

MATERIAL FOR REPLY  
TO GENERAL WALKER

1. The author has no bias against the former XX Corps Commander. In fact only met him briefly on one occasion here in Washington after the war. The MS was sent Gen. Walker at the personal request of the author, which hardly would hve been the case if the author was antagonistic toward him. Furthermore, revision was held up, after other answers were in, so as to take cognizance of Walker's comments.

2. The Metz operation is not belittled. Reviewers of the MS, including officers who took part in the operation, regard this story as one of the best parts of the MS. The fact that the German documents regard the defense of Metz as one of their best operations and that special honors were awarded the garrison is in effect a tribute to the XX Corps officers and men who finally captured the city.

3. The Metz defenses are not treated with contempt but are for the first time evaluated in proper historical perspective. French testimony on the strength of the Metz fortifications dates from 1940, and, as I point out in evaluating the strength of the Siegfried Line, progress in offense between 1940 and 1944 had greatly reduced the relative defensive strength of 1940 fortifications. German documents dating from the summer of 1944 show that the Germans did not regard the Metz fortifications as strong; instead they recognize that it was out-dated by advances in techniques and tactics of the 1944 offensive. The Germans did not praise the Metz defenses publicly until October, and then admitted privately in their "War Diaries" that this praise was a "propaganda bluff" to take advantage of the successful defense in September. The Americans themselves initially regarded the Metz fortifications as out-dated. On 5 September the XX Corps G-2 and

PI reports call these forts "World War I vintage." Several Intelligence Summaries issued prior to 8 Sept. by XX Corps and TUSA refer to the "old forts" of the Metz system.

The author has given the precise strengths of the German garrison as found in the German documents. The fact that the enemy were able to accomplish much with little is no reflection on the XX Corps. The books shows clearly that the same thing happened in front of the XV and XII Corps.

4. After the Seventh Army took over the Foret de Parroy fight the capture of FT. DRIANT became the first priority in Third Army plans and is so designated in Third Army records. The records further show that neither Gen. Patton nor Gen. Irwin regarded the Fort Driant Operation as "of minor importance." The MS clearly states that Fort Driant was one of the very few works around Metz that had been put in a strong state of defense. Furthermore, the story as told in the MS is based throughout on 5th Div. records (such as TF WARNACK JOURNAL) which treat the operation as difficult <sup>and unsuccessful but not discreditable.</sup> ~~and~~ is the view of the TUSA Diary kept by Patton's staff and is the view taken by the author.

5. The episode of the staff officer from the XX Corps who gave the order which resulted in delaying the 11th Infantry crossing is taken from (a) The Fifth Infantry Division in the ETO, a semi-official unit history published by the 5th Division, (b) Interviews by historical officers made in the field and now on file with the Historical Division, (c) 11th Infantry, p. 18, a semi-official unit history published by the 11th Infantry. The Inspector General report General Walker cites seems to raise sufficient doubt about this event to validate its deletion from the text.

6. The information on the relief of Gen. Thompson is based on oral and written statements made to the author by two officers who were with the 7th Armored. In view of Gen. Walker's personal testimony that he did not intervene in the relief of Gen. Thompson this particular information will be deleted.

7. The exchange between Gen. Walker and Gen. Irwin is taken directly from a stenographic verbatim report of a conversation between Gen. Walker and Gen. Irwin on 28 Sep '44. This report is attached to the 5th Div, G-3 Journal of that date. The statement of Gen. Patton's attitude is taken from Gen. Irwin's diary, which records Patton's visit to the 5th Div upon the afternoon of 28 Sep.

8. An unbiased reading will show that the statement quoted is hardly a "grudging one."

9. This is a statement of the facts as shown by the records. I note that both Gen. Gay and Gen Irwin have read and approved the MS containing this summation.

*H. M. Cole*