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Annex No 2 to G-2 Periodic Report No 131
(Reproduction Authorized)

Hq, 83d Inf Div
20 Dec 44

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

It has been directed that the information given below be brought to the attention of all officers and men.

The following extracts from various G-2 Periodic Reports are published for the information of all troops. They indicate the manner in which the enemy is fighting today. What he has done today, he may be expected to repeat tomorrow.

In the Estimate of Enemy Capabilities published by G-2, First U. S. Army, 17 Dec, this sentence appears: "Present indications are that this is the enemy's all-out bid for victory. It must be now or never." The enemy's actions since the beginning of his counter-offensive have made it clear that he is fighting a savage fight, that he is capable of any atrocity, that he is capable of completely violating the rules of warfare.

Civilian Boys: "At ZWEIFALL on 19 Dec, a nine year old boy was observed about to kindle a fire on the roof of a building housing American soldiers. He had the lighted match in his hand and it was only through the prompt action of an American soldier that the fire was prevented." (Source: G-2, 5th Armd Div).

Captured Clothing: "The enemy has used, and is using, captured uniforms, vehicles and equipment. He will undoubtedly continue to do this. We must realize, too, that by this time the enemy will try to create confusion among our forces in an attempt to make us 'jittery', hoping that we will fire on our own vehicles, planes, and personnel. Every precaution must be taken to prevent clothing or equipment from falling into enemy hands. All troops must be alert for the enemy's tricks." (Source: G-2, 5th Armd Div).

Parachutists: "A parachutist picked up vic K8719 states that 400-500 paratroopers were in his group. They ran out of rations and started back to German lines in approach march formation. There is one company in the lead. It is believed they will hide in woods and attempt to pass through American lines at night." (Source: G-2, VII Corps).

"Army reports about 150 Germans dressed in American uniforms have infiltrated behind our lines. They left from L0795 on 17 Dec in American jeeps and there were 4 to a jeep. 3 were captured in the vic of AYWAILLE (K5310) yesterday. Interrogation reveals that 40 of them are dressed as American officers up to and including the grade of major. They carry American paybooks and records but their identification tags are German. They carry American .45 cal pistols. This group of 3 had a German radio. They have German soldbuchs. 40 of them were to destroy Hq - they were engr; 40 are signal people who were to destroy communications; and the balance are ren to proceed to the MEUSE R and check movement and supplies." (Source: G-2, VII Corps).

The Massacre of American Troops: "On 17 December at about 1500 hours, Battery B of the 285th FA Obsn Bn, totaling about 150 of all ranks, was proceeding south in convoy on combined highways 23 and 32 about four kilometers below MALMEDY.

"Upon arriving near the point where the two roads separate (23 going south to ST VITH and 32 running northwestward to WAIMES), a number of enemy tanks proceeding in the opposite direction were suddenly observed by an enlisted man of the battery acting as 'road marker', and these tanks, together with others in the woods on the side of the road, immediately opened fire upon the vehicles of the Btry, the personnel of which abandoned their vehicles, seeking cover as best they could. About 14 vehicles of the Btry had already safely passed the road junction and gone on towards ST VITH.

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"At about the same time an ambulance, unoccupied except for the driver and his assistant, was fired upon by other tanks at a point about one kilometer past the junction towards WAIMES, the vehicle being wrecked and the two enlisted men being captured, placed on one of the German tanks, and brought back to the junction.

"All the personnel of Btry B surviving the attack were taken prisoner, disarmed, and together with the two Medical Dept enlisted men (and possibly some Engineers and Military Police on duty at or near the road junction) were robbed of their cigarettes and valuables, herded into an open field adjacent to the road junction and southwest of a house thereat, lined up about six ranks deep, and required to hold their hands clasped behind their heads, and then subjected to further search. From the evidence available at this time it is believed that the group of American prisoners totaled 120-150 men.

"Suddenly, for no apparent reason, one or two shots were fired into this group of defenseless prisoners by one of the Germans engaged in guarding them, and almost immediately two of the German tanks began spraying the prisoners with machine gun fire from a distance of about 75-125 feet.

"As the killed and wounded began falling to the ground, those who remained unurt likewise fell to the ground, simulating death, but a percentage of those initially uninjured men were undoubtedly slaughtered as the machine gunners continued to fire into the prostrate group.

"After the firing ceased, the tanks pulled away, and as they passed by the fallen Americans, individuals riding on the tanks fired their small arms into the helpless mass. Groans and cries for help from the wounded were then audible, and German soldiers walked through, deliberately shooting those who made outcry, or otherwise showed that life was not extinct.

"At about this time one of the Americans who had thus far escaped injury suggested to those near him that they 'run for it' and when this soldier started to do so, he was followed by about 20 or 25 others, some of whom were, although wounded, still able to make such an attempt. They were fired on by the German guards, but about 15 escaped despite their wounded condition." (Source: G-2, First U. S. Army).

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