

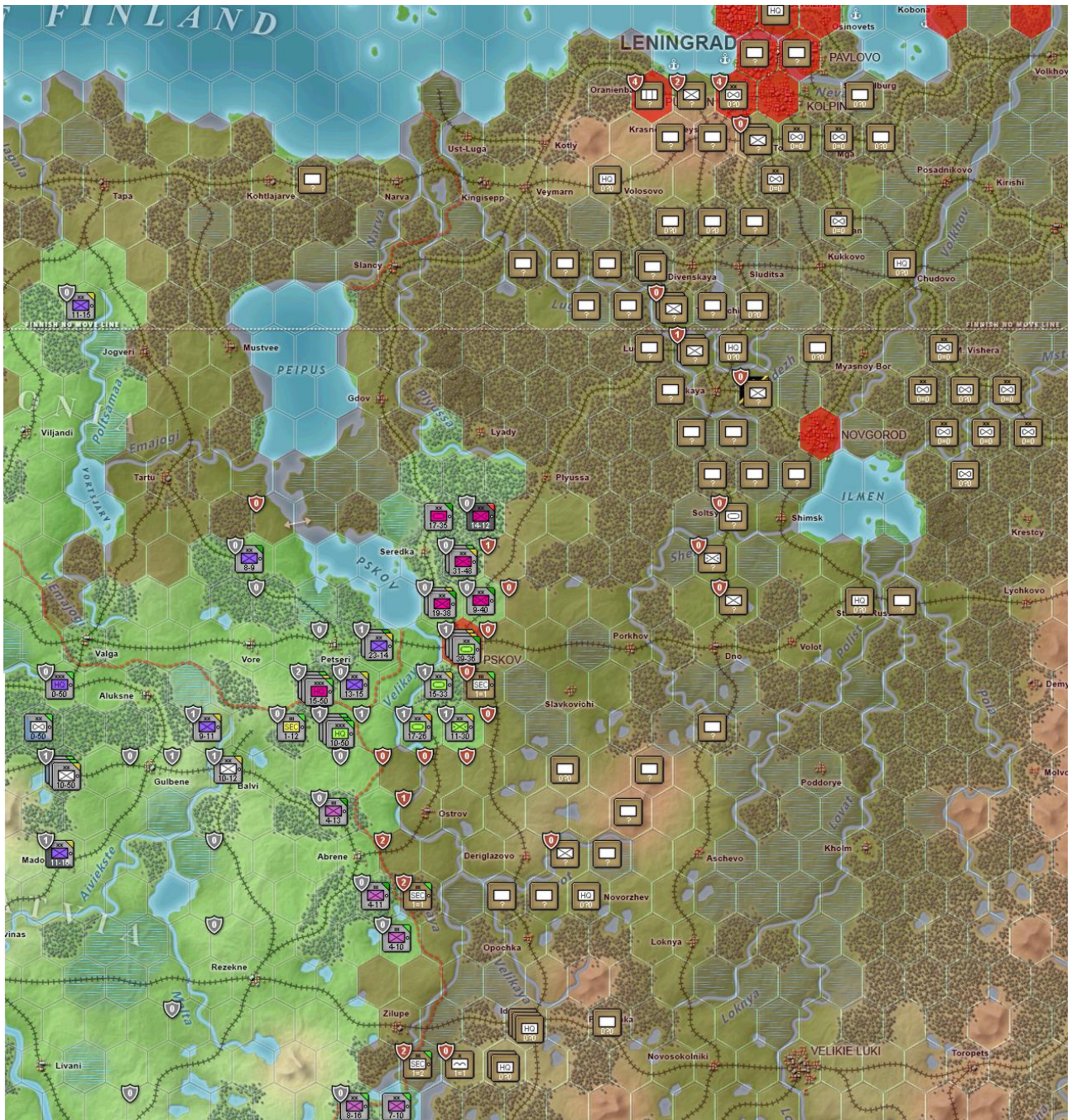
### **Turn 5, Strategic considerations**

The Soviets have run in both the north and the south this turn, making a stand only in the center. That is much as expected, although I would obviously have preferred them to fight where they stood.

On the ground, it seems I have done something right last turn, and most of my Panzers now have good movement point allotments. The magic seems to be utilizing the Corps HQ to draw supplies, requiring the receiving unit to be within five hexes of said HQ.

In the air, the Soviets are still bombing my fighters in Vilnius, but this time for a lot more modest results, and it seems the city defensive modifier prevents a lot of damage to my fighters (only lost a total of five to airfield bombings in Vilnius this turn to 15 last turn). Unfortunately, my own two engine fighters seem reluctant to fly interception. They are plenty in numbers (70+), close by, fully rested, set to fly day & night and under the same command, but still only three and four flew against the Soviet bombers.

## The North



### *Situational Assessment*

In the north, the Soviets are pulling hastily back towards the Luga river. Several of their divisions have not yet made it to the river itself, but at least some of the direct route to Leningrad is covered by stacks of at least two units. I expect those units to have CV's in the vicinity of two to four.

In Pskov I have nine mobile divisions with 30+ MP each and also a number of I Corps infantry that will be able to reach the Luga this turn, but will be unable to take any active part in the fighting. Last turn, I began moving pioneers to I Corps in expectation of a fight for Leningrad.

Southwest of Lake Ilmen, I can see a Motorized division and a Tank division still being pulled towards Leningrad and stretching south from Lake Ilmen is a thin line of Soviet units.

Behind the Soviet lines are quite a few airfields with various aircraft on them, but only one with Recon aircraft (11 SB-2 Rcn's).

In Leningrad itself, there is still eight Heavy Industry and eight Armament Factories.

### Planning

Given the weak Soviet lines south of Lake Ilmen, I will attack directly east from Pskov, hoping to force my way south past Lake Ilmen. The purpose of such an attack is twofold:

- First, over the next turns I can strike north or northeast to cut the rail lines supplying Leningrad, thus stretching the Soviet supply lines dramatically.
- Second, I will be able to use the area southeast of Lake Ilmen as starting point for an offensive directed southeast at Moscow.

While the Panzers strike east, I will still attack move directly towards Leningrad with the forces of I Corps. These forces will be strengthened over the coming turns and can hopefully put some pressure on the Soviets sooner rather than later.

### Execution

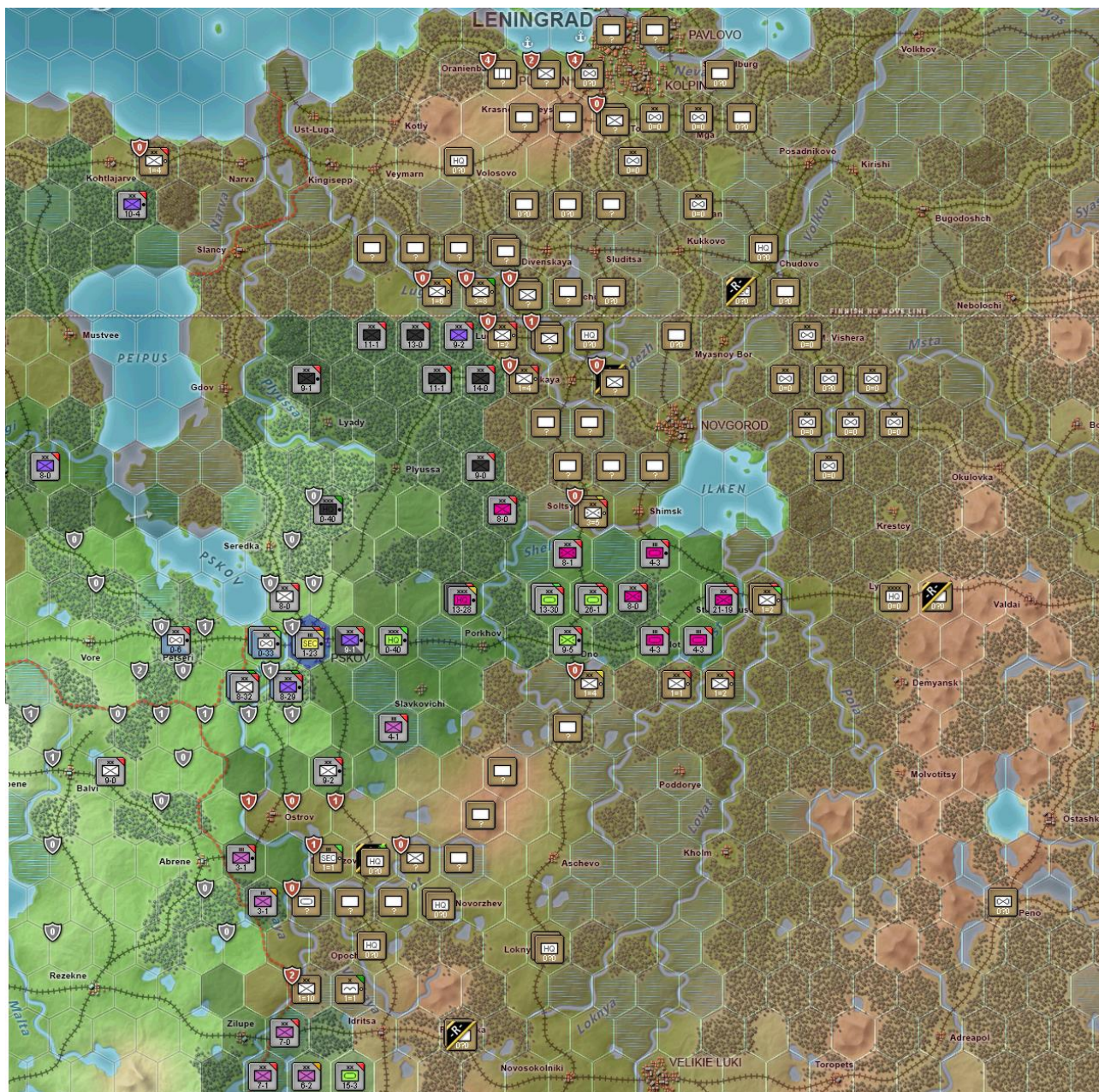
I can safely say that the attack south of Lake Ilmen went horribly wrong. The Soviet defenders tripled their defensive CV on almost every attack that I did, and I ended up spending most of my precious movement points on failed attacks. Attacks like the following felt like the norm rather than the exception.

|                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Axis Forces Attacking (H):<br><br>LVI Panzer Corps<br>3rd Motorized Division (45)<br><br>I Fliegerkorps<br>13 Bf 109E-3<br>35 Bf 109F-2<br>12 Ju 87B | 1 of 5 > 82,29 - Clear - Clear Turn: 5 1941-07-17                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | Soviet Forces Defending:<br><br>31st Army<br>250th Rifle Division (9)<br>435th Crps Art Rgt (1)<br>394th Crps Art Rgt (1)<br>101st Sapper Regiment (1)<br><br>3 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun<br>3 -> 85mm Anti-aircraft Gun |
|                                                                                                                                                      | Forces Engaged<br><br>ATK: men 13761, art 173, afv 8<br>DAM: men 10, art 1, afv 0<br>LOST: men 8, art 0, afv 0<br>ATK: flr 48, bmr 12, utl 0<br>LOST: flr 0, bmr 1, utl 0<br><br>DEF: men 15115, art 158, afv 2<br>DAM: men 69, art 1, afv 0<br>LOST: men 431, art 3, afv 0<br>DEF: flr 0, bmr 0, utl 0<br>LOST: flr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                      | Defending Forces HELD<br><br>Show Details Odds 1.81 : 1 Exit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| CV: 45->51.8 Eng Val: 0<br>Comm HQ: LVI Panzer Corps<br>G Erich von Manstein                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  | CV: 12->28.5 Fort: 0.00->0.00<br>Comm HQ: 31st Army<br>GL Nikolai Vatutin                                                                                                                                                |

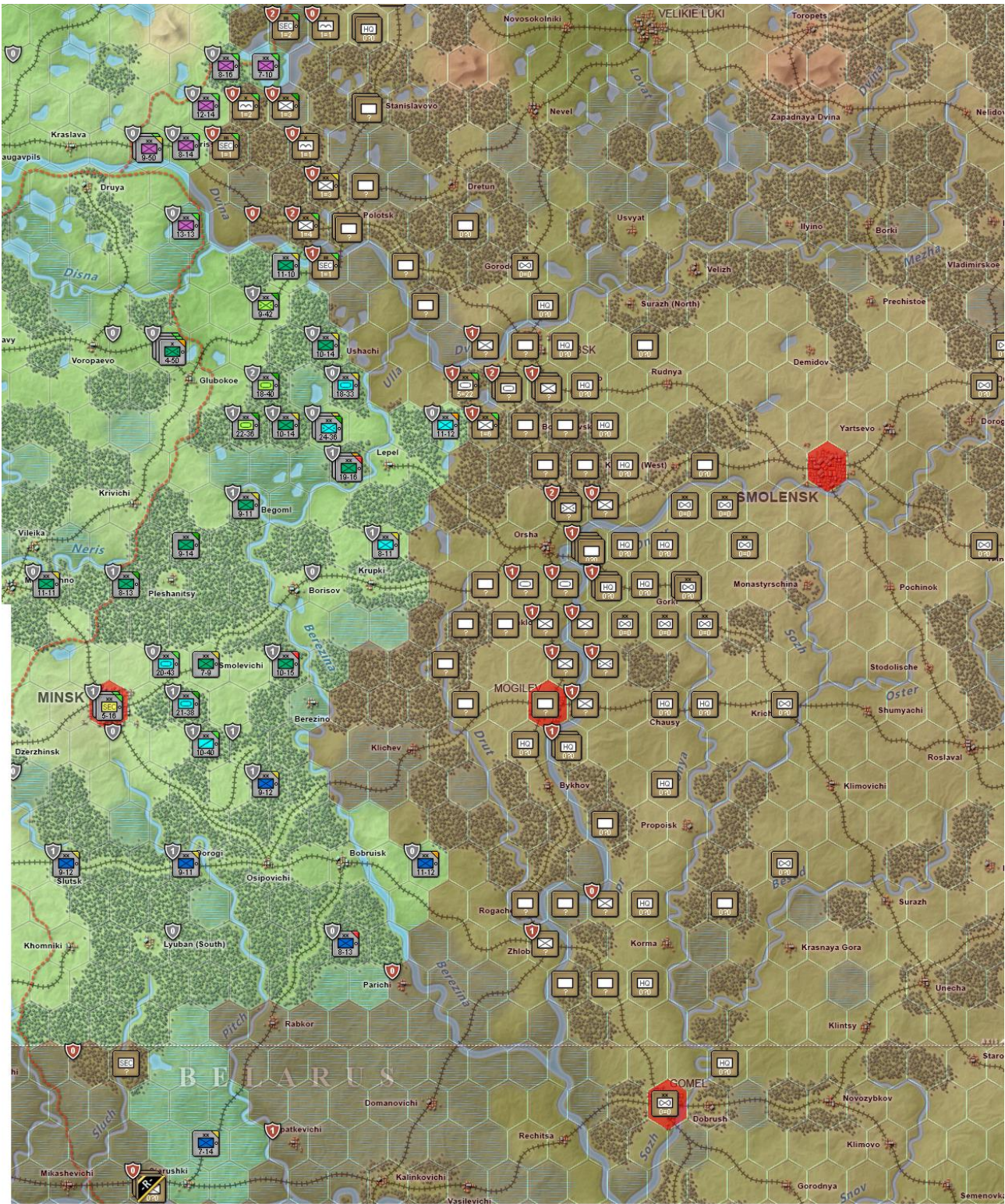
The result was that my attack ended up very short of its intended target areas and in a poor position for receiving supplies and fuel next turn. The lesson seems to be that hasty attacks are no longer viable if the Soviets are beginning to get their defensive setup properly managed.

As I have begun issuing pioneers and heavy equipment to one of the Corps in the north, I have given it a black color, to signify that this corps is made for attacking fortified positions.

Below is an image of the situation at Pskov, as I give the turn to Dontra.



The Center



### *Situational assessment*

In the center, my supply situation has also improved dramatically. The Soviets are present in force south of Vitebsk and along the Dnepr. Along the Dvina, their lines seem somewhat thinner.

My rail repair units approaching from the west are getting close to Kraslava at the northwestern edge of the image above, and I need to clear hexes for future rail advances in this area.

Behind the Soviet lines, the Red Army aviation has not moved, although it seems to me that the numbers of aircraft in the local airgroups are dwindling slowly. For instance there is now only 28 Recons present in the Air Groups having this type of aircraft.

### *Planning*

This turn, I will attack to cross the Dvina and hopefully swing north around Vitebsk, if possible ending my movement in the rear of the Soviet forces south of Vitebsk. With luck, I might even be able to encircle some of the Tank and Motorized divisions here by using the Panzer Corps moving up from Minsk to do a few limited attacks. Obviously, the whole plan hinges on my ability to get the Panzers across the Dvina without having to pay the 18MP cost for crossing the river into an EZOC.

At the northern end of the Pripyat Marshes stands a broken Soviet Tank division. I will need to move the local infantry in such a way, that its eventual capture and destruction becomes a certainty.

In the air, I will focus my airforces entirely on supporting the ground attacks this turn, as the potential gains certainly warrants giving the local Soviet airforces a breather.

This turn, I have received a bunch of new LW Flak Battalions as reinforcements to the OKH. I will install two of these in the V Fliegerkorps in Vilnius, so that the Soviet bomber attacks on the city can be met with even more resistance.

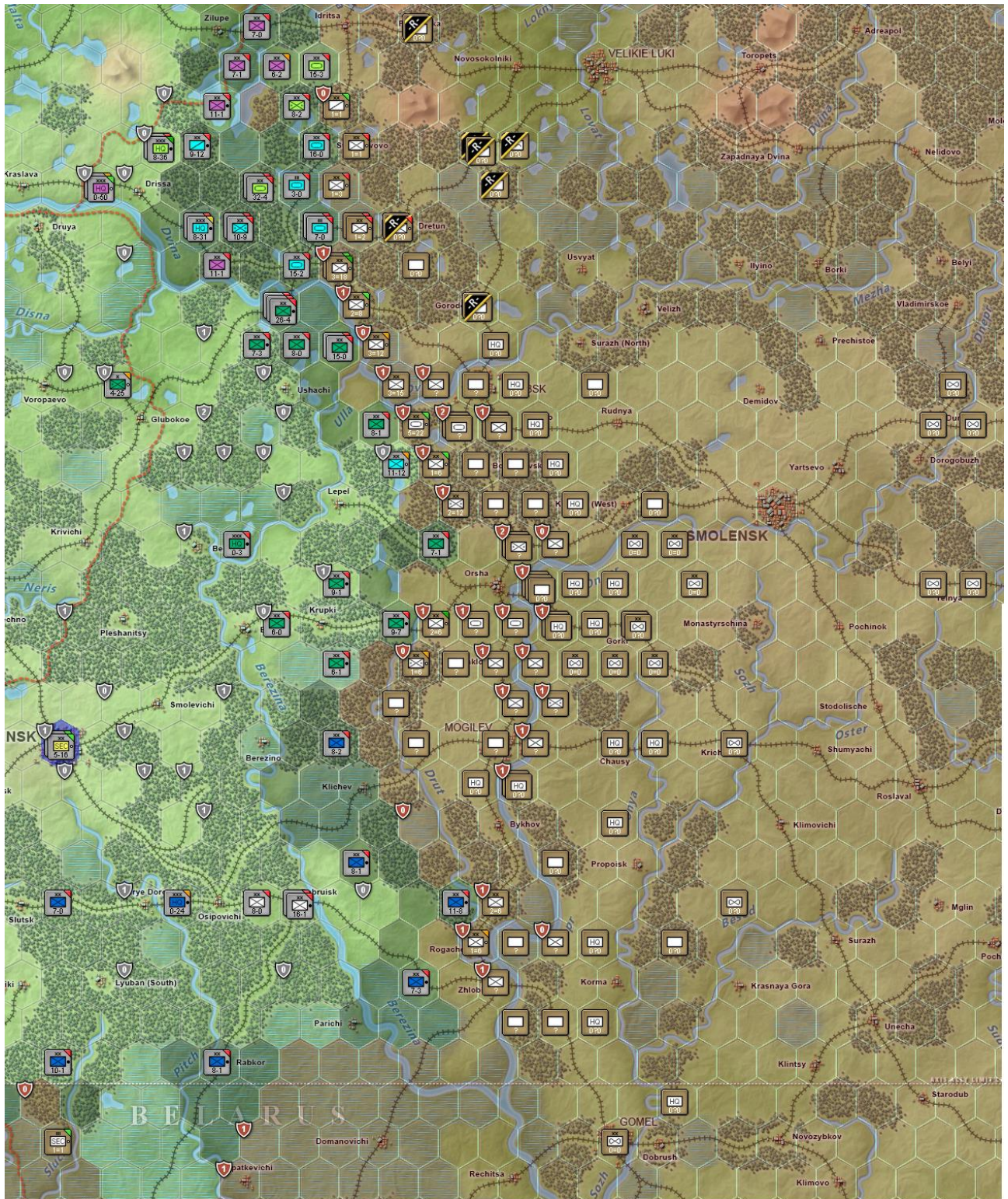
### *Execution*

The Soviet defences on the Dvina river turned out to be heavy stacks of 12 and 18 CV making my planned crossings all but impossible. As a result I altered my plans, going instead for bringing my Panzers north of the river and setting up for a renewed attack come next turn. Doing this, I did do a few attacks in order to dislodge the Soviets from their positions. I had the opportunity to encircle one Rifle division and two Airborne brigades but decided against it as I want to maximize my MP next turn.

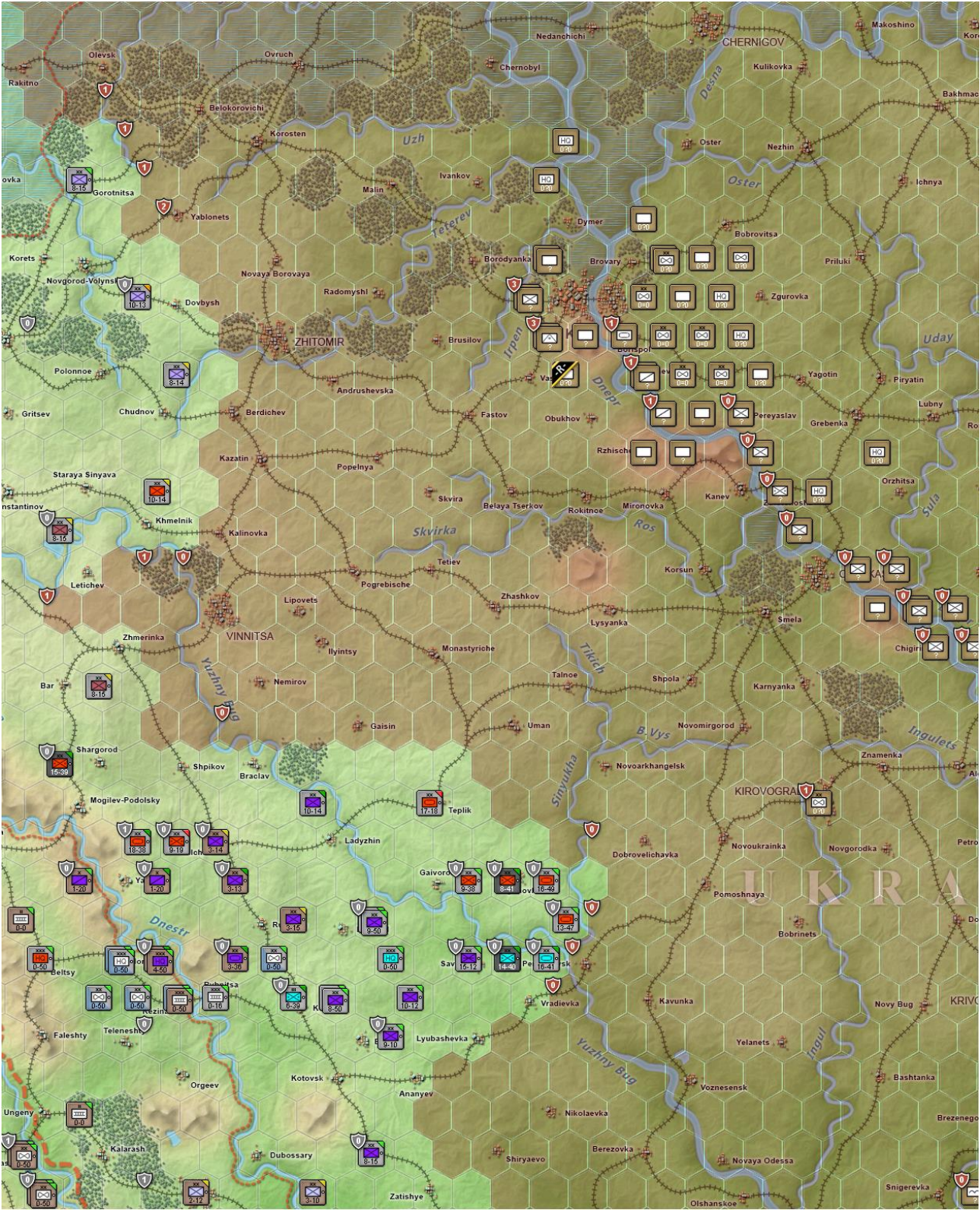
While this succeeded, my attacks just continued to fail over and over again at times where I simply think they ought to have succeeded. At this point of the war, I would say that a German attack with more than a 2:1 CV advantage would normally succeed (about two times out of three or so) while in fact they failed about three times out of four, it seemed. The result was a waste of movement points I would have liked to keep for future turns, and a progress that was nowhere near enough.

All in all, this turn has been very disappointing in the center, as I have failed to break out of the woodlands northwest of Vitebsk. Come next turn, I expect to find some heavy stacks of Soviet infantry standing in the way of further advances.

Below is an image of the center, as I give the turn to Dontra.



The South



### *Situational Assessment*

In the south, the Soviets have pulled back across the Dnepr. There are virtually no Soviet forces standing in front of the German Panzers, and advancing will be easy. At Rovno, the Soviet divisions are still encircled and the Lvov pockets are nearing their ends.

In the air, I spy an airfield with six tactical bomber airgroups just outside Kiev

### *Planning*

My Panzers in the south will be attacking in the direction of Kirovograd and Kremenchug this turn. While I wish to give the impression I am planning an assault on Dnepropetrovsk, I would much prefer to cross the Dnepr between Cherkassy and Kremenchug and strike on towards Poltava and Kharkov. This turn will be spent preparing for such a move.

As part of the move, I will check to see if I can motorize a couple of infantry divisions and move them forward towards the river, while also issuing them with pioneer battalions to help in the crossing come next turn.

At Rovno, I plan to destroy as many of the encircled divisions I can this turn.

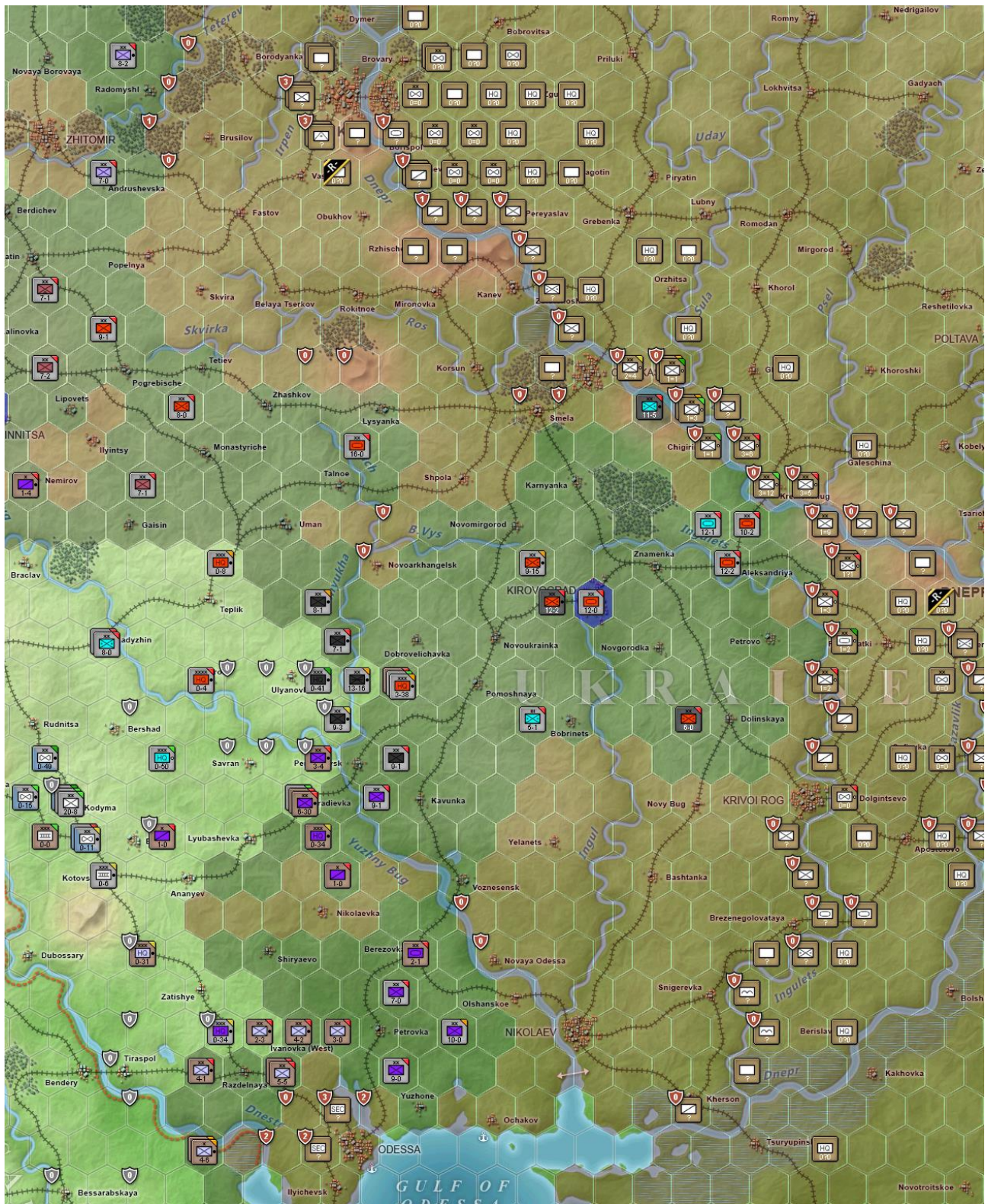
In the air, I will be attacking the airfield with the tactical bombers and possibly a few others. I will not be doing anything fancy though.

### *Execution*

Once again, my lack of experience has come around to thwart my plans for the turn. I began the turn by moving some forward Panzers up to the Dnepr, in order to have an area for building up my attack to cross the river. I then Motorized the closest infantry unit to move it through the pending friendly terrain up to the river (in order to be able to attack next turn). As it turned out however, a motorized unit cannot enter pending friendly terrain, which is not one of the restrictions mentioned in the manual. That wasted some 28 Admin points as well as making the foremost infantry less able to close with the front than it should have been. The result is that it will be at least another turn before I can begin attacking across the Dnepr with my infantry.

By moving past Zhitomir and Kirovograd, it seems the Soviets have left defenders in both cities. As Kirovograd was dead center in my direction of advance, I decided to remove the Tank division present here instead of risking some movement to restrict my flow of supplies.

Below is an image of the situation in the south, as I give the turn to Dontra.



## **Conclusion**

This has been another disastrous turn for the Germans in my belief. In all three main theaters, my plans have failed. I can only hope that the lessons I continue to learn will be learned in time to affect the further progress of the game.

In the air, I continue to suffer fighter losses. This turn, during the Axis phase, I have lost 23 fighter aircraft, which is quite a lot more than I have produced. Combined with the losses from the Soviet phase, my fighter strength is steadily waning. At this rate, I will be down by another 200 or so fighter aircraft before the winter.