

**S E C R E T**HEADQUARTERS 17TH TANK BATTALION  
APO 257, U. S. ARMY

30 June 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, month of June 1945

TO: The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

1 June through 9 June: On 1 June 1945 the Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters Company, Company "A", Company "D" and Service Company were located in the town of Krostitz, Germany; Company "B" was in the town of Hahenroda, Germany and Company "C" was located in the town of Mutzschlena, Germany. The area which was assigned to the 17th Tank Battalion for civilian control, security, and administration of Military Government was divided into three areas and responsibility for the area was rotated among the companies. One company which was designated as the alert company was always ready to move out at any time to take care of any emergency that might arise within the Combat Command "A" area.

A central Military Government Office was established in the town of Krostitz and the Military Government problems arising in the other towns in our area were handled through the Krostitz office or by periodic visits by the Battalion S-2 and other Staff and Company Officers.

Civilian control was maintained by periodic mounted security patrols throughout the area and by eight road blocks along the south and east boundaries of our area.

The Battalion conducted a training program each day and each company had all men out for training except those engaged in guard, civilian control or security activities.

On 2 June 1945 the Battalion Commander and Staff made a command inspection of all vehicles, weapons, and personnel. On this date the alert Company (Co "B") conducted a security raid on the town of Sausedlitz. The raid resulted in taking twenty men to higher headquarters for further screening. No enemy weapons or ammunition was taken.

On 4 June 1945 Company "B" conducted a security raid on the town of Brinnis. Ten men were delivered to Higher Headquarters for further screening and one Panzerfaust, two M-1 rifles with several rounds of ammunition were captured.

6 June 1945 which was D plus 365 for the Division was a holiday for all personnel not engaged in essential patrol or guard duty.

On 7 June 1945 the Battalion inaugurated a new security raid policy in compliance with directive from CCA Headquarters. The Battalion was to maintain an alert company at all times and in addition to maintaining an alert status this company was given a security target or town to raid each day. A minimum number of tanks were to be employed by the raiding company. Crews of the tanks not used in the raid were to be transported on decks of other tanks or by truck. A certain time was designated by Higher Headquarters for each raid and the company was to hit the town at that time and conduct the raids in a business-like, military, impressive manner. All male civilians of the towns were to be assembled in a centrally located point within the town to be screened by a Military Government or C.I.C. representative. All houses were to be thoroughly searched for weapons, ammunition, or any contraband articles. Upon entering a town all roads were blocked to prevent any individuals escaping. On this date Company "A", the new alert company, raided the town of Guntheritz at 0830. The raid resulted in sending seven men for further screening. Four of the men held suspicious passes; one man had no identification papers; and two men did not have proper discharge papers.

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On 5 June 1945 a team of two skilled NCO's from the 2d Armd Division was attached to the Battalion to assist in training our crews in operating the T 26 El Tank. The team worked with Company "B" on this date and on 7 June 1945.

On 9 June 1945 an inspection team from 129th Ord. Bn., started T.I. of vehicles in Company "C".

Training on T 26 El tank was conducted in Company "A" on 8 and 9 June 1945.

on 8 June 1945 Company "A" raided the town of Krensitz at 1800. The raid resulted in screening 127 men. Fourteen of which were arrested. Of the arrests, three were soldiers without proper discharge papers, five had no papers, and six were party members.

On 9 June 1945 Company "A" raided the town of Gollmenz at 1800. Fifty-three males were screened and seven were arrested. Of the seven arrests, three were P.W.'s without proper discharge papers, two had no papers, and three were party members.

10 June 1945: Sunday, no duty except necessary guard and security details.

11 June 1945: Continued road blocks, security patrols and Military Government operations. Company "A" raided the town of Schladitz at 1300. Two hundred and twenty-four (224) men were screened and fifty (50) arrests were made. Of the fifty arrests, thirty four were soldiers without proper discharge papers, thirteen had no papers, and three were party members. On this date the Battalion Medical Officer gave a one hour lecture to the personnel of Companies, "A", Headquarters, "D" and Service on Venereal Disease Control. The afternoon was devoted to organized athletics.

12 June 1945: The morning was devoted to close order drill, military courtesy training, practice guard mount, crew drill and maintenance of vehicles. Afternoon was devoted to organized athletics. Company "A" raided the town of Benden at 1800. Twenty-six (26) men were screened and four arrests were made. Of the four arrests all were soldiers without proper discharge papers.

13 June 1945: All available equipment in the Battalion was used in painting tanks and other vehicles. Those not engaged in this work and the usual security details, participated in raiding an assigned section of the town of Eilenburg. The assigned Battalion area in the town was broken down into Company areas with each company being responsible for clearing it's area. The Battalion entered the town at 0456 and started searching the houses at 0600. The raid was completed at 0947 and the screening was completed by the C.I. C. and Military Government personnel at 1010. One thousand three hundred and sixty seven (1367) men were screened. One hundred and thirty-four (134) arrests were made and of this number fifty-nine (59) were men with no papers, sixty-two (62) were P.W.'s who had not been properly discharged, twelve (12) were party members and One (1) was an Organizational Todt member. No enemy equipment, ammunition or weapons were found.

14 June 1945: Morning was devoted to training in interior guard duty, crew drill, maintenance of vehicles and weapons. Afternoon was devoted to organized athletics.

Company "D" became the alert company. Company "D" raided the town of Werbelin at 1300. Sixty-one (61) men were screened and no arrests were made. Tank painting continued in the companies and the usual security and Military Government activities were continued.

15 June 1945: Each company received a one hour orientation lecture on the Jap soldier. The Battalion Medical Officer gave a Venereal Disease

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Control lecture to Company "C". The tank companies had a two hour period in crew drill and fire orders. Tank painting continued in all companies. The afternoon was devoted to organized athletics. Company "D" raided the town of Biesen at 1800. Forty (40) men were screened and no arrests were made.

16 June 1945: Morning devoted to Command inspection of vehicles, weapons, personnel, and billets. Each company was found to be in excellent condition. The personal appearance of the men was unusually good which is always gratifying for that is always an indication of excellent morale. The afternoon was devoted to organized athletics with scheduled soft-ball games between the companies.

17 June 1945: Sunday, No duty except necessary guard and work details.

18 June 1945: Continued usual road block, security patrols, and Military Government activities. Company "A" moved to the Helfta small arms and Tank Range and began firing at 0800. Two Officers and a work detail devoted the preceding week to preparing the ranges. The small ~~arms~~ arms range was set up for two types of firing. One course had bulls eyes targets for zeroing pieces and the other course was designed to give the men practice in marching fire or firing piece from hip and quick fire positions. The tank firing range was designed so the tank moved down the course then as the tank commander designated a target the tank stopped and fired on it. There were five targets to fire on and each crew was given three shots at each target. The ranges of the targets varied from 500 to 1200 yards. The targets were actual enemy tanks and armored cars. The final score was based on range estimation, fire orders, sensing, crew drill, hits or accuracy, time required to fire first shot, and number of rounds required to hit target. In addition to the tank gun targets we had several targets representing dismounted personnel which were fired on with Bow gun and Co-Axial Machine Gun.

Each compay was given two days on the Helfta Range. Ten tanks were moved to the range and left there and each company that came out to the range used the same tanks. The companies were rotated by platoons between the small arms range and tank range. While one platoon was firing the tanks another platoon was practicing crew drill and fire orders behind the firing line and the other platoon was firing on the small arms range. By using this procedure we were able to kepp all men interested and busy all the time.

At 0800 on this date Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Company "B" and Company "D" and Company "C" moved to the town of Delitzsch. Four road blocks along our south and east borders were discontinued. This left only two road blocks on the south and one six man guard on a Brewery at Krostitz. However the security patrols were continued thorough out the area.

Company "D" raided the town of Creums at 1800. A total of Sixty one (61) men were screened but no arrests were made.

19 June 1945: Company "A" completed firing on Helfta Range at 1700 and returned to Delitzsch. Company "C" moved to Helfta Range at 1700 so they would be on the spot and ready to start firing at 0800, 20 June 1945.

Company "D" raided the town of Mockerwitz at 1800. Sixty men were screened and one (1) soldier without proper discharge paper was arrested.

The companies remaining in Delitzsch followed the training schedule and made necessary adjustments and arrangements in their new billets.

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20 June 1945: Company "C" started firing on Helfta Range at 0800. Other companies continued usual road blocks, security patrols, and Military Government activities. Training consisted of close order drill, dry run for small arms range firing, and organized athletics.

Company "D" raided Selben at 1800. One hundred and forty three (143) men were screened and five (5) arrests were made. Of the five arrests, four were soldiers without proper discharge papers and one was a Hitler youth leader.

21 June 1945: Company "C" finished firing on Helfta Range at 1700 and returned to Delitzsch. Company "B" moved to the Range at 1700. Other companies followed regular training schedule.

Company "D" raided Boyda at 1300. Twenty-seven (27) men were screened and no arrests were made.

22 June 1945: Company "C" assumed the alert station as of 1200 and Company "D" reverted to the regular duty status. Company "C" raided the town of Priester at 1800. Fifty one (51) men were screened and two party members were arrested. Company "B" started firing on Range at 0800 and the other companies followed training schedule of close order drill, orientation, scouting and patrolling, maintenance, and organized athletics.

23 June 1945: All companies except Company "B" which was on the range were inspected by the Battalion Commander and Staff. Vehicles, weapons, and quarters were inspected. The usual road blocks, security patrols and Military Government activities were continued.

Company "C" raided the town of Kupsal at 1800. Forty-four (44) males were screened and two P.W.'s without proper discharge papers were arrested.

24 June 1945: Sunday- No duty except necessary security and work details. Company "D" moved to Helfta Range at 1700 in order to be ready to begin firing at 0800 on the following day.

25 June 1945: Company "D" fired the M-29 light tanks on the Helfta Range and other companies followed the regular training schedule and continued the security and Military Government activities.

Company "C" raided the town of Gottscheim at 1300. Forty-three (43) males were screened and no arrests were made.

26 June 1945: Upon special request of the Military Government the town of Beissen was raided at 1800. The Military Government suspected some of the occupants of this village of having contraband articles. However the raid was fruitless. Of the fifty-three (53) males screened none were arrested and no contraband equipment was found.

Company "D" completed firing on Helfta Range at 1700 and returned to Delitzsch.

27 June 1945: On this date the entire Battalion took part in the raid on Delitzsch. The Battalion was given the mission of blocking all roads leading into the town and was given a section of the town to screen and search. Company "C" blocked the roads and the other companies were given certain areas to search. The raid resulted in our screening One Thousand and Forty (1040) men and making Twenty-six (26) arrests. Of the twenty-six (26) arrests, eighteen (18) were soldiers without discharge papers, three (3) were party members, and three (3) were automatic C.I.G. arrests.

During the afternoon our three T-26E1 tanks were moved to the Helfta Range and each of the three Medium tank companies were allotted one half day for firing these tanks. Company "B" was to begin firing at 0800 on the following day.

28 June 1945: At 0001, 28 June 45, Company "B" assumed the alert station and Company "C" reverted to regular duty station.

Company "B" fired the T-26E1 tanks on the Helfta Range from 0800 to 1200. Company "A" fired the tanks from 1200 to 1700. The companies remaining in Delitzsch followed the regular training schedule.

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The training film, "Your Job in Germany" was shown to all men present for duty. Lt. Wilson, the Battalion I & E officer explained the I & E at this time.

Company "B" raided the town of Liemelina at 1800 and screened One hundred and fifty-eight (158) males and made six arrests.

During the afternoon we received notice that our section of responsibility was being changed and that our Battalion would move to Halle and relieve the Division Artillery prior to 1200, 30 June 1945.

29 June 1945: The Battalion Executive Officer and S-3 and the company Commanders spent the day in Halle making arrangements for billets for our troops and arranging to relieve the Division Artillery of certain permanently guarded posts.

The companies remaining in the Delitzsch area continued training and preparing for the move to Halle.

The training films "Your Job in Germany" and "On to Tokyo" were shown again for those who failed to see them at original showing.

30 June 1945: At 0600 the Battalion moved to Halle, closing that area at 1000. Prior to 1200 we had relieved the Division Artillery. We placed guards on 13 permanently guarded installations (for details see enclosed description of installations). In addition to this we set up our local security guards in our Battalion area. Practically all of the men in the Battalion were engaged in some type of guard or security duty.

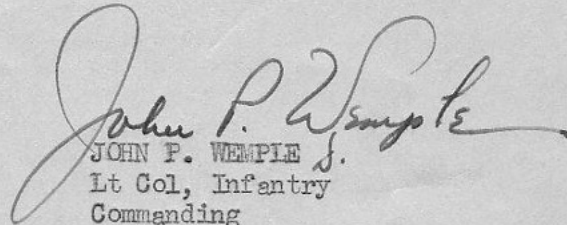
During the afternoon we received a warning order that we would probably move to a new area on the following day and that we had reverted to CCB Control. Therefore we began packing up again and preparing for the move. We were supposed to move to an area in the vicinity of Buchen, Germany.

During the month of June we were actively engaged in civilian control, security, and Military Government activities, but in spite of this fact we got in some good training. The most outstanding of which was the gunnery training which we had on the Helfta Range.

Throughout the month the Battalion I & E Officer devoted all of his time to making surveys and laying the ground work for the I & E program. Information centers were established in all companies and enlisted men were trained to conduct orientation periods by using the discussion group method.

While in the Delitzsch area we supervised the operation of a Displace Persons caom at Rockwitz, which was filled largely with Polish. This required rather close supervision but the Poles were cooperative and maintained high standards of sanitation.

We did not have any serious trouble with civilians or displaced persons. We did not meet any resistance in any of our many security raids.

  
JOHN P. WEMPLE  
Lt Col, Infantry  
Commanding