

c. Summary of the effects of the German occupation on the economy of Greece.

On their withdrawal from Greece in the fall of 1944, the occupying German forces systematically destroyed an estimated 66 percent of the total railway network. About 75 percent of the locomotives and a comparable percentage of the rolling stock were destroyed. Workshops and running sheds were about 50 percent destroyed. Bridges were severely and thoroughly dealt with by heavy mined charges. Tunnels were blocked by heavy mined charges behind the walls and roof. The Corinth Canal was rendered non-navigable by the Germans from ground demolitions causing two large landslides, clearance of which will require special machinery. Agricultural production was able to reach two-thirds of its prewar level by the spring and summer following the withdrawal of the Germans. In January 1945, no industries except public utilities were operating in Greece, due partly to the destruction by the occupying forces and partly to the lack of raw materials and the absence of funds in the hands of the manufacturers to pay for these materials. The Greek Government was able to support itself only by advances from the Bank of Greece. The cost of living rose 72 percent from 11 November 1944 to 2 December 1944. The November rates, however, were 200 percent above pre-war levels.

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GERMAN OCCUPATION IN GREECE

The boundary between the Bulgarian and German occupation zones in Greece started at the intersection of the Vardar River and the Yugoslav border, followed the Vardar River south for a short distance, and then swung north and east of Salonika and finally southwest to the Gulf of Salonika. East of this boundary the Bulgarians maintained three occupation divisions. The German occupation area west of this line (extending partly into Albania and including Corfu (Kerkyra) and the islands of the Aegean) was under Army Group "E", which controlled an average of six divisions. The following disposition, in December 1943, is typical of the entire occupation period, though changes were made in the actual units involved as refitted divisions were withdrawn to meet the demands of the active fronts and other divisions took their places: (See map attached)

Army Group "E"

OKM Salonika (administrative area headquarters) -

Salonika 4th SS Polizei Panzer Grenadier

(Motorized) Div - Larisa

XXII Gebirge (Mountain) Corps - Ioannina

104th Jäger (Light) Division - Agrinion

LXVIII Corps - Athens

11th GAF Field Division (ground unit composed of
Air Force personnel) - Athens

117th Jäger (Light) Division - Tripolis

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22d Infantry (or Air Landing) Division - Crete

Festungs Brigade Kreta (Fortress Brigade Crete) - Crete

Sturm Division Rhodes (Assault Division Rhodes) - Rhodes

In addition to these larger units there were many independent Festungs (fortress), Sicherungs (security), SS or police, and Landesschützen (local defense) regiments and battalions. There were also administrative headquarters for the military government of the occupied country.

Total strength of the occupation forces was about 150,000 to 175,000 men, of which about 35,000 were on Crete, 8,000 - 9,000 on Rhodes, and about 3,000 on other islands of the Aegean.

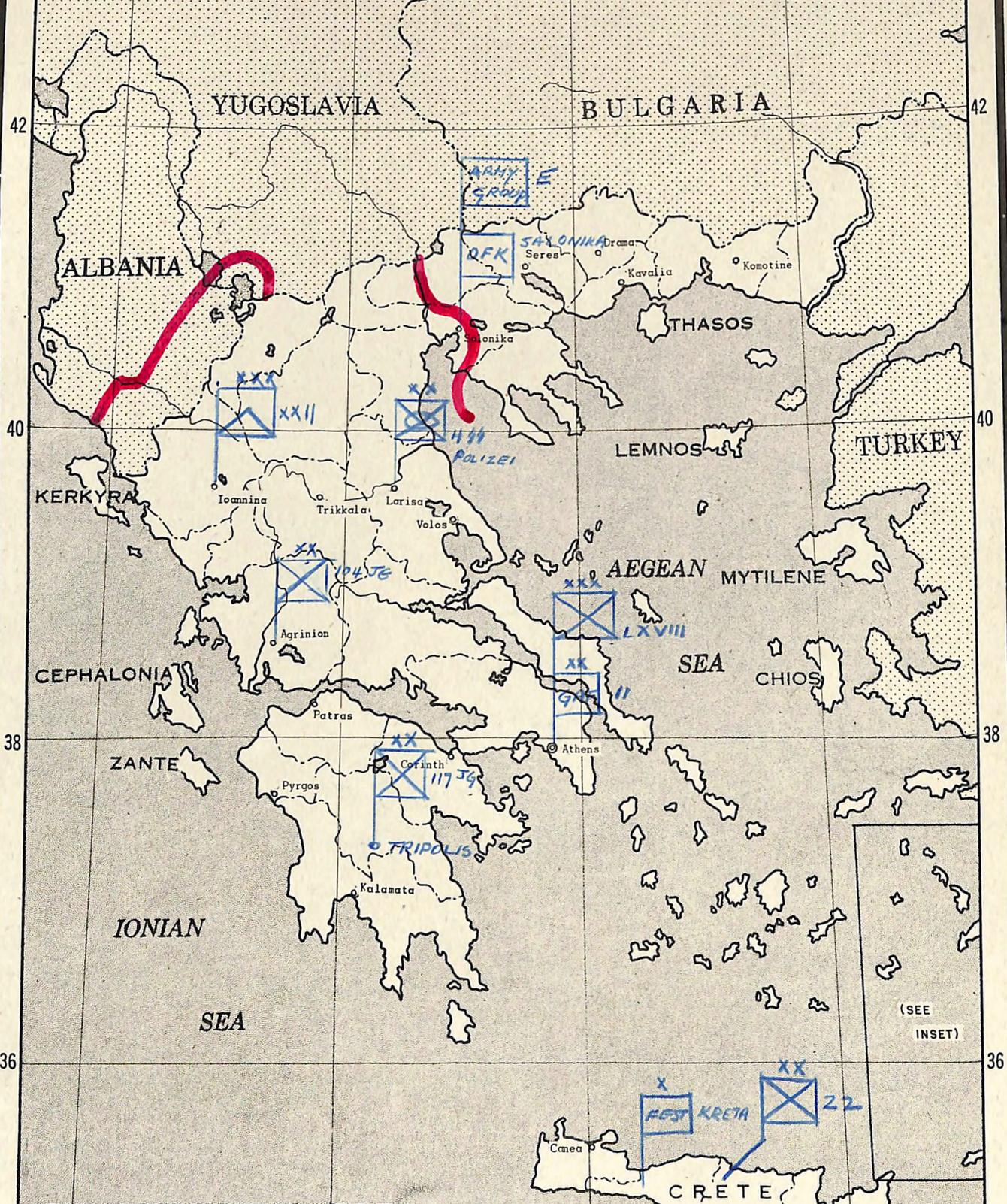
The larger units had their headquarters in the larger cities, with their subordinate units and the smaller independent units dispersed in towns along the main roads to protect the lines of communication against attack by guerrillas and other subversive elements, to prevent an uprising of the population, and to enforce the decrees of the military government. These towns also served as bases for counter-guerrilla operations. The fortress units were generally stationed along the coast in fixed fortifications to counter Allied landing attempts. Crete and Rhodes were held as perimeter protection so that they could not be used as bases for Allied invasion of the mainland.

It should be noted that Greece was an outpost and not on the German lines of communication. The Germans also did not expect a major invasion of the country. Hence the occupation forces were the minimum necessary to maintain internal security and for protection of the military government. The units were generally static and could not be moved rapidly, as was illustrated when the British made minor raids on some of the outer Aegean Islands and airborne troops were brought in by the Germans from Italy.

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GREECE

GERMAN DISPOSITIONS
DEC 1943

See text for Explanation

