

INTERROGATION REPORT
134TH INF REGT
IPW TEAM 60

1 April 45

10th Btry 890 Arty Regt, 190 Div:

The regt consists of two Bns, the 3d and 4th. Fourth Bn has two bttries, the 10th and 12th, which were to support the 1st Bn of 1225 Regt. The 11th Btry has been lost during the last weeks. 1st Bn 1225 had position centering at 625342. The position was taken by an excellently executed (opinion of German officer) attack of tanks preceded by arty preparation and followed by infantry.

10th and 12th Btries have two 150mm howitzers each. These are drawn by old-model, powerful passenger cars. Strength of 10th is about 100 men, one-third of which are considered unreliable because of their non-German origin. Because of ammo shortage the 10th btry had not fired for several days. The 12th btry fired 15 rounds interdictionary fire at area 593347.

Regt had no connection with AA or other arty units.

CO of 10th Btry is Lt v. der Salm. CO of 12th Btry is Lt Sturm. Bn CO is Capt Frieling.

General Situation:

Opposition consists of stragglers of various units, mostly of the 1st Bns of each of the 1225 and 1226th regts formed into Kampfgruppe, and small groups or individuals attempting to evade capture and withdraw or waiting to be captured. It is believed that many who live in this part of Germany have deserted and are hidden in their homes. In some instances units of the police force have been detailed as riflemen to provide a rear guard for withdrawing units. In many localities the Volksturm was mobilized and ordered to the WESER R section under penalty of death; many are believed to have remained at home in spite of the penalty. According to the recruiting officer for the RECKLINGHAUSEN area the Volksturm was handled entirely by the local mayors. The general mission of all these units was to cover the withdrawal of whatever could be saved in the First-Ninth Army encirclement.

Method of withdrawal of 1st Bn 1226, 1st Bn was to leapfrog half the bn beyond successive positions held by the other half. Until arriving at HERTEN the general direction of this withdrawal had been to the NE toward RECKLINGHAUSEN. Yesterday, however, the Kampfgruppe CO (now a PW) ordered the direction changed to the SE because of the pressure from the north. Because of the poor communications most of the men did not know of this change in plan, so it is probable that groups of them have gone in either direction. One unit known to have been withdrawing to the SE from BUER was the 657 AT Bn (has 4 88mm AT guns left in Bn).

Morale is very poor even among officers. (e.g.) the CO of a group of 30 AA men holding an outpost persuaded them to wait and surrender). Only one PW of all those interviewed still had hope for a secret weapon or conceded Germany a chance to win.

A retired captain of the army had been made chief of the Volksturm in RECKLINGHAUSEN. Two days ago he was approached by Gen Hammer (CG of 190 Div) and ordered to service with the 1226 Regt in what he thought was an administrative job. The Bn was placed under his command however, and believing

INTERROGATION REPORT
(CONT)

1 Apr 45

that he could not handle it in this difficult situation he changed to civilian clothes and went home.

Hitler's order regarding stragglers being punishable by death for not reporting to the nearest officer also applies to unit commanders in that they are held responsible under the same penalty for men not leaving any position until so ordered. Similar threats and propaganda concerning the treatment of PW by Americans is the chief deterrent to more desertions from the German Army.