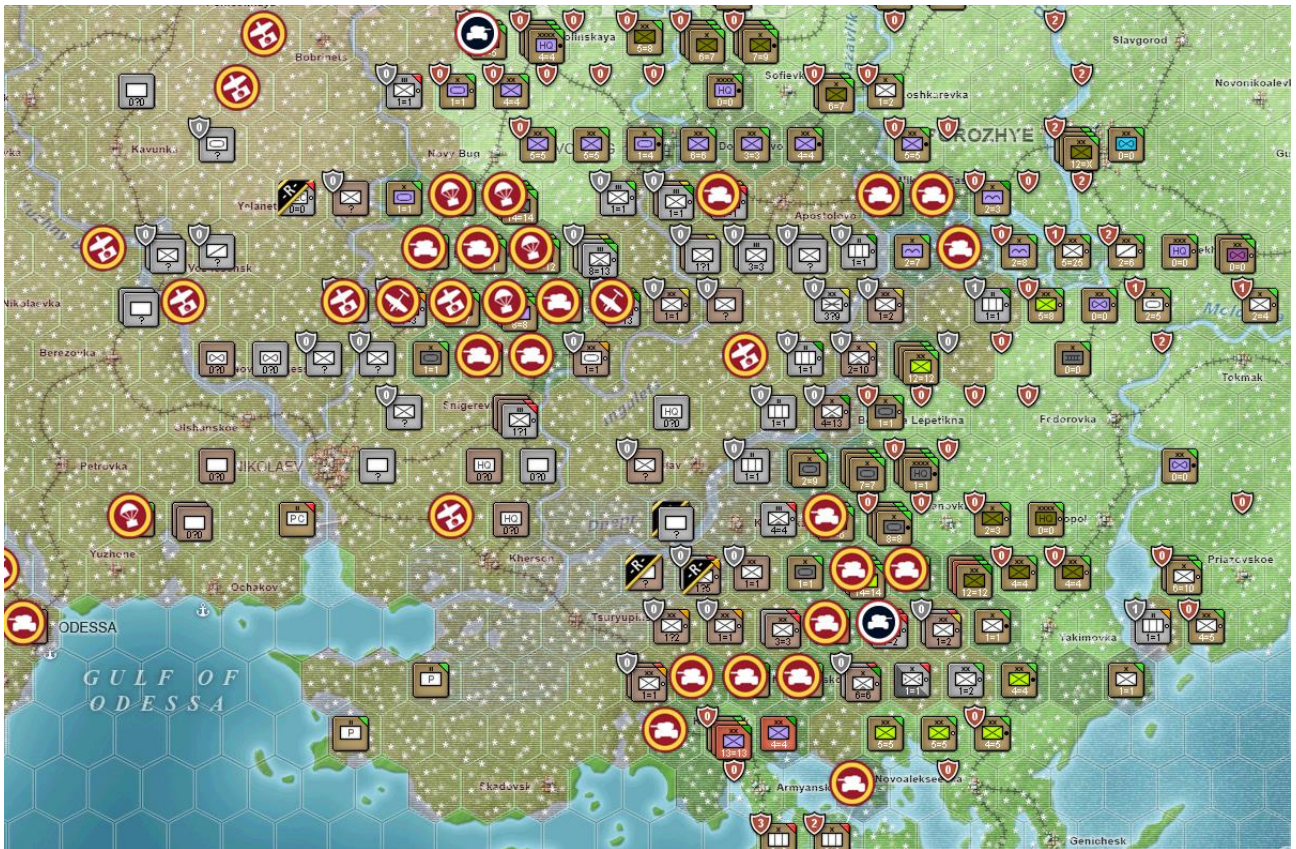
As it turned out, there was a Rumanian infantry division resting in Odessa that my intensive scouting missions had failed to spot. As a result, the amphibious landing this turn was a failure. To follow up next turn with a landing outside Odessa, I have moved a cavalry division into position for such an attack, and boarded it on my naval transports. I played this one very poorly, as I could simply have set the unit ashore next to Odessa and achieved the same result.

Other than that, my attacks were mainly successful in this area. At Krivoi Rog, I am now only three or four hexes from the sea, and I have the option of landing units here next turn if need be. I have also flown in as much supplies to the Cavalry corps in the wedge as I can. Most of the infantry and cavalry in the attack wedge now have 100% or more in supplies and ammunition.

North of Crimea, I have encircled another four German infantry divisions and assorted minor units. Those units are probably not going to be able to break out, and will most likely be lost over the next few turns.

Finally, I have built three Rail repair brigades for the Southern Front this turn.

The “reports map” of the area can be seen below.



Below is a snapshot of the situation without the reports, as I give the turn to Hermann.



Conclusion

Another bad turn for the Axis. I have encircled another four German infantry divisions and the entire ArmyGroup South looks to be in dire peril. Moreover, the Red Army is now 2.5 million men stronger than the combined Axis forces.

The coming of February may bring some relief to the Axis forces, and if they can prevent the encircling of Army Group South, or at least delay it for some turns, they may still be able to pull off some local success. That probably depends on whether I am able to launch an effective amphibious assault next turn and cut their supply system to pieces.

I have about 400 Admin points waiting for the time when I can start creating Tank Corps.

Below an image of the losses during the Soviet turn.

AXIS LOSSES			
Men	8	20206	1460092
Guns	1	304	23283
AFV	0	7	3582
SP & AC	0	1	1117
Men Killed	8	2895	397879
Men Captured	0	14566	404466
Men Disabled	0	2745	657747
Men Returned			55705
SOVIET LOSSES			
Men	0	8539	3223673
Guns	0	43	32508
AFV	0	85	15683
SP & AC	0	22	4120
Men Killed	0	6263	755010
Men Captured	0	0	1102877
Men Disabled	0	2276	1365786
Men Returned			104400