



When Intelligence Made a Difference

<<< WORLD WAR II >>>

The Untold Story of Patton at Bastogne

by David T. Zabecki

The Battle of the Bulge was the last major battle on the Western Front of World War II. In the following article by MG. David Zabecki he describes how LTG George Patton surmised that the Germans were planning a major offensive against Allied forces to his north. Added to Zabecki's article are sidebars related to his use of ULTRA SIGINT, which adds detail to how Patton perceived the strategic situation and planned ahead to counter the German offensive.

Excellent intelligence and superb staff work produced a feat of generalship even more amazing than Hollywood's version.

It is one of the most iconic scenes of all the Great War movies. LTG. George S. Patton Jr., played by Oscar-winning actor George C. Scott, is at his U.S. Third Army headquarters somewhere near the German border on the night of December 18, 1944, when he receives a phone call from 12th Army Group commander LTG Omar Bradley.

"Brad, I've got a bridgehead across the Saar. I'm on my way into Germany."

"Wait a minute George, there's a lot of trouble up north."

Bradley orders Patton to transfer his 10th Armored Division to the First Army's VIII Corps and tells him,

"Ike wants us to meet with Bedell Smith tomorrow at Verdun. Be there at ten."

Patton reluctantly agrees, and after hanging up he says, more to himself than to anyone else,

"There is absolutely no reason for us to assume the Germans are mounting a major offensive." After listing the logical arguments against such a course of action, he concludes, "Therefore, I believe that's exactly what they are going to do."

Assembling his entire staff, Patton tells them to start making contingency plans to halt the Third Army's eastward attack, pivot ninety degrees, and then attack north into Luxembourg. The following day, December 19, Patton attends the meeting at Verdun chaired by Eisenhower's chief of staff, LTG Walter Bedell Smith. An intelligence officer gives a briefing on the general situation. Patton then stuns all in the room by announcing,

"I can attack with three divisions in forty-eight hours."

An incredulous Bradley can only respond,

"Well, I'd give myself some leeway if I were you."

This is great cinema, one of Hollywood's shining moments. Unfortunately, it is not very good history—and it is even worse military reality. As any second lieutenant preparing his first platoon movement knows all too well, military operations are hardly that simple, and the larger the unit, the more complicated and time-consuming the planning. Moreover, there is no more complex or risk-laden battlefield maneuver than a ninety-degree turn and movement across and perpendicular to one's own lines of communication.

But Patton really did outthink the Germans, with a sophistication whose reality was far more amazing than a mere flash of Hollywood-style inspiration could capture. In fact, so thorough was Patton's reading of intelligence that a full week before his December 18 meeting with Bradley, he had ordered his staff to begin preparing contingency plans in case the Germans launched an offensive in exactly the sector where they ultimately did attack. A close examination of what his superbly trained staff was able to pull off once the decision was made to pivot the Third Army reveals a tour de force of military planning and movement—even if it almost certainly took longer than the twenty-four hours the movie would have us believe. Patton had been methodically accumulating evidence since early November 1944 that raised suspicions in his mind that the Germans were up to something to the north, opposite the U.S. First Army. In the wake of a failed attack by the First Army on November 8 against the town of Schmidt in the Hürtgen Forest, the Germans had remained strangely quiet across the entire sector to the north of the Third Army's left flank. The First

The Strategic Situation

With the capture of Paris and the Allied advance across northern France “Allied hopes were high in the late summer and autumn of 1944.” In the Fall, the Allied advanced stalled. In the north Operation Market Garden had failed in Holland to capture Rhine river bridges. To the south Patton’s armor had outrun its logistics. In September Allied forces were engaged around Aachen, just over the German border, and the Hürtgen Forest, northeast of Luxembourg. But much of the Western Front was relatively quiet. The prevailing Allied conclusion was that the Wehrmacht was largely defeated, but Hitler was using the lull to reequip and reinforce the West Wall. His offensive was planned for 12 December, but postponed four days due to weather. “[F]ew Allied commanders seriously feared that the Germans were capable of mounting any major attack.” Hitler imposed a radio ban on German forces prior to the Ardennes offensive, which “cancelled out ULTRA” upon which Allied leaders had become dependent. The radio silence ought to have been a “warning that something was afoot.” One exception to the optimistic conclusion about the German forces was LTG Patton. “Intelligence reports continued to hint at an alarming German buildup east of the Ardennes forest in Luxembourg. A new Sixth Panzer Army was identified in SIGINT and POWs indicated that a big attack was scheduled the week before Christmas. Aerial reconnaissance indicated a buildup of German forces opposite VIII Corps within First Army, to the north of Patton’s Third Army. On Saturday, 16 December, “all hell broke loose” along an 80-mile front. It was largely a surprise to Allied forces.

[Michael D. Hull. “The Allies’ Near-Catastrophic Intelligence Failure,” Warfare History Network, October 2021; and Dr. Harold C. Deutsch. “The Influence of ULTRA on World War II,” Parameters, Journal of the US Army War College, 1978.]

Army’s VIII Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Troy Middleton, seemed content to take advantage of the lull to rebuild its combat power and rest its forces. Patton, however, was immediately wary of the relative calm. On November 25 he wrote in his diary, “First Army is making a terrible mistake leaving the VIII Corps static, it is highly probable that the Germans are building up east of them.”

Patton was one of the few Allied military commanders who had direct access to Ultra—the decrypts of radio messages encoded with what the Germans believed to be their super-secure Enigma machines—but this intelligence was providing only limited indicators of any major operation. Most Allied commanders and intelligence officers simply believed that the Germans no longer had the capability.

Patton, however, never relied heavily on Ultra. He had his own secret weapon in the person of his intelligence officer, Col. Oscar W. Koch. Despite Patton’s carefully cultivated public image as the hell-for-leather cavalryman, he in fact valued precise and methodical staff work. Patton had handpicked the members of his staff and molded them into a smooth-functioning team that could almost read his mind and anticipate his intent. Koch was one of the stars of that team, and Patton hardly ever made a move without consulting his G-2.

By November 23 Koch had identified a number of German units leaving Westphalia and had also noticed that almost all of the panzer units had vanished from the Third Army’s front. This indicated to him that a major armored force was being assembled somewhere. The Third Army Daily G-2 Report for that day concluded: “This powerful striking force, with an estimated 500 tanks, is still an untouched strategic reserve held for future employment.”

By December 9 the Third Army was completely engaged in planning and preparations to launch a major offensive in ten days’ time to break through the West Wall and drive to the Rhine. The objective was Frankfurt, by way of Kaiserslautern. The Third Army was already starting to displace its command post from Nancy forward to St. Avold, and the troops of the attacking units were moving into their assembly areas.

But that same day Koch conducted a special briefing for Patton and started to connect the dots. He laid out the following facts:

- By the end of October four panzer divisions had been identified refitting near Paderborn, far north of the Third Army’s left boundary.

- By November 10 the Germans had pulled five more panzer divisions out of the line.
- Of the fifteen panzer divisions in the west, only five remained in contact in mid-November.
- Starting November 17, aerial reconnaissance detected huge German rail movements to the north of the Third Army's projected zone of advance—226 trains on November 18 alone.
- By November 23 Koch had identified the newly established Sixth Panzer Army, including five of its reconstituted panzer divisions.
- On December 2 the U.S. Seventh Army, to the south of Third Army, reported that the formidable Panzer Lehr Division was out of the line.
- By December 7 the Germans were holding at least thirteen divisions in reserve.

Koch also told Patton that he had identified nine German divisions opposite VIII Corps. That was almost three divisions more than were facing the entire Third Army, and almost four more than were facing Seventh Army. Of all the German divisions facing First Army, all but one were in front of VIII Corps. Patton decided to continue the preparations to launch his Saar attack on December 19, but he also alerted his staff to start developing generalized contingency plans to deal with any threat from the north. He wrote in his diary that day, "We'll be in a position to meet whatever happens."

On December 10 Patton's XX and XII Corps forced crossings of the Saar River to secure jumping-off positions for the coming offensive. The following day the Third Army Weekly G-2 Report noted that despite sustaining heavy losses, the Germans were still maintaining a cohesive defense without significant numbers of panzer units in the line: "The massive armored force the enemy has built up in reserve gives him the definite capability of launching a spoiling offensive to disrupt the Allied drive."

Through aggressive tactical air reconnaissance, Koch's analysts succeeded in identifying the contours of two major German assembly areas: one in the north between Düsseldorf and Cologne, west of the Rhine; and the other in the south, in the general area of Gerolstein, north of Trier. All movements into the southern assembly area were being made at night.

ULTRA Support to Commanders

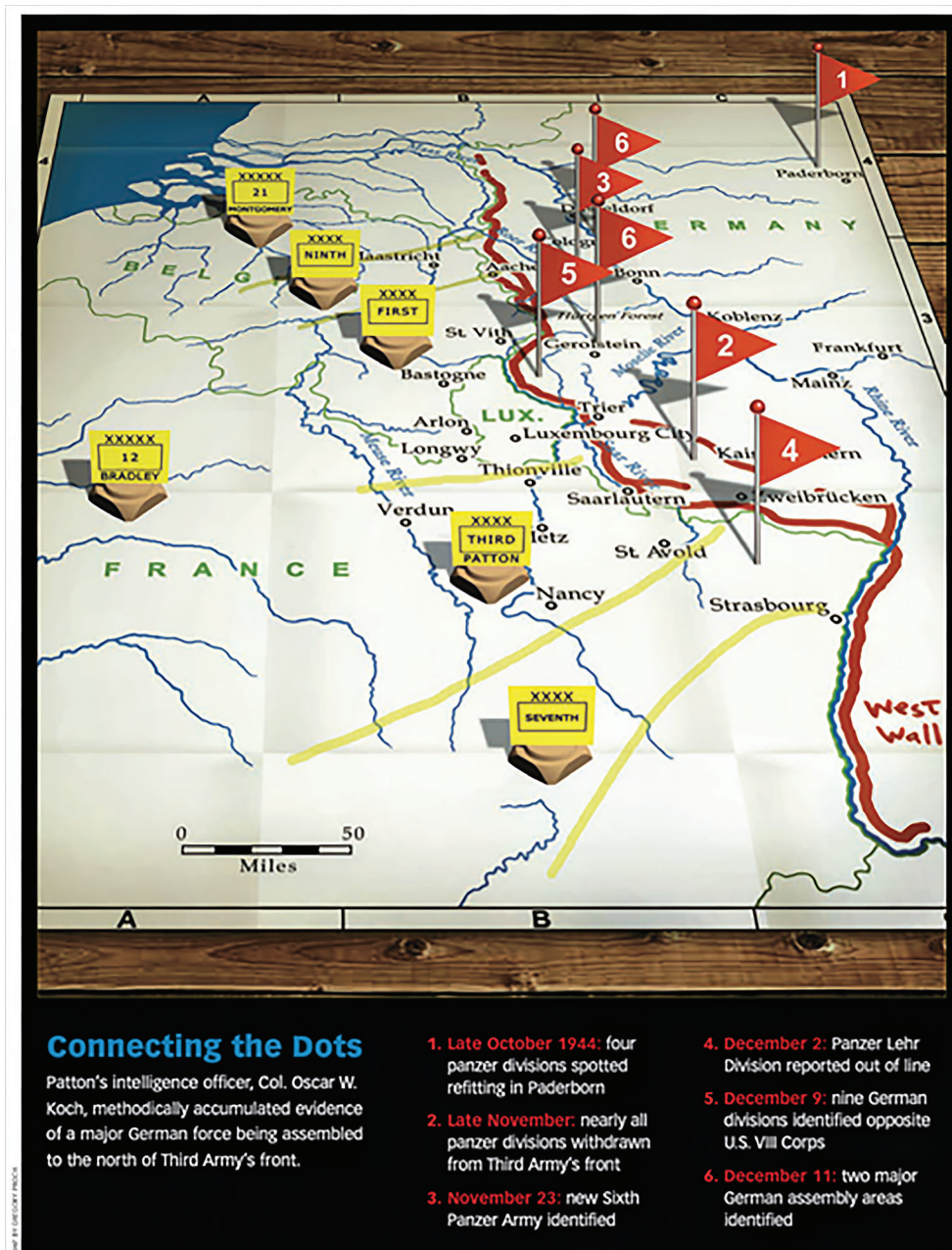
"At each Army Commander's HQ was a Special Liaison Unit (SLU)," supported by a Special Communications Unit (SCU), whose mission was to provide ULTRA and tactical SIGINT with "up-to-date and vital intelligence from Bletchley Park on the movements, status and plans of the German forces facing them." SLUs were part of the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI-6). Patton had daily briefings from his SLU, US Army Major Melvin Helfers, who had been trained at Bletchley Park.

[Geoffrey Pidgeon. "General Patton and his Use of ULTRA," ARRL, *The National Association for Amateur Radio*, 2010. <https://home.arrl.org>.]

An historical examination of Patton's employment of armor, airpower, and intelligence indicates that he masterfully employed the synergy between them. ULTRA intelligence was a key. Then Maj. Gen. Elwood Quesada, commander of the 9th Tactical Air Command in Europe in 1944-45, said of ULTRA intercepts:

"They were particularly valuable. They would tell us where certain units were. They would tell us where they might be going. They would tell us in one way or the other what the state of their alert was. They would often tell us what the effect of certain actions of ours was on them... It wasn't uncommon for us to get a verbatim copy of a message... that was sent to the German field commanders, Army Group commanders as an example, and from Hitler... and we would get the message before the field commander got it... It was a very helpful thing."

[Bradford J. Shwedo, Maj. USAF. "XIX Tactical Air Command and ULTRA: Patton's Force Enhancers in the 1944 Campaign in France," *CADRE Paper No. 10*, Air University Press, May 2001.]



Courtesy of Charles M. Province

Patton met on December 12 with senior American air commanders to plan a massive three-day aerial preparation scheduled to start December 19 along the Zweibrücken–Kaiserslautern line that would be followed by an all-out ground assault by XII Corps. At that point, however, Patton was starting to get very concerned about a possible German attack in the First Army's area. That day Patton instructed his chief of staff, Brig. Gen. Hobart Gay, and his operations officer, Col. Halley G. Maddox, to draw up specific contingency plans for a Third Army counterattack in case of a major German penetration into VIII Corps. On December 14 the Third Army G-2 Periodic Report noted: "It is evident from the determined hoarding

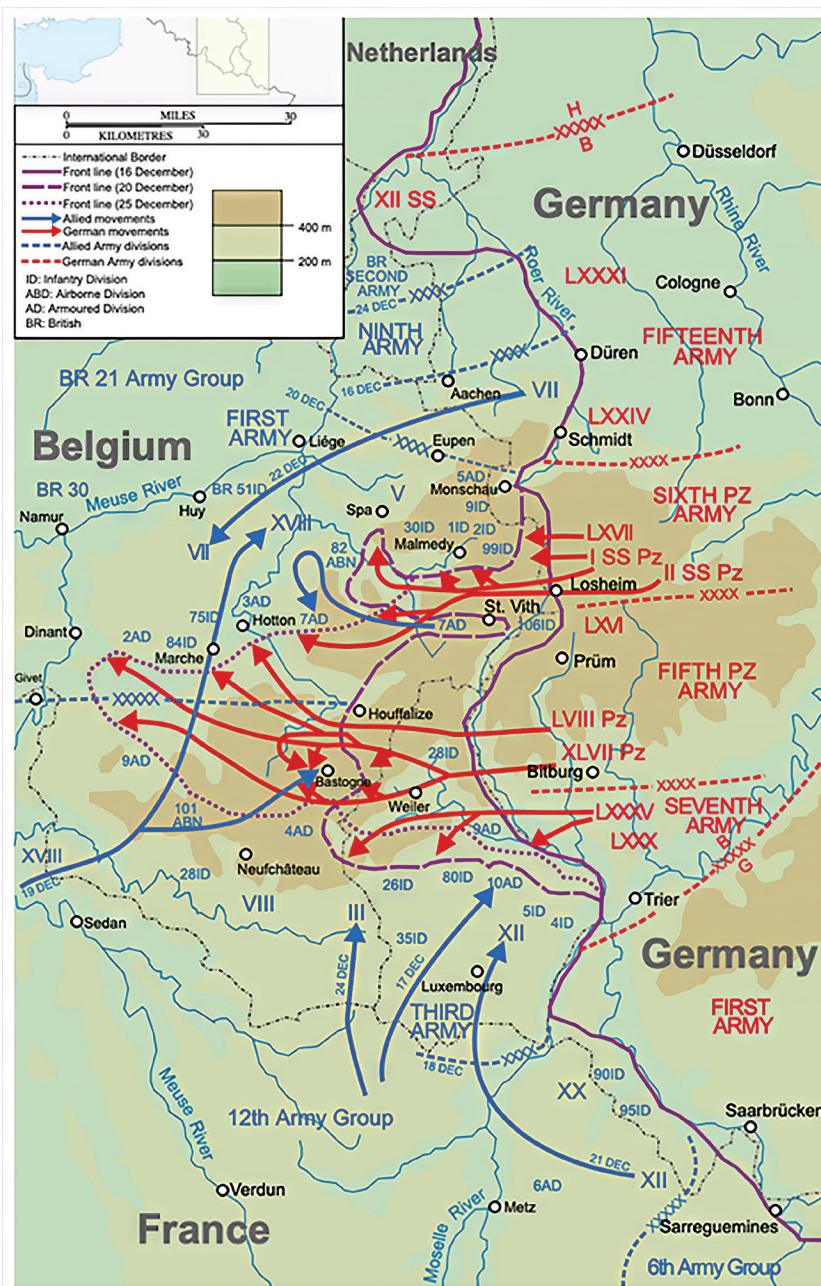
of Sixth Panzer Army units that the enemy is making every effort to employ this armor in a coordinated effort. He is already bending over backward to avoid piecemeal commitment."

The next day the Germans went on radio silence across the front. Patton reemphasized to his staff that VIII Corps inactivity was inviting a German attack. Patton refined his guidance further by telling Gay and Maddox: "I want you, gentlemen, to start making plans for pulling the Third Army out of its eastward attack, change the direction ninety degrees, moving to Luxembourg and attacking north."

Despite the initial reports of heavy enemy activity in the north that started to trickle in on December 16, Patton's XII Corps began to place the 80th Infantry



Eisenhower, Bradley & Patton - Britannica



Wikipedia Commons

Division and 4th Armored Division into line in preparation for the Saar offensive. But in response to increasing German resistance, Patton postponed the Zweibrücken aerial preparation to December 21. Nonetheless, Patton ordered the Third Army command post to displace forward to St. Avold on December 19.

Bradley, meanwhile, drove to Eisenhower's headquarters at Versailles. Bradley initially dismissed the reports of German activity as a spoiling attack designed to disrupt the Third Army's offensive. Watching the indicators develop on the map, Eisenhower responded, "That's no spoiling attack."

By evening the Germans had pushed a huge salient into VIII Corps' sector, and Bradley was starting to worry. He called Patton and told him to send the 10th Armored Division from Maj. Gen. Walton Walker's XX Corps north to help Middleton. Patton initially objected to weakening his own attack. Without the 10th, Third Army would not be able to exploit the breakthrough at Saarlautern. Nonetheless, Patton had the 10th moving within an hour. He later wrote in his diary, "Bradley admitted my logic but took counsel of his fears and ordered the move." But he then added a qualification: "He probably knows more of the situation than he can say over the telephone."

Still fiercely committed to his own Saar offensive, Patton feared that Bradley would take away more of his forces. He ordered XII Corps commander Maj. Gen. Manton Eddy to get the 4th Armored Division so heavily engaged that it would be impossible to pull them out of the line. Patton later conceded: "The fact that I did this shows how little I appreciated the seriousness of the enemy attack on that date."

At the Third Army's morning briefing on December 17, Koch reported that the Germans were continuing their attack against VIII Corps, but also appeared to be moving into the area of Third Army's XX Corps. Patton responded, "One of these is a feint, one is the real thing.

The more I think of it, though, the more I become convinced that the thing in the north is the real McCoy." Col. Maddox recommended to Patton that Third Army's best course of action was not a ninety-degree turn and attack north, but a thrust eastward deep into the German rear to cut German lines of communication and trap the bulk of the German forces west of the Rhine. He argued: "The Germans will have to commit all their reserves to maintain this drive. That means that they can't reinforce against us or the Seventh Army. If they will roll with the punch up north, we can pinwheel the enemy before he gets very far. In

a week we could expose the whole German rear and trap their main forces west of the Rhine.”

Patton agreed with Maddox, but he also noted, “That isn’t the way those gentlemen up north fight. They aren’t made that way. That’s too daring for them. My guess is that our offensive will be called off and we will have to go up there and save their hides.” Patton issued a warning order to the commander of the recently arrived III Corps, Maj. Gen. John Millikin, telling him to get up north and get familiar with the ground. Eisenhower, meanwhile, was the only other senior Allied commander who clearly saw early on that the Allies could turn the German attack to their own advantage. In a letter that day to LTG. Brehon B. Somervell, the head of The Army Service Forces that oversaw logistics, Eisenhower wrote, “The enemy launched a rather ambitious counterattack out of the Luxembourg area....If things go well we should not only stop the thrust but should be able to profit from it.”

Meanwhile, Eisenhower’s assistant operations officer, the British major-general John Whitely, recommended to Bedell Smith that Bastogne, the hub of seven spokes in the southern Ardennes road net, be made the pivot of the Allied defense in the south. Almost simultaneously, Middleton chose Bastogne as the center of the VIII Corps defense. That evening Eisenhower committed his only reserve, moving the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions from Reims toward Bastogne, with the 101st ordered to hold Bastogne at all costs.

By December 18 Eisenhower saw the situation clearly. He told his two American army group commanders, Bradley and LTG Jacob Devers, “My intention is to take immediate action to check the enemy advance; to launch a counteroffensive without delay with all forces north of the Moselle.”

That meant a counterattack into the southern flank of what was becoming known as the Bulge. Eisenhower also wanted to attack from the north, but he understood that the immediate task was to contain the German main effort. Eisenhower instructed Bradley, Devers, and Patton to meet him the next day in Verdun. Bradley was already thinking along the same lines. He had called Patton at 10:30 a.m. on the eighteenth, telling him to come to Luxembourg immediately and to bring the Third Army’s intelligence, operations, and logistics officers with

him. Patton and his staff left within ten minutes of receiving the call. The meeting started off with Bradley’s intelligence officer identifying seven panzer and seven infantry divisions that had been committed to the attack. Patton later admitted that he was surprised at the size and extent of the German gains. Bradley expected Patton to explode when he suggested that the rest of Third Army might have to follow the 10th Armored Division north. Patton, however, had already reached the conclusion that he had to halt his own



Patton’s counterattack at the Bulge would have been impossible without exacting and detailed staff work, performed at near-lightning speed. But throughout the war, Patton’s staff generally got low marks outside the Third Army. Bradley once wrote, “Until the Battle of the Bulge, I did not share George’s enthusiasm for his Third Army staff, which unlike those of the First and Ninth Armies, lacked outstanding individual performers.”

The Bulge decisively showed just how wrong Bradley was. Among the stars of his staff:

1. **Brig. Gen. Hobart Gay**, chief of staff, began on December 12 to draw up contingency plans for a Third Army counterattack.
2. **Col. Halley G. Maddox**, operations officer, shifted the entire army from a three-corps front running north-south to a four-corps battle line running in two directions—east-west facing the Ardennes, and north-south facing into Germany.
3. **Col. Walter J. Muller**, logistics officer, completely reconfigured the supply system with dozens of new depots and dumps, shifting 63,000 tons of supplies in 120 hours.
4. **Col. Oscar W. Koch**, intelligence officer, spotted signs of an impending offensive and pieced together a more precise German order of battle than Eisenhower’s staff had.

attack and respond to the worsening threat on his left. Patton responded that he was prepared to send three divisions to the north, all under the command of III Corps: the 4th Armored, the 80th Infantry, and the 26th Infantry.

As soon as he left the meeting with Bradley, Patton telephoned Gay and told him to stop the 4th Armored and 80th Infantry divisions in their tracks and start preparing to turn northward. Patton also alerted Millikin to be prepared to assume command of the attack, and he told air force commanders that the Zweibrücken aerial blitz would have to be put on indefinite hold. Gay, meanwhile, called Millikin and asked him to come to Third Army headquarters with his staff and to be prepared to spend the night.

At 8:15 p.m. on December 18, Patton and his principal staff officers met with Millikin and his. Without yet knowing the specific objectives, they agreed on the routes that the two divisions would use for their approach marches to the north. At ten o'clock Bradley telephoned Patton. The situation in the north was deteriorating, and Bradley asked Patton to start moving the divisions into position as soon as possible. They also agreed that the III Corps command post would start moving forward immediately, and that Millikin would meet with Bradley's staff at the 12th Army Group command post at eleven the next morning. Bradley told Patton to meet him and Eisenhower at Verdun at the same hour the next day.

By midnight, one combat command of the 4th Armored Division had started to move north toward Longwy. Throughout the night the Third Army staff worked feverishly on plans to turn the army ninety degrees. At dawn on December 19 the remainder of 4th Armored started moving north and the 80th Infantry started moving toward Luxembourg City.

Though they were helped by truck companies provided by the 12th Army Group, the logistic feats accomplished by the Third Army over the next few days would prove nothing short of phenomenal. By the time they were through, the Third Army's staff had established dozens of new depots and dumps, shifted 63,000 tons of supplies in five days, and moved an average of 4,500 tons of ammunition per day. Hundreds of thousands of new maps, weighing 57 tons in all, were distributed. Some 2,800 miles of road were reconnoitered by transport officers. An entirely new field communications system was set up, requiring 20,000 miles of wire to be strung.

At seven o'clock on the morning of the nineteenth, Patton met with his key commanders, and an hour later with his full staff. Patton at that point

assumed that as the battle progressed the First Army's VIII Corps would come under the operational control of the Third Army. With still limited knowledge of the entire situation and with two of his divisions already in motion, Patton dictated three possible axes of advance for the III Corps counterattack. In order of priority they were:

1. Due north along the line Luxembourg–Diekirch–St. Vith.
2. From the vicinity of Arlon north to Bastogne.
3. Along the axis Neufchâteau–St. Hubert, north against the western nose of the German salient.

After assigning a code name to each axis, Patton left at 9:15 a.m. for the Verdun meeting. He was accompanied by his assistant chief of staff, Col. Paul D. Harkins, who eighteen years later would become the first commander of the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Present at the meeting were Eisenhower, Bradley, Devers, Patton, and Eisenhower's



<https://www.normandy1944.info/photographs/battle-of-the-bulge>

deputy, Air Chief Marshal Arthur Tedder. Eisenhower's intelligence chief, British major-general Kenneth Strong, laid out the enemy situation. Then Eisenhower announced: "The present situation is to be regarded as one for opportunity for us and not of disaster. There will be only cheerful faces at the conference table."

With his characteristic bravado Patton quipped, "Hell, let's have the guts to let the bastards go all the way to Paris. Then we'll cut them off and really chew them up."

After a round of nervous laughter, Eisenhower responded, “George, that’s fine. But the enemy must never be allowed to cross the Meuse. Our weakest spot is in the direction of Namur.” Eisenhower elaborated:



101st Airborne in Bastogne, Christmas Day, 1944, history.army.mil

“The general plan is to plug the holes in the north and launch a coordinated attack from the south.” All at the conference were in agreement that the Third Army would counterattack from the south. Eisenhower said, “George, I want you to go to Luxembourg and take charge of the battle, making a strong counterattack with at least six divisions.”

When Eisenhower asked how soon he would be prepared to attack, Patton replied that he could attack with three divisions by the morning of the twenty-third—in just four days’ time. Eisenhower, however, wanted to wait until the Third Army could mount a six-division attack. Patton and Eisenhower argued back and forth, with Patton insisting that any delay would cost the advantage of surprise. Eisenhower finally relented when Patton agreed to reinforce the attack within six days.

As soon as the decision was made, Patton transmitted the coded message back to Gay at the Third Army command post. The 4th Armored Division

would move at once toward Arlon via Longwy. The 80th Infantry Division would move toward Luxembourg City by way of Thionville. The 26th Infantry Division would move on December 20 to the vicinity of Arlon, with advance detachments starting at once. The III Corps’ main effort would be up the Arlon–Bastogne road. Third Army’s XII Corps was also to disengage at once, and the corps command post and all corps-level artillery units were to start moving toward Luxembourg on December 21. As Patton had assumed, operational control of VIII Corps was chopped to Third Army. When Patton was leaving the meeting, his old friend Eisenhower remarked, “Funny thing, George, every time I get a new star I get attacked.”

Eisenhower had just received his fifth star, and after he had received his fourth star

in 1943 the Americans were attacked at Kasserine Pass in North Africa. Patton shot back: “And every time you get attacked, Ike, I pull you out.”



<https://www.normandy1944.info/photographs/battle-of-the-bulge>

Patton never returned to his headquarters in Nancy. He drove straight to Luxembourg and started to set up a forward command post there, out of his jeep. At 9:00 a.m. on December 20 he met again with

Bradley at the 12th Army Group command post in Luxembourg. Patton wanted to put his main effort into a drive against the base of the German salient to cut off the largest number of enemy forces. Bradley, however, told Patton that Bastogne would be the decisive objective.

During that meeting Eisenhower telephoned to inform Bradley that he was putting all the American



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forces north of the Bastogne–St. Vith line under the operational control of Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery’s 21st Army Group. That meant the 12th Army Group was losing the First and Ninth Armies and would be left with only the Third Army, which effectively cut Bradley out of the battle. Bradley bitterly objected to the move, and for the rest of his life he believed that his old friend had betrayed him. Eisenhower tried to soften the blow by telling Bradley he was being recommended for his fourth star. From that point on, however, Bradley mostly remained in his headquarters and interfered with Patton as little as possible.

Driving to Arlon to meet with Middleton later that day, Patton confirmed that the VIII Corps divisions were in no condition to counterattack the Germans. Patton later wrote, “I told Middleton to give ground and blow up bridges so that we can get the enemy further extended before we hit him in the flank. However, on Bradley’s suggestion, in which Middleton strongly concurred, we decided to hold on to Bastogne, because it is a very important road net, and I do not believe the enemy would dare pass it without reducing it.”

On December 20 alone, Patton visited 12th Army Group headquarters, III and VIII Corps headquarters, and the command posts of the 26th and 80th Infantry Divisions and the 4th, 9th, and 10th Armored Divisions. All the while he coordinated by telephone with Gay in Nancy as the Third Army staff worked feverishly behind the scenes. Although 12th Army Group was now effectively out of the picture as a command and control headquarters, the staff, especially the logistics section, worked tirelessly to support the Third Army staff. By the end of that day Patton decided to move up the III Corps attack by twenty-four hours, to start at six in the morning on December 22.

On December 21 Patton spent the entire day shifting units and orienting them north. He ordered that all corps units would advance in multiple columns, all columns would be composed of tanks and infantry, and all attacks would be executed in depth, preferably in column of regiments. The following morning III Corps jumped off as scheduled at six o’clock. The attack was supported by massed American artillery, guns, and ammunition that the Third Army staff had worked frantically to get into position. Later that day Patton wrote in his diary, “We now have 108 battalions of corps and army artillery supporting this attack—in other words, 1,296 guns of 105 or bigger. I don’t see how the Boche can take this much artillery.” Writing after the war, Patton’s aide Col. Charles R. Codman tried to put his commander’s performance in perspective: “To disengage three divisions actually in combat and launch them over more than a hundred miles of icy roads straight into the heart of a major attack of unprecedented violence presented problems which few commanders would have undertaken to resolve in that length of time.”

But Patton knew where the real credit belonged; he wrote, “It is noteworthy that all the operations, including plans for attack executed on the 22nd of December, were done by personal conference or by telephone, and that the highly complicated road and supply movements were only made possible by the old and very experienced General Staff of the Third Army and the high discipline and devotion to duty of all the units involved.”

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