

Plans &



12 September 1946

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

Reference the point raised by Hanson Baldwin on the timing of your decision on Command organization during the Battle of the Bulge.

1. I can find no record of your telephone call to Monty on the evening of the 19th or on the 20th but the following cables indicate conclusively that action was taken by you not later than noon on the 20th. It is my recollection that your decision was made prior to the 20th.

a. Your SCAF 149 dated 19 December - 2138A hours stated that you had just returned from conference with Bradley, Patton and Devers, explained your plans and action taken reference the South flank, stated our weakest spot was in the direction of Namur and that the general plan was to plug the holes in the North and launch coordinated attack from the South. (It appears that no message on the new command set up had been sent to Monty at this hour.)

b. Your SCAF 150 dated 20 December - 1252A hours stated "In this situation our front is divided into two main parts ***. Field Marshal Montgomery has been placed in charge of the Northern flank ***. (It is evident that Monty had been informed at some time before noon on the 20th.)

c. Your SCAF 151 dated 20 December - 1836A hours was the confirmatory directive to Army Group Commanders. It stated, "1. This directive is in confirmation of verbal instructions already issued", and then set forth the boundaries and missions and assignment of forces.

d. Your SCAF 179 dated 20 January setting forth "Progress of Operations since Directive of 28 October 1944" stated in par 11 -- "On 19 December *** I realized that it would be impracticable for one Commander to handle the American Forces both North and South of the large salient which was being created. *** I therefore fixed a boundary running East and West through the breach in our lines and placed all forces North of it *** under operational Command of C-in-C Northern Group of Armies and ***.

2. These official records indicate that you gave Monty your decision late on the 19th.

3. In your absence I have given Mr. Baldwin the letter embodying this information, copy of which is attached.



H. R. BULL
Major General