ANALYSIS OF
DEEP ATTACK OPERATIONS
OPERATION BAGRATION
BELORUSSIA 22 JUNE-29 AUGUST 1944

by

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CONTENTS

Title		Page
1	Strategic Setting	1
2	Operational/Tactical Situation	16
3	Conduct of Operations	37
4	Conclusions	57

Annexes

A	Strategic Setting
B	Soviet Force Structure (1944)
C	Correlation of Forces
D	Planning Sequence
E	Major Elements of Front Plans
F	Disposition

OPERATION BAGRATION

22 June-28 August 1944

1. Strategic Setting.

a. Principal Events.

Operation BAGRATION took place during what the Soviet analysts consider the third period of the war: that of the Soviet strategic offensives which marked the ascendancy of the Soviet armed forces over the German Wehrmacht. During this period, the armed forces of the Soviet Union held the strategic initiaitve and used it to defeat the Wehrmacht, gain control of Eastern Europe, and invade Germany proper, meeting Allied forces on the Elbe River on 25 April 1945. The period is regarded as beginning January 1944 and ending with the V-E Day, 7 May 1945.

During the first two major periods of the war, the Red Army had had first to conduct a strategic defense, more through force of circumstances than through any rational plan. During this period of strategic defense, which lasted from 22 June 1941 to 19 November 1942, the Wehrmacht generally held the strategic initiative and used it to advantage. Their first offensive, from 22 June to 5 December 1941 had nearly ended with the capture of Moscow, as well as resulting in the defeat of the Soviet Army which the Wehrmacht saw before it on 22 June 1941. They had not, however, counted upon the Soviet ability to raise new formations and manpower nor the movement of the factories east. Given the strategic surprise of the German invasion, the Soviet government had shaken but not fallen, and the governmental reorganization which followed would be one of the major factors

in the ability of the Soviet Union to decide strategy and conduct operations. Nor could the Soviet Union receive substantial help from potential allies during this first advance by the Germans, as Great Britain was just capable of defending her own territory against the Germans. Finally, the Germans had not reckoned upon the Soviets' use of their Far Eastern army to reinforce their European forces, made possible by the Neutrality Pact signed between Japan, Germany's ally, and the Soviet Union in April 1941. As strategic consumption of German forces proceeded and they met a reorganized and reinforced Red Army in the battle for Moscow, the German tide was halted, and the Soviet counteroffensive began on 6 December, growing out of local counterattacks which exposed the weakness of the forward German forces. In the spring of 1942, the Soviet forces again attempted an offensive, but they were defeated, and the German forces used this event to launch their own offensive in southern Russia in summer 1942. This resulted in the Stalingrad campaign, in which the German armies were halted at Stalingrad on the Volga River and in the Caucasus mountains by Russian defense and strategic consumption of their own forces again.

The second period of the war began with the Soviet counteroffensive against the German forces surrounding Stalingrad. This time, however, the counteroffensive was not a development of events on the ground but rather had been planned by Stavka, the Soviet High Command. The counteroffensive was successful, and the German Sixth Army was surrounded and destroyed by February 1943. However, when the Soviet forces attempted to exploit their success, they were defeated by the Germans in a counteroffensive by Manstein from 18 February to the end of March 1943. The lesson was clear that the

Red Army was still not able to take the offensive against the Wehrmacht. Thus, for the summer campaign, the Stavka decided not to initiate offensive operations but to wait for the expected German offensive, defeat it, and then conduct a counteroffensive. Due to good intelligence from such HUMINT sources as Sorge in Tokyo, Lucy, and the Red Chorus and the battlefield preparations of the Germans, the Red Army determined the location, Kursk, and timing, July, of the German offensive. The Red Army then prepared their positions and gathered reserves to meet the threat. The result was the complete defeat of the last strategic offensive effort to be made by the German Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front. The Red Army followed up its successes with another counteroffensive which liberated the Ukraine east of the Dnieper River and its capitol Kiev by November 1943, and in December expanded its bridgeheads on the western bank of the Dnieper River, preparatory to freeing the rest of the Ukraine.

By the beginning of 1944, the Red Army clearly had the initiative on the Eastern Front; moreover, since the beginning of the second period, the Soviet Union also had strong allies who could provide assistance in two ways: the United States and Great Britain. The main factor in the alliance had been the entry of the United States into World War II since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. As the Soviet Union saw it, the most important contribution which these allies could make to her strategically would be to open a second Front against the Germans. Although this was not to happen during the first period, they did contribute in two other ways. They commenced Lend-Lease aid, although this would not amount to sufficient quantities to affect Soviet operations until late 1943 and

1944. They also opened indirect attacks on Germany through the initiation of the strategic bombing campaign against Germany proper and commencing offensives and landings against Axis forces in North Africa (at the beginning of the Soviet's second period). The invasions of Sicily and Italy followed in the second period, knocking Italy out of its alliance with Germany and diverting German forces to defend in Italy. The invasion of Sicily may also have contributed to the German decision to break off its Kursk offensives as well in July 1943. Moreover, by the end of the second period of the war, the Allies had finalized their plans for the opening of the Second Front directly by landing in northern and southern France in May 1944, and the Soviet leadership had been so informed at the Teheran Conference in November 1943. Indeed, just the threat of the invasion had been sufficient to act as a distraction to the Germans by this time, and Lend-Lease aid had now entered the Soviet armed forces in quantity.

In the third period of the war, therefore, the Soviet Union held the strategic initiative, and the year opened with the first two of what would come to be known as the "Ten Destructive Blows" of 1944: Leningrad and the Ukraine. The offensive at Leningrad commenced on 14 January 1944 and ground to a halt on 1 March with the German siege of Leningrad broken, the German Sixteenth and Eighteenth Armies defeated, Soviet advances of up to 200 kilometers, and Soviet forces on the border of Estonia. The blow in the Ukraine commenced on 24 January 1944, lasting until mid-April, and involved all of the fronts in the Ukraine. Finally, the various fronts were ordered by Stavka to go on the defensive between 17 April and 6 May to prepare for the summer offensive.

By the time operations halted, the Soviets had regained almost all of the Ukraine and were threatening the borders of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania. In April-May, Soviet forces invaded and freed yet another German holding in the third blow of the year, the Crimea and Odessa.

The Soviet offensives had smashed five German armies: two in the north, two in the south, and one in the Crimea. German personnel casualties may have amounted to as many as 1,000,000 in the south alone. German equipment losses claimed by the Soviets for the first half of 1944 amounted to 8,100 guns, 3,500 mortars, 23,500 machine guns, 18,400 rifles, 1,000 tanks and assault guns, 3,300 tractors and prime movers, 61,300 vehicles, 11,700,000 projectiles, and 2,300,000 mines.

Finally, the German defeats had put pressure on two German allies, Finland and Rumania. The fourth blow of 1944 commenced on 10 June against Finland, and Viipuri fell within ten days. Fighting continued throughout the summer, and Finland ended hostilities on 4 September. In addition, on other fronts, the Allied invasion of Europe had commenced on 6 June, and Rome had fallen on 4 June.

b. Strategic objectives.

(1) Soviet Union:

(a) Recover Soviet territory from German occupation.

(b) Destroy German forces.

(c) Liberate other European countries under German control.

(d) Conduct strategic operations sequentially rather than simultaneously.

The first look at strategic concepts by which to accomplish the above objectives took place with a meeting of a commission of the State Defence Committee beginning 5 April 1944. They appear to have considered three options:

First, they could have continued their successful southern offensive southward into the Balkans, hopefully cutting off the German forces in the southern Ukraine. Besides destroying German forces, this would have freed European countries, especially Rumania and Bulgaria, which were wavering in their alliance with Germany. But the direction was away from Germany, and it would have had to be done with very powerful, undefeated German forces on their flank and rear. Finally, the remaining Soviet territory lay north of the Pripet Marshes.

The second option considered was that of a stroke north from the northern Ukraine toward the Baltic. If successful, such a strike would have encircled the German forces north of the Pripet Marshes, liberated the last major Soviet territory still remaining in German hands, and been on the road to Berlin. But this course was regarded as beyond Soviet capability, and it would have also left major German forces on its flanks, to say nothing of the encircled forces which would have to be reduced.

This led to consideration of mounting the offensive directly against the German forces in Belorussia, which represented the last major undefeated German force on the Eastern Front. If the offensive were successful, that would also lead to reconquest of the last remaining Soviet territory still in German hands. Following that, the possibility of a drive to the Baltic, to Konigsberg, in Eastern Prussia, or to Riga to encircle

Army Group North still remained. Most important, from the Soviet point of view, while the goal was less decisive, immediately, than either of the other two courses, it was feasible, and it could lead to strategically decisive results.

Stalin and the State Defense Committee approved the commission's recommendation by 12 April, and orders went out by 17 April directing the cessation of offensive operations described in paragraph 1a. The commission had also determined that simultaneous offensives were still not possible, either; therefore, the summer campaign would have to consist of sequential offensives.

Thus, the strategic objectives were now as follows:

(a) Recover/liberate Belorussia from Germany.

(b) Destroy or defeat German forces in Belorussia, Army Group Center.

(c) Liberate other European countries under German control.

(d) Conduct strategic operations sequentially rather than simultaneously during the summer.

(2) Germany:

(a) Defeat Allied landings in France.

(b) Win time for coalition to break up.

(c) Defend territorial gains in East with forces in theater.

(d) Defeat expected Soviet summer offensive in south with mobile reserves stationed in North Ukraine.

(e) Hold Allied forces in Italy.

In deciding its strategy, Germany had to consider the nature of all threats against it. As a result, Hitler had pointed out that the expected Allied landings in northern France were the most immediately dangerous threat to Germany, with the Red Army over 1,000 kilometers from the German frontier but the Allies only 300-500 kilometers away after landing. Thus, the Eastern Front could expect no reinforcement until after the Allied landing had been defeated and thrown back into the sea or contained. Until the decision in the West, the forces on the Eastern Front would have to defend, and they would have to defend all positions. They would not be allowed to trade space for time.

German intelligence had also identified the first two options described above which were available to the Soviets, and they felt that their forces, with strong armored forces in the northern Ukraine, could handle the defensive mission. They were not worried about Army Group Center because it had been successful in the winter and spring; moreover, the force ratios in April were not those which the Soviets liked when they went on the offensive. Finally, the terrain in the sector of Army Group Center favored the defense and was especially a hindrance to the movement of large armored forces. One of the most important indicators which the Germans would use to predict the next offensive would be the location of the tank armies, all five of which were in the Ukraine as of April 1944.

c. Allocation of Resources/Forces.

(1) Forces and force structure. (See Annex A) By the start of the summer, the Soviet forces had superiority in personnel of 1.7 times the German/Axis forces, 1.8 times the artillery and mortars (with the Soviet

artillery on average heavier than German artillery), 1.6 times the tanks and assault guns, and 4.9 times the operational aircraft. These ratios do not include the Stavka reserves or German OKW reserves; however, the Soviet Stavka reserves vastly exceeded those of Germany, and the Soviet Stavka could count on using those reserves on the Eastern Front, whereas such German OKW reserves as existed were likely to go to the Western Front. Thus, the ratios could be as high as 2:1 in personnel, overall, 2:1 in artillery, 1.8:1 in tanks, and 5.4:1 in aricraft. These ratios led the Stavka to the conclusion that there were insufficient forces to undertake simultaneous offensive action over the whole front.

(a) German (see Annex A).

By June 1944, the German armed forces counted some 9.1 million men, with 4.55 million in the Field Army and Waffen SS, organized into 324 divisions: 258 infantry, 34 panzer, 17 panzer grenadier, and 6 parachute. Of these, some 3.13 million men were on the Eastern Front, in 179 divisions and 5 brigades, including 23 panzer and 7 panzer granadier divisions. Satellite countries provided an additional 800,000 men, 49 divisions, and 18 brigades, mostly infantry and stationed in the south. These divisions were 63% of all those available to Germany, while the manpower was more on the order of 70% of all that available for field service in Germany and her satellites. The German forces on the Eastern Front also had the bulk of the armored forces and air forces: 5,250 tanks or assault guns and 2,796 operational aircraft. Although the West Front only had 1,550 tanks and 300 assault guns, these numbers had risen from 650 and 220, respectively, in December 1943. The German forces in the east were supported by an estimated

48,635 guns and mortars. These constituted 71% of all guns and mortars, 57% of all tanks and assault guns, and 51% of all operational aircraft. It has been estimated that Germany's other active theaters--France, Italy, and the air battle over Germany--consumed 30-35% of Germany's overall combat power.

Within the Eastern Front, also, the German force distribution was uneven. North of the Pripet Marshes, which constituted over 60% of the frontage, Germany had only about 40% of its divisions and only 10-15% of its mobile divisions, and the average division sector for an on-line division amounted to 19 kilometers. South of the Pripet Marshes, however, with only 40% of the frontage, Germany had 60% of the Eastern Front divisions, including most of the satellite divisions and the three satellites armies, and 80-85% of the mobile divisions. The average division frontage here was 8 kilometers. the Germans had lost some thirty divisions in the preceding winter offensives, and those divisions which remained were at varying levels of strength, although the lull of April-May gave those not in the active sectors some chance for reinforcement. Nevertheless, divisions remained at best at 6,000-8,000 men, with an infantry strength of only 2,000, or 300 men per infantry battalion.

(b) Soviet (see Annex A).

Although the Soviet Union, like Germany, had a two-front problem, strategically, they only had to devote about an estimated 7% of their combat power to their second front, against Japan in the Far East. This was due to the strategic depth provided by the distance from the Far East to European Russia and the Neutrality Pact signed in April 1941 between Japan and the Soviet Union. Moreover, the proportion would fall, as new

production and forces went exclusively to the Eastern Front opposite German/Axis forces until the last months of the war, when the Soviets started the build-up for the Manchurian campaign and the maneuver in Centeral Europe had compressed to the point that its forces would no longer fit on the terrain available.

In spite of the losses suffered during the winter campaign, the Red Army had continued to grow. Although personnel had increased by only 200,000 overall, this still meant that the losses had been made more than good. Moreover, the number of tanks and assault guns had increased by 4,357, or 77%, enabling the Stavka reserves to be increased eight-fold, and aircraft increased by 5,969, or 68%, increasing Stavka reserves by four-fold. While the number of artillery pieces overall had remained constant, its power had increased due to the replacement of lower-caliber guns and mortars with larger-caliber, more powerful weapons.

Within the Eastern Front, the Soviet distribution mirrored that of the German Forces described above, i.e., approximately 40% of the rifle divisions but 80-85% of the Mobile divisions south of the Pripet Marshes. In fact, in the winter campaign all of the Soviet tank armies (5) had participated in the south, and it was to be expected that their presence would identify future main efforts. In preparation for Operation BAGRATION, however, a substantial regrouping of forces would take place, as described in paragraph 2 below. Within the rifle divisions, the replacements had brought the divisions back up to 6,000-8,000 men per division compared to an authorized strength of 9,600 per rifle division.

For force structure of Soviet formations, see Annex B.

(2) Previous performance.

All trends were down for the German forces. While the number of divisions had continued to rise, the average number of men, especially infantry, in them had declined, both from reorganization, into regiments of two battalions in infantry regiments, and from casualties. Nor were replacements to be had. By this period, Germany had lost a cumulative total of 3.28 million men, and the Field Army was understrength as a whole by an estimated 20%. Of the one million men lost in the winter campaign, only 100,000 had been replaced. The shortage of German manpower was acute, and draft requirements were not being met. In addition, the loss of territories meant the loss of populations averaging 500,000-600,000 per month, which populations usually became available to the Soviet Army. The German labor force had dropped from ten and 1/2 million in 1939 to seven and 3/4 million by the end of 1943, in spite of over 2 1/2 million women working in industry. The Allied air raids and strategic bombing campaign kept the strength artificially high (and men away from the Eastern Front) in order to man antiaircraft defenses in Germany.

One bright spot was the continued increase of German production, which peaked during 1944. But this was mitigated by the fact that the production could not make up the losses, nor could it catch up with the Soviet increases and Lend-Lease materials discussed below. The tank production in 1943 was 10,800, and it jumped in 1944 to 17,800. For the war as a whole it was 76,000. Likewise, artillery production rose from 12,000 artillery pieces in 1942 to 40,600 in 1944. Aircraft production increased from 25,200 in 1943 to 34,300 in 1944, but in 1943 17,400 aircraft had been

destroyed, and the proportion was holding in 1944, especially on the Western Front. More than replacing aircraft, however, the difficult factor for the Luftwaffe was replacing trained pilots, both due to personnel losses and to fuel shortages (which kept training flights down and grounded operational aircraft), which were growing in 1944.

German doctrine was now exclusively controlled by Adolf Hitler, and he insisted upon holding all territory taken by the Wehrmacht. He intended to accomplish this through declaring important communication centers or regions fortresses which must be held by troops who could not be moved by the Army Group commanders without Hitler's personal approval. As a corollary, therefore, he would not allow the construction or preparation of lines to the rear, as he felt that such preparations became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Those commanders who would have contradicted him, and had done so in the past, had been relieved by now, the last being Manstein and Kleist in March.

In contrast to the Germans, the trends were up for the Soviet forces. They were able to make up their manpower losses. Out of an available manpower pool of an estimated 35,000,000, they eventually called up 25,000,000, and 13,700,000 were killed, along with 7,000,000 civilians. By 1944, however, the reconquest of Soviet territories was adding some 500,000-600,000 men per month to the pool. Additionally, the annual class for the Soviet Union was about three times that of Germany. Thus, although the rifle divisions were not at full strength, they were at least fuller than German divisions, and the prospects for replacements were better than for the Germans.

In production, too, the Soviet Union was faring better than were the Germans. For the war as a whole, Soviet industry produced 107,000 tanks and assault guns while German industry produced 76,000. On top of this production, the Soviet Union received another 13,000 armored vehicles through Lend-Lease. In 1943, the tank production was 24,000, and it increased to 29,000 in 1944. Artillery production in 1943 was 45,000 field and antitank guns, rising to 56,000 field and AT guns in 1944. Aircraft were another major item, with production of 30,000 in 1943, 32,200 in 1944 (exceeded by Germany that year only), and Lend-Lease of 19,000 aircraft for the war as a whole.

But the most important Lend-Lease materiel provided by the US to the Soviet Union in the war were trucks, of four and six wheel drive construction. These trucks amounted to 220,817 through April 1944, and would total 427,000 for the war (of a Soviet truck park of 665,000 trucks). These trucks had cross-country mobility superior to those of the Germans, and they enabled the quantities of infantry necessary to be motorized to support the tanks in tank and mechanized corps. They also provided good cross-country mobility for supplies to accompany Soviet forces forward of the railheads. This quantity of trucks, which were already superior qualitatively to German trucks, exceeded the entire German output of trucks for the years 1939-1945.

Soviet doctrine had by this time matured, and Operation BAGRATION would reflect that maturity. It emphasized keeping the initiative, using maskirovka, or operational cover and deception, to conceal the main attacks of the Soviet forces, concentration at the selected points to overwhelm the

enemy with attacks throughout the depth of his position, and exploitation as soon as the tactical penetration had been made to operational depths, to defeat the enemy's operational reserves, and develop operational success into strategic success. In order to accomplish this success, the Soviets had developed both the numerical superiority (albeit not, in this period, overwhelming) and the force structures to achieve this aim. The force structures which were to lead to this operational success were the tank army, a corps-sized echelon composed of two or three tank corps (division-size elements) and/or one to two mechanized corps (see Annex B). In fact, the structure of the tank army could vary with the operation, with fewer tank corps or more mechanized corps depending on the mission and enemy's situation. Another force structure used for deep attack operations was the Cavalry-Mechanized Group, of which two would be seen in Operation BAGRATION. This formation was usually temporary and intended for use in terrain which would not support a tank army.

Soviet doctrine called for armies or specially-reinforced armies called shock armies to be given the task of breaking through the enemy's tactical defenses. The fronts would reinforce armies making the front main effort with tank or mechanized corps. These armies would then introduce these mobile groups into the battle to exploit to the depths of the tactical defenses or to reinforce success. The tank armies or cavalry-mechanized groups were committed by the front commander on his own order (but in accordance with his approved plan) or with Stavka approval, either from Stavka in Moscow or from the Stavka representative sent out to coordinate the operations of a group of fronts. The latter method was the norm for strategic operations.

2. Operational/Tactical Situation.

a. Opposing Forces. For correlation of forces, see Annex C.

(1) Soviet Forces.

The Soviet forces assembled for Operation BAGRATION consisted of 166 divisions, of which 124, including six cavalry divisions, took part in the initial assault. Mobile forces amounted to eight tank or mechanized corps (equal to German panzer or panzer grenadier divisions)--two tank corps in 5th Guards Tank Army, one mechanized corps in each of two cavalry-mechanized groups, and the other four tank corps separate--and two cavalry corps--one in each of the two cavalry-mechanized groups. Each of these corps had, however, about twice as many tanks as a comparable German division; moreover, these formations included 40%-50% of the tanks and assault guns in the Soviet forces. More than 6,000 aircraft, organized into five air armies, one supporting each front except 1st Belorussian where two air armies were allocated, would provide air support. Additionally, nearly 1,000 aircraft of Soviet Long Range Aviation would support the offensive from bases in southern Russia. Of these initial divisions, ninety-seven would make the six main penetrations of the German front. On the penetration, or breakthrough, sectors, the Soviets would also concentrate 65% of the men, 63% of the guns and mortars, 76% of the tanks and assault guns, and 73% of the aircraft (not including the front and army rear services, air force personnel, or the troops of the left wing of the 1st Belorussian Front). This concentration would translate the overall 3:1 superiority in men and divisions, 8:1 in guns, 10:1 in tanks and assault guns, and 4:1 in aircraft into tactical superiorities of 10:1 in those sectors. These concentrations

were not unnoticed by the Germans, but the cover and deception operations, called maskirovka by the Soviets, caused them to misinterpret them, as explained below.

The Soviet figures in Correlation of Forces do not reflect the left-wing armies and forces of the 1st Belorussian Front in the south. These forces amounted to another forty-two divisions in six combined arms armies, one tank army, and one air army. However, they would only enter the battle when the main BAGRATION forces passed Slonim on their way west. Nor do they count two whole combined armies in Stavka reserve, located at Smolensk to be sure, but unavailable to the front commanders for their commitment on their own authority.

Moreover, the Soviet forces had some potentially exploitable weaknesses. In the first place, the authorized personnel strength of their rifle divisions was about one-third less than the German infantry division of the time, and the actual personnel strength of the rifle divisions was at about one-half of authorized strength. They had, however, been reinforced for this operation, so the strength may have been up, although it was not full strength. Nor were their artillery units at division level as numerous or as capable as those at division level in the German division; rather, their artillery at division conducted direct fire in support of infantry, and attached artillery units or artillery at corps fired indirect fire missions. This characteristic extended to other supporting arms within the Soviet rifle division. They were not as numerous or as capable as like units in the German infantry division. The Soviet rifle division depended upon attachments from higher or support from corps to give them the

capability and sustainability of German divisions. The number of infantrymen, however, was about equal to that of the German infantry division of the time (2,000 infantrymen at battalion level), which was also understrength. Thus, a Soviet rifle division was about half a German division in effectiveness, making the 118 Soviet rifle divisions equal to about fifty-nine German divisions. In another comparison, an American infantry division of 1944 with its habitual attachments was equal to a Soviet rifle corps of two to three divisions, and, therefore, a Soviet army was about equal to an American corps and a Soviet front equal to an American field army.

(2) German Forces.

The German forces of Army Group Center consisted of fifty divisions and three brigades. These included thirty-eight infantry divisions, one Panzer division, three panzer grenadier divisions (one of which was OKH reserve), three Hungarian divisions, and five security divisions in the rear. The two latter categories of divisions were not available to counter Soviet battle forces in the field. Of the rest, thirty-eight divisions, including two panzer grenadier divisions, were allocated to the front-line defense, while four divisions--the panzer division, the OKH reserve panzer grenadier division, and two infantry divisions--were in reserve for the armies. Immediately to the south of Army Group Center at Kowel lay the LVI Panzer Corps of two panzer divisions which had until May belonged to Army Group Center. By Soviet estimates, other forces which from north and south of Army Group Center which could reinforce brought the total of divisions available to the defenders to 63-66 divisions. While in the Army Group

Center proper there may have been as few as 200 tanks/assault guns, or as many as 400, but potential reinforcements brought the possible total up to 900 available to the Germans as committed forces or reinforcements. There were approximately 9,500 guns and mortars, and the 6th Air Fleet supported Army Group Center with 1,342 aircraft, although some sources report only forty fighters available to Army Group Center. Other participants reported seeing no German aircraft during the campaign. On the Eastern Front, Luftwaffe strength was declining due to the Allied bombing campaign and the air battle which it had engendered as the Luftwaffe defended Germany. The losses to the Luftwaffe in aircraft and pilots in April and May 1944 had been 5,000. Only from the Eastern Front could replacement aircraft and pilots be obtained.

(3) Logistical.

The Soviet forces had made substantial efforts to provide proper logistical support for the operation. For the size of forces involved, the movements had to be substantial, and they were. There were 90-100 railroad trains daily to the fronts involved in the operation before the start of it, for a total of approximately 5,000 trains, each of fifty cars average. Of the total, 2,000 trains were used to transport personnel or formations, and 3,000 were employed for supplies. Division stocks were brought up to five units of fire (necessitating 13,500 rail cars), fourteen days' rations, and ten to twenty refills of POL. For the force as a whole, there were brought in 150,000 metric tons of rations, 900,000 metric tons of artillery ammunition, and 1,200,000 metric tons of POL, that is, approximately three-fourths of the total supply effort was taken up by just those three

classes of supply. In addition, the operation would need 45,000 metric tons per day of supplies in the advance, or an average of 275 metric tons per day per division. (By contrast, U.S. planners used 600 tons of supplies per day per division.) To care for casualties, there were 294,000 hospital beds, about equal to 18% of the force. (The Soviet planning figure seems to have averaged about 20% of the force for World War II.)

In order to move these supplies forward of the railheads, there were about 12,000 trucks, organized into four truck brigades of 1,275 trucks each, one per front, and one truck regiment of 348 trucks per army, an average of forty trucks per division. In addition to rail and road transport, air transport was employed during the operation. To be sure, it was not a mass carrier, but it helped. During the operation , aerial resupply delivered 1,182 metric tons of fuel, 1,240 metric tons of Ammunition, and around 1,000 tons of equipment and spare parts to forward units, primarily mobile groups.

(4) Command, control, communications.

The operation was centrally planned and controlled in the initial stages, but it became decentralized in execution in the latter stages. The planning echelons were Stavka in the first instance and the fronts in the second in an iterative process which also involved the supreme commander, Joseph Stalin himself. The primary executing echelons were the armies and fronts. The dispatch of Stavka representatives to the fronts--Marshal Vasilevsky, Chief of the General Staff, to coordinate 1st Baltic and 3d Belorussian Fronts in the north, and Marshal Zhukov, Deputy Supreme commander, to coordinate 2d and 1st Belorussian Fronts in the south--would

provide the key link between planning and execution and between Stavka and the fronts. These Stavka representatives would remain at the command posts of the fronts making the main efforts: 3d Belorussian for Vasilevsky and 1st Belorussian for Zhukov. Later, Stavka representatives for coordination of aviation would also arrive at the fronts.

There were also requirements for fronts to communicate directly and immediately with the General staff in Moscow, and to this end, each front had a chief of operations communications links on the rolls of the front Main Signals Directorate. Additionally, the headquarters organized operations groups, headed by the chief of operations section or deputy chief of staff and staffed by officers from the operations, intelligence, and cipher sections. Army operations groups also included representatives from artillery, armored/mechanized troops, and engineer troops. The front operations would have the commanders of those arms and selected members of their own staffs as well as the commander of the supporting air army. Operations groups were equipped with mobile communications centers, and they were expected to operate close to the front.

Communications here conflicted with the cover and deception plan, or maskirovka, but solutions were to be found. As there were strict restrictions of the use of radio, wire was the primary means of communication before the operation, and, below army, after it had begun. In order to help front commanders keep better informed, they were assigned detachments of special liaison officers equipped with special radios, encryption gear, and even observation planes. These liaison officers had the mission of reporting back to their front commanders, and they also had

the authority to report any negative information back to their front commanders as well as relay his instructions to subordinate commanders. Nor were their reports restricted just to the supported front commander; they could also communicate directly with Stavka (or the Stavka representative with the fronts). At each front were special purpose communication centers for communications directly back to Stavka.

The availability of equipment had improved both quantitatively and qualitatively since the beginning of the war, and the Soviet forces' proficiency had also improved. HF multiplexing equipment was received and put into service at higher echelons. At lower echelons, troops had begun receiving ultra-short wave radios with a range of 10 kilometers. Quantitatively, the availability of equipment had increased two-fold over the start of the year and six-fold since the start of the war.

(5) Deception and intelligence.

One of the most important aspects of the BAGRATION planning was the cover and deception plan, called maskirovka by the Soviets. In the Soviet meaning, maskirovka covers much more than just cover and deception. It even has a connotation of positive or active control of the enemy. By 1944, maskirovka had come to be characterized by this scope and diversity. It included the use of reconnaissance on a wide front, simultaneously, active operations of aviation--on main and secondary fronts, preparation of offensive operations in a number of strategic directions at once, switch to offensive from defense on secondary directions or fronts initially, and concentrated use of smoke. Above all, maskirovka was coordinated and integrated from the very top--Stavka--and implemented as the plan filtered down to the lower echelons.

In the case of Operation BAGRATION, maskirovka led to some most impressive accomplishments. First, the magnitude and location of the movement of the supplies discussed earlier was hidden from the Germans. Second, the concentration or relocation of five combined arms armies, two tank armies, two mechanized corps and two cavalry corps, eleven aviation corps, and 210,000 replacements for forces in place were successfully hidden. More important, the location, strength, and timing of the offensive were concealed strategically, the location, strength, and objectives of attacking forces were concealed operationally, and the penetration concentrations of forces and guns were concealed tactically. These successes were due to the use of maskirovka measures at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

The strategic measures undertaken were directed by Stavka and carried out by the respective fronts. In some cases, these measures fit into preparations for subsequent offensive operations by those fronts. One of the most important was the creation of diversionary, dummy concentrations of troops of the flanks of the theater, to be "shown" during the period 5-15 June. In the south, 3d Ukrainian Front created one such concentration, in the vicinity of Kishinev, and the 3d Baltic Front prepared another such concentration to its rear east of the Cherekha River. Each of these concentrations was to show a combined arms army of eight to nine rifle divisions reinforced by tanks and artillery. Second, offensives were timed and located to serve as diversions from the preparations in the center. Thus, the Crimea offensive in the south from 8 April-12 May created one such diversion. Likewise, the Karelian offensive against Finland was explicitly

timed--commencing 10 June--to serve as another such diversion. Third, major formations which could serve as indicators of offensive preparations were shown in locations where the Germans expected them to be. For example, the three tank armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front were left in that front, reinforcing the German predisposition for offensive in the south. Of course, they also kept German mobile forces from Army Group Center; indeed, they probably led to the assignment of the lone panzer corps with panzer divisions, LVI Panzer Corps, in Army Group Center to Army Group North Ukraine in May. Additionally, the 5th Guards Tank Army, which did transfer from the south to Operation BAGRATION, was first shown in the rear of 3d Ukrainian Front, further to the south, before its move north, where it arrived only on 16 June. The Soviets also raised another tank army, for a total of 6 compared to the 5 for which the Germans were looking. The Soviets also left the bulk of their Long Range Aviation air armies (6 of 8) in the south, reinforcing the German inclinations, while they could attack targets in the BAGRATION area from those locations.

Among other measures which were employed to aid the maskirovka was the limitation of overall knowledge of the plan to five people besides Stalin: Zhukov (Deputy Supreme Commander), Vasilevsky (Chief, General Staff), Antonov (Deputy Chief, General Staff), Shtemenko (Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations), and his deputy. Although the number of personnel with access was later expanded, the access remained restricted to a few officers at front level and arms and services level. There was also public announcement of defensive aims, such as by Stalin at the May Day parade of 1944, and troops were informed that they were to defend in their sector and

would join the expected offensive from the south after it commenced. Then, too, much of the personnel build-up consisted of reinforcing formations already in the sector, both with lower-echelon units and with personnel and equipment replacements, rather than major introduction of new units. This held except for mobile groups, and those were successfully hidden from the Germans.

Operational maskirovka measures aimed at concealing the front main attack areas and the forces to be employed in them as well as the timing of the attacks. Especially concealed were the shift of 6th Guards Army in 1st Baltic Front's sector from the right of the sector to the center-left, next to 43d Army, to make the penetration and encirclement north of Vitebsk, the arrival of 5th Guards Tank Army in the left rear of 3d Belorussian front, and the deployment of 28th Army as part of the penetration and encirclement of Bobruisk from the south. The Soviets did show their preparations for offensives at Orsha, Mogilev, and Bobruisk from the Rogachev direction north of the city and east of the Beresina. They further simulated offensive action against Vitebsk on its face rather than at the shoulders of its salient where the main attacks were, in fact, located. In addition to concealing their efforts at the shoulders of Vitebsk, they also concealed their effort against Bobruisk from south of the city and west of the Beresina.

Also, diversionary reconnaissances-in-force were conducted during the period 20-23 June by 2d and 3d Baltic and 1st Ukrainian Fronts, initially, in reinforced company and reinforced battalion strengths. They were joined in the latter stages by forces of the 1st Baltic and 3d, 2d, and

1st Belorussian Fronts. At its extent, this diversion involved 60 detachments over 1,000 kilometers of frontage; moreover, the RIF'S of 1st Baltic Front were so successful that the front commander exploited them and forswore his prepared attack.

Other operational measures included establishing a 25-kilometer security zone not only in the sector of Operation BAGRATION but also along the entire front. Special security was effected for all rail movements to Belorussia, with rifle divisions making joint--foot and rail--movements and at night, if possible. Soviet air superiority denied the Germans any use of aerial reconnaissance, and radio silence was decreed for major formations (front as well as army) and new formations which were not yet on line. A General Controllers' Service was established to regulate the concealment of movements and camouflage of stationary troops, and they were headed by the Chief of Staff at front and by the military council at army and corps.

Tactical maskirovka measures aimed at preventing the Germans from learning the identities of existence of mobile groups and reinforcements not already on line. Thus, wire or courier were the primary means of communication before the offensive began. In addition, within the 25 kilometers security zone, ground reconnaissance was denied by vigorous patrolling. Ground and air movements by the Soviets were controlled forward of the front rear boundary, and main movements were made at night. At night, also, the troops worked on their camouflage, which was inspected daily and reported on to the front commander, and they used vertical masks or screens in front of trenches and works to help hide them from observation. The Soviets did not try to hide everything from the Germans,

however, as that would have been as revealing as having everything out in the open. Rather, they aimed at letting the Germans see what they knew was there or what the Soviets wanted them to see.

Soviet maskirovka and intelligence would be immeasurably aided by the use of the partisan forces of Belorussia. These partisans performed reconnaissance functions for the fronts, acting under orders put out from the Belorussian Partisan Staff in Gomel, and they would also perform interdiction functions in the German rear areas. In spite of two very heavy attacks by German forces in the spring, the Belorussian partisans still numbered 143,000 in 150 brigades and 49 separate detachments. During the period 19-22 June, they attempted some 2,000 cuts of railways and succeeded in 1000 of them, setting some 10,000 individual charges per night. They also attacked some 26 headquarters. These activities affected German reinforcements arriving after the battle more than they did internal communications or resupply, the latter due to the speed with which the German defenses fell. Had they had to fight for an extended period, depending upon the lines for resupply, they might well have felt the effects in resupply as well.

Surprisingly, the Soviet air forces were not employed to any great extent in interdiction activities. Instead, their main tasks were to maintain air superiority over the battlefield, provide close air support to ground forces, especially those mobile forces which had outrun the mass of Soviet artillery, and conduct reconnaissance for the ground forces. Soviet Long Range Aviation forces attacked likely German headquarters and air force installations rather than engaging in aerial interdiction.

The Germans did obtain some of the picture, but, because of their predisposition toward a Soviet attack in the south, they read those indicators as reflecting a defensive rather than offensive intention in Army Group Center. OKH (the German High Command for the Eastern Front) did know that all of the Soviet tank armies (which they believed to number five) were in the south; they were unaware that the Stavka had raised a sixth tank army which had replaced the 5th Guards Tank Army. They also saw the 2d Tank Army in the left wing of 1st Belorusian Front as belonging to the forces dedicated to the southern offensive rather than as part of BAGRATION. They did not know the location of the three armies which took part in the liberation of the Crimea--two of which, 2d Guards Army and 51st Army, would form Stavka reserve at Smolensk for BAGRATION. They saw that frontal aviation in the south, already the strongest part of the Soviet Air Forces, had increased, but they failed to notice that frontal aviation in the center had increased even more than in the south although the southern frontal aviation remained stronger. This estimate was strengthened by the presence of the bulk of Long Range Aviation assets in the south also. They saw any preparations in the center as being, at worst, part of a diversionary offensive(s) to precede the main offensive in the north Ukraine.

Army Group Center had a somewhat clearer picture, although it, too, did not have the whole picture. They had obtained a fairly good estimate of the Soviet order of battle in artillery and air forces, but they had vastly underestimated the enemy division and mobile forces facing them. They had only identified 140 enemy division and 3 tank/mechanized corps, a miss of 40% in division and 300% in mobile forces. The error was also as bad when

it came to numbers of Soviet tanks facing them: they estimated 400-1,800 tanks facing them against the 4,000-5,200 actually available. They had, however, correctly placed the bulk of the tanks in the 3d and 1st Balorussian fronts. By 14 June, Army Group Center was sufficiently concerned to raise the issue in a conference with OKH representatives, expressing their belief that there would be main attacks on their flanks and that it would commence soon.

The armies had come closer to the mark with relation to the locations of enemy forces facing them although they underestimated the strength and failed to see enemy capabilities in a larger, or operational, context. The 3d Panzer Army, in the north, had identified the chance of a main attack to the southest of Vitebsk and, based upon identification of 3 new divisions, 100 tanks, and new artillery, a supporting attack northwest of Vitebsk. From 13 June on, they had seen a further concentration north of the Smolensk-Minsk highway through Orsha. Actually this was a lapse in camouflage discipline by 5th Artillery Breakthrough Corps. From 19 June on, they expected to be attacked at any time, with the main effort to be a local envelopement of Vitebsk; they did recognize that there was some significance to the concentration along the highway near Orsha, but they did not pursue it.

The 4th Army, in the center, had early assessed that the concentration near Orsha could be a main attack, and from 16 June on, they were also aware of a buildup east of Mogilev itself. They had expected an attack from 11 June at any time, then on 16 June estimated one to occur at

22 June. By 19 June, they expected an attack within the next 2-3 days, but they saw no larger significance to the attacks and locations in their sector.

In the south, the 9th Army had gained the clearest picture of all, but even they only saw a local significance. They had seen the attack preparations towards Bobruisk from Rosacheve from 30 May on, as the Soviets desired. From 7 June on they also saw a supporting attack west of the Beresina and south of Bobruisk, and by 12 June, they had assessed both locations as main attacks, with the one west of the Beresina the most dangerous. They did not realize, however, just how dangerous it was with the addition of 28th Army. On 13 June, they expected the Soviet attack either 15, 20 or 22 June; by 17 June, they estimated the time as 20 June, and on 20 June, they estimated 22 June. They saw the enemy objectives as the seizure of Bobruisk, splitting the army and cutting off German forces east of the Beresina.

In sum, then, the Soviet maskirovka had concealed the location and strength of the summer offensive strategically. Operationally, Army Group Center had some disquiet feelings, but they had not identified the strength of the Soviet forces. While they had identified some of the eventual concentrations, they had not put them into any context larger than tactical. The armies had a better idea of locations and timings, but even they had not appraised the operational or strategic significance of their knowledge.

(6) Doctrine.

(a) Soviet.

By the third period of the war, Soviet doctrine had come to view the double envelopment as the best way to destroy large enemy formations. They viewed accomplishing these in five stages: penetration of the enemy's tactical zone; exploitation and linkup by the encircling forces; formation of the inner arm of the encirclement; formation of the outer arm; and continuation of subsequent operations. Generally, in order to concentrate the strength necessary for a large-scale double envelopment, the Soviets employed the forces of at least two fronts. Of thirty encirclement battles, twenty-two were carried out by groups of fronts. Indeed, during the planning for this operation, one point of contention is reported to have been General Rokossovsky's insistence upon a double envelopment of Bobruisk by his front; he held this position with Stalin himself, even after Molotov had taken him from the room and asked if he remembered with whom he was arguing. Stalin agreed eventually, reminding Rokossovsky that it was now his responsibility. In encirclement operations each front organized its forces into "assault groups" and mobile groups. They employed combined arms armies, suitably reinforced and task organized, for the initial assault and tactical breakthrough and the mobile groups for the encircling force, the outer arm of the encirclement, and to continue further operations. The combined arms armies of the first echelon or the second echelon armies would also form the inner arm of the encirclement.

In order to accomplish this they first concentrated their strength at the point of decision, massed units to create high tactical densities, and echeloned their forces to ensure depth. Soviet front commanders task organized their "assault groups" with infantry, tanks,

artillery, and engineer units for the penetration and tactical breakthrough. The assault commanders might form special mobile groups in the lead rifle divisions, often consisting of a rifle battalion, tank regiment or brigade, engineers, and SP artillery commanded by the division deputy commander, to penetrate rapidly to seize deep tactical objectives, such as breaking through the tactical defense zone or seizing a river or obstacle crossing. In the third period of the war, Soviet assault forces usually penetrated the main positions of the enemy's tactical defense zones within the first day of an offensive, using divisions' forward detachments and quickly opening the way for second echelon units or mobile groups to pass through the gap, even while the tactical battle might be raging, into the enemy's rear areas.

When combined-arms assault forces penetrated the enemy's tactical defenses, the decisive moment came with the commitment of front and army mobile groups to exploit the breach, driving for deep operational objectives. The offensive entered a phase in which the mobility and maneuverability of units often meant the difference between victory and defeat. Front-level mobile groups were generally composed of tank armies and/or "cavalry-mechanized groups," which consisted of a cavalry corps (which had organic tanks) joined with a mechanized (less frequently, tank) corps. They were used where the terrain or weather precluded or limited the employment of large armored forces. Tank and/or mechanized corps made up the mobile group(s) of an army. Army and front commanders moved mobile groups through the gaps to go deep, disrupt, and destroy. Army mobile groups maneuvered within 50-100 kilometers of the front line to encircle

tactically and destroy enemy formations in cooperation with combined arms units. Front mobile groups ranged wider, with operational missions: smash operational reserves, disrupt communication and supply networks; seize important terrain features, such as crossroads or river crossings; overcome positions in the operational defense zone; seize and hold bridgeheads; cut enemy retreat routes and threaten or accomplish encirclement; pursue enemy forces. Usually, mobile groups needed dedicated air support as they would outrun their normal front and army artillery support.

(b) German.

While the German military recognized the need for shortening their lines so they could form operational reserves with mobility, Adolf Hitler prevented this elastic defense. Therefore, the combination of linear and strongpoint defense which he prescribed played directly into the Soviet doctrine. Moreover, the extended frontages which resulted caused the Germans' mobile forces to be too spread out, tactically, to allow much of a counterattack, whether tactically or operationally. The static defense, linear or fortress, also allowed the other great powerhouse of the Red Army, the artillery, to wreak havoc upon the defenders before the assault forces even reached them.

b. Military Objectives/Missions/Tasks

(1) Missions of opposing forces.

(a) Soviet. For a detailed outline of the planning sequence, see Annex D.

1. 1st Baltic Front:

--Penetrate enemy's defense southwest of Gorodok and cross to west bank of Western Dvina River.

--Encircle Vitebsk from west and south, seize Vitebsk, and destroy enemy forces in Vitebsk region in conjunction with forces from 3d Belorussian Front on left.

--Advance on Lepel' (75-100 kilometers) and along west bank of Western Dvina, protecting northern flank of the offensive.

2. 3d Belorussian Front:

--Penetrate enemy's defense southeast of Vitebsk and advance northwest to Western Dvina River.

--Encircle Vitebsk from east and south, seize Vitebsk, and destroy enemy forces in Vitebsk region in conjunction with forces from 1st Baltic Front.

--Seize city of Senno and continue advance to southeast.

--Penetrate enemy's defense north of Smolensk-Minsk highway to seize Orsha and destroy enemy forces.

--Advance along axis of highway and destroy enemy forces in vicinity of Borisov.

--Break through to west bank of Beresina in vicinity of Borisov.

--Concentrate main forces in Orsha-Borisov sector for further operations.

3. 2d Belorussian Front.

--Penetrate enemy forces defending Mogilev and destroy them.

--Continue advance along Mogilev-Minsk highway to Beresina River.

4. 1st Belorussian Front.

--Penetrate enemy defenses from Rogachev north of Bobruisk and east of Beresina River.

--Penetrate enemy defenses from south of Bobruisk and west of Beresina River.

--Encircle Bobruisk and destroy enemy forces in region.

--Continue advance in two directions: Bobruisk-Minsk and Bobruisk-Baranovichi.

--Commence advance of troops of left wing (near Kovel') after troops of right wing pass Slonim.

(b) German forces. (See Maps at Tab 2.) The German forces were ordered to conduct a static defense along the Dnieper River east of the Drut and Western Dvina Rivers (Map 2A). Specifically, they had to hold the cities of Vitebsk, Orsha, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Borisov, and Minsk as fortified places, requiring a minimum of one division per city as the garrison. The German tactical zone included two lines of defense. Of the two, the line along the front was the better prepared because manpower and time only permitted work on the line closest to the enemy (May 2B). The Germans also attempted to construct lines at depths of up to 250 kilometers, but Hitler had categorically forbidden construction on the line along the Beresina and Dnieper, feeling that it would become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The first line had two or three belts, each with two or three lines of trenches. The depth of this line was about 3.7 kilometers. The second line only had one belt of two or three trenches, much of which was not finished.

The terrain in Army Group Center's sector (Map 1) favored the defense and, moreover, presented obstacles to the movement of mass armored formations. Most important of the natural features in the area were the numerous rivers which almost all ran north or south, the Dnieper, Drut, Beresina, Western Dvina, Svisloch, Ptich, and Neman. All were potential barriers, which unfortunately went unrealized by the defenders. The river system contributed to the second most important of the terrain features in the area: the marshes, bogs, and, finally, the Pripet Marshes to the south. These bogs and marshes restricted cross-country movement and made the roads, railroads, and cities more important than ever, especially those which passed through gaps in the bogs (Map 2D): Molodechno and Baranovichi. Thus, the Soviets would use only one tank army in this area but two cavalry-mechanized groups, and their deep objectives would be those key communications centers.

c. Courses of action considered.

(1) Soviet. See Annex D.

Among the courses of action considered, and even implemented in the first Stavka draft, was that of a direct pincer move from north and south, through Vitebsk and Bobruisk, to Minsk, encircling the German forces entrapped therein. The disadvantages to this plan were that it did not fix other German forces within the salient sufficiently, it aimed at locations at which the Germans were strong (and had proved it in the recent winter-spring campaign when they had stopped the Soviet forces at Vitebsk, Orsha, and Bobruisk), and it did not provide enough alternatives to get the mobile groups out rapidly, before German countermeasures could seal off

success at the gaps. Although the Minsk-Smolensk highway through Orsha was the main high-speed axis of advance through the Army Group Center area, it narrowed at Borisov, and the Germans had recognized the same factor. The original plan also aimed at a much shorter advance, 200-250 kilometers, and, therefore, it would not be a strategic success, even if it was an operational one.

The revised plan, on the other hand, had the advantages of making its advances in stages, although with the various echelons aiming simultaneously at successively greater depths, fixing the German forces in place more securely, and providing for exploitation beyond the lines planned if they were more successful than thought. It also took advantage of the tying of German forces to known localities, such as the 6 fortress cities.

(2) German.

The main alternative available to the Germans was how much to trade space for time, but this was not permitted by either resources or Hitler. Additionally, Hitler's personal orders establishing 6 fortress cities reduced the Army Group's options for selecting localities to defend and soaked up potential reserves, or thickening forces with which to weight the defense, by tying them to specific cities. The removal of LVI Panzer Corps then eliminated any operational reserves from the Army Group. Even locally, the German forces had a very thin defensive line, and any break or rupture would be catastrophic.

3. Conduct of Operation.

a. Disposition of forces.

(1) Soviet. See Annex E for overall groupings. See map for 22 June 1944 at Tab 3 for locations.

The Soviet dispositions concentrated tremendous combat power in the areas selected for the six penetrations and exercised economy of force elsewhere. Even so, the number of divisions and the length of the sector caused all four fronts to array themselves in a single echelon, with all of their combined arms armies on line; moreover, within the armies, the predominant attack formation was also single echelon. Only the 6th Guards Army of the 1st Baltic Front and the 3d and 65th Armies of the 1st Belorussian Front used two echelons, each army keeping one rifle corps in the second echelon. The desired concentration of combat power took place by narrowing the attack zone and breakthrough or penetration sectors of the assault rifle corps, who then attacked in two or even three echelons. See map at Tab 3, Dispositions 0600, 22 June 1944, to follow the discussion of Soviet dispositions. Also, See Annex F for some figures on the concentrations achieved by the Soviets at selected penetration sectors.

The mobile formations were allocated only to axes of main effort. Armies had organic to them tank brigades, which they attached forward to rifle corps, usually those making the main effort. In turn, the rifle corps would attach those brigades to a lead rifle division which would then use them to form, with a rifle battalion and engineers, forward detachments, often commanded by the division deputy commander. The tank corps were attached to certain armies for their use in developing success or reinforcement. The cavalry-mechanized groups and the tank army were allocated to the fronts making the main effort, but their employment was a

matter of Stavka concern, especially if it would deviate from the plan. In general, the corps and army deep attacks by armies without tank corps were about 50-60 kilometers deep. But even they could be used for an important objective. For example, the encirclement of Vitebsk was effected by the forward detachments of 43d Army from the north and tank brigades of 39th army from the south. Tank corps were employed against objectives up to 100-150 kilometers deep, and front mobile groups would make deep attacks against objectives 200-250 kilometers deep.

In 1st Baltic Front, 1st Tank Corps was attached to 6th Guards Army for use in developing success to the west once the Western Dvina had been crossed. The 3d Belorussian Front attached its 2d Guards Tank Corps to the 11th Guards Army, for use in exploitation along the Orsha-Borisov axis. The Oslikovksy Cavalry-Mechanized Group (CMG) and 5th Guards Tank Army remained under Front control, although the CMG was to be employed through 5th Army in the northern penetration by 3d Belorussian Front to develop success towards the Beresina and, beyond that, towards Minsk. The decision on employment of the 5th Guards Tank Army had been a matter for Stavka and Stalin to decide. Eventually, they decided that it should be introduced in 11th Guards Army's sector, astride the Minsk-Smolensk highway, towards Borisov, and, after that, making the encirclement of German forces from the north passing east of Minsk. There was provision, however, for it to enter battle through 5th Army's sector.

No major mobile formations had been allocated to 2d Belorussian Front. As a result, it took one of its organic tank brigades and attached it to the assault army, 49th Army, for use in developing success. The 1st

Belorussian Front, making the other main effort at Bobruisk, attached its 9th Tank Corps to 3d Army, of the northern group, for exploitation towards Bobruisk and Minsk. The other tank corps of the Front was attached to 65th Army in the south, with the same mission as 9th Tank Corps. The Pliyev CMG was the Front mobile group, located in 28th Army's sector, and had the objectives of Slutsk, Osipovichi (towards Minsk), or Bobruisk.

The attack northwest of Vitebsk by 6th Guards Army and 43d Army was to be made by three corps on an exceedingly narrow front: the left rifle corps of 6th Guards Army and the two right wing corps of 43d Army. These three corps, with 1st Tank Corps and two rifle corps in 6th Guards Army faced about 1 1/2 German divisions. South of Vitebsk, the adjoining corps of 39th and 5th Armies would launch an attack south of Vitebsk due west and southwest. The 39th Army would swing its forces back north to complete the encirclement of Vitebsk while 5th Army would continue the attack westward. See Annex F, paragraphs 1 and 2, for examples of the concentration of combat power for the attacks of 5th Army and 5th Guards Rifle Corps of 39th Army.

In the Orsha-Mogilev sector, 11th Guards Army in the north would launch an attack on Orsha from north and east. It would employ two rifle corps in a very narrow sector to initiate the advance, basically along the main highway and railroad towards Orsha from the northeast. Again, see Annex F, paragraphs 1 and 2 for examples of the concentration of combat power by 11th Guards Army and one of its corps. After the first day of the operation, General Galitsky, the commander, had to alter his plan because of the German resistance. Indeed, he shifted four divisions and 2d Guards Tank Corps to his northern flank after the first day. The 31st Army south of

11th Guards Army had its attack weighted to its right flank, where two rifle corps would attack in concert with the two left flank corps of 11th Guards Army. However, they had no mobile group.

In 2d Belorussian Front area, only one assault was to be made, by 49th Army directly east of Mogilev. This army had nearly half the combat power of the Front, and it had further concentrated its forces, three rifle corps on an exceedingly narrow front with divisions in three echelons in some cases. Even though not allocated any major mobile forces, the army would use one of its organic tank brigades as a mobile group. See Annex F, paragraph 1, note a., for the relative combat power. The other two armies acted as holding forces with no distinct offensive mission.

Further south, in the 1st Belorussian Front area, 3d Army, with two of its four corps concentrated in a very narrow sector on the left flank, would attack north of Rogachev, side-by-side with two corps of 48th Army, concentrated on 48th Army's right flank in narrow sectors also. See Annex F, paragraphs 1 and 2, for concentration of the forces of 3d Army and its two corps. The remainder of 48th Army's front was held by a small rifle corps and a fortified region (a division-size force intended for holding, economy-of-force missions). For the southern assault against Bobruisk, 65th Army had its combat power developed on its left flank in the 18th Rifle Corps of five divisions backed up by the 1st Guards Tank Corps. See Annex F, paragraphs 1 and 2, for concentration figures. On the left flank of the southern assault, 28th Army deployed its combat power in two rifle corps on its right flank adjacent to 65th Army's assault force. Located to its rear was the Front mobile group, the Pliyev CMG. These three corps with

ten divisions, one tank corps, and the front CMG faced about one and one-half German divisions, with the understrength 20th Panzer Division in reserve at Bobruisk.

Because of the lengthy time of preparation, the Soviets had available a large number of infantry support tanks and artillery. Also, they did a lot of task organizing of low level units, including the creation of assault groups and tailored advanced battalions, including engineer support of substantial proportions.

(2) German forces. See Map 2A.

As seen on the referenced map, the German forces occupied positions with sectors of 10-20 kilometers per frontline division. The occupied positions were in a single echelon with only four divisions in reserve at army level, with other divisions as mentioned earlier. Because of the width of the individual sectors, even the divisions could not concentrate in vital sectors but had to deploy all of their battalions forward. Only in the Vitebsk sector was there an apparent concentration of divisions, but since they were holding a salient, as in the north, the troop density was still only 10 kilometers per division. There were one infantry division and two assault gun battalions, albeit at reduced strength, in tactical reserve.

The defenses at Orsha appear to have been more concentrated, with 78th Infantry Division and 25th Panzer Grenadier Division on line astride the main highway and another infantry division in reserve north of Orsha. Yet, when 11th Guards Army (122,000 men, 2637 guns/mortars, and 484 tanks/AG's) pressed, it eventually found the sector where the Germans had economized and pushed their assault through there. The divisions

defending the Mogilev approach were supported only by one Panzer grenadier division, Feldhernhalle, which was understrength in its assault gun battalion and, further, required OKH approval for commitment.

On the Bobruisk approach, there was a panzer division in tactical reserve for Ninth Army, but it was understrength and inadequately armed in tanks. Moreover, the indecisiveness with which it was finally employed contributed greatly to its ineffectiveness. In the breakthrough sector of 3d and 48th Armies, each Soviet corps opposed no more than one two-battalion German regiment, while Soviet forces of no more than equal size to the German forces held the sector between there and the southern breakthrough sector. There, again, the two German divisions in the sector defended against thirteen Soviet Rifle divisions, one tank corps of about 300 tanks and a CMG. That gave a Soviet superiority of about one division for each German battalion.

b. Opening Moves. (See maps at Tab 3 for daily summaries 22 June-13 July 1944.)

Operation BAGRATION did not commence at one time, but rather, developed successively from north to south. The reconnaissance phase of the attack commenced in the 1st Baltic, 3d Belorussian, and 2d Belorussian Front sectors on 22 June. In the 1st Baltic sector, the gains were so impressive that overnight, General Bagramyan, the commander, decided to dispense with hs formal attack on 23 June and exploited the gains of his RIF. By then, his assault forces, some fifteen battalions, were already 5 kilometers into the German defenses. The divisions sent out forward detachments on 23 June, which had the mission of reaching the Dvina River as soon as possible. As

you can see from the map of 23 June, some of them had reached it by nightfall, and the breach had reached 16 kilometers in depth and 50 kilometers in width. Although Bagramyan ordered 1st Tank Corps forward, the condition of the roads prevented it from entering the battle that day.

The 3d and 2d Belorussian Fronts commenced their offensives on 23 June 1944, with a massive artillery and air barrage followed by the new penetration tactics. In the 3d Belorussian Front sector, the 39th and 5th Armies obtained the greatest success on this day. They penetrated to a depth of 10-11 kilometers on a 50 kilometers front, and, in 39th Army's sector, the tank and assault gun brigades supporting each assault division passed through and commenced their exploitation for the Dvina River and link-up with 43d Army forces. In 5th Army's sector, conditions were ripe for the early commitment of the Oslikovsky CMG the next day. On the Orsha axis, however, things did not go so well. In spite of the numerical superiority of 11th Guards Army, its progress in the selected breakthrough sector was only a few kilometers, but the right flank corps was achieving success. Thus, the army commander, General Galitsky, decided to commit his army mobile group, 2d Guards Tank Corps, to the north, along with four rifle divisions from the south of his sector. Army Group Center committed the two divisions stationed in the Vitebsk and Orsha areas--95th and 14th Infantry Divisions--against the penetrations, but piecemeal.

The 49th Army of the 2d Belorussian Front made the most significant advance of the day, penetrating 10-12 kilometers in its sector, albeit at heavy cost to the attacking infantry. It did, however, cause commitment of

the German Feldherrnhalle Panzer Grenadier Division against it. The forward detachments of the assault rifle divisions led this advance.

On 24 June, the most important event of the operation occurred in the southern sector: 1st Belorussian Front opened its offensive northeast and south of Bobruisk. The attack of 3d Army in the north gained only 2 kilometers and bogged down in the designated breakthrough sector, but the northernmost corps of the army had had success, and the army commander decided to commit his mobile group, 9th Tank Corps, through it the next day. The southern attack by 65th and 28th Armies had been devastating, with the artillery preparation alone nearly vaporizing the facing German divisions. The 65th Army committed its mobile group, 1st Guards Tank Corps, at 1600 hours that day. While the armies had breached the enemy's defenses on a front of 30 kilometers to a depth of 5-10 kilometers, the 1st Guards Tank Corps pushed the advance to 20 kilometers. The tank corps had the missions of cutting the road west of Bobruisk and encircling the enemy along the Beresina south of Bobruisk. The Germans committed their reserve, 20th Panzer Division, but indecisively. First, they ordered it north, and then they ordered it back south but minus some of its armor. As a result, it saw action in neither sector that day.

To the north, 43d and 6th Guards Armies of 1st Baltic Front secured bridgeheads over the Dvina from the north and expanded the breakthrough to 30 kilometers deep and 90 kilometers wide. The 39th Army advance elements reached the Dvina from the south. In 5th Army's sector, the CMG had just started to go into action, and 5th Tank Army had commenced its move towards the 5th Army sector for commitment. The CMG had positioned 3d Guards

Mechanized Corps on the north and 3d Guards Cavalry Corps to the south; the group's objective was the Beresina River. Further south, the Soviet penetration continued to develop in the northern part of the 11th Army sector, with the additional rifle divisions coming into action and 2d Guards Tank Corps moving north, also. The Stavka representative, Marshal Vasilevsky, decided to change the axis of 5th Guards Tank Army, also, from the Orsha axis to 5th Army's sector. This would take at least thirty-six hours to accomplish.

In the 2d Belorussian Front sector, the advance on Mogilev continued, unimpeded by the FH Panzer Grenadier Division. The 49th Army had committed its own mobile group, built around organic units and the 22d Guards Tank Brigade, and this helped the advance drive deep.

On 25 June, the first encirclement closed on Vitebsk, at a depth of about 50 kilometers. Trapped were five divisions, and 3d Panzer Army had only two of its eleven divisions and one of three corps left. The 39th and 43d Armies would take about three days to liquidate the pocket, accepting the surrender of about 15,000 of an estimated 30,000 in the units in the pocket or to its flanks. Nor were relief attempts to succeed, for on the south the CMG had begun its exploitation towards Borisov on the Beresina. Behind it, 5th Guards Tank Army was assembling and would be ready for commitment the following day. In 11th Guards Army sector, 2d Guards Tank Corps would also be ready for commitment the following day. The 3d Belorussian Front had broken the German defenses on a 100 kilometer front and moved forward 30-50 kilometers. The 49th Army continued to make steady, if costly progress, and approached the Dnieper on the north of Mogilev. In

the 1st Belorussian Front, 3d Army commander committed 9th Tank Corps where the best gains had been made with orders to move on Bobruisk and seize a blocking position east of the city. Meanwhile, 1st Guards Tank Corps moved northwards, trapping a part of 34th German Division against the Beresina. The front commander, General Rokossovsky, ordered the commitment of his CMG (4th Guards Cavalry corps and 1st Mechanized Corps) with the mission to advance through the German defenses and turn west for Slutsk, south of Minsk, against the key communications junction of Baranovichi.

By 26 June, Soviet forces in the north were chopping up the Vitebsk pocket while mobile groups were racing for the Beresina River and Borisov. 5th Guards Tank Army entered action and deployed south of Oslikovsky CMG, putting a phalanx of four corps deployed with brigades abreast in column formation moving southwest on the Beresina and Borisov. The 2d Guards Tank Corps cut the Vitebsk-Orsha road, swung south and cut German communications between Orsha and Minsk, at a depth of 50 kilometers. The 49th Army had reached and crossed the Dnieper north of Mogilev. In the south, 1st Belorussian Front closed on Bobruisk from the east, with 9th Tank Corps, committed to combat that day, driving about 50-75 kilometers to the outskirts of Bobruisk on the east. 1st Guards Tank Corps was just west of Bobruisk and preparing to cut the Bobruisk-Minsk highway, and the Pliyev CMG had reached the Ptich River and was turning towards Slutsk to the west of Bobruisk.

The first German reinforcements for Army Group Center had just arrived, 5th Panzer Division headed for Borisov, and 12th Panzer Division

headed for Bobruisk. As they arrived by rail, they were dispatched piecemeal, and, thus, neither was especially effective in halting the onrushing juggernaut.

On 27 June, the inevitable happened, and 1st Guards Tank Corps and 9th Tank Corps linked up west and north of Bobruisk, trapping about 70,000 in the pocket. Of these, some 8-15,000 managed to get out. The CMG continued west for Slutsk. In the north, a major gap had opened between the remnants of 3d Panzer Army in the north and 4th Army in the center, and the CMG and 5th Guards Tank Army marched into the gap. Meanwhile, to the south, 2d Guards Tank Corps completed the encirlement of 78th German Infantry Division in Orsha. Mogilev itself was now encircled, and 2d Belorussian Front had made its first assault upon it, only to be repulsed.

By 28 June, the magnitude of the opportunities opening up caused Stavka to revise its directions to the fronts. It essentially changed the original second phase from an encirclement east of Minsk by forces from north and south to a wide encirclement west of Minsk, with strong mobile formations holding the shoulders and gaps northwest at Molodechno and southwest at Baranovichi while combined armies formed the inner encirclement east of Minsk around the formations of the center of Army Group Center. Specifically, 1st Baltic Front was to turn further north but continue protecting the northern flank of the offensive. The 3d Belorussian Front was to direct its CMG to Molodechno and 5th Guards Tank Army to encircle Minsk to the west. The 2d Belorussian Front was to provide the direct pressure force against the German forces, moving on Minsk from the east.

The 3d Belorussian Front was to send both its tank corps towards Minsk, while its CMG continued west to Baranovichi.

On the 28th, the forces in the north had reached the Beresina, with the CMG constantly outflanking the German 5th Panzer Division over terrain where the panzers could not follow. In the south, 12th Panzer Division did get a battle group in to the Bobruisk pocket long enough to effect the rescue of some 15,000, but the rest remained encircled. The CMG had reached Slutsk and was menacing Baranovichi, having advanced nearly 100 kilometers in three days. With the elimination of the Bobruisk pocket on 29 June, the first stage of Operation BAGRATION came to an end. The Germans had lost nearly 200,000 men killed or taken prisoner, two armies (3d Panzer and 9th) were ineffective, a third was in danger of being encircled with another 150,000 men, and the four eastern fortresses had fallen: Vitebsk, Orsha, Mogilev, and Bobruisk. The Red Army was nearly 120-150 kilometers into the sector. The success was operational and needed only one more success to raise it to a strategic success.

c. Subsequent Phases.

Subsequent phases of Operation BAGRATION occurred as follows. From 29 June to 4 July the Soviet forces conducted attacks to encircle the German 4th Army forces moving west from Mogilev towards Minsk, with the deep attacks aimed at the capture of Minsk itself and at cutting Minsk off from outside help at the gaps of Molodechno in the north and Baranovichi in the south. Then, from 5-16 July the Soviet forces, in response to another set of orders from Stavka, exploited to the borders of Belorussia, taking the key cities of Vilnius and Baranovichi and creating the conditions for the

1st Ukrainian Front to commence its L'vov-Sandomierz operation south of the Pripet Marshes. The next phases were the attack of the left wing of the 1st Belorussian Front, taking Lublin and Brest and crossing the Vistula at Warsaw (17-31 July) and the Kaunas Operation into Lithuania by the 1st Baltic Front from 28 July-28 August. Although the Soviet forces concluded the Belorussian operation by 29 August on the Vistula, in East Prussia, and in the Baltic states, the deep attack operations had ended in 3d and 2d Belorussian Fronts with the withdrawal of their tank corps and tank army by 13 July from the vicinity of Vilnius, in 1st Belorussian Front by 1 August with its halt in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, and in 1st Baltic Front with the end of the Kaunas operation on 28 August. Gains made during the periods after those cited above were made by the rifle armies with infantry support tank forces rather than by deep attack operations.

By 28 June, the mobile groups of the north were moving in a phalanx with the CMG at the Beresina River north of Borisov, 5th GTA with its two tank corps pressing the German 5th Panzer Division directly along the highway to Borisov, and 2d GTC moving on the Beresina River south of Borisov. While the fighting around Borisov by 5th GTA continued very heavily on 29 and 30 June, the CMG north crossed the Beresina and began to envelope the 5th Panzer Division from the north, while 2d GTC had reached and crossed the Beresina from the south. In the south, the tank corps were still helping with the encirclement of Bobruisk while the CMG advanced west towards Baranovichi, reaching Slutsk by 29 June, about 80 kilometers from Baranovichi. Moreover, the tank corps were disengaging from Bobruisk and beginning to advance up the Bobruisk-Minsk road. In the center, four

armies, 31st, 33d, 49th, and 50th, pursued the German 4th Army (with elements from 3d Panzer Army and 9th Army) and began encircling it north and south, while the deep attack pincers from Borisov and Bobruisk would preclude any escape or relief from Minsk.

By 30 June, the defense of Borisov and the Beresina had collapsed as the 5th Panzer Division withdrew from Borisov to avoid encirclement from the CMG north and 2d GTC to the south, both of which had crossed the river along with 5th GTA at Borisov. Now orders reached the CMG to direct its advance upon Molodechno, approximately 100 kilometers away and to the northwest of Minsk, leaving the three tank corps of 5th GTA and 2d GTC to advance on Minsk. The Soviet concept here was to hold that gap for their own further operations as well as to prevent German reinforcements from interfering with the capture of Minsk and the encirclement of the 4th Army. While parts of 4th Army had reached the Beresina, others were as many as 50 kilometers east, while Soviet forces were across it north and south and 50-80 kilometers closer to Minsk with more mobile forces than those available to the Germans. In the south, the Soviet forces were within 50 kilometers of Baranovichi, but resistance was stiffening, with the introduction of German 4th Panzer Division and 28th Jager Division. The drive on Minsk from the south now had the rifle armies, except 48th Army which was withdrawn into front reserve, supporting the advance of the tank corps up the road to Minsk, approximately 75-80 kilometers to the southeast.

Although 1 July was essentially a day for regrouping for Soviet forces, Rokossovsky in the south made an important decision, to send the 4th Guards Cavalry Corps of the CMG north of Baranovichi cross-country to cut

the railway into Minsk at Stolbtsy. He also directed the 9th TC from the direct Bobruisk-Minsk road west to the Slutsk-Minsk road, from which it would outflank the resistance of 12th Panzer Division in the advance on Minsk. In the north, the CMG reoriented itself for the drive on Molodechno while 5th GTA prepared for the final drive on Minsk astride the Borisov-Minsk Highway with 2d GTC on its left flank. In the center, the German 4th Army spent 1-2 July crossing the Beresina under pressure.

The Soviet drives renewed on 2 July, and by 3 July all major objectives had been achieved. In the north, the CMG had reached Molodechno and Smorgon (northwest of Molodechno), although Molodechno did not fall until elements of 5th Army could assist 4th GCC in the seizure. The drive on Minsk, led by 5th GTA and 2d GTC on its left entered Minsk on July 3d, covering 50 kilometers in two days, and the tank forces swept on through the city to positions west and southwest of it. Four hours later, the forces from the south entered, led by the converging of the 9th TC directly south and 1st GTC from southeast. No sooner did they reach the city than they were ordered to turn south for redeployment against Baranovichi. The Soviets had estimated that it would take them until 7 or 8 July to reach Minsk, and they had done it in two days. In the pocket thus formed were approximately 105,000 Germans, and it took the rifle armies of 2d Belorussian Front, 31st (from 3d BRF), 33d, 49th, and 50th, until 11 July to reduce it. They killed approximately 40,000 and paraded 57,000 through Moscow on 17 July on their way to internment in Siberia. The success was now strategic, with 300-350,000 German casualties and 25-28 divisions destroyed, leaving a gapping hole of nearly 400 kilometers in the German lines.

With the magnitude of the strategic success clear now, Stavka on 4 July issued new orders for the offensive, directing 1st Baltic Front on Kaunas in Lithuania, 3d BRF to Vilnius and then the Neman River, 2d BRF to the Neman, and 1st BRF to the western Bug, on the borders of Poland, finally bringing his left wing into action. The mobile groups were to lead off immediately, with the rifle armies to reduce any bypassed enemy forces. This decision represented a change from the usual Soviet style, as they had previously halted after an advance of 200 kilometers to regroup and bring up supplies and forces, and the advance to Minsk had been 200-250 kilometers, with some forces advancing up to 280 kilometers.

The fronts jumped off on the third phase on 5 July with the same success which had met the first two phases. On 5 July, they changed the task organization to conduct the new operation. In the north, they disbanded the CMG, using its 3d GMC to spearhead the advance of 5th Army on Vilnius, while the 5th GTA added its weight to 3d GCC's attacks on Molodechno, which fell that day. The 5th GTA would then spearhead the units of 11th GA. While 2d BRF was occupied by elimination of the 4th Army, 1st BRF moved its tank corps from Minsk into position for an attack on Baranovichi from the northeast and east.

On 6 July the Soviet advance on Vilnius began with the 3d GMC leading the forward detachments of rifle divisions. This advance was virtually unopposed, and Soviet forces reached Vilnius on 7 July. The 5th GTA reached Vilnius on 8 July and invested it from the south, having advanced another 100 kilometers in some two days from Molodechno. At times,

both forces were some 30-40 kilometers ahead of their supporting rifle divisions. However, Vilnius did not fall immediately, and the Germans would make an effort to relieve the garrison.

In the south, the attack on Baranovichi opened with the main attack coming from the northeast and supporting attack from the east along the Bobruisk-Baranovichi road. The German forces resisting were good--4th Panzer Division, 28th Jager Division, 12th Panzer Division, and two smaller cavalry units, all under the command of 2d Army as 9th Army was no longer capable of command. Nevertheless, they were worn down from the battles earlier for the defense of Baranovichi, and when the full power of the right wing of 1st BRF was brought to bear on them, the resistance crumbled, with Baranovichi falling on 8 July. It fell to a Soviet force breaking through to the north of Baranovichi, almost encircling the defenders and compelling them to withdraw to Slonim. In the center, 2d BRF was also reinforced with a mobile group, 3d GCC from the CMG. They used them to spearhead the advance to Lida, where they overcame the German defenders by 9 July.

The fighting around Vilnius occasioned some extremely hard work meeting German counterattacks as well as reducing the German pocket. As a result, the Soviet armor in the mobile groups was so used up that they began to be withdrawn. The first to go was 2d GTC on 10 July, and 5th GTA, down to about twenty-eight tanks operational after repulsing the German counterattack on 13 July. The fronts did, however, have sufficient combat power and momentum to reach the Neman River, a move of about 230 kilometers from Minsk for 2d BRF and 180-200 kilometers for 3d BRF. Meantime in the south, 1st BRF had pursued through Baranovichi to Slonim, which fell

quickly. By 10 July, the 61st Army, 1st BRF, which connected the right wing of 1st BRF with the left wing, came into play, and it liberated the city of Pinsk on 14 July and linked up with 1st BRF, which had advanced 150-170 kilometers in twelve days.

All of this success had drawn German divisions from other army groups, amounting initially to six divisions from Army Group North Ukraine, including three panzer divisions. Later reinforcements totaled twenty-eight divisions from Army Group North, Army Group North Ukraine, and Army Group South Ukraine. That made conditions ripe for the next Great Blow, the L'vov-Sandomiercz Operation by the 1st Ukrainian Front commanded by Marshal Koniev. It commenced on 12 July to complicate further the Germans' strategic problems. Finally, the long-awaited left wing of the 1st BRF attacked on 18 July, taking Lublin on 23 July and Brest on 28 July. The 2d Tank Army reached Praga beside Warsaw on 31 July, and 8th Guards Army under General Chuikov, the bulldog defender of Stalingrad, crossed the Vistula on 1 August. The advance was some 300 kilometers in two weeks, a pace which met the best efforts of the rest of Operation BAGRATION.

On the same date, Bagramyan in 1st BAF had reached the Baltic and cut Army Group North off from Army Group Center. Later advances by 3d and 2d BRF would bring the front another 100 kilometers further west, into the eastern borders of Eastern Prussia and Poland, but these advances would be made by the rifle armies with such mobile groups as there were providing infantry support. During this period, the 7th "Great Blow" commenced on 20 August, the Jassy-Kishinev Operation against Army Group South Ukraine. German counterattacks in the north, against 1st BAF at Shyualyai, and in the

south, against the forces of 1st Ukrainian Front across the San River west of the Vistula, effectively ended Operation BAGRATION by 29 August 1944.

d. Outcome.

Operation BAGRATION had resulted in the reconquest of Belorussia and even the invasion of part of Germany itself, Eastern Prussia, as well as penetrating Poland to the Vistula River and Warsaw. It had allowed the liberation of Lithuania and part of Latvia, and there were bridgeheads over the Vistula River, as well as the full crossing of the Neman and Narev Rivers on the way to East Prussia. As a result of paving the way for later offensives, it indirectly led to the precipitate withdrawal of Rumania from the war, three days after the Jassy-Kishinev Operation commenced in the south. Later on in the year, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland would also be taken out of the war.

In the destruction of Army Group Center during the first two weeks of the operation, it had achieved strategic results, and the effects were also strategic. Its successes drew forces away from the other sectors of the front which the Red Army planned to hit during the summer, making them more successful. It had also caused the destruction of thirty divisions and the diversion of twenty-eight divisions to its front. Three German armies had been wrecked and a fourth, the 16th in Army Group North, severely mauled.

The Red Army had advanced almost 600 kilometers during the summer, approximately twice as far as the Allies and Patton advanced after the breakout from Normandy to the German frontier. It had encircled German forces at Vitebsk and Bobruisk, at Minsk, and at Vilnius and Brest-Litovsk. It had widened the advance frontage from 700 kilometers at its start to

1,000 kilometers at its end and sucked in an estimated ninety-seven German divisions and thirteen brigades, piecemeal. Those German divisions faced an overall force of 2,500,000 men, 45,000 guns and mortars, 6,000 tanks and assault guns, and approximately 7,000 aircraft.

The Soviet forces had accomplished their operations on a vaster scale than ever before, and it was their most successful strategic operation. They had taken only one week to reduce the Minsk pocket, while the Stalingrad pocket of similar size had taken nearly two months to reduce eighteen months earlier. They had also used very sophisticated techniques of direct and parallel pursuit at a depth of 250 kilometers to close that pocket. Their operational art, in the matter of deep attacks, had been very much restricted to maneuver forces, led by tank or mobile forces or groups. They had used their rifle divisions to make the tactical breakthroughs, and had used forward detachments (made possible by the attachment of army separate tank brigades), tank corps (at army) and CMG or tank armies (at front), introduced even while the tactical battle was going on but no longer in doubt, to exploit as soon as possible. Sometimes they were committed as soon as the first day. The pace had averaged 20-25 kilometers per day before the withdrawal of the major tank formations in mid-July and 13-14 kilometers per day after, although the left wing of 1st BRF had again averaged 20-25 kilometers per day in its rush to the Vistula.

4. Conclusions.

The deep operations in Operation BAGRATION ranged from 60-250 kilometers in depth of operations. They were primarily conducted by maneuver elements;

those elements depended upon tank forces for their success. A key to the use of those tank forces was the growing Soviet doctrine which emphasized carrying the battle to the enemy simultaneously throughout the depth of his position. Thus, assault rifle divisions making attacks in main directions could be reinforced by a tank brigade and expected to form a forward detachment which could carry out operations to the depth of the enemy's tactical defenses. As soon as it was clear that the enemy's defenses were crumbling, larger Soviet tank forces would be committed through the position to carry out their missions in the enemy's rear while the assault divisions might still be fighting their way through the tactical defenses.

These larger Soviet force structures were organized to allow them to carry their operations progressively further into the enemy's rear, and they did so. The tank corps could carry about 100 kilometers into the rear, and the tank army or CMG could carry about 200 kilometers into the enemy's rear before they would need support. Moreover, the doctrine allowed these formations to run without maintaining connection with their following combined arms or rifle armies. Thus, the encirclement at Vitebsk could be made by tank brigades and forward detachments, while that at Bobruisk could be made by tank corps. However, the encirclement of Minsk, 250 kilometers deep could not have been made without the CMG or tank army. More remarkably, those formations still had enough combat power to continue operations for another 150-200 kilometers, past Vilnius and Baranovichi, before they were used up.

The decline in the average rate of advance showed the effects of their withdrawal, yet they imparted enough momentum to the Soviet advance to allow

the rifle or combined arms armies to advance another 200 kilometers before the advance ground to a halt, about 400 kilometers beyond where the Germans had expected them to halt. That first advance of 300-400 kilometers took place in the first three weeks of the operation, leaving another five weeks of slower advances while the German defenses were rebuilding. Moreover, the failure to keep an encircled force bagged which had plagued the Red Army during the winter campaign in the Ukraine did not recur. Rather, the forces which had formed the outer encirclement kept moving out to prevent the rescue of the encircled force which had occurred at least twice the previous winter.

The Soviets had developed the higher level force structure which allowed them to get so deep: the tank army. The CMG also proved useful as a substitute in terrain not favorable to the employment of masses of armor. These formations were not to be committed to fight through the tactical defenses, but rather drove deep for operational or strategic objectives. Thus, one can see deep operations occurring at several echelons simultaneously.

Of course, the Soviet concept of and conduct of maskirovka, or cover and deception (but more inclusive), also furnished a major factor in the success of the operation. The maskirovka plan was prepared at the highest levels and disseminated to all levels. Thus, it supported not only Operation BAGRATION but also the other offensives of the summer by disguising the exact location of the next blow, or at least removing the Germans' ability to react effectively to the next move. In Operation BAGRATION, the Soviets

achieved surprise at the strategic and operational levels at least, and they achieved some tactical surprise in the strength which they had to employ.

Maskirovka was only one part of a very sophisticated plan which took the operation by bite-size pieces and only proceeded to the next piece when certain of success in the preceding stage. Thus, the decision for the encirclement of Minsk was finally made after the Vitebsk and Bobruisk pockets had occurred, and the exploitation to the borders of Belorussia was ordered only after the success of the Minsk pocket and the seizure of the main exits from it northwest and southwest. However, the Soviets had seen the liberation of Belorussia and the destruction of Army Group Center as the ultimate aim of the operation.

One manner in which the Red Army could have conducted deep attack operations was aerial interdiction, but they did not do so to any marked degree. In fact, throughout the war they only devoted about 5% of their sorties to interdiction as we understand it. Another means of deep attack which they did not use but which they possessed was airborne attack. They did, however, use partisans in support of this operation as a form of deep attack. This would be an anomaly, because in the Ukraine the partisans were not so reliable, some bands being quite anti-Soviet. Indeed, they killed Marshal Vatutin, a front commander in the spring of 1944. Nor would partisans necessarily be available in operations outside the country.

The success of deep attack operations in Operation BAGRATION was abetted also by the German defensive dispositions and doctrine. Although the German military leaders did know how to practice defense in depth, Adolf Hitler would not allow withdrawals to shorten the lines in order to provide greater

operational reserves, nor, even operationally, would he allow construction of works and lines to operational depth. The latter stricture only aggravated the situation caused by lack of manpower to complete the second line of tactical defenses in the area of Army Group Center. Thus, Army Group Center was left with inadequate forces and preparations for the frontage which it had to defend. The unit available to Army Group Center which might have provided operational reserves, LVI Panzer Corps, was removed from Army Group Center's control, and it was mal-positioned to react to the blows which eventually fell.

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ANNEX A

Correlation of Forces (Strategic)
June 1944

1.- Soviet.

Personnel Formations Armament Mil. Equip.	Active Fronts and Fleets	Stavka Reserves	Total
Ground Forces	5,691,000	386,000	6,077,000
Air Forces	377,000	70,000	447,000
Navy	357,000	------	357,000
Airborne Forces	-------	58,000	58,000
Total	6,425,000	514,000	6,939,000
Rifle, Motor-rifle Cavalry, and Airborne Divisions	453	23	476
Detached Brigades	17	-----	17
Fortified Areas	19	-----	19
Tank and Mechanized Corps	22	15	37
Detached Tank Bdes	36	1	37
Artillery and Mortar Divisions	72	11	83

Personnel Formations Armament Mil. Equip.	Active Fronts and Fleets	Stavka Reserves	Total
Detached Artillery and Mortar Bdes	82	11	93
Aviation Divisions	132	21	153
Guns and Mortars	92,557	4,493	97,050
Tanks/Assault Guns	7,753	2,232	9,985
Operational Aircraft	13,428	1,359	14,787

2. German.

Personnel Formations Armament Equipment	Field Army-Eastern Front	Other Fronts	Reserve or Satellite	Total
Ground Forces	3,130,000	1,420,000	(800,000)	4,550,000 (GE)
Air Force		1,800,000		1,800,000
Navy		80,000		80,000
Replacement Army			2,000,000	2,000,000
Total	3,130,000	3,300,000	2,000,000	8,430,000
Infantry Divisions	149	109	49	258 (GE)

Personnel Formations Armament Equipment	Field Army-Eastern Front	Other Fronts	Reserve or Satellite	Total
Parachute Divisions		6		6 (GE)
Brigades	5		18	23
Panzer Divisions	23	11		34 (GE)
Panzer Grenadier Divisions	7	10		17 (GE)
SS Divisions	9			
Guns and Mortars	48,635	19,865	Unk	68,500 (GE)
Tanks/Assault Guns	5,250	3,960	Unk	9,210 (GE)
Operational Aircraft	2,796	2,686	Unk	5,482 (GE)

ANNEX B - SOVIET FORCE STRUCTURE (1944)

1. SOVIET RIFLE FORCES

Rifle Army

3 rifle corps
  7-12 rifle divisions
1 artillery brigade
  2 gun artillery regiments
1 tank destroyer regiment
1 antiaircraft artillery regiment
1 mortar regiment
1 engineer/sapper brigade
1 tank regiment
1 signal regiment
1 tank or mechanized corps
  (optional)

strength: 80,000-120,000 men
  300-460 tanks (if tank/mech corps attached)
  1,700-2000 guns/mortars
  30-225 SP guns

Rifle Corps

3 rifle divisions
1 artillery brigade (guard corps)
1 artillery regiment (regular corps)
1 self-propelled artillery regiment
1 guards mortar regiment
1 antiaircraft artillery battalion
1 sapper battalion
1 signal battalion

strength: 20,000-30,000 men

Rifle Division

3 rifle regiments (4 x 76mm, 12 x 45mm)
1 artillery brigade
  1 gun artillery regiment (32 x 76mm)
  1 howitzer artillery regiment (20 x 122mm)
  1 mortar regiment (20 x 120mm)
1 antiaircraft artillery battalion (12 x 37mm)
  (in guards divisions)
1 tank destroyer battalion (18 x 45, 57, 76mm)
1 sapper battalion
1 signal company
1 reconnaissance company

strength: 9,380 men*
64 guns
127 mortars
12 AA guns
54 AT guns

*Rifle division strengths are by TOE - Actual strengths much smaller (4,500-6,000)

2. SOVIET CAVALRY FORCES

Cavalry Corps
3 cavalry divisions
2 tank regiments (39 tanks each)
1 reconnaissance battalion
1 tank destroyer regiment
1 mortar regiment
1 guards mortar battalion
1 self-propelled artillery regiment
1 engineer regiment
1 signal battalion
strength: 14,000-15,000 men
80-100 tanks
268 guns/mortars
48 AT guns
34 AA guns

Cavalry Division
3 cavalry regiments (6 x 76mm, 6 x 45mm)
1 artillery regiment
1 reconnaissance battalion
1 antiaircraft squadron
1 engineer squadron
1 signal squadron
strength: 4,700 men
42 guns
18 AT guns

3. TANK/MECHANIZED FORCES

Mechanized Corps
3 mechanized brigades
  3 motorized rifle battalions
  1 tank regiment (35 tanks)
1 tank brigade (65 tanks)
1 light self-propelled artillery regiment (SU--76)
1 med self-propelled artillery regiment (SU-85)
1 heavy self-propelled artillery regiment (SU-152)
  (in some corps)
1 mortar regiment
1 antiaircraft artillery regiment
1 guards mortar battalion
1 motorcycle battalion
1 signal battalion
1 sapper, engineer battalion
1 medical battalion
1 transport company
1 repair, reconstruction company
strength: 16,442 men
  183 tanks
  63 SP guns
  234 guns/mortars
  8 multiple rocket launchers

Tank Corps
3 tank brigades (65 tanks each)
1 motorized rifle brigade
1 mortar regiment
1 antiaircraft artillery regiment
1 light self-propelled artillery regiment (SU-76)
1 med self-propelled artillery regiment (SU-85/122)
1 heavy self-propelled artillery regiment (SU-152)
  (in some corps)
1 light artillery regiment
1 guards mortar battalion
1 motorcycle battalion
1 transport company
2 repair companies (artillery, tank)
1 medical battalion (May 1944)
1 sapper battalion
1 signal battalion
1 aviation company
1 chemical defense company
strength: 12,010 men
  207 tanks
  63 SP guns
  182 guns/mortars
  8 multiple rocket launchers

Tank Army
2 tank corps
1 mechanized corps (optional)
1 motorcycle regiment
1 light artillery brigade
  2 gun artillery regiments (76mm)
  1 gun artillery regiment (100mm)
1 light self-propelled artillery brigade
  3 light self-propelled artillery battalions (SU-76)
  1 machine gun battalion
  1 antiaircraft machine gun company
2 mortar regiments
1 guards mortar regiments
1 antiaircraft artillery div
  4 antiaircraft artillery regiments
1 morotized engineer brigade
  2 motorized engineer bns
  1 pontoon bridge battalion
1 signal regiment
1 aviation communications regiment
1 transport regiment
2 repair/reconstruction battalions
strength: 50,000 men
500-650 tanks, SP guns
650-850 guns/mortars

ANNEX C

CORRELATION OF FORCES

BELORUSSIA - JUNE 1944

SOVIET	GERMAN
1st Baltic Front (3d Air Army) (1BAF)	3d Panzer Army (3PzA)
6th Gds Army (6GA)	IX AC
4th Shock Army (4SA)	LII AC
43d Army (43A)	VI AC
1st Tank Corps (1TC)	
227,000 men	120,000 men
687 Tks/SPs	
3d Belorussian Front (1st Air Army) (3BRF)	
39th Army (39A)	
5th Army (5A)	
11th Gds Army (11GA)	
31st Army (31A)	
5th Gds Tank Army (5GTA)	4th Army (4A)
3d Gds Mech Corps	XXVII AC
CMG	
3d Gds Cav Corps	XXXIX PC
2d Gds Tank Corps (2GTC)	XII AC
389,500 men	165,000 men
1,810 Tks/SPs	

2d Belorussian Front (4th Air Army) (2BRF)

33d Army (33A)

49th Army (49A)

50th Army (50A)

202,900 men

276 Tks/SPs

1st Belorussian Front (16th Air Army-Rt Wing) (1BRF)
(6th Air Army - Left Wing)

3d Army (3A)

48th Army (48A)

65th Army (65A)

28th Army (28A)

9th Tank Corps (9TC)

1st Mech Corps

(CMG)

4th Gds Cav Corps

1st Gds Tank Corps (1GTC)

434,900 men

1,287 Tks/SPs

9th Army (9A)

XXXV AC

XXXXI PC

LV AC

120,000 men

6th Air Fleet

Totals

Initial	1,250,000 men (combat)	3 x 1	400,000 men (combat)
	(124 divisions, 8 TC/MC)	(3 x 1)	(38ID,5PZ/PZGrDiv, 7 res)
Total	2,400,000 men (total)	3 x 1	800,000 men (total)
	(166 divisions, 12 TC/MC)	(3 x 1)	(60 div)
Initial	4,050 Tks/SPs	10 x 1	400 Tks/SPs
Total	(5200 Tks/SP	6 x 1	(900 Tks/SP)
	5,100 aircraft	4 x 1	1,324 aircraft
	33,000 guns/mortars	8 x 1	4,000 guns/mortars

ANNEX D - PLANNING SEQUENCE

5 April--Commission of GKO established to study Eastern Front for strategy.

12 April--Commission reports; GKO decides for offensive in Belorussia and split of Western Front (controlling operations in Belorussia) into 3d and 2d Belorussian Fronts.

17-19 April--Stavka transmitted directives to all front commanders to assume the defense; establish 25 km "security zone."

24 April--Western Front replaced by 2d and 3d Belorussian Fronts.

30 April--Stavka completed initial draft of concept of operation.

1-7 May--Planning directives based upon Stavka concept issued to front commanders.

-Two phases:

--Encirclement of German forces at Vietbsk and Bobruisk.

--Exploitation to Minsk from Vitebsk and Bobruisk for encirclement of Army Group Center's main forces.

--Main attacks to be made by 3d Belorussian and 1st Belorussian fronts against Vitebsk and Bobruisk, respectively, then linking up at Minsk.

--1st Baltic Front to make deep attack to Molodechno.

-Four penetrations:

--1st Baltic Front

--3d Belorussian Front

--1st Belorussian Front (2)

15 May--Four front commanders submit plans to Stavka.

20 May--Stavka draft plan completed and issued as a planning memorandum signed by Army General A. I. Antonov, DCS Ops for the Red Army and Navy. Named BAGRATION.

22-23 May--Plan reviewed by Supreme Commander Joseph Stalin and his deputies along with the four front commanders and their chiefs of staff. Changes:

-Concept/missions:

--1st Baltic Front to advance along Western Dvina River to protect northern flank of offensive.

--Phase one to include encirclement of Minsk (depth of 200-250 km); phase two to include left flank of 1st Belorussian Front after right flank forces reach Slonim and advance of 550-600 km.

--Operation's first phase to be accomplished in stages:

---1st--encirclements of enemy tactical defenses at Vitebsk by 1st Baltic and 3d Belorussian Fronts and Bobruisk by 1st Belorussian Front, with secondary penetrations against Orsha and Mosilev to fix enemy forces (depth approximately 50-60 km)

---2d--Mobile groups to encircle/destroy enemy operational reserves and encircle main body force by driving on Minsk and cutting it off from north and south at Molodechno and Baranovichi, respectively.

--Forces making main efforts now 97 divisions, up from 77.

-Six penetrations:

--1st Baltic Front--northwest of Vitebsk to encircle Vitebsk from north; exploitation force to Western Dvina River.

--3d Belorussian Front--two penetrations. One southeast of Vitebsk to encircle city from south, and the other to penetrate German defenses at Orsha and destroy enemy forces there. Cavalry-Mechanized Group to follow northern penetration and seize Molodechno.

--2d Belorussian Front--east of Mogilev to destroy enemy forces in area and break through to Beresina River.

--1st Belorussian Front--two penetrations, north (Rogachev sector) and south of Bobruisk, one on each side of Beresina River. Tank corps of front to be used in encirclement of Bobruisk and/or encirclement of Minsk; Cavalry-Mechanized Group to exploit to Baranovichi to isolate Minsk from south.

24-30 May--Stavka revised draft Plan.

31 May--Stavka issued revised planning diretive to front commanders. 5th Guards Tank Army assigned to 3d Belorussian Front with mission of passing through Orsha penetration and attacking towards Borisov and Minsk.

041600 June--Vasilevsky arrives at 3d Belorussian Front to coordinate northern group of fronts. Chief Marshal of Avn A. A. Novikov to assist on aviation maters.

050500 June--Zhukov arrives at 1st Belorussian Front to coordinate southern group of fronts. Marshal of Avn Faiaieyev to assist on coordination of avn matters.

13 June--Stalin agreed to four-day postponement of BAGRATION (i.e., from 15-20 June to 19-23 June).

14-18 June--Army and corps plans wargamed before front commanders and Stavka representatives.

15 June--Front plans finalized and reviewed by Stavka.

19 June--Partisan activities begin. Reisovaya voina, 10K detonations; 40K for four days. Estimated 1000 cuts in rails and roads made of 2000 planned.

20-22 June--RIF (rein co & bn) conducted by 2d and 3d Baltic and 1st Ukrainian Fronts, as well as by BAGRATION Fronts.

20 June--By this date, the four fronts had received all their reinforcing troops and completed training.

22 June--RIF by BAGRATION fronts commenced; success in 1st Baltic Front converted into offensive.

23 June--3d & 2d Belorussian Fronts (northern and center) commence offensive.

24 June--1st Belorussian Front (south) commences offensive.

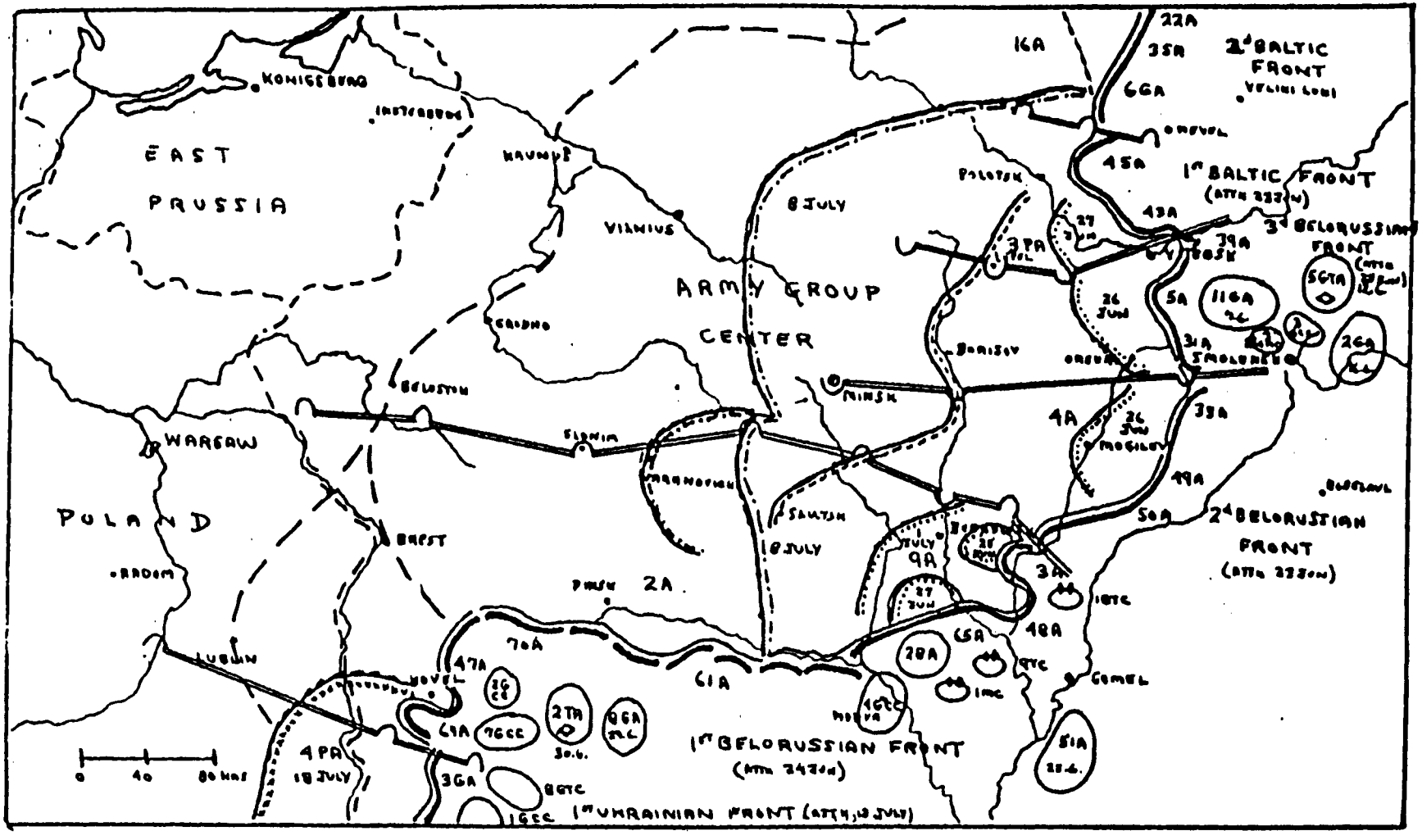
28 June--Stavka orders CAA of fronts to encircle German 4th Army east of Minsk and CMG's of fronts to cut roads west of Minsk at Baranovichi and Molodechno; 5 GTA to effect outer (W) encirclement of Minsk.

4 Jul--Stavka orders pursuit to borders of Belorussia; 5 GTA & CMG (N) to Vilnius, CMG (S) to Belostock.

12 July--L'vov-Sandomiercz Operation (1st Ukrainian Front) starts.

18 July--Left Wing of 1st Belorussian Front opens offensive toward Lublin and Warsaw; pursuit by rest of BAGRATION forces to Vistula River and E. Prussia.

OPERATION BAGRATION : PLAN



ANNEX E

Major Elements of Front Plans

Front	Total Width of Frontage (Kilometer)	Width of Penetration (Kilometer)	Formations Making Penetrations	Exploitation Force	Remarks
1st Baltic	160	25	6th Guards Army; 43d Army	1st Tank Corps	
3d Belorussian	130	18	a. Northern Shock Group 39th Army; 5th Army	Mechanized Cavalry Group (3d Cavalry and 3d Guards Mechanized Corps)	5th Guards Tank Army to be committed as the front's main exploiting force in zone of group enjoying greater success
		15	b. Southern Shock Group 11th Guards Army; 31st Army	2d Guards Tank Corps	
2d Belorussian	160	15	49th Army	1st Rifle Corps	Initially, this front limited objective of seizing Mogilev

Front	Total Width of Frontage (Kilometer)	Width of Penetration (Kilometer)	Formations Making Penetrations	Exploitation Force	Remarks
1st Belorussian	650 (250)	17	a. Northern Shock Group 3d Army; 48th Army	9th Tank Corps	Initially, only right wing of this front (four armies) were to be committed. Four armies had a frontage of 250 kilometers.
			b. Southern Shock Group 65th Army; 28th Army; Mechanized Cavalry Group	1st Guards Tank Corps	

ANNEX F

Dispositions

1. Army operations in breaking through enemy tactical zones.

Army/ Front	Sector in km Zone	Width Pen	Width End	Depth in km	Avg Dly Advance	Length of Op in Dys (Initial)	Remarks
5 Army/ 1st BR	22	12	60	150	18-20 km	8	CMG; 5 GTA 22 tanks/AG /km inf spt
11 Gds Army/ 1st BR	35	8	35	160	16-18 km	9	2GTC 1.1 km/div; 181 guns/km; 22 tanks/AG /km inf spt; 46 tank/AG /km total
49 Army/ 2d BR	50	12	45	60	12 km	5	See note a.
3 Army/ 1st BR	53	12	65	80	16 km	5	9TC; 16 tanks/AG /km inf spt
65 Army/ 1st BR	24	6	40	65	13 km	5	1GTC 75% of personnel, 80% of guns/mortars, 95% of tanks/AG's 13 tanks/AG /km inf spt

Notes:

a. 49 Army Concentration of Forces

Forces/ Material	Own Forces Total	Per km	GE Forces Total	Per km	Relative Superiority
Battalions	91	7.6	12	1.0	7.6:1
Guns/Mort	2159	180	290	24	7.5:1
Tks/AG	253	21	72	6	3.5:1

2. Tactical densities in Rifle Corps in Operation BAGRATION.

Front/ Army	Corps	Atk Zone	Pen Sector	Density Per km Pen Sector Rifle Bn	Guns/Mort	Tanks/AG
3 BR/ 39 Army	5 Gds	6 km	4 km	5.5	134	24
3 BR/ 11 GA	36 Gds	5.5	5.5	4.9	138	13
1 BR/ 3 Army	35th	5	4	4.5	139	32
1 BR/ 3 Army	41st	7	5	4.8	143	10
1 BR/ 65 Army	18th	7.5	5	3.6	180	17

3. Introduction of 2d Echelons and Mobile Groups of Armies.

Name of Operation	Army	Day of Entry into Battle 2d Echelon	Mobile Group	Immediate Task 2d Echelon	Mobile Group
Orsha	11 GA	Rifle Div-2d Day	2d GTC-4th Day	Seize 2d Def Line	Seize army obj; develop tactical success into operational
Bobruisk	3 Army	Rifle Div-2d Day; 46 RC-3d Day	9th TC-2d Day	Seize 1st Obj Seize 2d Obj (46 RC)	Seize 1st Obj
Bobruisk	65 Army	Rifle Div-1st Day	1st GTC-1st Day	Seize 1st Obj	Seize 1st Obj

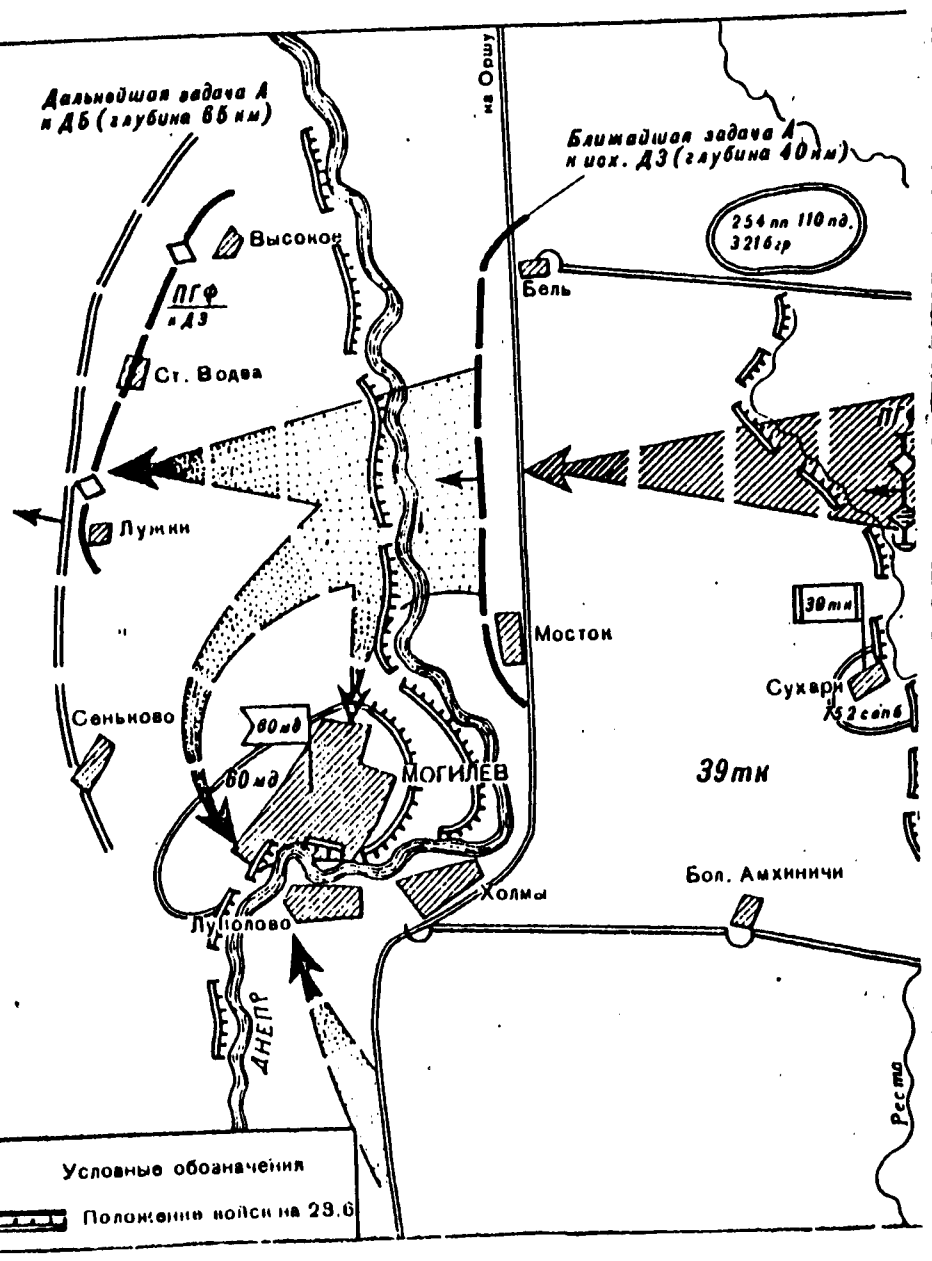
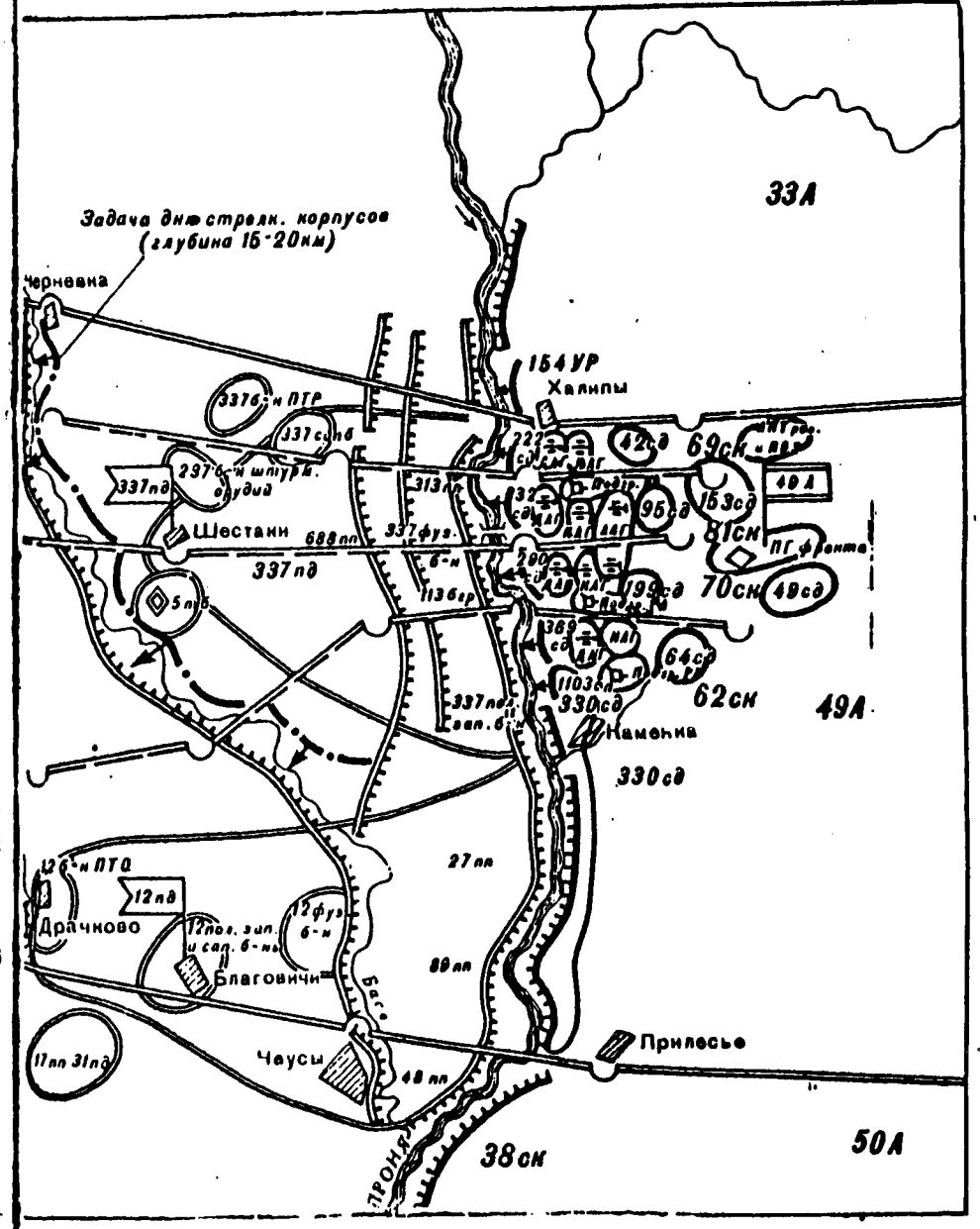
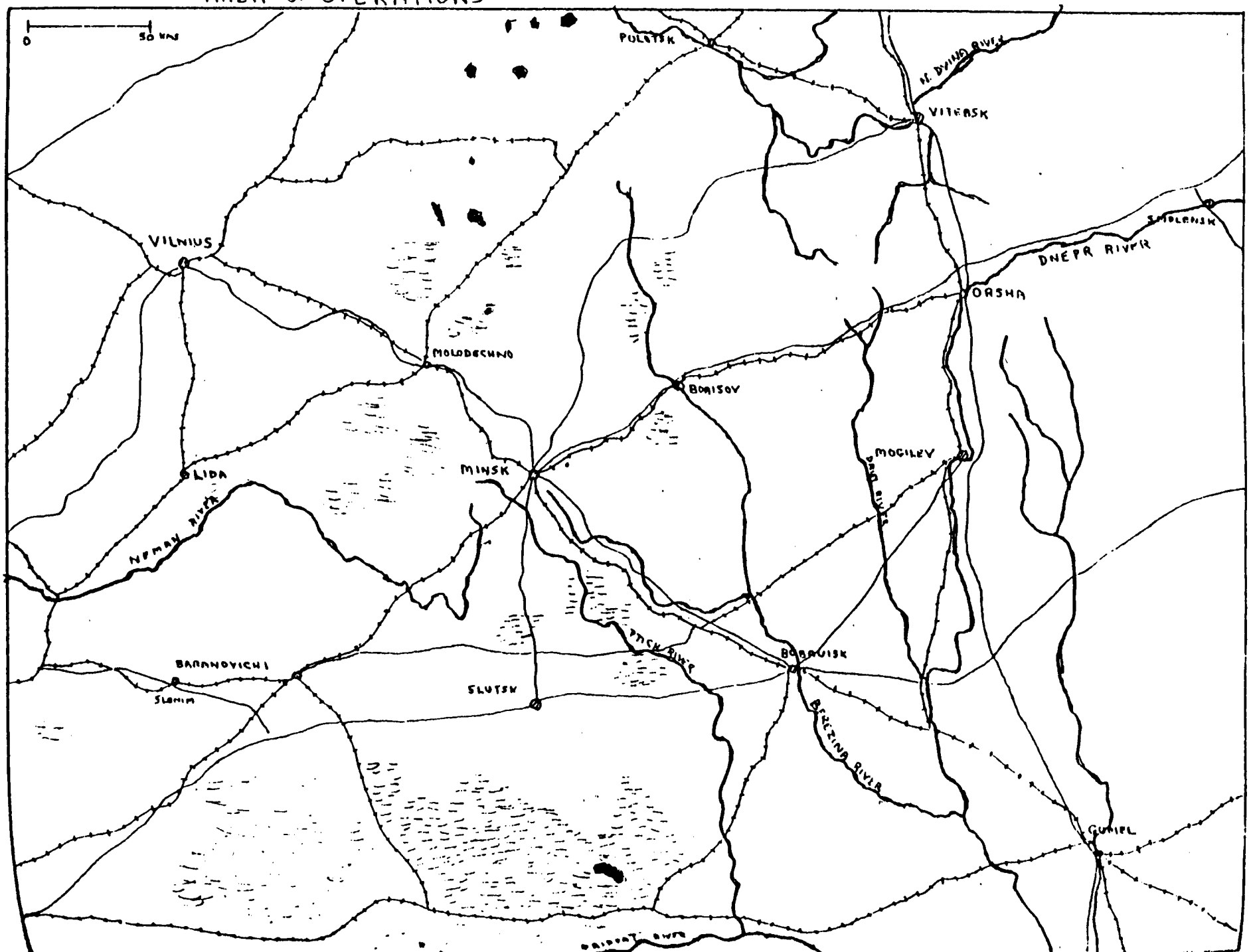


Схема 3. Решение командующего 49-й армией на прорыв подготов



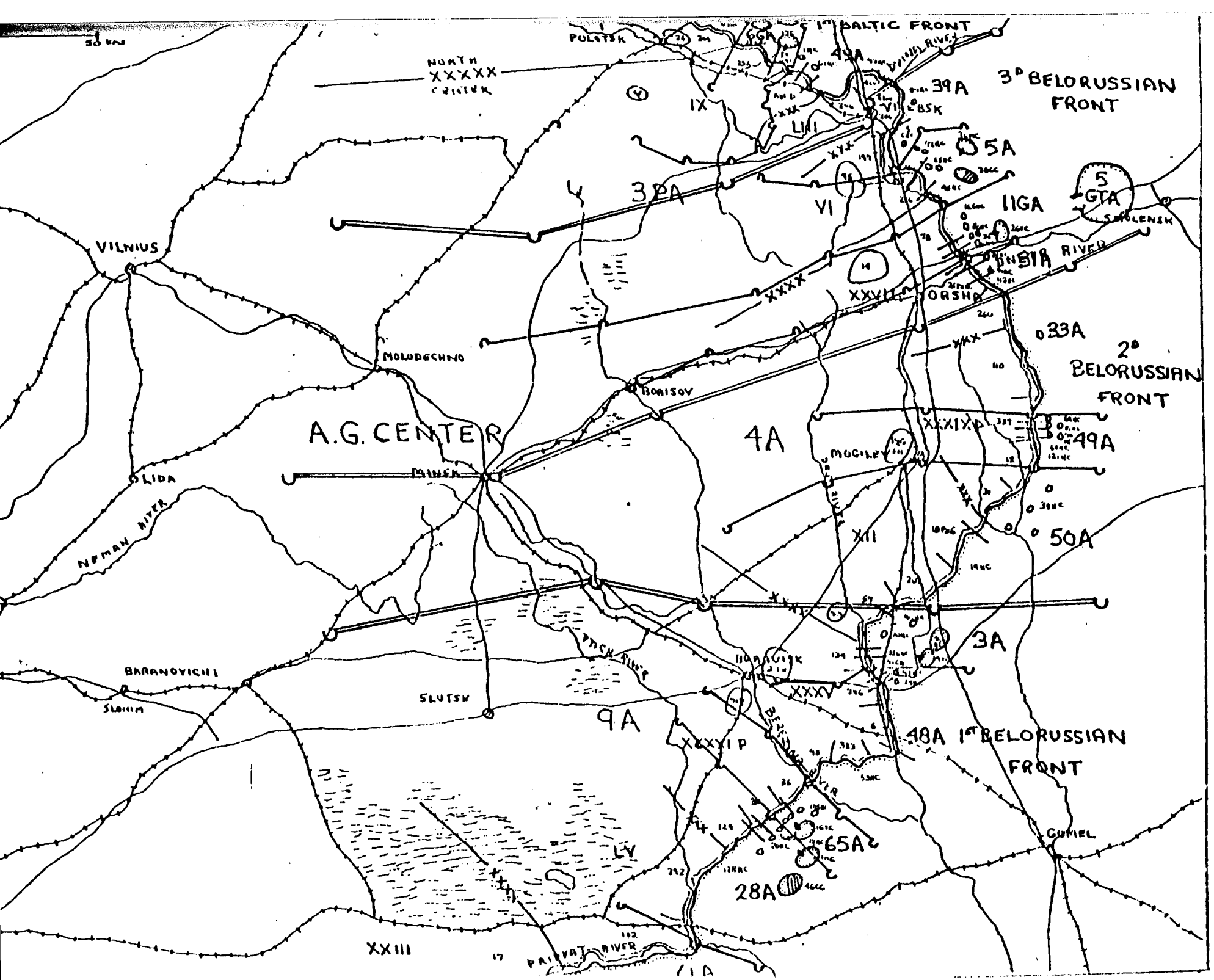
ленной обороны противника в Могилевской операции (23—28.6 1944 г.)

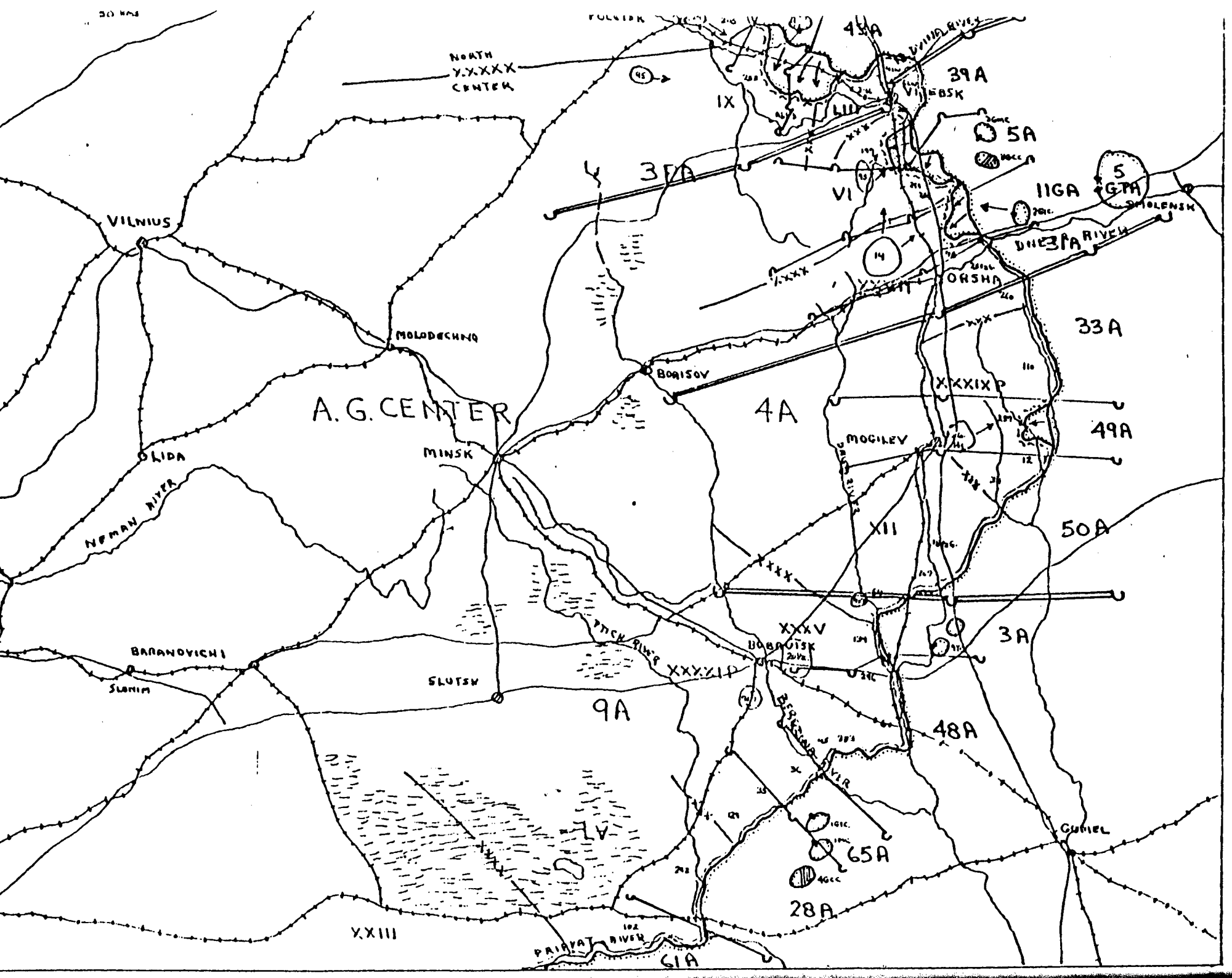

AREA OF OPERATIONS
0
50 KM
PULETSK
N. DVINA RIVER
VITEBSK
SMOLENSK
DNEPR RIVER
VILNIUS
ORSHA
MOLODECHNO
BORISOV
MOGILEV
LIDA
MINSK
DRUT RIVER
NEMAN RIVER
PTICH RIVER
BARANOVICHI
SLONIM
SLUTSK
BOBRUISK
BERESINA RIVER
GOMEL

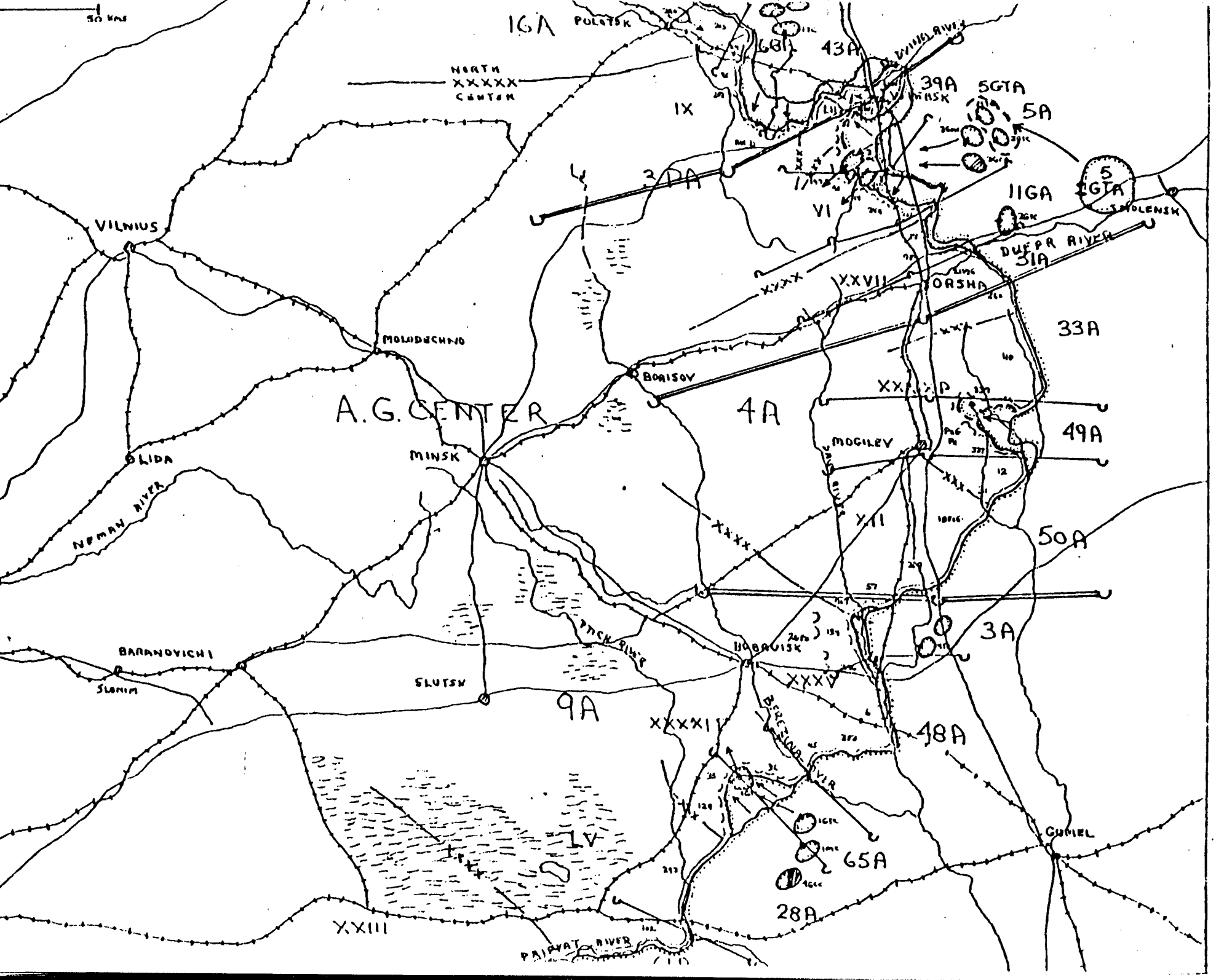
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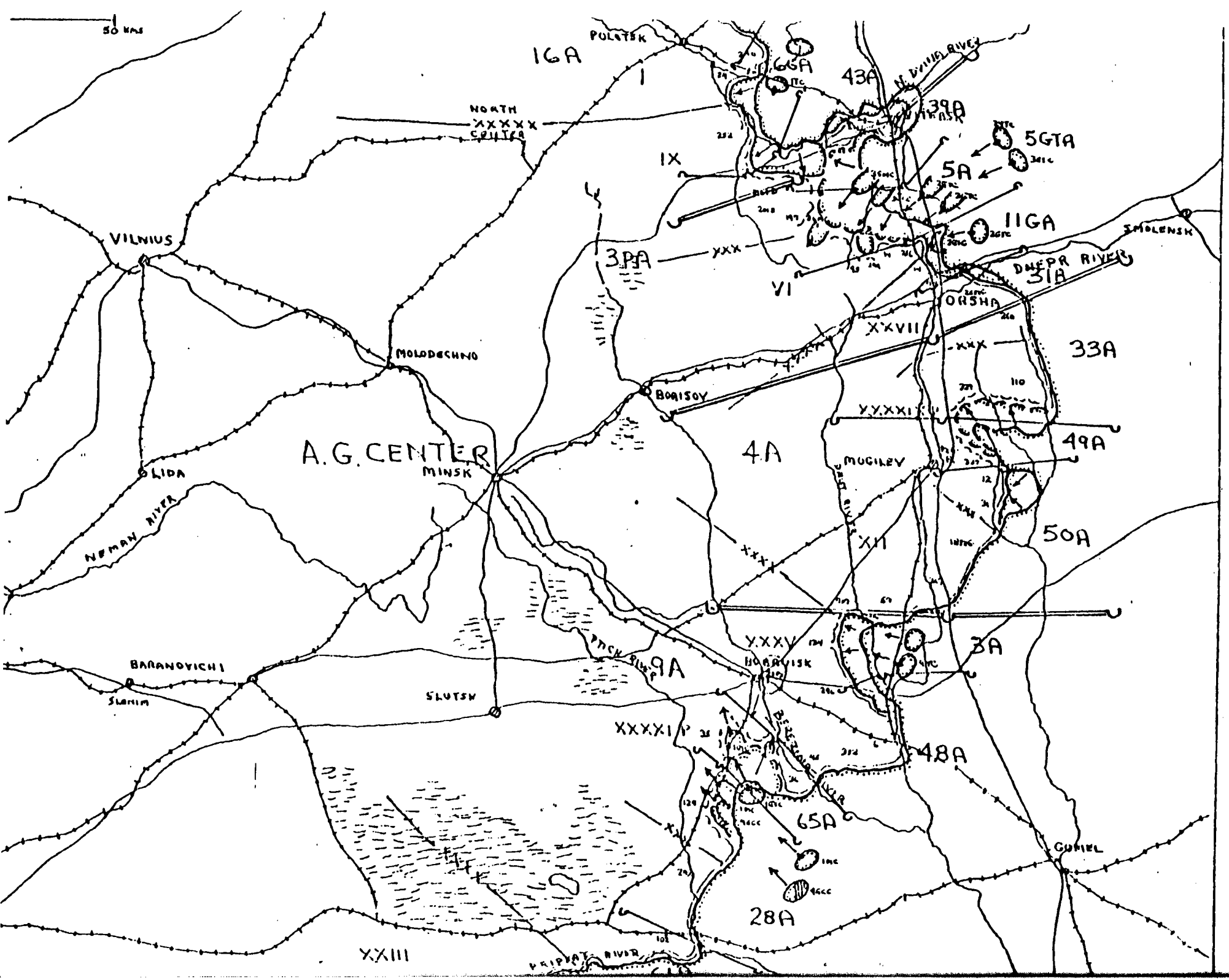
The Belorussian Operation

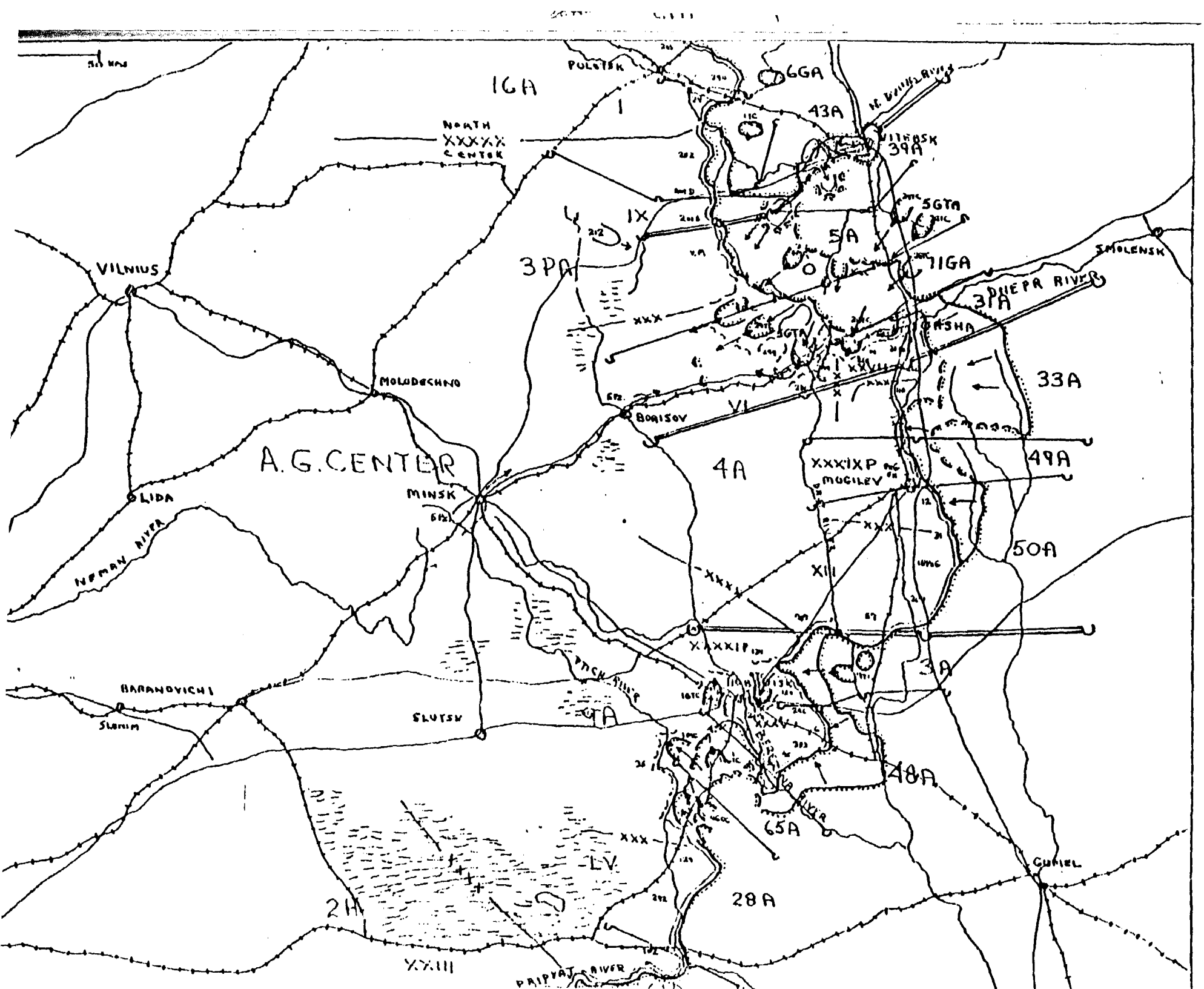
22 June - 13 July 1944

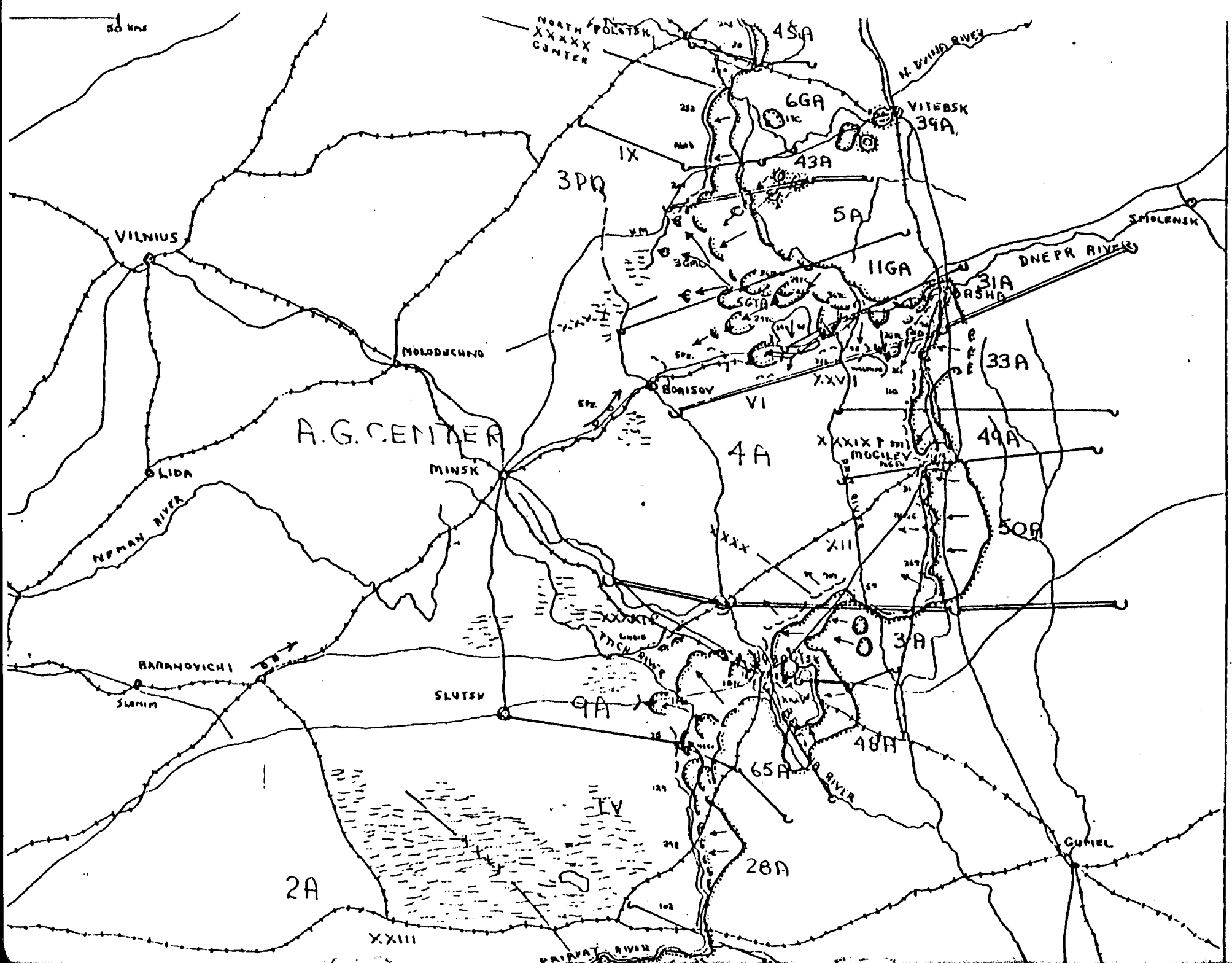

1ST BALTIC FRONT
POLOTSK
NORTH
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CRIMEA
IX
LIII
VI
39A
3D BELORUSSIAN
FRONT
BSK
5A
3PA
VI
11GA
5
GTA
SMOLENSK
VILNIUS
DNEPR RIVER
51A
XXXX
XXVII
ORSHA
33A
2D
BELORUSSIAN
FRONT
MOLODECHNO
BORISOV
A.G. CENTER
4A
XXXIX
49A
MOGILEV
MINSK
LIDA
NEMAN RIVER
XII
50A
3A
BARANOVICHI
SLONIM
PINSK
SLUTSK
9A
XXXV
XXXVI
48A 1ST BELORUSSIAN
FRONT
GOMEL
65A
LV
28A
XXIII
PRIPYAT RIVER
61A

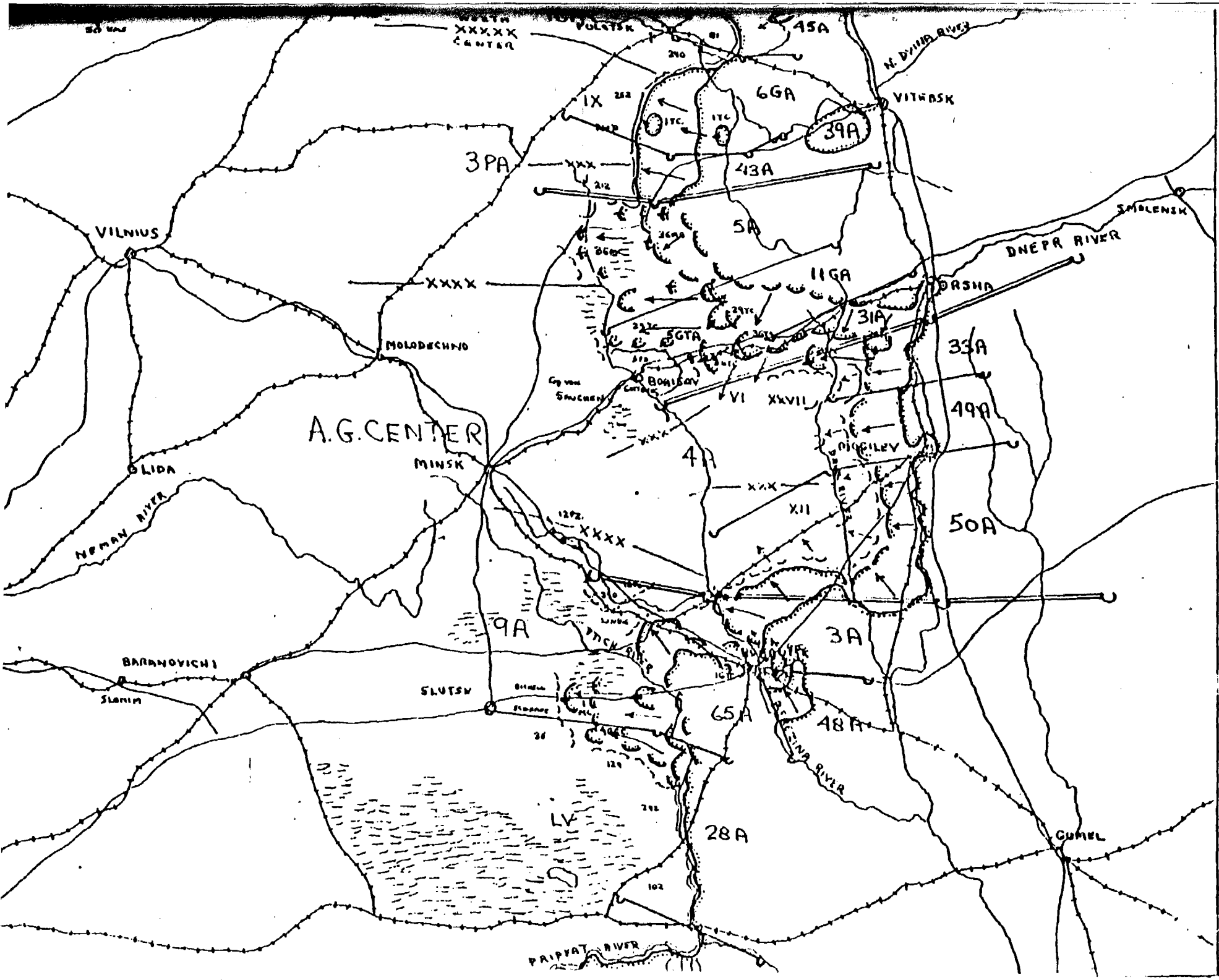

NORTH
CENTER
VILNIUS
MOLODECHNO
A.G.CENTER
MINSK
OLIDA
NEMAN RIVER
BARANOVICHI
SLONIM
SLUTSK
PINSK
PRIPYAT RIVER
BORISOV
ORSHA
MOGILEV
DNIEPER RIVER
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GOMEL
4A
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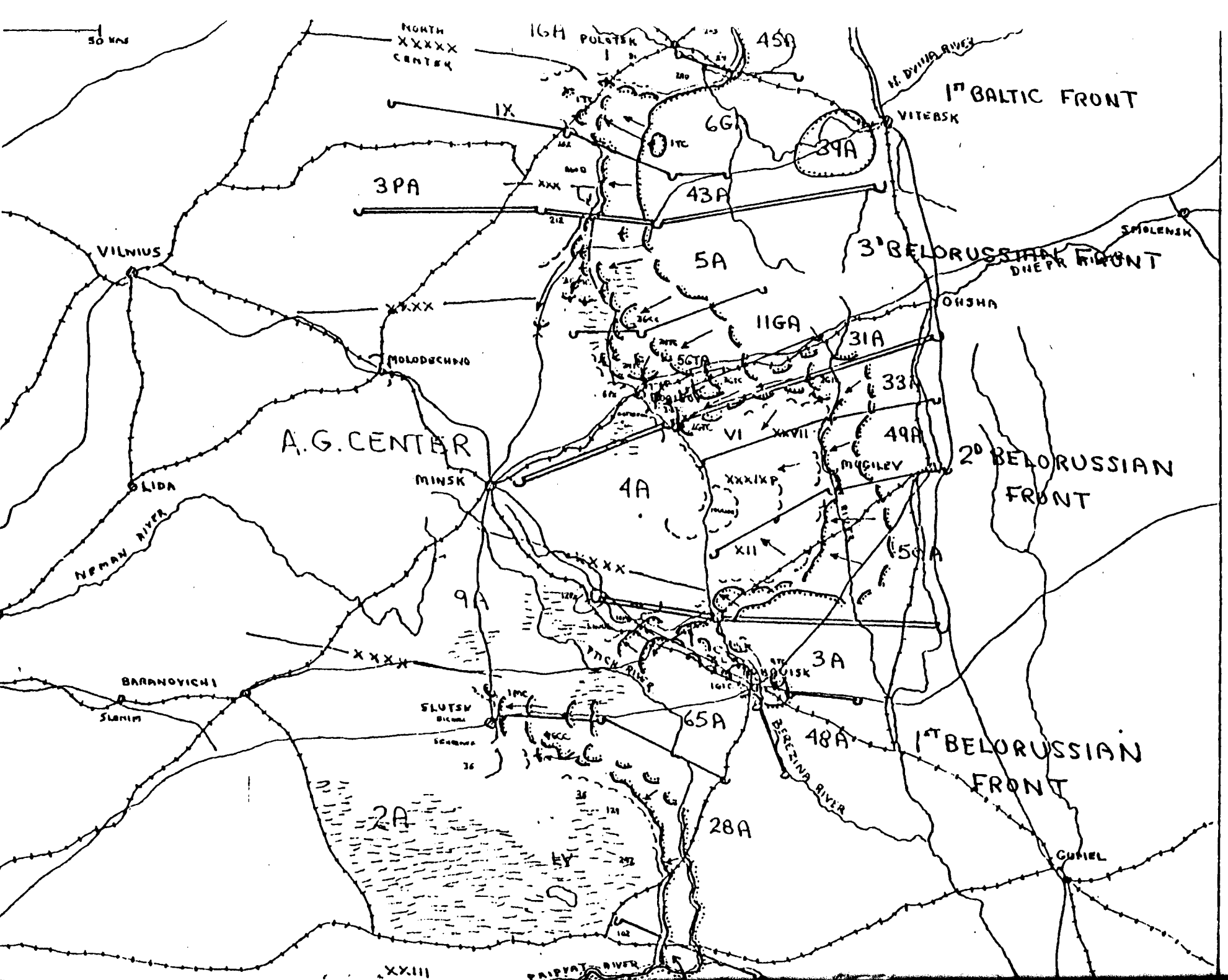

50 KMS
16A
POLOTSK
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43A
DVINSK RIVER
NORTH
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CENTER
IX
39A
MSK
5GTA
5A
4
3DA
5
GTA
11GA
VI
VILNIUS
SMOLENSK
DUEPR RIVER
31A
XXVII
ORSHA
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MOLODECHNO
BORISOV
A.G.CENTER
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XX
P
49A
MOGILEV
MINSK
OLIDA
NEMAN RIVER
XII
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3A
BARANOVICHI
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PRIPYAT RIVER

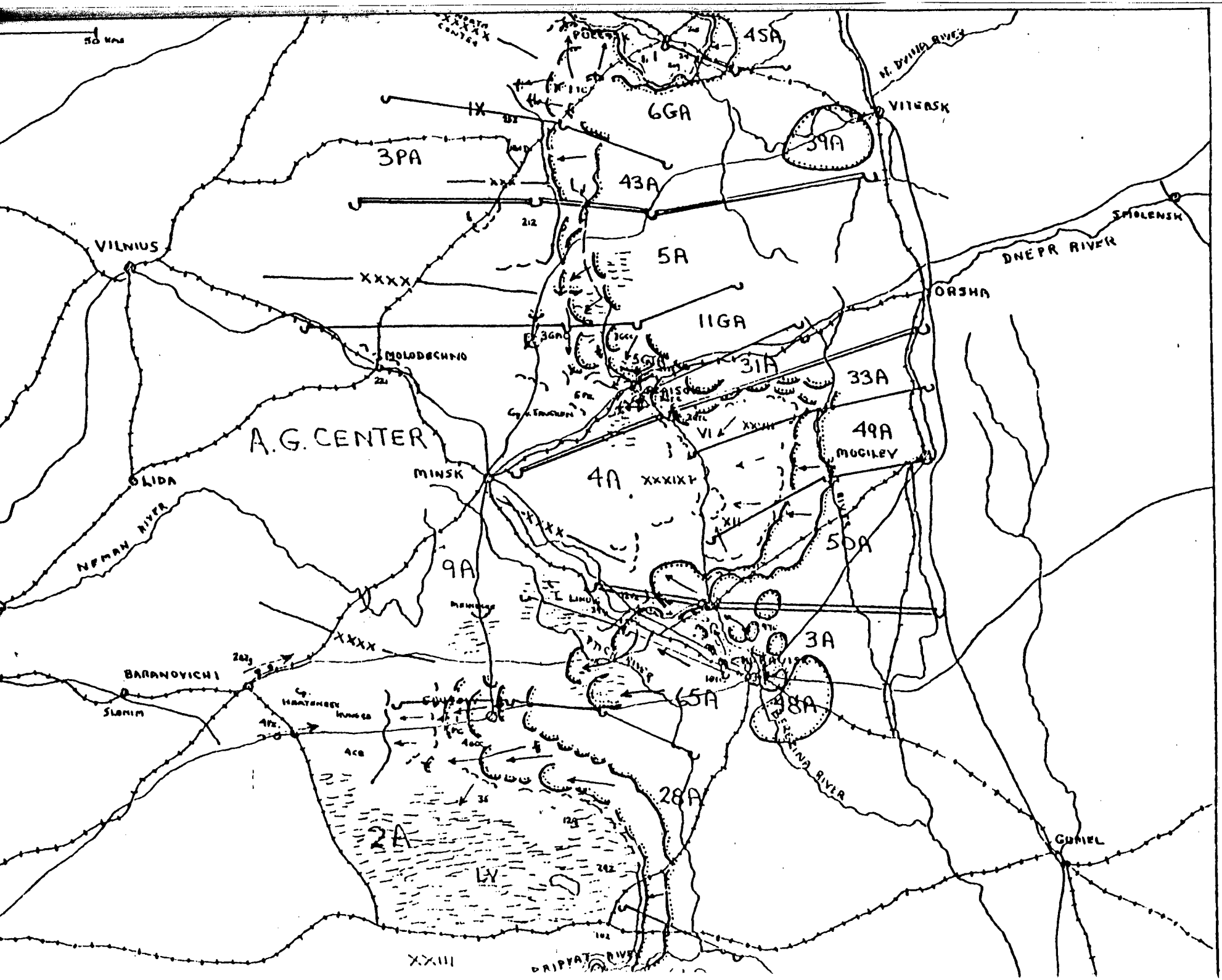

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PRIPYAT RIVER
XXIII
6GA
43A
N. DVINA RIVER
39A
VITEBSK
5GTA
5A
IX
11GA
SMOLENSK
3PA
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DNEPR RIVER
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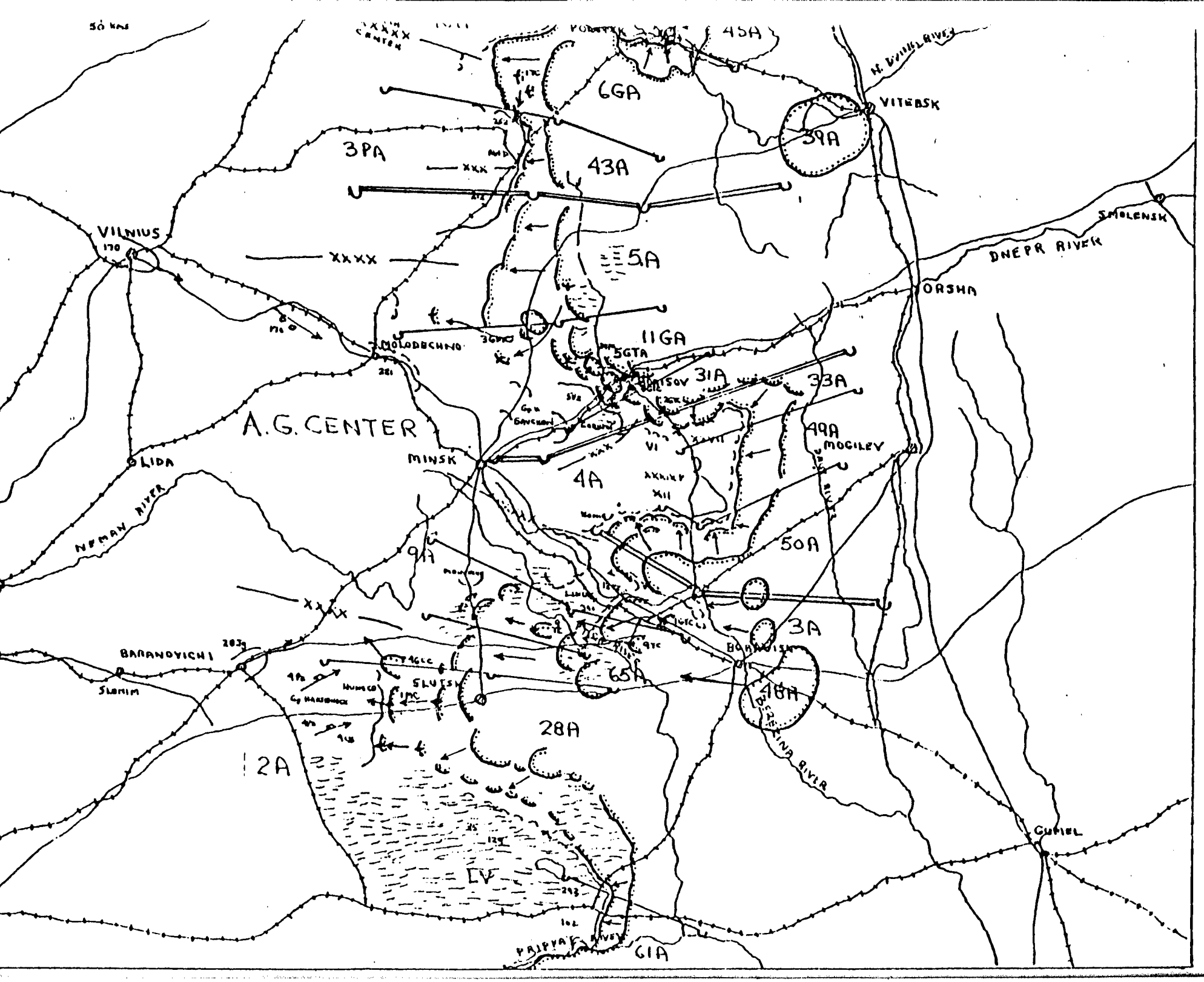

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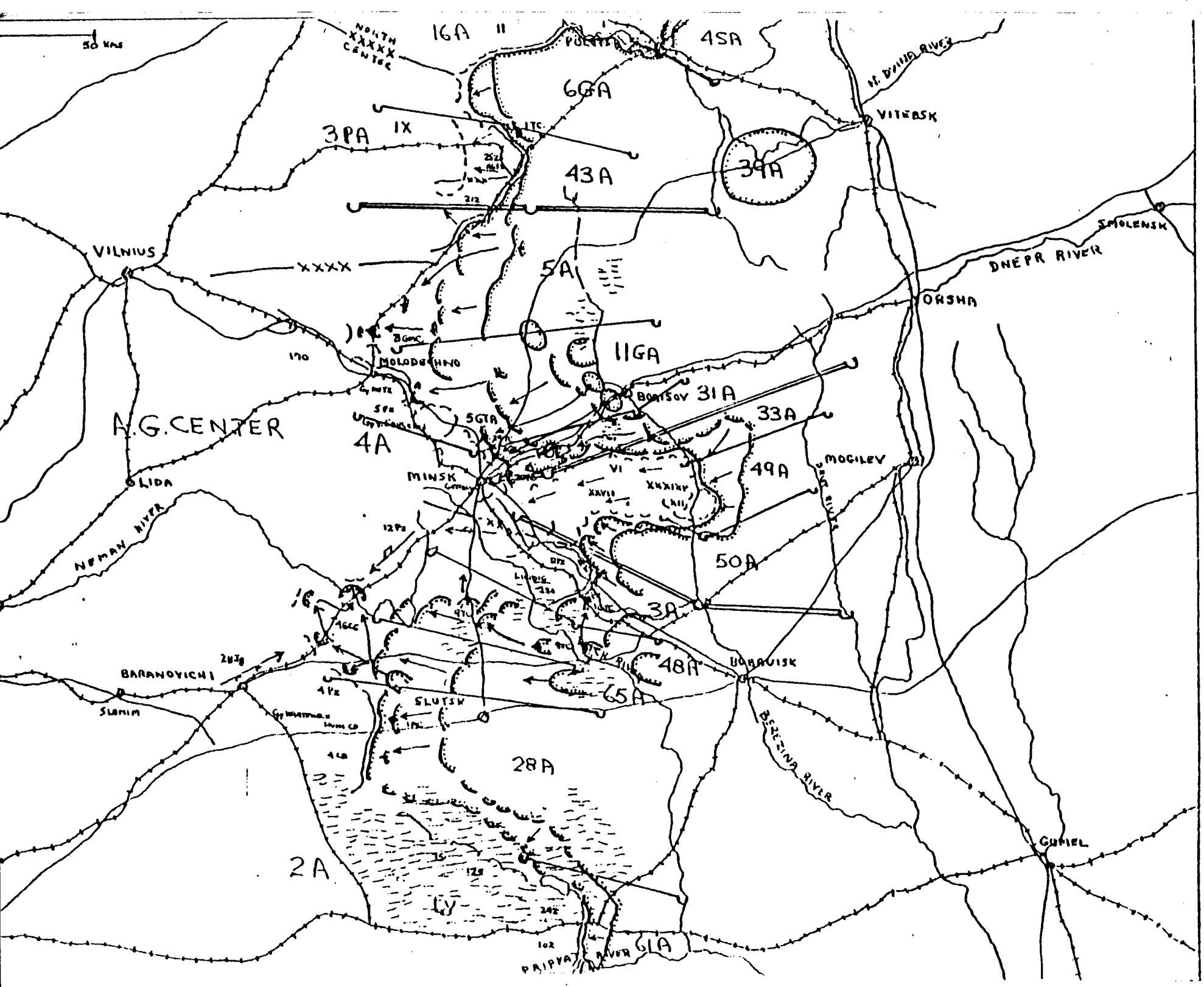

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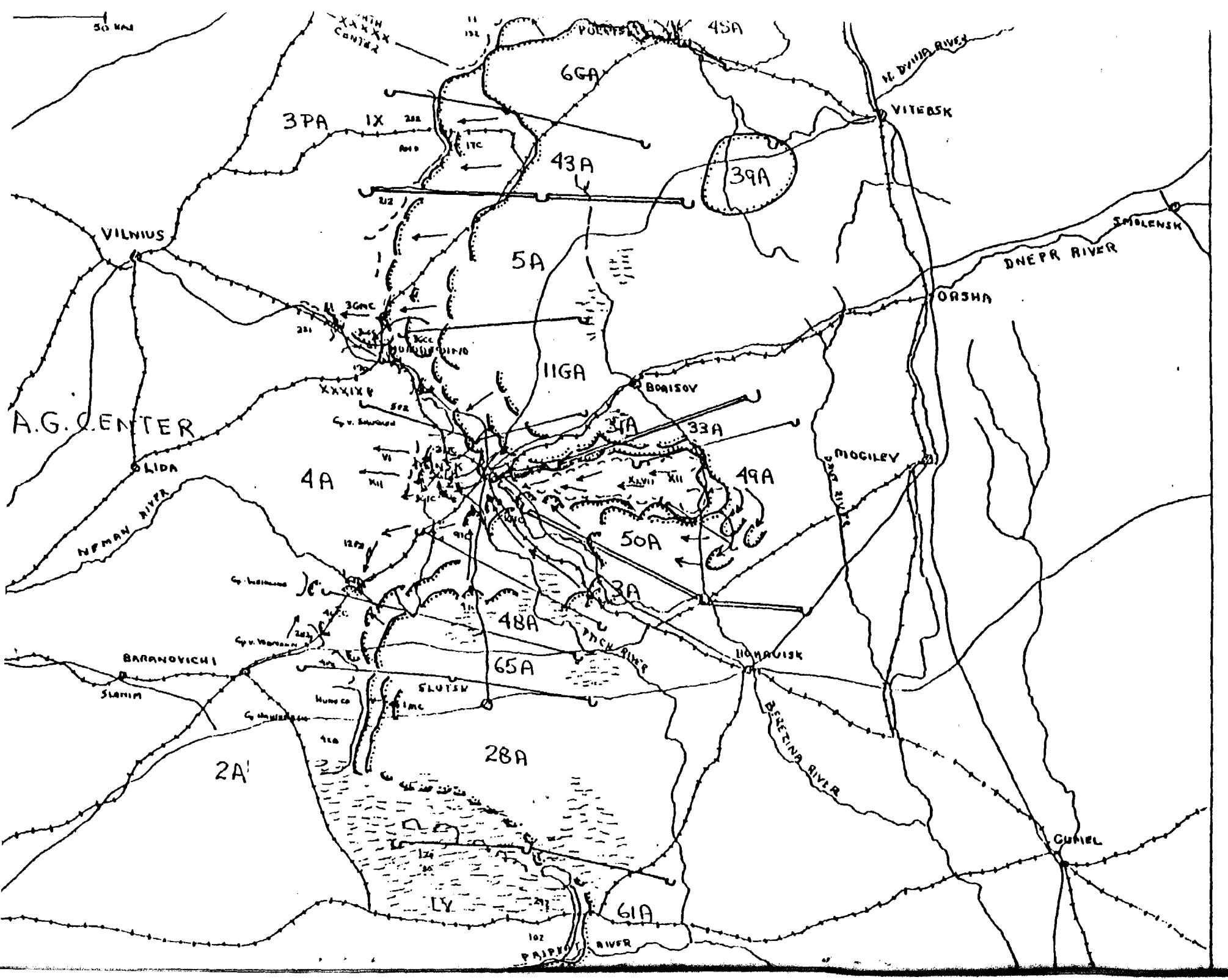

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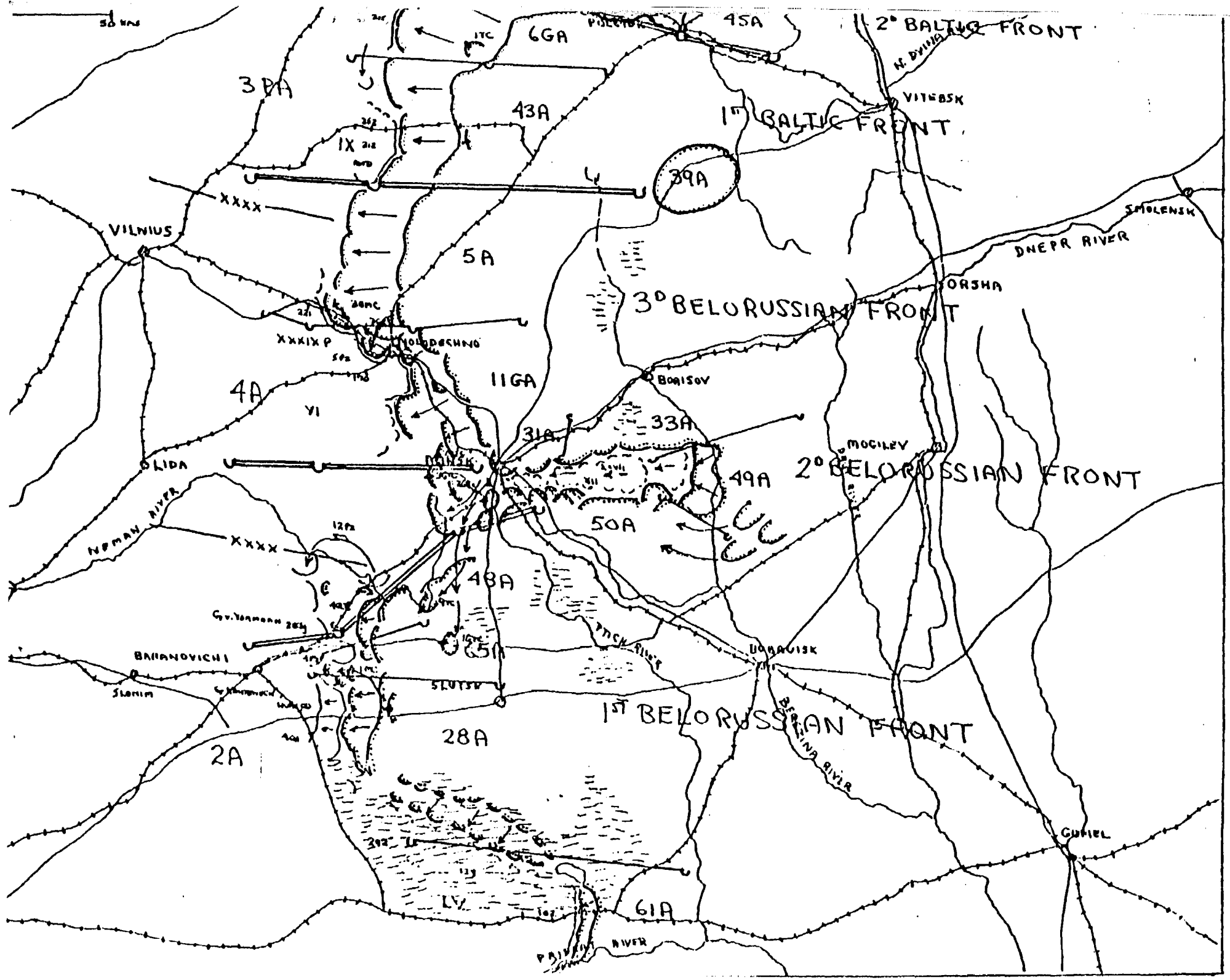

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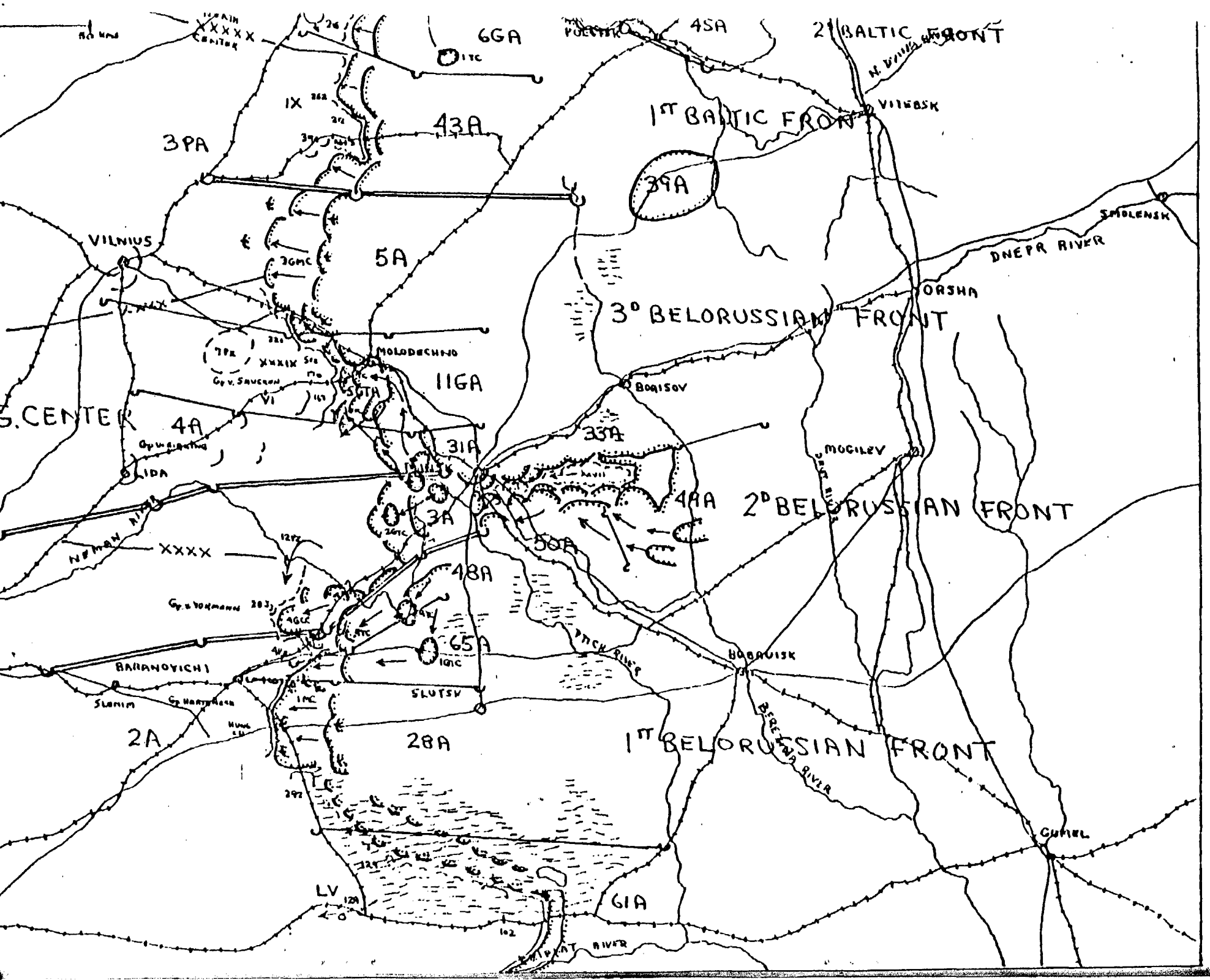

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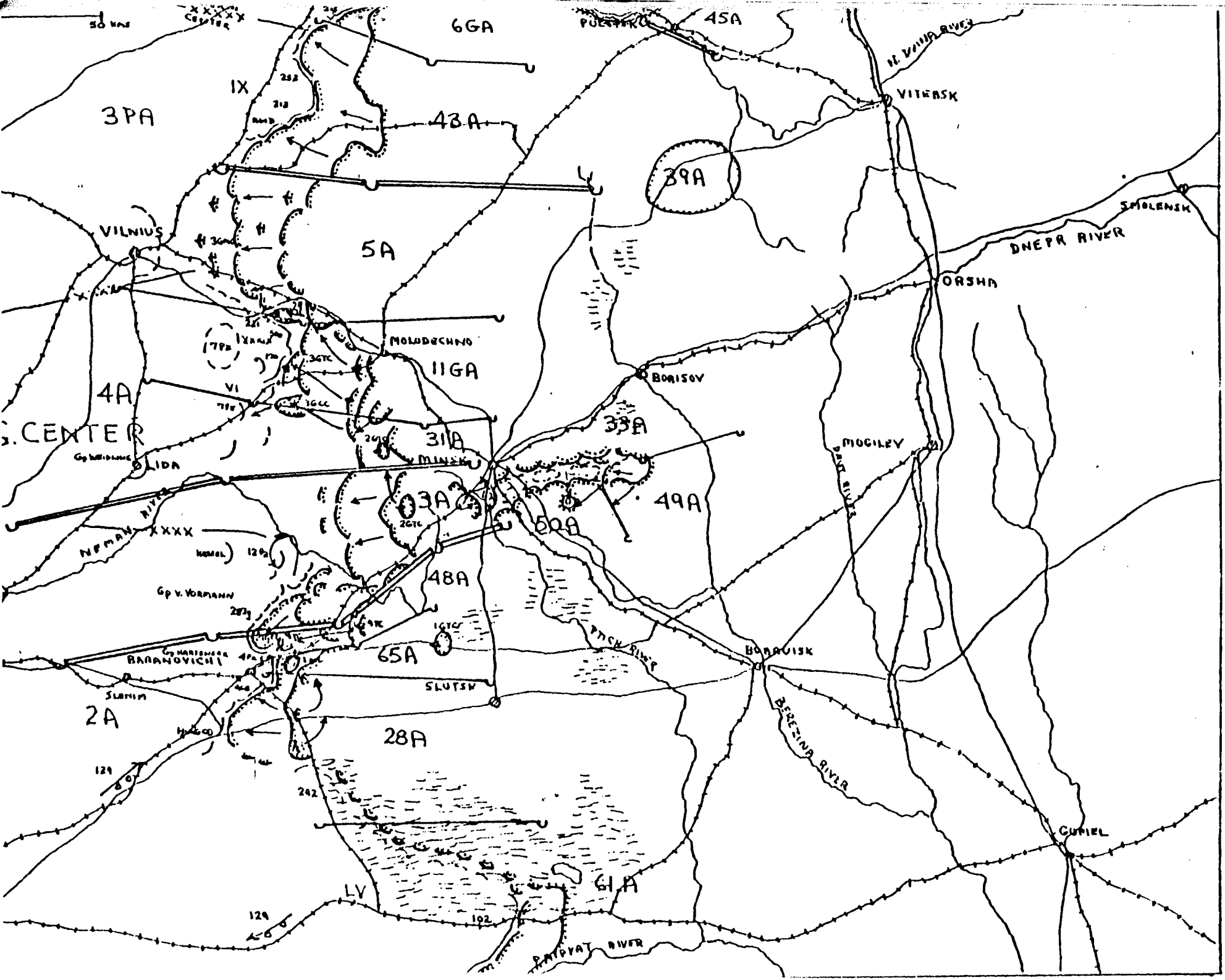

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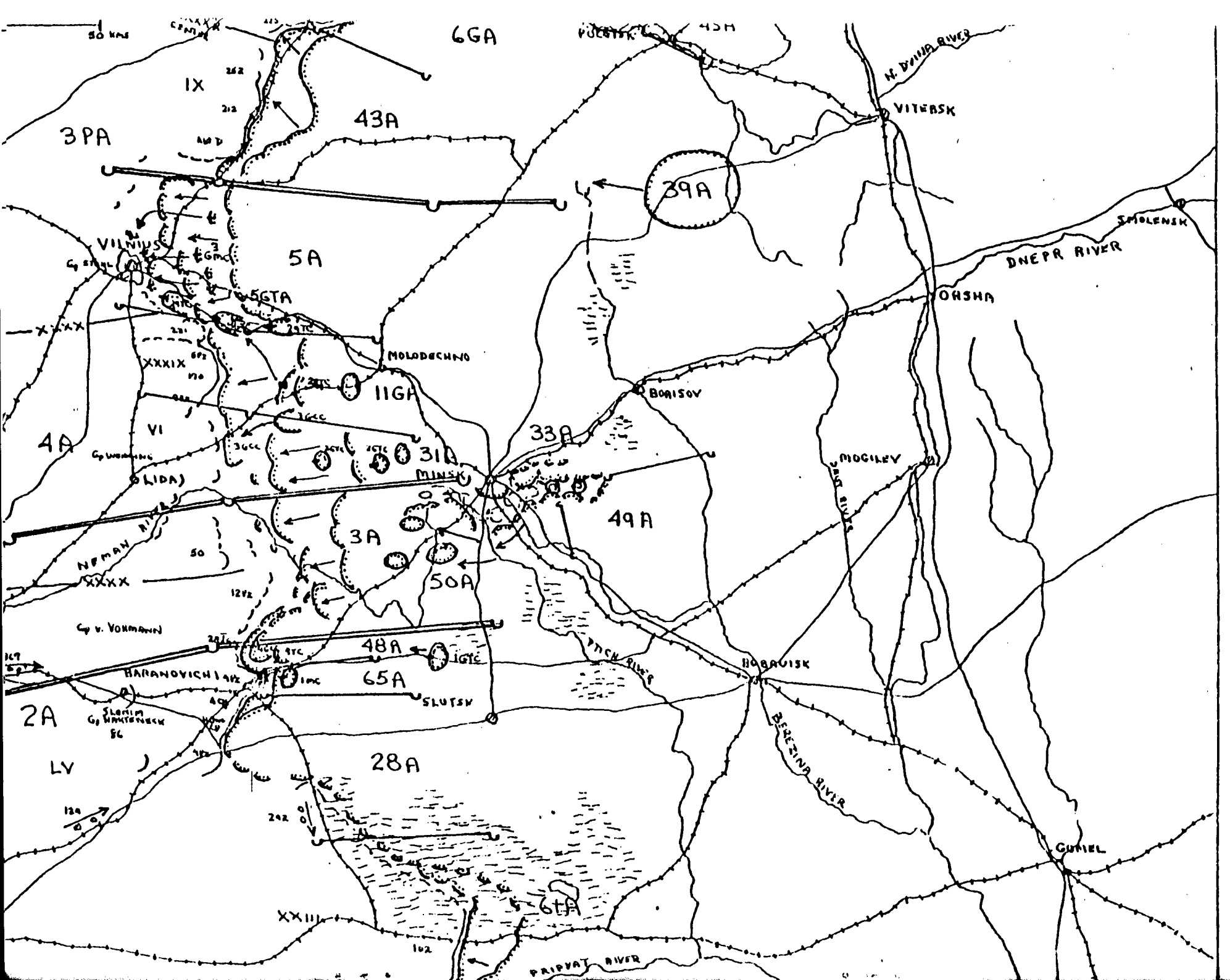

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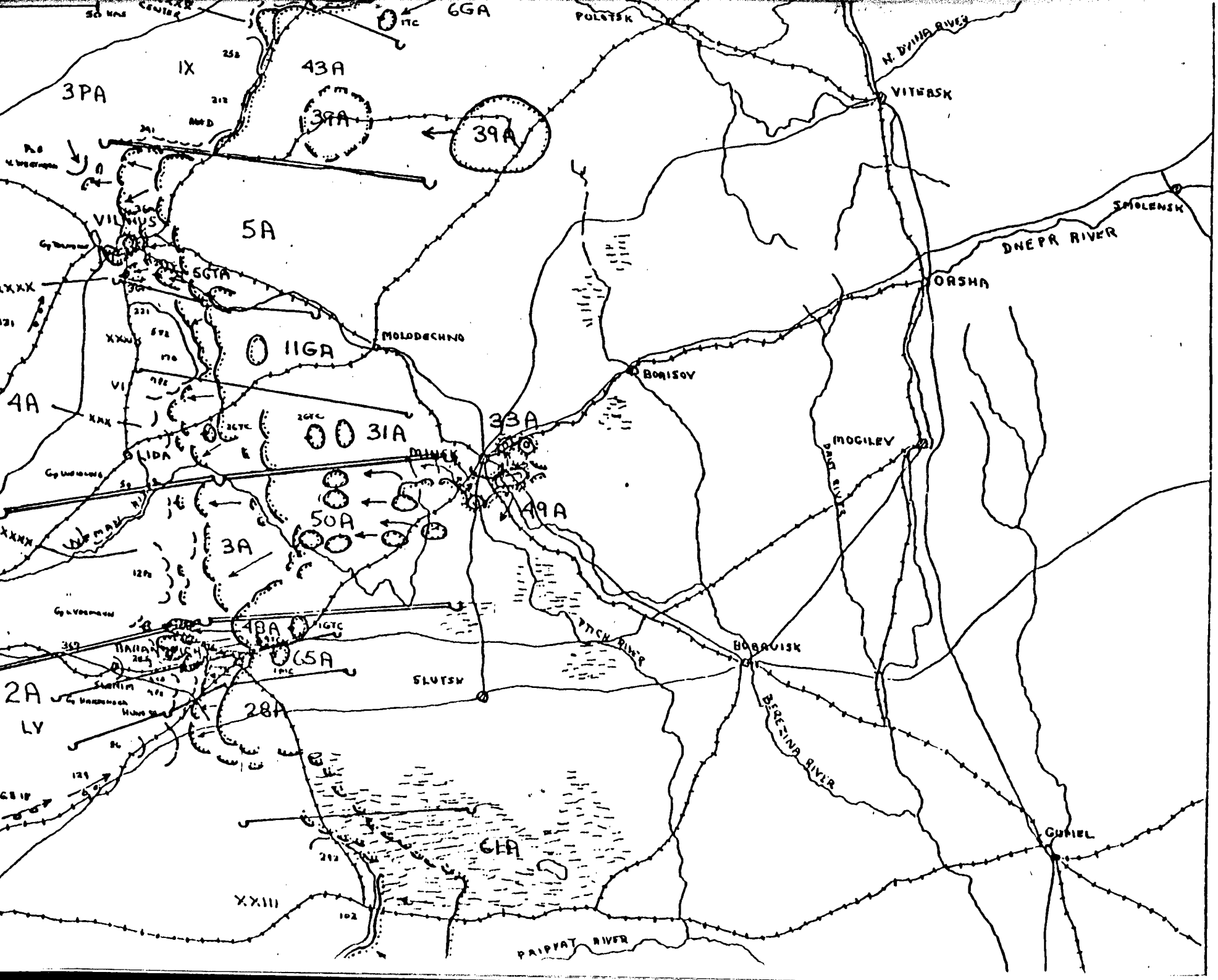

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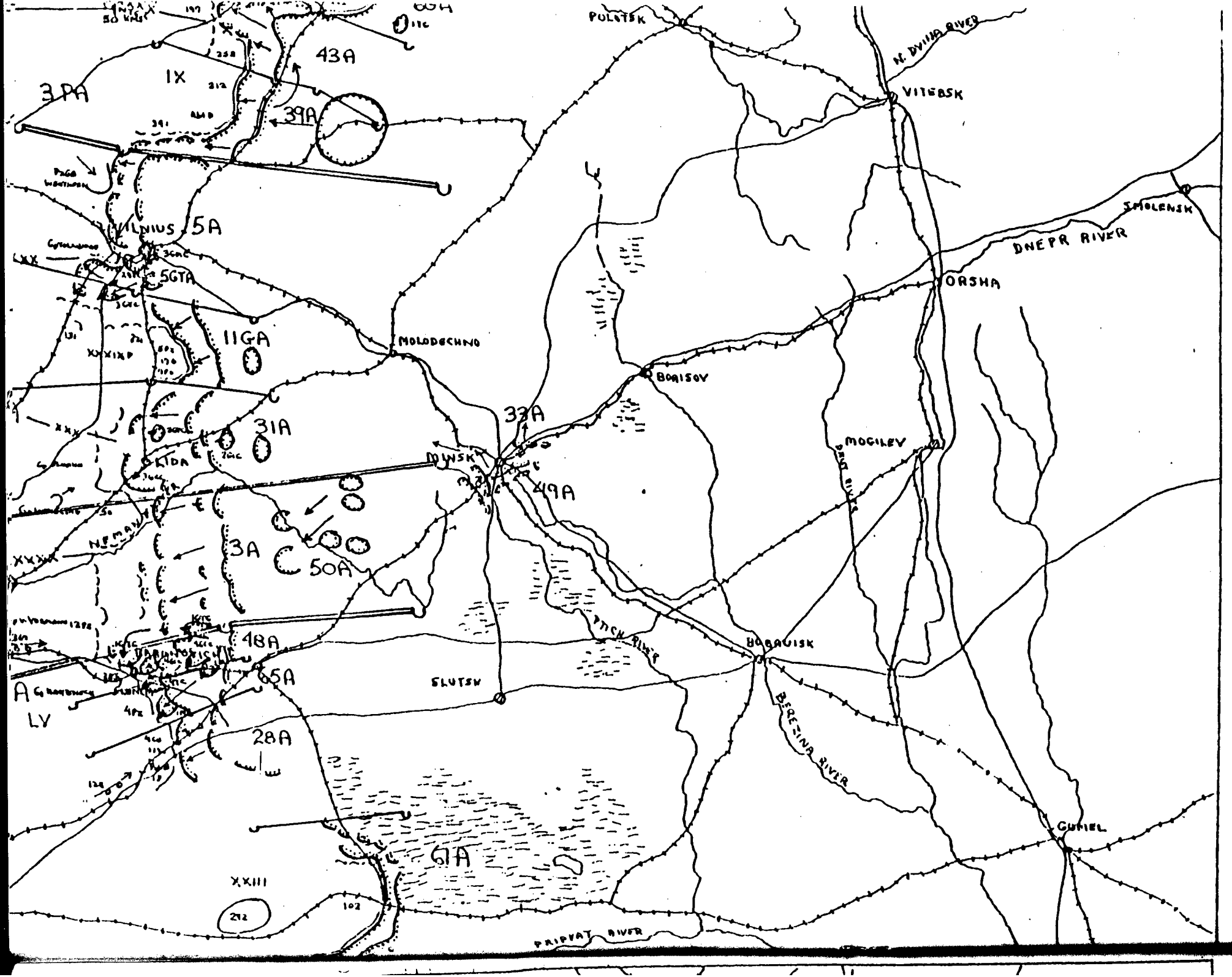

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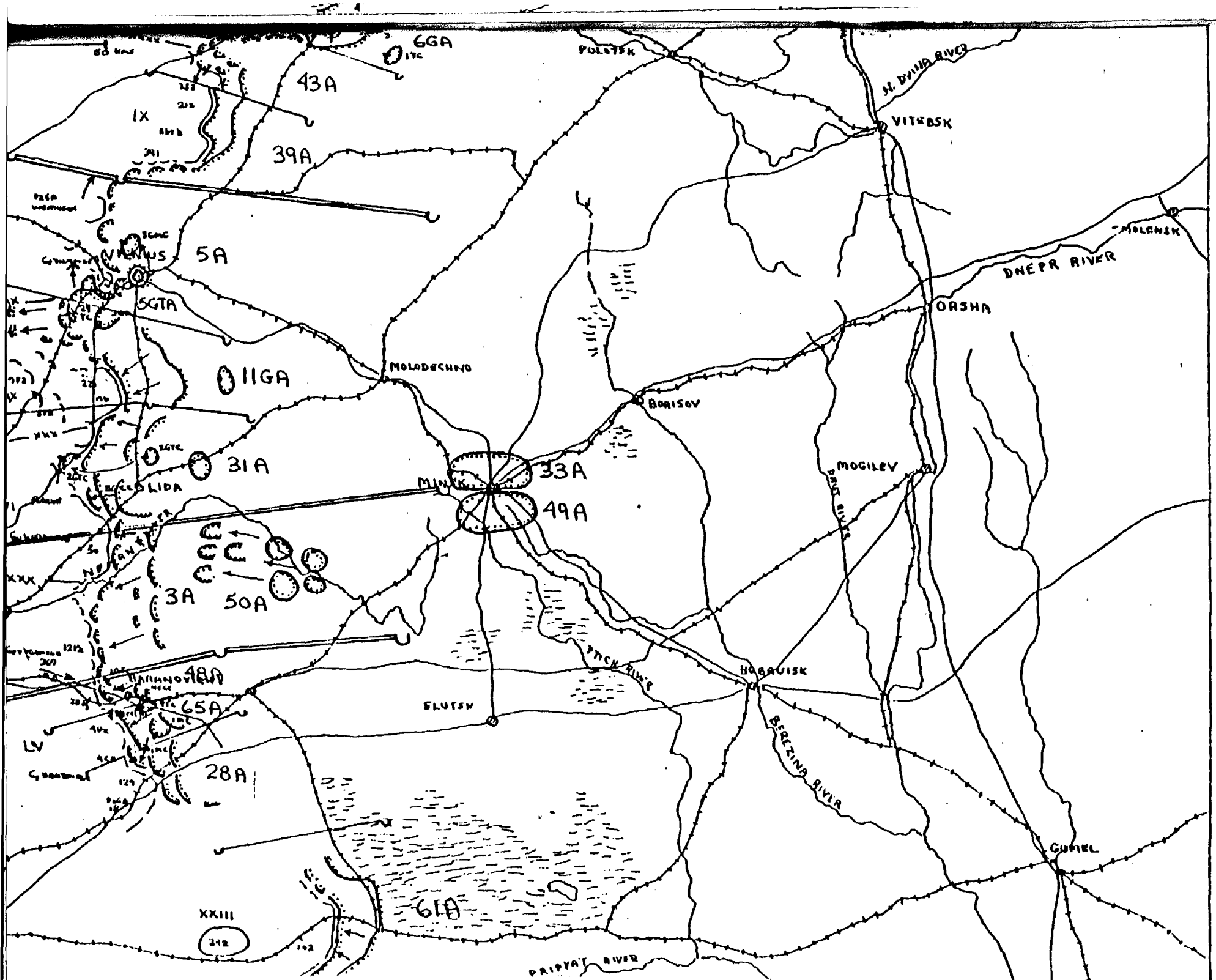

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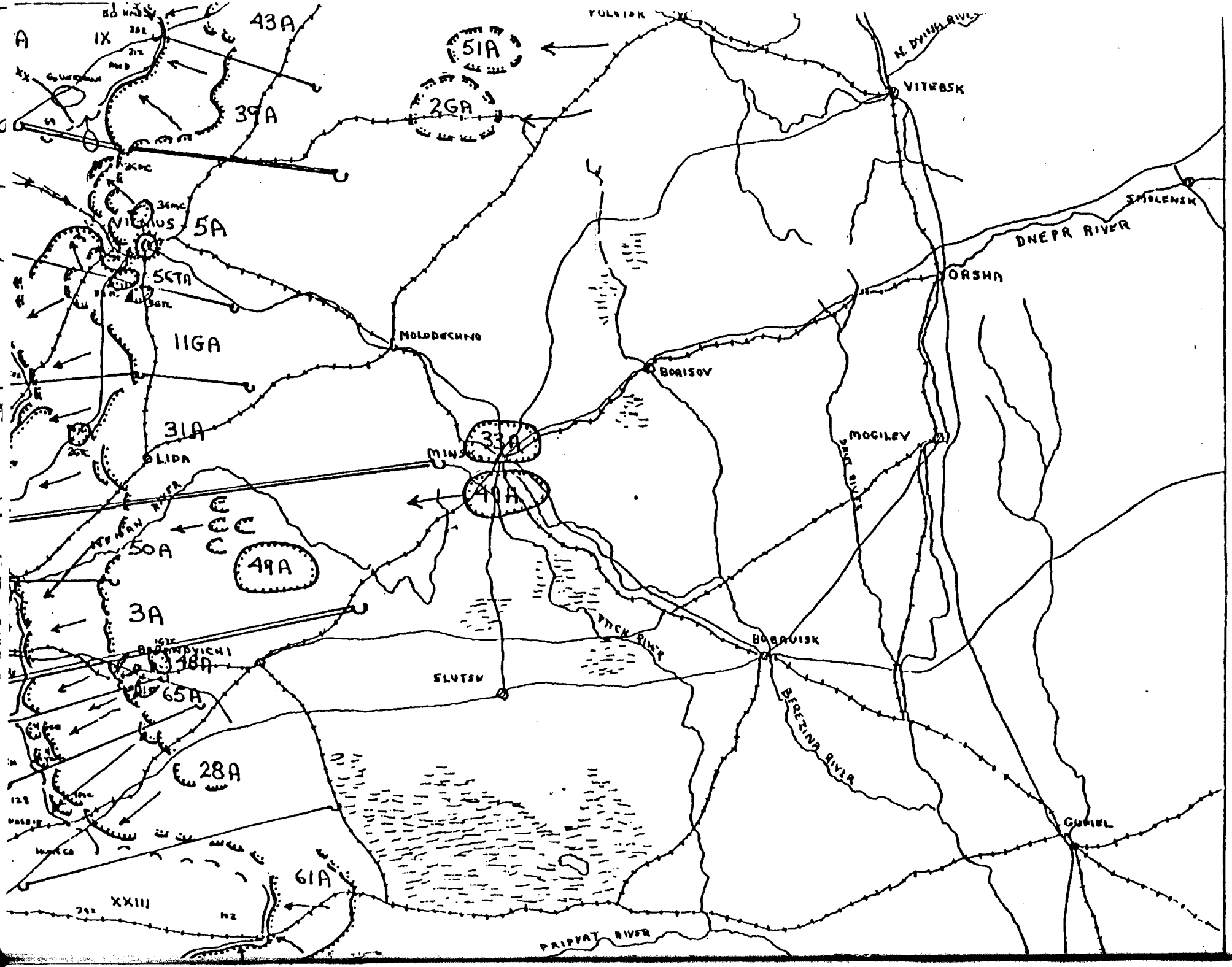

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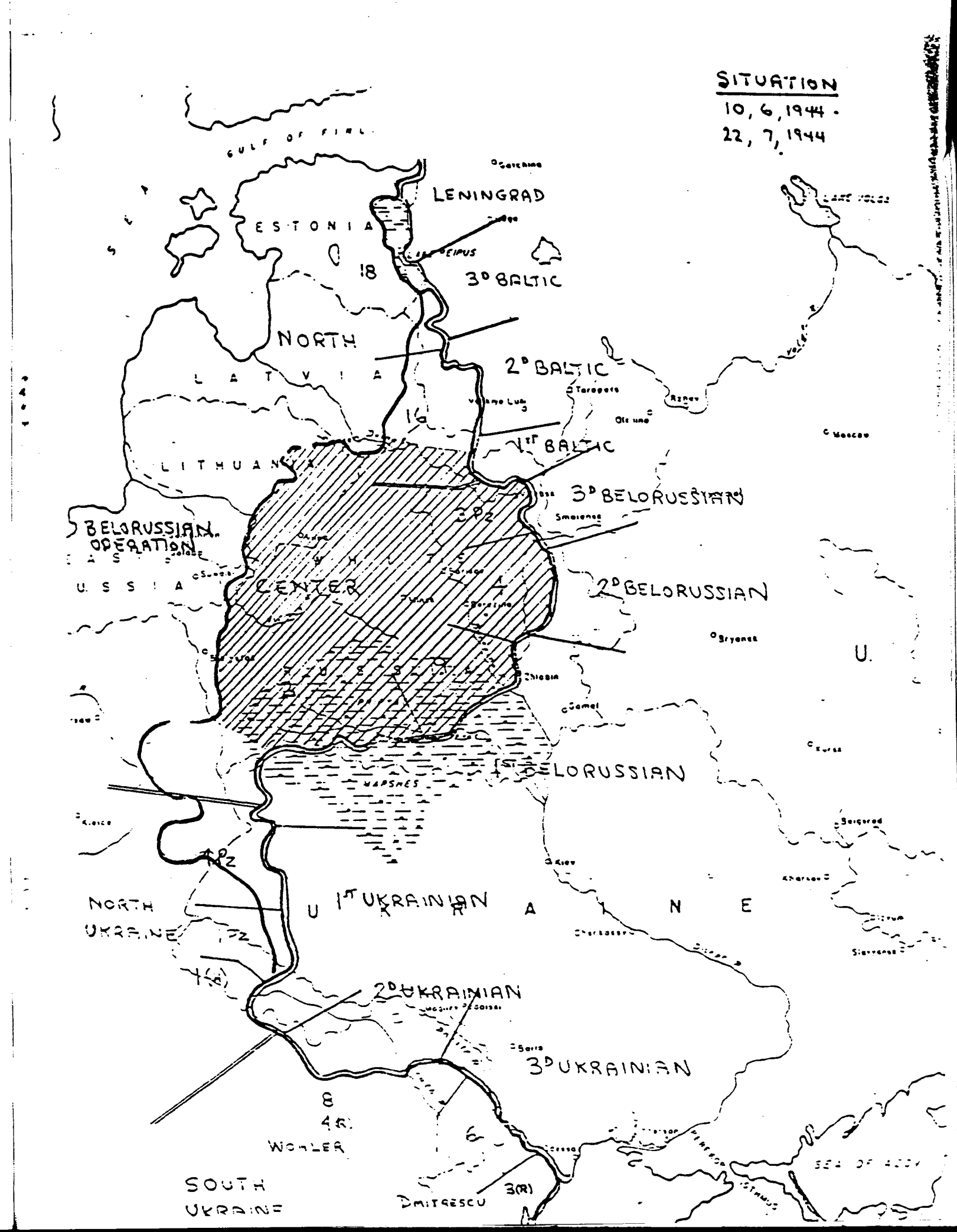

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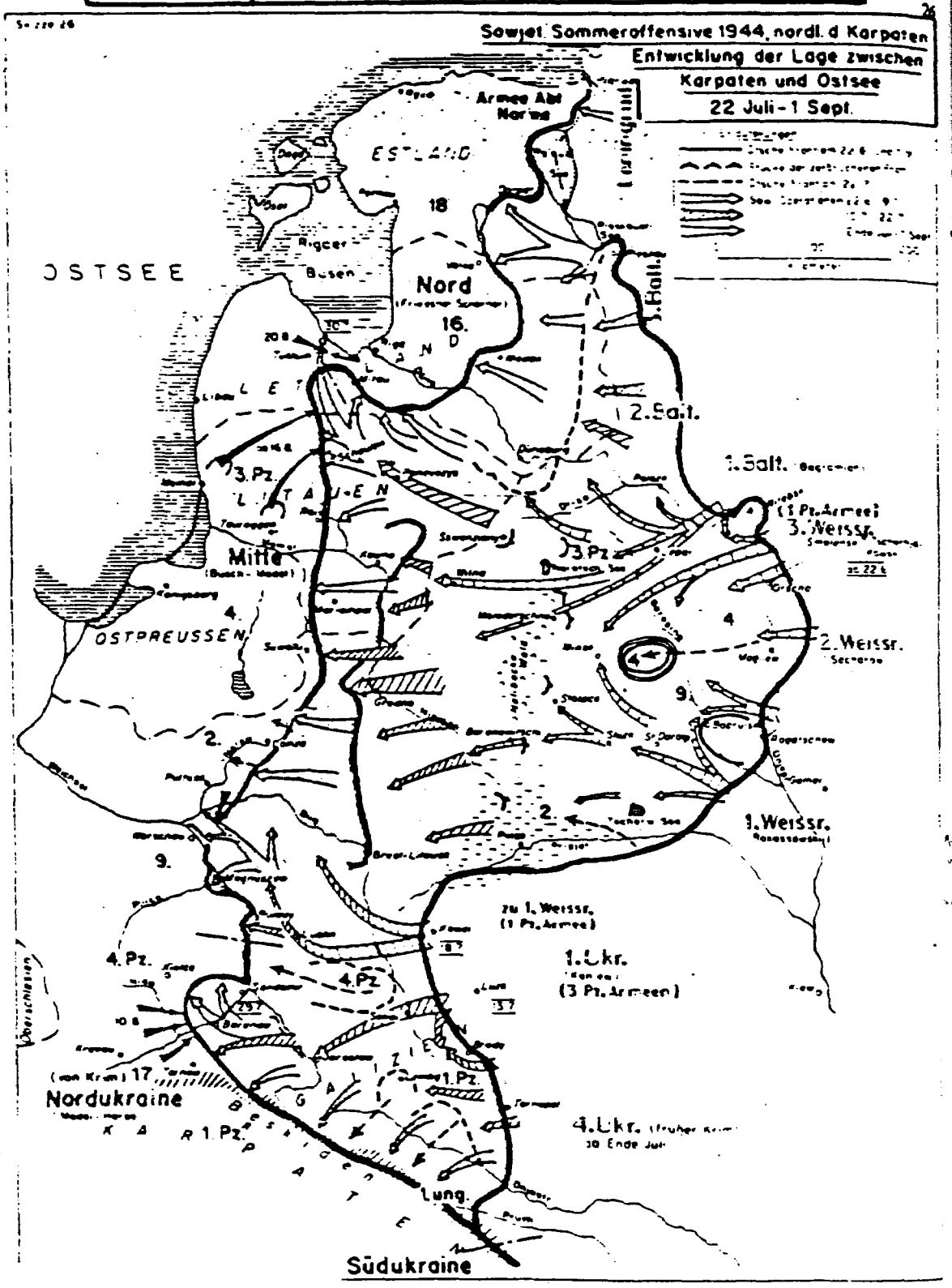

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PRIPYAT RIVER


SITUATION
10, 6, 1944 -
22, 7, 1944
GULF OF FINL
LENINGRAD
ESTONIA
18
3D BALTIC
NORTH
LATVIA
2D BALTIC
16
1ST BALTIC
LITHUANIA
3D BELORUSSIAN
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CENTER
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U.S.S.R.
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MARSHES
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2D UKRAINIAN
3D UKRAINIAN
8
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WOHLER
SOUTH UKRAINE
DMITRESCU
3(R)
Moscow
Smolensk
Bryansk
Gomel
Kiev
Belgrad
Kharkov
Sea of Azov

ATV / Stud	BAGRATION	44



27 Situation in Army Group Center.