

War Diary16.5.1941.
FridaySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

3 M.L's from Harwich carried out a patrol last night in the Straits of Dover.

British Air Operations.

Minor attacks were made by Bomber Command last night on Dieppe and Boulogne. During today a 2500 ton merchant vessel is reported to have been hit and left sinking, 70 miles N.N.W. of Bergen.

Coastal Command aircraft last night attacked the E-Boat base at Ijmuiden. Willemsoord, La Pallice, Calais and Dieppe were also attacked.

Enemy Air Operations

SS ASSAROE reported at 0156 today being bombed 33 miles E.N.E. of Bailey Light (Dublin Bay)

SS GWENTHILLS reports being attacked 5 times by machine gun fire, by an enemy aircraft at 0300 today, 2 miles west of Bardsey Island.

Transport ARCHANGEL was bombed at 2350 in 57° 55' N., 2° 3' W whilst carrying troops to Aberdeen from Kirkwall. There are reported to be 99 casualties. Ship sank later.

SS ETHEL RADCLIFFE (torpedoed by E-Boat 17/4 and bombed 9/5) was attacked four times last night at Yarmouth and was severely damaged by bombs and is probably not capable of salvage.

472

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

SITUATION REPORT

Mining.

Operations
B.S. 56
S.N. 9 B

TEVIOT BANK, PLOVER and CATTISTOCK laid mines today in the East Coast Barrier. R.A. (M) reported this operation completed at 0952/16.

Enemy minelaying aircraft operated last night in Liverpool Bay and off the south-west coast.

Mines were detonated off St. Anns Head.

South Atlantic.

DRAGON arrived at Freetown this morning escorting the French SS BOURBONNAIS which was intercepted by BULOLO 13/5.

It is thought that the Italian DUCHESSA D'AOSTA, which took refuge at Fernando Po when Italy entered the war is in W/T communication with Europe and is reporting movements of Allied shipping.

Mediterranean.

Submarines

Changes in the disposition of the submarines in the Mediterranean, necessitated by the altered situation are outlined by C. in C. Med. today.

Malta

The Grand Harbour was attacked by aircraft last night. The A.T. boom cannot be opened on account of damage to the winch by bombing. Several mines are believed to be in the fairway.

/GLOXINIA.....

473

16.5.1941.
Friday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Malta-Contd.

GLOXINIA has been damaged by mine. ENCOUNTER has been further damaged by bomb. FERMOY in dock is written off and is being broken up.

Three Swordfish aircraft were slightly damaged this morning by aircraft attack on Hal Far aerodrome.

The Malta supply situation is dealt with in a message from the Governor today.

Search for enemy convoy.

5 F.A.A. Swordfish from Malta last night swept an area between a point 70 miles E.S.E. of Malta and 60 miles E of Cape Passero to intercept, if possible, the southbound convoy, which, however, was not sighted.

UNDAUNTED lost.

UNDAUNTED is 3 days overdue from patrol north of Tripoli (Libya) and is considered lost.

Libya

Tobruk was attacked again today by enemy aircraft. Damage caused was negligible.

Air Attack on Suda Bay. Several ships damaged.

Suda Bay was dive bombed at 1730 today by about 25 aircraft. SS LOGICIAN, Greek NICOLAOU OURANIA, ARAYBANK and Greek KYTHERA are reported to have been hit and damaged; the two latter are reported to be on fire and unapproachable.

Syria

M.A. Ankara today gives information of the latest Turkish troop movements and forwards the Turkish Military Staff view of the situation.

474

16.5.1941.
Friday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

U-Boat Report

Freetown Area

C. in C. S.A. today gives a summary of enemy submarine activity in the Freetown area between 27/4 and 9/5.

SS RODNEY STAR reported at 0604 being torpedoed in 5° 3' N., 19° 2' W.

An unknown ship reported at 0835 being torpedoed in 5° 2' N., 10° 2' W. This was probably RODNEY STAR. Two destroyers and a flying boat searched the area, but found nothing.

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

475

Policy

CLYDE

Admiralty 2339B/13. CLYDE has completed working up after a long refit and is now ready for service. Pending a decision as to her future employment, I suggest that she now proceeds to Gibraltar where she would be well placed strategically for service either in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean. (F.O.S. 1019B/16)

Movements

KOS 5

Your 1640B/14. Request information this vessel. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1054/16)

RODNEY
SOUTHERN PRINCE
BRITANNIC

RODNEY screened by 3 destroyers is to proceed passing Hoxa Boom at 1000/17 to Clyde.

(ii) C. in C. Rosyth and C. in C. W.A., are requested to make A/S air escort. Code word DIMPLE. "Dimple".

(iii) Destroyers are to remain at Clyde and will be required for subsequent screening of RODNEY. (C. in C. H.F. 1209B/16 A.M. 2014B/13. Route for RODNEY, SOUTHERN PRINCE, and SS BRITANNIC, leaving U.K. 21/5 for Halifax.

2. SOUTHERN PRINCE should R/V with RODNEY and SS BRITANNIC in position A at 0830B/22 (D.O.D. H. 1617B/16)

Captain D. 6. in SOMALI with BEDOUIN, ESKIMO will be required to screen RODNEY to Clyde passing Hoxa Boom 1000B tomorrow. Para 2. On arrival at Clyde enter Harbour. You will be required for subsequent screening of RODNEY. (R.A.D. 1740B/16)

MOOLTAN

Admiralty 1817B/11 and C. in C. Nore 1540B/13. Intend to sail SLEIPNER as part escort to meet MOOLTAN off May Island about 1200/23. Request one destroyer be detailed to make same R/V, acting as S.O. of escort for passage to Clyde. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1249/16 to C. in C. H.F.)

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

476

Operations

Warship
to West of
Shetlands.

Large warship reported by aircraft in 60° 10' N., 4° 15' W., at 0647/16. 6 Hudsons are searching. Proceed with ARETHUSA to westward prepared to act on information received. (C. in C. H.F., 1054B/16 to EDINBURGH) Scapa departure 1215. EDINBURGH for operational duties to northward. (A.C.O.S. 1241/16) In absence of further information para 2 of my 1054B/16 is cancelled. GALATEA, EDINBURGH and ARETHUSA are to return to Area A. (C. in C. H.F. 1554B/16)

Western
Patrol.

Desired to re-establish Northern Zone of patrol as soon as possible. Reasons. Request proposals. (A.C.N.S. F. 1246B/16 to F.O.C.N.P.) See Operations Volume.

East Coast
Patrols.

Departures M.T.B's 30, 31, and 32, at 2135. M.G.B's 60, 64, and 65, at 2150. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2152B/16)

British Air Activity

Patrols

Six Hudsons carrying out diverging search now as follows. Details. (C. in C. Rosyth 1200/16) 3 Whitley A/C on A/S sweep flying in parallel tracks 30 miles interval for 200 miles leave Datum Line Butt of Lewis Cape Wrath on course 318° at 1400 today. (C. in C. Rosyth 1320/16)

/Portland.....

477

War Diary16.5.1941
FridayHOME COMMANDSBritish Air Activity-Contd.Portland.
Engagement of
Low-flying
aircraft.

F.O.I.C. Portland has made strong representation to me that the present orders that fire is not to be opened by A.A. guns unless a plane is definitely established as hostile is resulting in enemy raiders cruising round at night with impunity. He requests that the correct policy is to fire at all low flying aircraft within the gun defended area unless they identify themselves as friendly by recognition signal. He asks that Military Defences should open fire with all guns on aircraft at night seen below 3,000 feet. I am not aware of any special orders governing the action of the Military Defences at Portland but from F.O.I.C. Portland's representation it appears that for some reason there are handicapping restrictions in that area.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1407B/16)

Own A/C
shot down
on 13/5.

Following is claim for aircraft probably destroyed at 0045/13 as a result of being engaged by Naval pom-poms sited at Penlee Point. Details.(C. in C. Plymouth, 1557/16)

Height of
Kites and
Balloons.

Admiralty 1939/22/4/41 giving conditions under which kites and balloons may be flown from ships. No mention is made of ports or anchorages when there are no shore barrages or waterborne balloons controlled by Balloon Command. Presume intention is that height from ships at anchor in such areas should be limited to 300 feet as at night. Consider this essential for flying safely and request principle be agreed and instructions issued to this effect without delay as case recently occurred at Yarmouth where balloons from ships were flying at over 2000 feet in harbour. (H.Q.F.C. 2020/16 to Air Ministry)

16.5.1941.
Friday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Air Activity

Automatic AAAA signal heard at 0130 G.M.T. strength two bearing about 25° from Lands End. (Lands End 0131/16) (Port Patrick 0133/16)

ASSAROE

SS ASSAROE being bombed 33 miles E.N.E. of Bailey Light. (Liverpool W/T 0156/16)

ETHEL RADCLIFFE
Bombed.

British, 5673 tons. Attacked four times during the night by enemy aircraft. In last attack at 0455 four bombs were reported dropped and vessel sustained direct hits. No casualties. Damage extensive and severe. Prospects of salvage now extremely remote. Am continuing discharge of No.2 hold for the present and recovering Salvage Equipment. (Admty. Salvage Officer, Yarmouth, 0830B/16)

Aircraft
over
Orkneys.

At 0345 one E/A approached from N.E. at 8,000 to 10,000 feet, passed over Burray, South Ronaldsay, and Long Hope, and left at 0419 in N.W. direction near Rora Head. Plots were good and ground defences engaged E/A by unseen fire procedure. No bombs, mines or flares dropped. (A.C.O.S. 1000/16 to Admty.)

PERFECTIVE
A/C shot down.

My 0935B/15. Further information proves this A/C was shot down by PERFECTIVE commanded by second hand W.C.P. Leigh. Vessel was anchored in Humber entrance and at 0023 A/C was heard approaching and was sighted flying at 200 feet. It was instantly engaged and tracers were seen to hit and engine was heard to cut out. Prisoners state that wing of plane touched water whilst avoiding fire but consider more likely that pilot was hit. Plane was not engaged by any other ship or from shore, and there were no fighters up. (F.O. Humber, 1615B/16)

/GWENTHILLS....

479

16.5.1941.
Friday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Air Operations-Contd.

GWENTHILLS

(British 868 tons) Reports being attacked five times by M/G. 1 enemy aircraft at 0300 /16 two miles W. of Bardsey Island. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1821B/16)

ARCHANGEL

(British 2448 tons) Bombed.

ARCHANGEL bombed. Probably sinking. Am engaging aircraft. (BLANKNEY 2350/16) Am standing by to take off wounded and repel probable further attack. (BLANKNEY 0021B/17) ARCHANGEL severely damaged in boilers and engines. Not at present settling. (BLANKNEY 0025/17)

Convoys

W.N. Odd
& DAFFODIL "Daffodil"

Help ^{"Rusty"} ~~RUSTY~~. Request fighter assistance. One enemy A/C. My position 57° 24' N., 1° 41' W. (Rosyth, 2352/16) Fighters left for Convoy ~~RUSTY~~ and ~~DAFFODIL~~ (Rosyth 2355/16)

Mining

Operation
B.S. 56.

TEVIOT BANK, PLOVER and CATTISTOCK sailed. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 0545/16) Operation B.S. 56 completed. (TEVIOT BANK 1700B/16)

S.N. 9.B.

Completed. (R.A.M. 0952/16)

Operation
B.S. 57.

Your 1924B/15. Request information whether mines will be ready in time to embark them on 18th. If so intend to carry out B.S. 57 that night. (C. in C. Nore, 1130B/16 to Admty.) Your 1130B/16. Mines will be available. (D.D.O.D. M. 1822B/16 to C. in C. Nore)

/East Coast.....

480

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Mining-Contd.

East Coast Sweep.

Your 1110/13. Fleet sweeper searched one mile either side of a line joining following points. One new German "X" type mine out and sunk in 52° 7.5' N., 2° 24.5 E. One sweep parted at same time. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1253B/16)

1st M.S. Flotilla.

My 2055/6. BRAMBLE, HAZARD, HEBE, SEAGULL, SHARPSHOOTER and GOSSAMER are required to remain at one week's notice for minesweeping operations. Subject to above proviso they are available to you for escort duty. When BRITOMART rejoins she should be substituted for GOSSAMER. (D.M.S. 1339B/16 to C. in C. W.A.)

4th M.S. Flotilla Searching Sweep.

Request you will arrange for a high percentage searching sweep for moored mines to be carried out by 4th M.S.F. over the whole areas described in Admty. Messages 371 QZX and 372 QZX. Sweeps should be fully armed. (D.M.S. 1340B/16 to C. in C. Nore.)

Intend sailing 5 F M/S S.O. ELGIN at 1300 tomorrow proceeding by 225 and 202 QZS to Aldeburgh Float commencing Sweep as follows. Details. Returning to Harwich by 2245/18. Request Fighter protection and fighter escort as follows. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 2157B/16)

Milford Haven

2 mines detonated today by sweeper off St. Anns Head. Details. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1841/16)

KILEENAN

(Steam Barge, 72 tons) Sunk by mine in the River Mersey on 7/5. (D.S. 619)

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Intelligence

E-Boats.

Possible E-Boats sighted at 0123 by Motor Launch on patrol off Smith's Knoll. (C. in C. Nore, 0155B/16)

E-Boats number unknown bearing 090° in position 038° 29 miles from Lowestoft. (M.L. 110 0215B/16)

The following points are being used by E-Boats on East Coast. (D.D.I.C. 1847B/16)

Brest

Battle cruisers in usual positions. Visual R/C 1310/16. (D.D.I.C. 1544B/16)

Enemy Raider

A vessel closely resembling German HOHENFELS which may be Raider No.16 was sighted on 3/5 in 24° 45' S.24°29'W. See illustration WIR No 47 31st January. No 16 has been at sea since April 1940 and was last located in Indian Ocean South of Saya de Malha on 28/2/41. She may now be making for a French Atlantic Port. (D.D.I.C. 1610B/16)

M.V. off
Gris Nez.

An enemy M.V. about 3000 tons, tanker type, was observed to pass Cap Gris Nez westwards. Speed 8 knots, at 1834 today. (V.A. Dover, 1908B/16)

Miscellaneous

Delayed
Signals.

Request that delays in receipt of following four signals amending Admty. 0001/1 be investigated. In consequence of delays two ships have been sailed as per original instructions contained in Admty. 0001/1. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1000/16 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)
Your 1000/16. Admty. signals were only received at Greenock as follows:
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1740B/16 to N.O.I.C. Oban) Note by War Registry.
The signals in question were addressed to C's in Chief and not individually to either Greenock or Oban.

16.5.1941.
Friday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping & Convoys

W.S. 8 B

A.M. 2256B/10. Request you will detail EXETER as cruiser escort.
3. After convoying W.S. 8 (B) ship will probably remain on foreign service. (V.C.N.S. 1054B/16 to C. in C. H.F.)
Convoy W.S. 8 B consisting of one M.T. and six personnel ships will leave U.K. on 22/5 for M.E. Speed of slowest ship is 14 knots. (D.O.D. (F) 1332B/16 to C. in C. E.I.)

Ships missing from Convoy.

Your 1045/16. My position is 62 F buoy 31 ships in company. Have ordered LE TIGER to search back 15 miles for remaining 6 and report situation. (VERSATILE 1135/16 to C. in C. Rosyth)
My 1135. LE TIGER reports no sign of these ships. (VERSATILE 1522/16)

SS EMPIRE
PROGRESS

Now at Cardiff to sail. Portsmouth to Milford Haven for O.B. convoy. As this ship will load a valuable cargo at Portsmouth all possible protection should be provided. (D.T.D. 1830B/16)

482(A)

SECRET

MESSAGE

1303/16th May IN

From C. in C. Rosyth

Date 16. 5. 41.
Recd. 1633

F/L BY T/P

Addressed. Admiralty C.in C. Nore, S.E.E. C.C.D., H.Q.F.C.,
H.Q.C.C.

812 Admiralty's 1936B/14/5 not to all addressees.

Following cycle for East Coast convoys will operate
as from Monday 19th May

Southbound

Monday 0900 F S (Slow)
Tuesday 2300 F S (Fast)
Wednesday 0900 F S (Slow)
Thursday 2300 F S (Fast)
Friday 0900 F S (Slow)
Saturday 0900 F S (Slow)
Sunday blank day

Northbound

Monday 0600 E C (Fast)
Tuesday 0600 F N (Slow)
Wednesday blank day
Thursday 0600 E C (Medium)
Friday 0600 F N (Fast)
Saturday 0600 E C (Slow)
Sunday 0600 F N (Slow)

Time table as in my 1145/24/3 for 9 and 7 knot ships
The Thursday E C (Medium) convoy will run as a slow convoy
6=1/2= knots from Southend to Forth and from Forth northwards
as a medium convoy 7=1/2 knots.

1303/16

Advance copy to Ops., O.D., Trade
movements of coastal colliers

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)
O.D.8.
D.N.I.
D. of S. 2A
D.T.D. (4)
D.T.D. (M)

D.S.D.9.
D. of S.T.
I.P. (3)
D.A/S.W.
O.I.C.
W.D.
I.M.N.G.

483

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS

CIRCASSIA

Your 1744B/13. CIRCASSIA has engine defects which will be completed a.m. 20th. (N.O.I.C., Iceland, 1844/16)

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Force H.

Departure (corrupt group) S.O. Force H in ARK ROYAL, RENOWN, SHEFFIELD, WRESTLER, FEARLESS, FORESTER, FURY in accordance with S.O. Force H's 0925/15. (S.O.I. Gib; , 1030A/16).

Search
for A/C.

Search for Wellington aircraft believed to be forced landed 150 miles west of Cadiz. Aircraft co-operating. (F.O.C.N.A. 1035/16 to HAVELOCK).

REGENT.

Your 2101B/15 acknowledged. Comply with my 1210A/15. (F.O.C.N.A., 1110A/16, to REGENT).

JONQUIL.
GERANIUM.

Return to Gibraltar at best speed. Report E.T.A. when not less than 100 miles from SCARBOROUGH. (F.O.C.N.A. 1313/16 to JONQUIL, GERANIUM).

SURCOUF.

C. in C. Plymouth's 2232/14 and Adty. 1243/24/4. SURCOUF is routed through (a) 49° 30' N. 10° W. (b) 42° N. 25° W. to patrol within 150 miles radius of (c) 35° N. 40° W. to limit of endurance. E.T.A. at Bermuda 14/6. (F.O.(s) 1448B/16 to F.O.C.N.A.).

TRUANT.

F.O.C.N.A.'s 1110/12. Request you will sail TRUANT p.m. 20/5 for Portsmouth New Hampshire (route, speed, E.T.A. etc.). (A.C.N.S. (F) 1808B/16 to F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. A.W.I.).

ATLANTA.
Italian

Insistent rumour in Port indicates about to sail. (Consul, Las Palmas, 1840/16 to Admty.)

Evacuation
from Gibraltar
etc.

D.O.D.(F) 2312B/16 See South Atlantic.

/S.S. OLGA.....

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (contd).

S.S. OLGA
TOPIC.

My 0135/3. Inform Master OLGA TOPIC in writing that sale of ship to Swiss is unauthorised and TOPIC will confirm that it is cancelled; that he is to take his ship to U.S.A. via Gibraltar in accordance with orders of the Yugoslav Legation, that the vessel will be employed on conditions agreed between the British and Yugoslav Governments, and that neither he nor his crew will be compelled to take the vessel to U.K. or ports in East Africa, north of Mombasa. (Hd. of M. 2322B/16 to N.C.S.O. Lisbon).

HOHENFELS
(German)

A vessel closely resembling German HOHENFELS which may be German raider No. 16 was sighted 24° 45' S. 24° 29' W. 3/5. Vessel may be making for a French Atlantic Port. (F.O.C.N.A. 2358/16 to FURIOUS, ARAWA, SCARBOROUGH).

South Atlantic.

S.S. BUTESHIRE.

My 2258/15. fire now under control. (D.A.M.S. Officer, Buenos Aires 0329/16).

PEEBLES.

Overdue Shipping. PEEBLES due Freetown 15/5 but expected 12/5 from Capetown 28/4. Has not arrived. (S.O.I. Freetown 0850N/16 to Admty.)

Guns from
Red Sea
Coasters.

Admty. 1546/27/2/41. In view of altered position in Red sea intend not to disembark Military personnel or guns from D.E.M.S bound Suez Canal zone pending receipt of further instructions from Admiralty. Intend to resume arrangements made in A.M. quoted above upon receipt of Hotchkiss guns referred to in C. in C. East Indies 0810Z/10/5. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1125B/16, to Admty.).

/Orders.....

486

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic-Contd.

Orders to
NELSON
EAGLE

Admty. 2349B/15 proceed St. Helena. EAGLE is to complete with fuel there if conditions permit in order to be available for any operation on passage if situation requires. (C. in C. S.A. 1125N/16 to NELSON, EAGLE)

BOURBONNAIS
(French)

Arrival 0600/16. DRAGON and BRIDGEWATER escorting French BOURBONNAIS. (S.O.I. Freetown 1201N/16)

S.L. 75

Your 1647/15. No cruiser escort is available. (D.O.D. (F) 1244B/16 to C. in C S.A.)

ARUNDEL CASTLE

My 1927/14. Sailed from Freetown 6/5 for Gibraltar. E.T.A. p.m./21. (C. in C. S.A., 1251N/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

DUCHESSA
D'AOSTA

1. There is reason to believe that Italian DUCHESSA D'AOSTA which took refuge at Fernando Po when Italy entered the war is in wireless communication with Europe and that information regarding movements of Allied shipping may be transmitted by this means. (Spears Mission, Brazzaville, 1415/16)

ALIAKMON
Greek

Returned from S.L. 74 having been in collision, only stem damage so far found this will be repaired by fitting large cement box, vessel expected to sail S.L. 76. (M.W.T.R., Freetown, 1456N/16 to M. of W.T.)

CHARLES L.D.
(French)

Arrived 16/5. (N.C.S.O. Port Elizabeth. 1746/16 to D. of S.T.)

/LL Sweepers....

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic-Contd.

LL Sweepers
for Meditn.

Admty. 1837B/11.

(2) Intend sailing HEKTOR VII and GOS VI from Durban 19/5 for installation of switch-gear at Alexandria.

(4) Subject to satisfactory trials NEBB and KAI will be ready for sea end of May. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1832B/16 to Admty.)

Portuguese
Atlantic
possessions.

Your 1839N/14. President of the Council issued formal statement on 9/5 that (1) No belligerent had made any demand for eventual utilisation of any part of Portuguese possessions against another Power. (2) That as an affirmation of Sovereignty Portuguese Government had taken steps to defend all their Atlantic Islands against any attack, though such attack considered unlikely. H.M. Ambassador, Lisbon has on several occasions impressed on Doctor Salazar urgent necessity of reinforcing garrisons in Atlantic Islands and increasing defensive measures there and in Portugal. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1818B/16 to C. in C. S.A)

CARNARVON CASTLE
ASTURIAS

Your 1146/13. Intended that CARNARVON CASTLE shall relieve ASTURIAS on completion of docking which commenced 13/5. Ship should join her division about end of first week in June. ASTURIAS will then proceed refit and boiler cleaning be deferred. (C. in C. S.A. 2125N/16 to R.A.S.A.D.)

ARUNDEL CASTLE
Evacuations
from Gib. etc.

C. in C. S.A. 1927/14. In view of small accommodation remaining in ARUNDEL CASTLE and necessity for her speedy return to U.K. she should only embark 100 personnel at Gibraltar and sail independently without awaiting escort.

/2.....

488

16.5.1941.
Friday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

ARUDEL CASTLE
Evacuations
from Gib. etc.
-Contd.

2. If ship has not returned to Freetown for re-routeing she should be allowed to proceed direct to U.K.
3. C. in C. S.A. report whether ship has been re-routed.
4. NEA HELLAS should be used for
 - (a) 1,700 Gibraltarians and
 - (b) British and Allied personnel ex Lisbon understood now not likely to exceed 400. Any vacant accommodation may be used for personnel ex Tangier. (D.O.D. (F) 2312B/16 to C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A.)

CRITON
(French)

Your 1231/12. Nature of cargo does not warrant prize proceedings. Vessel will be requisitioned as a reprisal for detention of British ships in French ports.

French crew should be asked whether they wish to join de Gaulle and ship's complement made up from survivors of British merchant ships as necessary. You should inform them that after requisitioning French flag will be worn at main mast. Preferred that requisitioning should take place in U.K. In this case it is advisable to place token naval prize crew on board during voyage home to justify vessel's status as a "capture" in case of emergency, and white ensign should be worn at the fore in circumstances specified in last paragraph of Article 109 in Prize manual.

If personnel for token crew are not available ship will be requisitioned at Freetown under Defence Regulations. Ammunition should be off-loaded. (Hd. of M. 2323B/16 to C. in C. S.A.)

U-Boats

Summary of enemy submarine activity in Freetown area 27/4 to 9/5. (C. in C., S.A. 2357N/16) See Lion Copy.

SECRET

MESSAGE

2357N/16 May

IN

Date 17.5.41.

From C in C South Atlantic

Recd. 2137

NAVAL CYPHER X BY W/T

Addressed Admiralty.

234. Following is summary of enemy submarine activity in Freetown Area between 27th April and 9th May. On 27th April and 28th sightings of submarines were reported one 150 miles south of Freetown one 360 miles 232 degrees from Freetown but were not verified until later. No attacks. Rafts of (? SAMSO) were reported on 2nd May. First S S S was received early 6th May. Information available now shows that between 30th April and 7th May inclusive (2 ships were torpedoed and two more S S S signals are unaccounted for. Details - 1 ship on 30th April and one May 1.5 known ships and two SSS unverified between May 5th and May 7th one on May 9th one date not known 3 of these were about 800 miles from Freetown to westward. Two about 400 miles from Freetown Three were within 150 miles three between 50 and 250 miles. One unknown. Consider probable two ships were operating within 400 miles of Freetown and one 700 to 800 miles off. There appears to be tendency for shipping from U.K. to approach a position 008 15N 014 45W from a direction 285 degrees in a lane about 60 miles wide. This should be largely remedied when the new orders take effect but it is important that there should be dispersion in the area and it is for consideration that there should be some coordination between the different routing authorities to ensure this.

2357N/16

Advance copy sent Ops O.D. C.I.C.
Trade.

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

4th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

A.C.N.S. (F)

Nav. Sec.

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

Ops (4)

O.D. (5)

D.N.I. (4)

D.T.D. (4)

D.T.D. (M)

Cdr. Holbrook

D. of P. (3)

D.S.D.9.

D.A/S.W.

I.P.3.

/D.

D.P.D.

M. (2)

E.F.S.

I.M.N.G.

F.O.S. By Courier.

for action.

489

War Diary16.5.1941.
FridayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean"Tiger"
Convoy
A/A/Defence.

Request early information as follows on A/A arrangements in ships of "Tiger" convoy

- (a) In how many ships the A/A arrangements came into action.
- (b) Effectiveness of each type.
- (c) Suggestion as to how ships similarly employed should be armed on a future occasion. (1st S.L. 0134B/16 to C. in C. Med.)

Convoy
A.S. 31.

Two Greek destroyers will R/V with you in position 032° 16' N., 029° 45' E. at 0600/16. (R.A. Alexandria, 0205C/16 to ISIS)

Evening
Convoy.

Following Maryland recco Augusta in my I 312 15/5. 5 Swordfish 830 Sdn. F.A.A Swept area between 35° 25' N., 15° 50' E., to 36° 35' N., 16° 08' E., from 2300 to 0100 to intercept possible south-bound convoy. No convoy sighted. (H.Q. Malta 0330/16 to H.Q., R.A.F. M.E.)

R.A (D)

Expect to sail 0740. Course 330°. Speed of advance 20 knots. (R.A. (D) M. 0717/16 to KANDAHAR)

Minelaying

Admty. 0120 (?) B/7. No Flooders have been received nor have I any information that these components are being supplied. Laying of minefields in accordance with my 1356/30/4 has been postponed. (C. in C. Med. 0908C/16 to Admty.)

Night
Operations.

If no further developments occur following movements are to be carried out tonight 16-17/5. Force B GLOUCESTER, FIJI and two destroyers commence sweeping Matapan-Sapienza at 2300 to be 60 miles clear of the coast by daylight and rejoin S.O. Battleships Med. Fleet.

/Force D.....

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Night
Operations
-Contd.

Force D. NAIAD, PERTH and 2 destroyers to reach Anti Kithera Channel 2300/16. Force C. To reach Kaso Strait 2300/16 unless further orders have been received by 2300 Force D withdrawn to join S.O. Battleships Mediterranean Fleet, Force C withdraws to South Eastward. Forces to be in position at dusk/17 to carry out similar sweep night of 17/18th. (C. in C. Med. 1104/16 to S.O. Battleships, Med. Fleet, R.A. 15 C.S., R.A. (D) Med., GLOUCESTER)

Fleet
Operations

If situation remains unchanged I intend 1st eleven to sail with flag of 7th C.S. in WARSPITE p.m/18 to relieve you. (C. in C. Med. 1106C/16 to R.A. 1st B.S.)

Extension of
Danger Zone.

My 2247B/15 will enable you to take action in circumstances such as those referred to in Admiralty Message 1635B/14. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1113B/16 to C. in C. Med.)

Air Operations

One. Western Desert. Night 14/15 May. Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour and Denina aerodrome. Details awaited.
Two. Greece. Night 14/15 May. Wellingtons bombed Hassani, Megara and Menidi aerodromes in Athens area, details awaited.
Three. Crete. My A.869 15/5 Para three. One Fulmar, two Blenheims damaged on ground during raids on Maleme aerodrome on 13th and 14th May. 13/5 seven escort patrols for incoming Convoy by Blenheims. One Gladiator intercepted four JU 88's and one M.E. 110 about to attack convoy off Heraklion, breaking up their formation. Night 13/14 May. Suda Bay intermittently bombed during night. Damage reported slight.
Four. Cyprus 15/5 eight Italian aircraft bombed Nicosia and three unspecified villages at noon. No service damage or casualties. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E. 1124/16)

/ECEABAT....

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean-Contd.

ECEABAT
Turkish
Ferry Boats

Your 1736B/13. ECEABAT has remained in Egypt owing to uncertainty of situation and pending completion of repairs. Intend vessel should now sail to Mersin if she can be taken over by Turkish authorities.

Two. Consider that four of the remaining seven ferry boats are vital to our requirements and should be retained until the arrival of Z craft from India late in the year. Three. M.E. concur in above proposals. (C. in C. Med., 1222/16 to Admty)

Long-Range
Air
Reconnaissance.

For Tedder from C.A.S. I should like your comments and suggestions on C. in C. Med's 1807C/15. Is your inability to provide reconnaissance required due to priorities or to actual lack of any serviceable aircraft? (Air Min., 1315/16 to H.Q. R.A.F., M.E.)

Suda Bay
SS BUSH

Situation all quiet. If BUSH is sailed tonight unescorted can Italian prisoners be embarked. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1330/16 to C. in C. Med.) Your 1330/16. Yes. Sail her via Kithera & report route to Med. Fleet. (C. in C. Med. 1634/16 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay) Your 1617/15 (N.T. in W.R.) consider A/A defence of Sollum needs immediate augmentation if not already arranged. (S.O. Force (I) 1333/16 to C. in C. Med.)

Sollum
A/A Defence.

Enemy
Shipping

7 Merchant Ships expected to leave Sfax northbound p.m/16 (Cdr. (S) 1 1435B/16 to URGE.)

Crete
Patrol

Your 1024/13 (N.T. in W.R.) M.T.B's 67 and 217 will be patrolling in Elaphonisos Channel during night 16/17 May. (S.B.N.O., Suda Bay 1437C/16 to C. in C. Med.)

/Syria.....

War Diary16.5.1941.
FridayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean-Contd.Syria

Turkish plans. (M.A. Ankara, 1515/16, to C. in C. M.E.) See Lion Copy.

A.S. 31.
escort.

C. in C. Med. 1103/15. Greek destroyers cannot pass boom before midnight. (R.A. Alexandria 1521C/15 to Capt. (D) 10)

Malta
Air Raids

16/5. Report Malta up to 1600. Times G.M.T. Night 15/16, 0115-0300 hrs. about 8 enemy aircraft over target Grand Harbour. Some bombs on land 2 in Valletta causing negligible civilian damage. Navy, slight damage to dockyard. ENCOUNTER received direct hit by small bomb. SS AMERIKA superficial damage by near miss. Further mines dropped in both Marsamxett and Grand Harbour and entrances. No Army or R.A.F. damage. No casualties. 0910. 17 M.E. 109's dropped 10 250 lb. bombs Hal Far Aerodrome from 15,000 feet. (H.Q., Med. 1630/16) See also 1903/16.

Disposition
of S/M's.

In view of changed situation. Intentions (C. in C. Med., 1734/16) See Mediterranean Volume.)

Alexandria
Sanctuary.

Alexandria Submarine Sanctuary will be in force 0300 to 0730/17 (G.M.T) for TAKU arriving. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1735/16 to Force I)

CACHALOT
report of
explosion.

CACHALOT reports at 0045/14 column of water 200 feet high followed by loud explosion occurred in position 037° 08' 011° 15'. CACHALOT was passing 2 miles to northwards and incident clearly seen by moonlight, nothing was in sight before or after explosion. At 0245/14 exchanged signals with REGENT. (Cdr. S. 1., 1805B/16 to Capt. S. 1.)

/HYACINTH.....

492A

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E 1515/16th May

IN

From M.A. Ankara.

Date 17.5.41.

Recd 0810.

Cipher

Addressed C. in C. Middle East, repeated G.O.C. Palestine and Transjordanian.

13628

80516 Cipher 16/5.

IMMEDIATE.

First of two parts.

Saw Deputy Chief today and communicated extracts G.O.C. Palestine and Transjordanian I/205 and I/237.

2. Deputy Chief at my request gave following orders:-

- (a) 7th Corps to send daily reports of traffic on line Aleppo-Nusaybin.
- (b) Turkish Consul Mosul to send daily reports on German aircraft or troops Mosul.
- (c) Secret Service to endeavour report on German air movements Palmyra and Deis Ez Yor.
- (d) Turkish Consul Beirut to investigate and report on German Military Mission.

3. Staff Officers disguised as Consular Clerks being sent at once to Turkish Consulate Mosul Beirut Mitylene Salonica Gurnulsina. Staff Officers already installed Consulate Tabriz.

4. Following troop movements ordered:-

- (a) 39 (repeat 39) Division Irlahiye to Alexandretta Frontier.
- (b) 20 (repeat 20) Division Elaziz to Irlahiye Frontier.
- (c) Frontier Brigade and 14th (repeat 14th) Cavalry Division to Frontier between Urpi and Gaziantep. All above under command 17th (repeat 17th) Corps.
- (d) Two (2) Infantry Regiments supported by 2nd (repeat 2nd) Division to Iraq Frontier Cizre Eastwards. Above under 7th (repeat 7th) Corps.

5. Troops complete in personnel but not in transport which will be made up on frontier.

6. All movements and mobilization to be complete by end of month.

Last Part.

7. From knowledge of Arabs and long experience of Palestine, Deputy Chief begged me convey his(? conception of) best plan urgently to C. in C. Middle East as follows:-

(a) Within.....

492 13

- 2 -

- (a) Within a week, by which time effect of Turkish advance to Frontier will be felt, British to initiate advance from Palestine by coast road on Beirut supported on left by Fleet and right by mountains.
- (b) To inform French authorities that advance was to forestall further German penetration. French authorities to continue to govern and administer country.
- (c) Capture of Beirut to be followed by advance on Tripoli, Latakia and Galep always by coast road since on leaving sea Turkey would (protect) left flank.
- (d) Occupation of Deir Ez Zur would follow left flank still protected by Turkey.
- (e) He considered this plan (? possible) with one cavalry and two infantry divisions preferably motorized.
- (f) Once started speed and hard hits were essential. Given these essentials Arabs would pack up at once and French resistance if any would be half-hearted.

1515/16.

Advance copy sent Duty Captain, D.O.D.(F), & D.D.I.C.

Received from War Office 0110/18.

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S.(F)
- C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- D.O.D.(F)
- D.D.C.D.(F)
- D.N.I.(4)
- D. of P.(2)
- Duty Captain
- E.P.S.
- Hd. of M.
- I.P.
- W.D.
- N.I.D.10, Pay. Cdr. Wilson.

jf

~~200~~

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean-Contd.

HYACINTH
SALVIA

HYACINTH is to relieve SALVIA at Suda Bay at first opportunity on completion of repairs about 22/5.
(C. in C. Med. 1829C/16 to F.O. (D.) M.)

Malta
Supplies

Governor, Malta, 1831B/16 to C. in C. Med.
(See Lion Copy.)

Enemy
Units.

Two transports one destroyer in position 032° 27' 014° 46' proceeding westwards speed of advance 14 knots. One destroyer proceeding eastwards speed 30 knots.
(UNBEATEN, 1850/16 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta
Air Damage
& mining.
FERMOY
total loss.

Grand Harbour Boom winch house damaged by bomb and A.T. Boom cannot be opened till winch is repaired. Several mines believed type G. in Fairway in Grand Harbour. SWONA only LL sweeper available as GLOXINIA has suffered damage from a near miss acoustic mine. SWONA is in Marsamxett Harbour which still has a clear fairway. ENCOUNTER further damaged by bomb in number two Boiler Room. FERMOY in No 5. dock is written off and being broken up to enable dock to be cleared and valuable items salvaged.
(V.A. Malta 1903B/16 to C. in C. Med.)

New type
Mine at
Malta.

Description.
(V.A. Malta 1921B/16, 2030B/16)

SYVERN
& M.T.B's.

SYVERN escorting M.T.B's 216 and 213 will be proceeding from Spakia to Suda Bay during night, 16th/17th.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1951/16 to C. in C. Med.)

/Air Attcks....

493/A1

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET.

M E S S A G E

1831B/16th May.

IN.

From Governor Malta.

Date 17.5.41.

Time 0301

NAVAL CYPHER (X) By W/T.

Addressed C. in C. Mediterranean. Repeated P.S.T.O. Egypt. Director of Sea Transport. R.A. Alexandria for S.M.S.C.

COSUP 830. Reference Director of Sea Transport message 1703/B of 14th May. Following is an agreed telegram between Governor Malta and V.A.M.

2. Following survey may be of assistance in considering general supply situation at Malta.
3. If convoy at present at Malta can be unloaded successfully during the next week position in regard to foodstuffs will be reasonably satisfactory. There is the possibility of destruction by enemy action at any time, however, although all possible action has been taken to disperse and protect stocks. Stocks of fodder are only moderate, whilst stocks of timber cement and all types of coal are unsatisfactory. Timber and cement are essential for re-armament and for construction of make-shift shelters for civil population. Coal situation is vitally affected as mentioned in paragraph 8 below.
4. White oils. This remains our most serious problem. Above-ground tanks will be empty by the end of the month and we will then have to use reserve stocks. Consumption of kerosene has been reduced to a minimum and consumption of benzine can be reduced further only by (a) seriously affecting efficiency of Army, and (b) by reducing bus service of civil population which is now only 8 and a half hours to 6 hours daily. Latter is the minimum service to allow dockyard and essential services to carry on. We are particularly anxious to avoid this further strain on the civil population which is suffering so much at the present time. As remarked in para. 8 below consumption of aviation spirit is increasing alarmingly and the proposal in Admiralty 1612B/11 May is going to make this problem even more difficult. The lack of adequate storage facilities here is probably the greatest weakness in our defences. Only one white oil tanker has come to Malta since war with Italy commenced. It is imperative that one should be sent at the earliest possible moment. Lack of tin and casing materials at Suez also affect this question.
5. Furnace Oils. Position has been made reasonably satisfactory by successful discharge of HEOGH HOOD and SVENOR.
6. Refrigerated ship. As proposed in Governor Malta's COSUP Telegram No. 765 of 22nd April only one more refrigerated ship is required at Malta after that the entire fortress will live on tinned products. NEW ZEALAND STAR will meet our requirements in this respect. (C. in C. Med. 1108C/14 May, refers).
7. A/A ammunition. Expenditure requires constant attention. At present we need to import about 1,000 tons monthly.
8. General. Consumption for Malta has been reduced to a minimum except for further cuts in benzine mentioned in paragraph 4 above. On the other hand, the increasing use of this Base for naval and air offensive operations is causing consumption of certain items to rise sharply. Expenditure of aviation spirit alone quadrupled during past week. Consumption of coal for naval services must remain high. Experience indicates that approx. 20,000 tons of imports are required to maintain Malta each month. To this figure must be added any losses by enemy action or increases in consumption due to offensive operations. We have been particularly fortunate up to date, but with the heavy scale of day and night bombing now being carried out, and the increasing enemy air activity over the Mediterranean, some losses in the future must be expected. Since war with Italy commenced we have never yet been able to make our general stock position satisfactory. The impossibility of running convoys for the first few months of the war and the further delay which occurred after the damage to ILLUSTRIOUS have prevented stocks reaching a satisfactory level. The opportunity now exists, however, to make the general position satisfactory if four large ships are run in M W 8 together with BRECONSHERE

carrying/.....

carrying aviation spirit. If this convoy were successful, it would then be possible to maintain Malta with two ships every month and periodical tankers. The need for a white oil tanker is most urgent for the reasons given in paragraph 4 above. If one can be found in time request that special action may be taken to include her in M W 8 as one of the four large ships. If a satisfactory tanker cannot be found in time a fourth M T ship should be substituted. If tanker is not included in M W 8 we consider the white oil position here to be so serious as to justify the tanker being run in as a special operation as soon as possible afterwards.

9. Fundamentally, our problem is to increase quickly our stocks of white oils, coal, fodder, and basic materials and then maintain them in addition to our food stocks. Quick action is essential in order that we may be able to withstand losses from enemy action. The steadily increasing use of Malta will tax our resources to the utmost and will still further complicate our supply problem.

10. R A Alexandria pass P/L copies to F.S.T.O. Egypt and to C. in C. Mediterranean on arrival.

1831E/16

1st Lord.
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 D. of P. (2)
 D.O.D. (F)
 D.D.O.D. (F)
 D.O.D. (H)
 D.D.O.D. (H)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D.S.D.
 D.N.A.D.
 D. of L.D.
 D. A/S W.
 D.M.S.
 I.P.
 W.D.
 Duty Captain.
 Hd. of M.
 D.T.S.D.

D.D.I.C.
 E:P.S.
 D.T.D. (2)
 N.I.D.10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.
 D. of S.T.

War Diary

16.5.1941.
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean-Contd.

Air Attacks
on Suda Bay
4 ships
damaged.

Suda Bay dive bombed at 1730/16. About 25 aircraft 40 to 50 heavy bombs. LOGICIAN hit alongside pier caught fire but now safe and not making water, cannot move at present. Greek NICOLAI BURANIA hit fire under control. ARAYBANK with Greek KYTHERA alongside hit and heavily on fire, unapproachable. About 25 casualties mostly Australians. Unloading LOGICIAN. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2027/16 to C. in C. Med.)

EMPIRE SONG
Enquiry.

In his report of loss of EMPIRE SONG FORESIGHT recommends holding an enquiry. Owing to dispersion of witnesses many of whom include chief engineers returned to Gibraltar this cannot be held at Malta. (V.A. Malta, 2112B/16 to Admty.)

Safety route
for PERSEUS

Safety route is ("established" or "now") between ends of Port Said and ("the" or Alexandria") searched channel through (positions) from 0800/17 to 0800/18 for PERSEUS (Capt. (S) 1 2207C/16 to Med. Fleet)

Tripoli

Tripoli (Africa) Air photographic reconnaissance, 16/5. 8 Destroyers 18 small and medium Merchant Vessels, oil on water. (V.A. Malta, 2213B/16 to C. in C. Med.)

Barrage
Balloons

Your 1527/2 and (? 2138) B/6 to A.S. Dockyard Malta. Request details of performances of free balloons. Are these operated by Naval or R.A.F. Personnel?
This form of balloon barrage seems very suitable for Malta defences.
(N.O.I.C. Malta 2221B/16 to Admty.)

/GLENGYLE.....

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (contd).

GLENGYLE.
A.S. 31.

My 1214/16/4 (N.T. in W.R) GLENGYLE is to embark lighters with despatch and return to Alexandria as soon as possible. DECOY may be used as escort if Greek destroyers are not ready. Report E.T.A. Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 2256C/16 to S.B.N.O. Suez Canal area).

UNDAUNTED
overdue lost.

Regret UNDAUNTED is now three days overdue, there has been no reply to my 1646B/12 asking for position and I consider her lost. At 0815/7 UPRIGHT in position 035° 46' 012° 48' heard one very loud explosion similar to ship being torpedoed, at 1000/8 H.M.S. UPRIGHT in position 032° 35' 014° 30' heard series of distant explosions. There is no news of any enemy claims. UNDAUNTED was operating North of Tripoli (Africa). (S.O. (Subs) Malta, 2315B/16 to Capt. S.1).

East Indies.

S/M
distress
message.

Intercepted by CANBERRA (C. in C. E.I, 0204/16) See U-Boat Campaign.

Difrein,
Honril, etc.,
evacuations
Shumma
minefield.

My 0502/3/5 (1) Nocra, 1000 all classes evacuated (2) Ras Kumbit, four 70 m.m. Coast Defence Guns found destroyed and Battery deserted. (3) Delemmi, two Batteries each four 70 mm. Guns destroyed. (4) Shumma one battery 70 mm. Guns destroyed. (5) Harmil, Garrison surrendered and evacuated (6) Arrangements to evacuate Garrasons under Paras. (3) and (4) being made. (7) Commandant Shumma states minefield existed between Shumma and Ras Kumbit. (S.O.I. Colombo, 0556Z/16 to Admty).

W.S.8A.
Escort.

(i) In view of N.O.I.C. Simonstown 2117/15 cancel my 1246/11.
(ii) Intend HAWKINS to relieve MAURITIUS near Cape about 23/5 and escort W.S.8A to Durban and subsequently to Perim.
(iii) C. in C. S.A. is requested to arrange R/V for HAWKINS and W.S.8A.
(C. in C. E.I.0758Z/16 to Admty, C. in C.S.A)

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (contd).

S.W.6.

Durban arrival RANCHI escorting Convoy S.W.6. (N.L.O. Durban 1128Z/16 to Admty etc).

Shatt-el-Arab
mine watching.

Your 1108/15 (1) concur that this is best arrangement at present practicable and approved to take up such craft as your require and can officer and man locally; (ii) all naval personnel you ask for are not immediately available but F.O.C.R.I.N. is requested to state how far he can help. (C. in C. E.I. 1232Z/16 to S.N.O. Persian Gulf).

KANIMBLA.

My 0824/10 para 3 After escorting NEVASA to 060° E. KANIMBLA is to proceed to Karachi (C. in C. E.I. 1304Z/16 to KANIMBLA, ANTENOR).

CORNWALL.

N.O.I.C. Durban's 0920/15 CORNWALL is to leave Mauritius P.M. /17 if practicable and proceed Durban at 18 knots. (C. in C. E.I. 1306Z/16 to CORNWALL).

CORNWALL.
GLASGOW.

My 1908/10. (1) After carrying out search of Saya De Malha CORNWALL and GLASGOW are proceeding to Mauritius for fuel to arrive a.m./17. (2) After fuelling CORNWALL proceeds to Durban for repairs. (3) GLASGOW remains at Mauritius to clean boilers. (C. in C. E.I. 1308Z/16 to Adty.).

CALEDON.
CERES.

A.M. 2152/18/4. Is it the intention that CALEDON should return to East Indies Station shortly? Until she does and her refit is completed I am unable to spare CERES for her refit which was due in February (C. in C.E.I., 1754Z/16 to Admty).

/Survivors.....

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (contd).

→ Survivors
of EMPIRE
LIGHT
CLAN
BUCHANAN
BRITISH
EMPEROR.

Unnumbered Secret Reference his telegram 2046/14 (N.T. in W.R. 1332/14 from C. in C. E.I. is presumably intended). Part I. The names in my immediately following telegram are British and Lascar survivors landed by CORNWALL grouped as follows.
(a) EMPIRE LIGHT (b) CLAN BUCHANAN
(c) BRITISH EMPEROR. (Governor, Seychelles T.H.I. 1904/16 to Adty.).

S.S. RAMO.

Understood Norwegian ship RAMO bound Basra to load for Durban and States is detained by you. Request reason and when likely to sail. (D.T.D. 2111B/16 to N.C.S.O. Bombay).

→ EMPIRE
LIGHT.

(Attacked by raider 25/4 North of Seychelles) C. in C.E.I. reports survivors. Ships consequently presumed sunk. (D.S. 619).

America & West Indies.

D.E.M.S. in
U.S. Ports.

In view of present U.S. policy whereby British warships are refitted at U.S. ports suggest U.S. Govt. should be asked to permit mounting of defensive armament in British and Allied ships at U.S. ports. This would save considerable delay, at present new guns are merely placed on board at U.S. ports and ships must proceed to British port for mounting. If this can be arranged propose D.E.M.S. officers be appointed to New York and possibly other U.S. parts to assist and advise. (C. in C. A.W.I. 0953Q/16 to Admty.).

U.S. Cutters.

Your 2136B/8. Cutters are renamed as follows:
SARANAC as BANFF, TAHOE as FISHGUARD, MENDOTA as GULVER, PONTCHARTRAIN as HARTLAND, CHELAN as LULWORTH, SEBAGO as WALNEY, CHAMPLAIN as SENNEN, CAYUGA as TOTLAND, SHOSHONE as LANDGUARD, ITASCA as GORLESTON. (MALAYA, 1047/16 to Admty.).

CARADOC.
BISHOPDALE.

My 1642Q/6. After fuelling CARADOC at Tortola on 18/5 Oiler BISHOPDALE is to proceed to Bermuda passing through position 025° N. 066° W. (C. in C.A.W.I. 1052Q/16 to CARADOC).

/Convoy.....

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. (contd).

Convoy
Code
Words.

Your 2108B/5. N.S.H.Q. suggests that promulgation of code word to all ships in convoy may reduce secrecy and increase oscillation; and further suggests information be limited to Cdres. Request Admiralty decision. (C. in CA.W.I. 1417Q/16, to Admty.) Reply: 2026/23.

W/T in
B.H.X.
Convoys.

All W/T receivers in ships sailing in B.H.X. Convoys whether or not capable of oscillating are to be sealed except in Vice Commodore's ship. Instructions on lines of N.S.H.Q. 1643Z/13/5 are to be issued to Masters and carefully explained to Convoy conference. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1732Q/16).

Mortier Bay.

My 1541P/11 rough survey of Mortier Bay shows following. (R.A. (3) 1810P/16 to Admty.)

PRINCE ROBERT.

Sailed Esquimalt 16/5 arrives Suva 28/5 escort S.S. AORANGI from Suva towards Esquimalt to limit of endurance then returning to Suva. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2051Z/16 to Admty.).

THORSHAVN.

Your 1452/15 Beatty Montreal has been informed THORSHAVN should complete D.G. repairs and proceed Clyde. (D.T.D. 2112B/16 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).

BROOKLYN
HEIGHTS.

Following from Isbrandtsen S.S. Co. Please ascertain position situation American Motor Ship BROOKLYN HEIGHTS. Vessel left Karachi 28/4 due Basrah 4/5 since unreported. (Consul General New York, (? 2202)/16 to Admty.) Reply: 1916/18;

499

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

SOMERSBY.

British, 5170 tons, in convoy S.C. 30 with grain for Loch Ewe, torpedoed 240' S.W. of Iceland a.m./13. S.S. MARIKA PROTOPARA has rescued all the crew. (D.O.R. 16/5).

BENVENUE.

British 5920 tons. Received 2314 G.M.T. SSSS at 2110 G.M.T. 4.27 N. 28.25 W. or 18.25 W. name not sure was BENVENUE, torpedoed. (Portishead Radio T.H.I. 0120/16).

Intercept
by CANBERRA.

Following is a repetition of CANBERRA 2345/15 begins C. in C. E.I. From CANBERRA Following corrupt message was read at 2118Z/15. Begins SSSS torpedo 2 blank 39 N. DEZ AVORM QRU Ends. Bearing 220° third class sense determined strength seven atmospherics 9 my position 009° 33' N. 053° 42' E. 9. (C. in C. E.I. 0204/16 to Admty. C. in C.S.A. N.O.I.C. Simonstown).

RODNEY STAR.

(British 11803 tons) Following has been read. SSSS de GRL 05.03 N. 19.02 W. RODNEY STAR torpedoed. (Burnham Radio, 0604/16, Portishead Radio T.H.I. 1011/16).

SALOPIAN
(torpedoed
13/5)

Your 1839P/15. It is confirmed that SALOPIAN was torpedoed and sunk. IMPULSIVE with 278 survivors is proceeding to Hvalfiord. (D.C. 0755B/16 to R.A.3).

When fuel makes it necessary to abandon operations proceed Iceland (C) to fuel and await orders. (C. in C. W.A. 1438B/16 to Capt. (D/3)).

Unknown ship.

Following has been read. SSSS 05.02 N. 10.02 W. unread torpedoed de VPU (Sierra Leone) 0620Z/16. (Freetown T.O.R. 0835/16) W.D. Note - Was possibly corrupt version of RODNEY STAR SSSS. See C.in C. S.A. 1345/19.

WRAY CASTLE.
(torpedoed
3/5)

S.O. (I) Freetown's 2159/13. WRAY CASTLE torpedoed 3/5 (repetition 3/5) in position 68° 48 N. 13° 38 W. 44 in crew all saved except one Arab presumed killed by the explosion. (C. in C. S.A. 2132N/16 to Admty).

/LASSELL.....

500

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (contd)

LASSELL
(torpedoed
30/4).

My 2141/6. Chief Officer and 25 survivors of LASSELL landed Freetown (? date corrupt) Ship was sunk by one torpedo from U.22. 3rd Engineer and one Greaser killed by explosion. Remainder of crew with Captain and four Passengers not yet accounted for but some evidence they may have been picked up. (C. in C. S.A., 2157N/16 to Admty.).

Submarines Reported.

0145.

Series V. (corrupt group) on W/T detected close, strength 9, followed by coded groups, 61° 10' N. 022° 32' W. BULLDOG joining H.X. 124. Am making Asdic Sweep. (DANEMAN, 0145Z/16 to C. in C. W.A.).

0620.

Admiralty message A.F. 05.02 N. 10.02 W. at 0620 Z. (C. in C.S.A. 0636Z/16 to G.B.M.S. 6A).

0800.

Following has been read. X. 329P. Sub. on surface, position 53.40 N. 22.00 W. Liverpool W/T, T.O.R. 0822/16).

Estimated U/B dispositions. (D.D.I.C. 1423B/16).

1850 G.M.T.

At 1850 G.M.T. Italian U-Boat bearing 215° 2nd Class from Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 2034A/16 to DORSETSHIRE, BULOLO, VELOX.)

By D/F on 5025 kc/s at 1849 G.M.T. Italian U/B in 45° 30' N. 4° 00' W. Unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 2139B/16 to S/M's on patrol in Plymouth Command).

501

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. (contd).

South Atlantic.

27/4 - 9/5.

Summary of U/B Activity (C. in C. S.A.,
2357N/16) See Lion Copy.

Submarines Attacked.

By VERBENA.
WATCHMAN.

Have attacked good contact in 062° 28' N.
024° 30' W. Consider submarine surfaced,
am chasing to S.E. at full speed.
(VERBENA, 0100/16 to N.O.I.C. Iceland).
My 0100/16 have carried out an attack on
doubtful contact in 062° 31' N. 024° 10' W.
at 0134Z negative results. Intend contin-
uing chase in direction 080° until daylight
then to sweep back to Reykjavik. Submarine
seen on surface after first series of
attacks using flashlight. Low cloud
and mist reduced effectiveness of star shells
Have asked WATCHMAN and remainder of twelfth
escort group to sweep back through area.
(VERBENA 0300Z/16 to N.O.I.C., Iceland).
WATCHMAN, VERBENA in company 0510 position
62.45 N., 23.30 W. Am searching on course 215°
12 knots. (WATCHMAN 0536/16 to FOIC Iceland).
Leave EMPIRE INDUSTRY at Mouth of searched
channel and proceed with all despatch to
assist H.M.S. WATCHMAN searching for U-boat
(Capt. (D) 12 1208Z/16 to BURNHAM,
SCIMITAR).

? See card for
EMPIRE INDUSTRY

Have carried out 2 attacks and VERBENA one
on contact in position 62° 15' N. 23° 35' W.
Second contact attacked gave every indication
of being submarine. At present carrying
out all round sweep. If contact not
regained shall search area within 8 mile
square. (WATCHMAN 1420/16 to S.O. Escort
Group 12).

By HIBISCUS
etc., 15/5.

Cancel my 2206B/15 HIBISCUS and
RHODODENDRON report, proceeding to rejoin
convoy at 2126/15. (C. in C.W.A. 0144B/16
to TARTAR).
My 1905B/15. Remain with convoy to
limit of endurance. (C. in C.H.F. 1015B/16
to TARTAR, MASHONA).
Reference C. in C.H.F.'s 1509B/15 (1905B/15
intended) after leaving convoy sweep
through positions 053° 46' N. 019° 07' W.
and 054° 18' N. 018° 46' W. where U Boats
were attacked at 2009B/15 and 1715B/15.
(C. in C.W.A. 1028B/16 to TARTAR).

/By....

War Diary.

16.5.1941.
Friday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked. (contd).

By LANCASTER.

Gained good submarine contact in 060° 49' N. 009° 36' W. Carried out 4 counter attacks. Large bubbles and slight oil only evidence have rejoined D.S.3. (LANCASTER 1505B/16).

By A/C.

At 1059. (O/C R.A.F. Lough Erne 1730/16).

→ By A/C.

A/C B/210 sighted 2 U/B's at 0815/16 in 52° 55' N., 19° - 45' W. 400' W. of Galway. 1 Attacked with G/F. (D.S. 620/17/5).

By A/C
1740/15 (?)

Position 54° 08' N. 19° 22' W. 2 Corvettes summoned by Z/209 arrived 40 mins after attack established contact in approx same position and subsequently made 6 further attacks. 2hrs 20 mins after attack by Z/209 Corvette signalled 'Consider him a goner. Three cheers'. (H.Q. 15 Group 2010/16).

→ By A/C
0815.

Aircraft sighted 2 U-Boats in 052° 55' N. 019° 45' W. at 0815/16. Both S/MS dived on being attacked. (C. in C. W.A. 2359/16 to VANQUISHER).

MOST SECRET.17.5.1941.
Saturday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.IZARRA
intercepted.

REGISTAN this morning intercepted the French auxiliary schooner IZARRA in approx. 45° 46' N 29° 10' W and is sending her to St. Johns Newfoundland after taking on board 5 anti-British members of the crew.

The stationing of A/A ships in Thames Estuary is cancelled.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command aircraft attacked Boulogne, Rotterdam and Ostend last night. Minor attacks were made by Coastal Command aircraft on targets at Willemsoord, Calais, La Pallice and Dieppe.

Enemy Air Operations.Scapa.

An enemy aircraft passed over Scapa Flow this afternoon.

N.W.
Approaches.

S.S. STATESMAN was bombed at 0643B in 56° 44' N 13° 45' W and sank later.

East Coast.

A M/S group was bombed and machine-gunned in -the Thames Estuary at 2240 but no damage is reported. Bombs were dropped in the Harwich area last night, but no Naval damage is reported.

Channel.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.Enemy Air Operations.(contd).Channel

S.S. ARTHUR WRIGHT and ALA which had left convoy for Shoreham, with S.S. BOTNE, were attacked off Shoreham this afternoon and damaged. S.S. ARTHUR WRIGHT shot down one of the 2 enemy planes.

A coastal convoy from Portsmouth to Dartmouth was attacked at 1010 off Portland Bill. No damage is reported. Minor damage from incendiary bombs was caused at the N.S. Depot Woolston at 0150 today.

Mining.

Three Beauforts laid mines off Brest last night.

Minelaying by enemy aircraft was carried out last night in Milford Haven, off the Humber, Wash and Whitesand Bay.

Milford Haven was closed at 0530 on account of mines dropped by enemy aircraft. Reopened 1114B.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.North Atlantic.

~~In view of the probable damage to the German battle cruisers at Brest RENOWN is to refit. S.O. Force H is to transfer his flag to REPULSE or ARK ROYAL.~~

South Atlantic.

Reinforcement
of Freetown
A/S forces.

C. in C. S.A. is to be reinforced by a division of destroyers (3 Vees from Portsmouth and one from W.A. Command), to assist in dealing with attacks on trade in the Freetown area.

Mediterranean.Suez Canal.

About 8 enemy aircraft dropped mines or bombs in the Suez Canal Zone between 2205 and 2357, between Port Said and a point south of Suez. Six unexploded mines are reported to have been dropped in the Canal and several exploded on landing on the bank or in the Canal. Traffic was stopped in the northern sector of the canal.

ABA
bombed.

Hospital ship ABA was bombed twice today, south of Kaso Strait. RAD. with Force C came to her assistance and shot down 2 of the enemy, COVENTRY was slightly damaged by near miss.

Crete.....

MOST SECRET.17.5.1941.
Saturday.Wab Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean. (contd).Crete.

Suda Bay was bombed both this morning and this afternoon. At 1600 ELEONORA MAERSK and THEMONI were hit and set on fire. The latter blew up and sank later. VOLO was slightly damaged alongside the pier, which was hit.

Fifteen M.T.B's have now reached Crete, and Elaphonisos patrol was in force last night.

East Indies.Reinforcement.

EXETER is to join the East Indies Command *temporarily* after escorting W.S.8B, SHROPSHIRE and CORNWALL are to remain on the station for the present.

Shatt-el-Arab.

The questions of countering possible enemy minelaying in the Shatt-el-Arab and defence of ships against air attacks, are dealt with by an Admiralty message today to C. in C. Med., and C. in C. E.I.

America & West Indies.DUNELMIA
Q Report.

S.S. DUNELMIA reported at 0056 G.M.T. that she had been ordered to stop by an armed merchant raider. (The report was cancelled on 20/5).

Search for.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.America & West Indies. (contd).Search for
S~~C~~HEHERAZADE.

PRINCE DAVID left Bermuda at 1303Q today to search for and intercept French S.S. S~~C~~HEHERAZADE bound for Casablanca, which was in 27° 30' N 80° 0' W at 0805Q/16. U.S. Naval aircraft will co-operate in the search.

Sailings of
German ships.

German ship RHAKOTIS sailed from Antofogasta 2100 G.M.T. today and FRANKFURT from Talcahuano at 2035 G.M.T. BOGOTA and QUITO left Coquimbo at 1910.

U-Boat Campaign.Freetown
area.

It is reported that Norwegian tanker ALFRED OLSEN, in ballast was shelled by a S/M at 2230 G.M.T./9 in 2° 59' N 20° 26' W after being missed by torpedo. Ship was set on fire and abandoned.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.ALAUNIA.
DERBYSHIRE.

Your 2252/14. It is most important that each A.M.C. should carry its maximum number of passengers.
(D. of P. 0003B/17 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

M/L's as
Minelayers.

Your 1144/25/4/41. How many M.L.'s of First Flotilla are now available as Minelayers with fittings and trials completed.
(D.D.O.D.M. 1607B/17 to C. in C. Nore).
Reply nil.
(F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1901B/17).

BLACK SWAN
STORK.

Intend to transfer BLACK SWAN and STORK to your command as from 20/5.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1739/17 to C. in C. W.A.)

4 Destroyers
for C. in C. S.A.

Attacks on our trade in the Freetown area have made it imperative that we should as soon as possible reinforce C. in C. S.A. with a Division of Destroyers.
2. It has therefore been decided that 4 Vees should be sent from Home resources, of which 2 should come from the Portsmouth and 2 from the W.A. Commands.
3. C.'s in C. concerned are requested to detail destroyers for this service, and to report to Admty their names, and indicate when they will be ready to sail.
(V.C.N.S. 2051B/17).

Movements.GALATEA
EDINBURGH
ARETHUSA.

Scapa arrivals GALATEA, EDINBURGH, ARETHUSA.
(A.C.O.S. 0120B/17).

RODNEY

Scapa departure RODNEY with SOMALI, BEDOUIN, and ESKIMO.
(A.C.O.S. 1001/17).

My 1617B/16. After position D amend to read as follows.
(D.O.D. H. 1727B/17).

Add to my 1001/17 E.T.A. 1030/18.
(A.C.O.S. 2218/17).

Clyde.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements. (contd).Clyde-
Iceland
Ferry.E.T.A. S.D.3 0100/18.
(LANCASTER 1030/17).CLYDE.Your 1019B/16. Approved.
(V.C.N.S. 1037B/17 to F.O.S.)Operations.CONQUEROR.My 1617/13. Sailed. E.T.A. 1800/17. Code
word ~~Smith~~ III. Speed 12 knots.
(F.O.I.C. Portland, 0856B/17 to C. in C.
Plymouth).
Arrived 1810 CONQUEROR.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1812/17).IZARRA
(French)
intercepted.Have placed armed guard of 3 Officers 7 men
on board Vichy 4 masted auxiliary schooner
IZARRA, Newfoundland Bank Fisherman. Am
escorting IZARRA until instructed where to
snead her. My position 045° 46' N 029°
10' W course 36°. Speed of IZARRA 4½ knots
short of fuel. Have taken 5 anti-British
members of her crew on board.
(REGISTAN 0900Z/17 to Admty).
Your 0900/17. Sail IZARRA for St. Johns,
Newfoundland. And then comply with F.O.C.N.P.
1902/14.
(A.C.N.S. F. 1641B/17 to REGISTAN).Jan Mayen.Your 1631B/14. 6 Megacycles being used.
Communication established at 0730, 1130,
1530 and 1930 daily. If communication is
not established, hourly calls are made.
During last month there have been only 2 or
3 failures to establish communication and
strength of signal is normally good. Army
number 11 sets are used at both ends.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1627/17).

EDINBURGH.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.EDINBURGH
for Biscay
Patrol.

EDINBURGH is to proceed passing Hoxa boom at 1900/18 to proceed between latitudes 044° N and 046° N with the object of intercepting enemy shipping bound from and to Bay of Biscay ports. EDINBURGH should not normally operate to Eastward of longitude 020° W. 2. Admiralty's 1610/B/16 (re HOHENFELS) and information regarding recent interceptions on arrival pass to EDINBURGH. (C. in C. H.F. 1904B/17 to F.O. 18 C.S.)

British Air Activity.Escort.

Expect one Blenheim as escort from 0300 till -daylight. (C. in C. Plymouth 0155/17 to TYNEDALE).

Patrol

Air Patrol S.9 in operation. (C. in C. Rosyth 0600/17).

Thames
Estuary A/A
Ships.

Cancel my 2204/30/4. (C. in C. Nore 1045B/17 to H.Q.F.C.)

Your 1408B/15 May entirely concur. Although A/S Patrols off Muckle Flugga are an essential requirement the effort required to maintain Walrus aircraft when at buoys is not commensurate with the results obtained. Understand only one Walrus at Sollum Voe is now serviceable. The crews have been trained to operate from catapults for Fleet work and Aircraft spotting and would be better employed in ships. (C. in C. H.F. 1203B/17 to Admty).

Air
Search.

Focke - Wulf report 1130/17 46 30 N 08 40 W. Considered that this aircraft may be in vicinity of enemy shipping proceeding towards Bordeaux. One Sunderland to carry out creeping line ahead search due West from Base Line of 0530 W between 4430 N and 4600 N. To prudent limit of endurance. Aircraft to report and shadow enemy forces worthy of attack by striking force. (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 1301/17 to H.Q. 19 Group).

Smoke Screen.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity. (contd).Smoke Screens.

Your 1956/12 and 2346/12. Your views in last sentence of former fully agreed and are being represented to appropriate authorities. 2. Future policy in regard to use of smoke now under consideration on highest plane and decision will be communicated. (D. of L.D. 1442B/17 to F.O.I.C. Glasgow).

Own A/C
fired on.

Your 1740/27. B.J. 125/F.O.6. Enquiry has failed to produce any evidence of naval or merchant ships being concerned in this incident. (D. of L.D. 1443B/17 to Air Ministry F.O.6)

Boulogne and
2 M/V's off
Hardelot
bombed.

On Night 16/17 at Boulogne, bombs and incendiaries were dropped in the dock area and several explosions between docks were observed. Two ships at anchor off Hardelot were attacked. Results unobserved. (H.Q.B.C. 1803/17).

Anti
E-Boat
Carrier sweep.

In view of enemy R/C today I would like an evening clearance search of approx. area between 58° 40' N and 59° 40' N. and between 002° W and long. 000°. Object to intercept surface ships particularly E Boat Carriers approaching to attack during dark hours. (C. in C. H.F. 1953B/17 to C. in C. Rosyth). Your 1953/17. This is being done. (C. in C. Rosyth 2059/17 to C. in C. H.F.)

NADINE
fires on
own a/c.

H.M. Trawler NADINE reports opening fire on a Wellington Bomber at 1255B today in 52° 14' N 01° 55' E. Aircraft approached head on at 500 feet. Challenge was made six times and no reply received. Recognition signals were dropped after NADINE had opened fire. Fire was opened at a range of 700 yards. (C. in C. Nore 2213B/17).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity.ARCHANGEL
(Bombed 16/5.)

Tugs proceeding from Peterhead. Fraserburgh Life Boats, launches, Auxiliary Patrol Trawler STONEFLY will also assist.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 0116/17 to BLANKNEY). Am alongside taking off passengers as water is gaining.

(BLANKNEY 0335B/17).

Proceed to Aberdeen forthwith and land wounded.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 0614/17 to BLANKNEY).

Transport ARCHANGEL 2448 tons with 400 troops from Kirkwall to Aberdeen was bombed and badly damaged by enemy aircraft at 2330 16/5 when 13 miles north of Kinairds Head. Survivors including 60 wounded arrived Aberdeen at 0840 in BLANKNEY. Vessel in tow of tugs ABEILLE IV and ATTENTIF was off Rattray Head at 0838/17 making good 4 knots proceeding towards Aberdeen.

(C. in C. Rosyth 0905/17).

Following summary of report of C.O. BLANKNEY At 2356/16 in 57° 55' N 02° 03' W whilst escorting S.S. ARCHANGEL with troops to Aberdeen course 140° speed 15 knots. (Weather) Attacked by three A/C believed Heinkel by low level bombing. Six bombs dropped from height 60 feet estimated 500 lbs. impact. Three direct hits on ARCHANGEL by bombs described as being chained together. A/C engaged by BLANKNEY with all armament and hits claimed but no certain destruction. ARCHANGEL in tow of rescue tug ABEILLE and ATTENTIF attempted to make Aberdeen but now report bulkhead gone and making water fast. Tugs endeavouring to beach ship vicinity Ythan River about eight miles northward from Aberdeen. 99 casualties including 12 dead landed at Peterhead and Aberdeen, mostly military but some mercantile ratings.

(F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1227/17).

Leave area in time to return to Scapa by sunset.

(F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1421/17 to BLANKNEY).

Woolston
bombed.

At 0150/17 incendiary bombs caused fire at N.S. Depot Woolston. Some Minor damage to stores.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 0556B/17).

STATESMAN.....

513

17.5.1941.
Saturday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity Contd.STATESMAN.

(British, 7939 Tons) Bombed in 56° 44' N.,
13° 45' W. (Liverpool: Recd. 0646/17.)
Detail one Corvette to assist STATESMAN.
(C. in C. W.A. 0718/17 to BOADICEA.)
PRUDENT and RESTIVE are to proceed in
company with all despatch to assist.
STATESMAN. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0733B/17 to
PRUDENT.)
If in vicinity pass position 056° 46' N.,
013° 46' W., and pick up survivors in 2
boats from STATESMAN.
(C. in C. W.A. 0943B/17 to ST. APOLLO.)
Ship has sunk. RESTIVE return to Loch
Foyle PRUDENT to Campbeltown.
(C. in C. W.A. 0951B/17 F.O.I.C. Greenock
1000B/17.)
Am with 2 life boats till 1100. E.T.A.
1315. (A/C. No.97 1040/17.)
Estimate arrival at STATESMAN 2030B.
(HEPATICA 1505B/17.)

Convoy "Service"
SERVICE
bombed.

"Service"
SERVICE was attacked at 1010 in position 200
degrees Portland Bill 5 miles by two M.E.109.
4 bombs dropped from very low level near
rear ship but no damage reported.
Air escort was in area.
(F.O.I.C. Portland 1155B/17.)

Harwich
bombed.

From 2300/16 to 0445/17 A/C dropped bombs
on Power House and in vicinity Parkeston
Quay and on Harwich Town. The latter may
be of new type. Towards dawn flares were
also dropped over the harbour. No Naval damage
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1245B/17.) or casualties.

Scapa
Flow.

At 1615 E/A came in from the west and
passed over northern part of Flow to east-
ward. E/A was seen by ground defences and
reported as Ju., 88. Low Cloud. E/A
plotted from 20 mins., west of Stromness
and last plot received when 20' east of
Sanday Island. (A.C.O.S. 1805/17.)

ALA
(Norwegian,
933 Tons.)
ARTHUR
WRIGHT
(British
1091 Tons.)
bombed.

ALA attacked by German Aircraft at Shoreham.
Towed in and beached in 3 fathoms of water
to west of W.pier, well clear of fairway.
(N.O.I.C. Newhaven 1849/17.)

/At about.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity (contd).

ALA
(Norwegian,
933 Tons.)
ARTHUR WRIGHT
(British
1091 Tons).
bombed.
(contd)

At about 1640/17 ARTHUR WRIGHT, BOTNE, and ALA left convoy for Shoreham. When about 5 miles S. of Shoreham ARTHUR WRIGHT reported 2 enemy planes from seaward, which bombed ALA amidships, and then attacked ARTHUR WRIGHT with bomb which missed but exploded close enough to seriously damage superstructure and engine room. Two enemy planes then appeared from shoreward and machine gunned her causing further damage which will necessitate refit. Gunner of ARTHUR WRIGHT claims he damaged enemy plane with 12 pdr. Plane subsequently fell in the sea. Rescue boat ADVANCE with lifeboat put to sea but could find no trace of enemy airmen or plane. ALA was by this time abandoned in sinking condition. ADVANCE stood by while BOTNE took her in tow subsequently assisted by tug HAROLD BROWN, and she was beached about 1½ cables West of entrance pier. ALA sustained serious damage in midships, engine room section, and stewardess was killed. No other casualties.

(R.N.O. Shoreham 2020/17).

Following from Intelligence Officer R.A.F. Tangmere. Coastguard report they witnessed engagement enemy aircraft at 1640/17 and saw 1 Me. 109 attacked by Spitfire and fall into sea, also black smoke of another aircraft as it fell into sea some distance from Me. and south of attacked ship. This appeared to be Junker 88 brought down by Gunner of ARTHUR WRIGHT.

(R.N.O. Shoreham 2110/17).

Unknown
Vessel
attacked.

Automatic AAAA signal heard by Lands End, at 2040 strength 4 bearing 004°, and by Port Patrick strength 3 bearing 185°. (Liverpool W/T 2242/17).

515

War Diary.

17.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

B.S.57.

My 1130B/16. Intend to postpone B.S.57. for a few days. Further signal will be made when situation is clearer. Postponement will also enable operations to be carried out nearer high water. PLOVER should not load for the present.
(C. in C. Nore 0026B/17.)

Milford Haven.

Port is closed owing to mines dropped by aircraft. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0530/17.) My 0530/17. Port is open subject to local restrictions.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1114B/17.)

Operation S.N.9.B.

Following received by aircraft from R.A.M. begins:-
Operation S N 9 B completed 0951 ends.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1244/17.)

Harwich.

One Blue Mine detonated by 'LL' drifters at 0751/17 in 51° 44.5' N., 01° 10.3' E.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1427B/17.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Fishing-Boats off Brest.

Position 4815N 0520 W. Observed large number of lighted fishing boats in patrol area. A/C report.
(St. Eval 1530/17).

Brest.

Brest 1930/17. No change.
(D.D.I.C. 2226B/17).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.S.L. 7223 British and 9 Allied ships arrived.
Commodore, Rear-Adm. Knowles. Cargoes.
(D.S. 620, 17/5).Enemy
Broadcast
to Greek ships.

Following is a translation of a broadcast by Nordeich in Greek at 1927/16. To all ships in foreign ports:-

1. Telegraph to Ministry of Mercantile Marine where you are, and wait there for our further orders.
2. Ships at sea are to proceed to nearest non-British port and wait there for our further instructions, informing us by telegraph which this port is.
3. All voyages to England are against the interests of Greece, all available tonnage is to be put at our disposal, and must not be exposed to danger of destruction in the German war at sea.

G. Tsolakoglu, Prime Minister.
(Circulation at Request of D.N.I. 1823/17).

BRITANNIC
SOUTHERN PRINCE.

Admty 2014B/13., 1617B/16. A/S escort. Captain (D) 6 in SOMALI, MASHONA, TARTAR, BEDOUIN, ESKIMO. Destroyers to leave convoy at limit of prudent endurance and proceed to Scapa.
(C. in C. W.A. 1925B/17 to N.O.I.C. Greenock, etc).

Speed of
Northbound
convoys.

My 1936/14. In order to avoid delay to ocean going motor ships whose critical speed is $6\frac{1}{2}$ knots the speed of advance of the slow northbound convoys may be increased from $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 knots at the discretion of N.C.S.O. Southend. This discretion is only to be exercised in respect of motor ships sailing from the Thames and provided that not more than one or two coastal colliers are cut out and that there is a slow convoy on the following day, when reporting the convoy sailing N.C.S.O. Southend is to state whether the speed of advance is $6\frac{1}{2}$ or 7 knots.
(D.T.D. 2044/17 to C. in C. Nore C. in C. Rosyth).
Cancel my 2044/17. (D.T.D., 1614B/20).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.→ Enemy Units.

At 2313/16 German Naval unit bearing 329/2.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0045Z/17 to FURIOUS, SCARBOROUGH,
HAVELOCK, Trawlers of Western Patrol.)
Following D/F Bearings of enemy unit.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0123Z/17 to N.A. Stn).
My 0123Z. Para 3 refers to U-Boat to
westward of Freetown.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0231/17).
My 0007B/17. Bearings from Empire Stations
appear to place this U/B to Eastward of
Cape Verde Islands.
(D.D.I.C.0251B/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)

ATLANTA

Possibility Italian ATLANTA is about to
sail from Southward. Description.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0135/17 to N.A. Stn).
→ At 0142 German U-Boat bearing 300° third
class from Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0315Z/17 to FURIOUS, HAVELOCK,
SCARBOROUGH, Trawlers Western Patrol.)
See also U-Boat Campaign.

SHEHERAZADE
(French).

W.P.P.S. 81. Cancel W.P.P.S. 278. SHEHERAZADE
should be intercepted if possible and sent
in. She carried U.S. observers for French
North Africa, and interception should be
reported as soon as circumstances permit.
(Head of M. 0153B/17 to A.I.G. 24 & 39
V.A. Force H., C. in C. A.W.I.)

IRENE ROSETTE
(Belgian).

Following received from British Consul,
Cadiz (begins) Belgian motor fishing smack
IRENE ROSETTE, 229 of 58 tons gross arrived
here yesterday afternoon from Bayonne to
repair slight damage to motor. Master is
unable to decide whether to hand ship and
crew to British Naval Authorities fearing
German reprisal on family in Belgium. I
am insisting that he does this and will
telegraph you subsequent developments.
Reference 1200/16. (Ends).
(S.O.(I) Gib., 0351/17 to Admty).

RENOWN refit.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (contd),RENOWN
Refit.

It is desired to take advantage of probable damage to German Battlecruisers to refit RENOWN. Request you will transfer your Flag to REPULSE or ARK ROYAL and sail RENOWN for U.K. before Operation "~~ROCKET~~". "Rock.t". (V.C.N.S. 1311B/17 to F.O. Force H).

CLYDE

Sail CLYDE for Gibraltar 18/5.
(F.O. (S) 1321B/17 to S.3).

Force H.

Arrival S.O. Force H in ARK ROYAL, RENOWN, SHEFFIELD, WRESTLER, FEARLESS, FORESTER, FURY.
(S.O.(I) Gib., 2106/17 to Amdyt amended 0916 /18).

South Atlantic.KING EDWIN
NAIRNBANK.

Request you will instruct S.S. KING EDWIN and NAIRNBANK to proceed direct to Cape without bunkering if possible and omitting call at Freetown. Bunkers if required to be obtained at St. Vincent (Cape Verde). (A.C.N.S.(T) 0020B/17 to C. in C. S.A.)

Ships to
Avoid Freetown.

No ships are to proceed to Freetown, unless they have cargo, passengers or a Commodore for that port. Ships requiring bunkers should call at St. Vincent (Cape Verde) or Walfish Bay for coal and Azores or St. Vincent (Cape Verde) for oil.

(D.T.D. 0022B/17 to BOADICEA, EGRET, TARTAR, WALKER. for Commodores of O.G.62, OB 321, and OB 322).

Following have been instructed to proceed direct to St. Vincent, C.V.I:- ANGLO-INDIAN TEWKESBURY. STORNEST, GASCONY, CORDILLERA.

Following have been re-routed: ROWALLAN CASTLE, LITIOPA, CALUMET.

(D.T.D. 2206B/17 to C. in C. S.A.)

Evacuations.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).Evacuations
from Gibraltar.

Your 2312B/16. ARUNDEL CASTLE sailed Gibraltar. My 1251N/16. NEA HELLAS arrived 16/5 has accommodation for 320 only, remainder -of troop deck filled cargo at Cape. Should ship be sent Gibraltar or U.K. direct?
(C. in C. S.A. 1003N/17 to Admty).
C. in C. S.A. 1003N/17 NEA HELLAS should be sailed for Gibraltar.
(D.O.D. (F) 1745B/17 to C. in C. S.A.,
F.O.C.N.A.)

MOUZINHO
and BANFORA
repatrioes.

Reported Portugues MOUZINHO due Bissau today (4 groups missing) at that port, suggested she might first proceed to Freetown to embark balance of passengers and crew of BANFORA for transport to Casablanca, not calling Dakar. Probable numbers of passengers (C. in C. S.A. 1117N/17 to N.A. Lisbon.)

Independent
ships
calling Azores.

Admty 0001/1 sect. IV para 5 amended by A.M. 2142/9 and 0004/11. Request information whether these instructions to call at Azores or Cape Verde Islands apply to all independent homeward bound transport requiring bunkers whether carrying service personnel or not.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1137B/17 to Admty).

CRITON
(French.)

Your 2323/16 Token Crew is available.
(C. in C. S.A., 1218N/17 to Admty).

CUMBERLAND
NEWCASTLE.

Desired that CUMBERLAND should return to U.K. to refit. Request you will arrange for NEWCASTLE to relieve her and take over the Flag of R.A.S.A.D. Unless it is essential for her to call at Freetown she should proceed direct to relieve CUMBERLAND, if necessary refuelling at St. Helena.
(V.C.N.S. 1308B/17 to C. in C. S.A. R.A.S.A.D.)

ST. LOUIS
GABON
(V. French).

Vichy French S.S. ST. LOUIS reported sailed Westward from Lome P.M./14 escorted by Sloop LA SURPRISE cargo maize and palm oil. S.S. GABON reported still at Lome 14th/5.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1330N/17 to Admty).

AEQUITAS.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).AEQUITAS
AUCTORITAS
MONBALDO
(Italian)
NORDERNEY
(German).

Rio de Janeiro reports local press states AEQUITAS and AUCTORITAS are preparing for sea. No confirmation of this beyond permit requested for former to embark 1100 tons bunker coal. Nothing loaded by Italian ships yet and dry docking necessary as ships very dirty, early sailing therefore unlikely (ends). At Para MONBALDO has Lighters alongside. A.l., cargo being moved to make space for 500 tons bunkers due to arrive shortly. Monbaldo and NORDERNEY maintaining steam.

(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2031Z/17 to S.A.D.)

Destroyers.

Reinforcement. (D.O.D.(H) 2051B/17) (See Home Commands, Policy).

W.S.8 A.

My 1301/12 0758/16 (1) W.S.8.A was delayed 16 hours. MAURITIUS is to detach STRATHAIRD from convoy as necessary to arrive Capetown 0830B/24. STRATHAIRD should sail from Capetown to rejoin convoy in daylight same day.

(2) C. in C. E.I. is requested to sail HAWKINS to R/V with W.S.8 A. in 35° S 17° 5' E at 1500B/24 to relieve MAURITIUS who is then to proceed to Simonstown.

(C. in C. Africa 2119N/17 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown., MAURITIUS, C. in C. E.I.)

LECH
(German).

Unconfirmed Press report of 16/5 says arrived at Pernambuco. (D.S.620) Denied (D.S. 621).

Swiss
Cargoes.

Your 1431/16 (N.T. in W.D.) These vessels are time-chartered to Swiss Govt. and are discharging their cargoes at Lisbon Markings are part of arrangement for safe conduct which has been granted by German and Italian Governments.

(D.T.D. 2126B/17 to C. in C. S.A.)

521

17.5.1941.
Saturday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Enemy
Convoy

Following received on 11200 Kc/s. Med. A/C from Med. A/C No 1. P. C and S. of 5 M/V's 2 destroyers are 38.32 N., 20.40 E (Nore W/T, 0543Z/17) (105° 8 knots

PERSEUS

Alexandria A/S sanctuary will be in force 0300 to 0700/18 for PERSEUS arriving. Also between 1700 and 2100/18 for PERSEUS leaving. All times G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 0848C/17 to Med. Fleet, Force "I")

SALZBURG
(German)
CAMPINA
(Roumanian)

Following from Yugo Slav Military Attache Bucharest, arrived here yesterday.
(a) the three German steamships for Aegean 14/5 carried ammunition and contact mines
(b) German ship due to sail from Constanza for Samsun or Trebizond this week-end with war material for Iraq in transit through Turkey (this must be SALZBURG)
(c) Roumanian CAMPINA had a cargo of aviation petrol.
(d) Salonika being prepared for use of Italian naval units.
(e) German R.A. Fleischner appears German S.N.O. Roumania, and has 17 staff officers. (S.O.I. Istanbul, 0955/17 to S.O.I. Med.)

Tobruk

Operational Summary No. 341 up to 1200 hrs. 17.5.41. in four parts.
Night 14/15. Enemy dropped several bombs on Tobruk, no damage no casualties. Day 15/5 1 Ju. 88 bombed Tobruk harbour. No damage no casualties. Enemy bombed Sollum barracks. Day 16/5. Enemy bombed Tobruk harbour and troops within perimeter. Damage negligible.
(H.Q., R.A.F., M.E. 1159/17)

GLENGYLE.
Force for
Tymbaki.

On arrival Alexandria GLENGYLE is to embark Army personnel and stores referred to in M.E.Q.M. 2/114/10 of 16th/5 and sail so as to arrive Tymbaki, Crete by 2359/18. Escort AUCKLAND, VOYAGER, WATERHEN. Unloading is to be completed by 0400/19 when ships are to return Alexandria. S.B.N.O. Suda Bay report arrangement for finding beach. (C. in C. Med. 1213C/17 to GLENGYLE etc.)

522

17.5.1941.
Saturday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean cont:

GLENGYLE
force for
Tymbaki.
-Contd.

My 1213C/17. Approx. load is 30 officers
670 other ranks, four Bren carriers, up
to four 15 cwt. trucks, 30 tons of
baggage, 43 tons of supplies, 20 tons of
(?ammunition), 21 tons of P.O.I.
(C. in C. Med., 1425C/17 to GLENGYLE)
My 1213/17. Sail about 2300/19 or as
soon as ready passing through 64, 132 and
45, speed of advance 15 knots. R.V. with
COVENTRY in accordance with my 1831/17.
Return to Alexandria by same route.
(C. in C. Med., 2001/17 to GLENGYLE)

Suda Bay
Operations.

Report situation even if negative at 0900,
1500 and 2100 daily. Fleet operations
are based on what is happening in Port
Alfred. (C. in C. Med., 1239C/17 to
S.B.N.O. Suda Bay)

ABDIEL

Is expected to arrive Haifa about 0001/18
Mines are to be embarked immediately on
arrival. (C. in C. Med., 1241C/17 to
N.O.I.C. Haifa) *See also p 525*

ABA
Bombed

Following has been read from WIDNES:
Hospital ship ABA attacked by plane 34:-
15'North. 26°10'East. (Malta W/T 1305/17,
1350/17)

Minelaying
Operations
MAT 1,2.

C. in C. Med. 1355C/17. Mediterranean
Volume.

F.O. 7 C.S.

Request you transfer your flag to WARSPITE
p.m/18 and sail 2000/18 taking WARSPITE
VALIANT, ORION, AJAX, NAPIER, KIMBERLEY,
JANUS, ISIS, HEReward, DECOY, HERO, GRIFFIN
under your orders, if HERO and GRIFFIN
cannot be ready by 2000 they are to sail
on completion to join you. (? S.O. 7th D.F.)
in WOOLWICH report on HERO and GRIFFIN
Further orders follow. (C. in C. Med.
1425/17 to F.O. 7 C.S.)

/Minelaying....

War Diary

17.5.1941.
Saturday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean-Contd.

Minelaying
threat to
Shatt El Arab
and Red Sea.

Threat from use by Germans of Syrian aerodromes, mining, attacks on Merchantmen, etc. Measures to be taken. (V.C.N.S., 1457B/17 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.I.) See Lion Copy. *Reply from C in C Med., 1329C/19, see Mediterranean Volume.*

ATLAS
German.

Departure Cartagena 16/5 for Marseilles. (Cartagena, 1510/17 to D. of S.T.)

Crete
M.T.B. Patrol

My 1437/16. Nothing seen in Elaphonisos Channel. Flare observed on Kithera which may be form of "Homer Beacon" for aircraft Owing to engine failure patrol carried out by one M.T.B. only. M.T.B's 216 213 arrived a.m./17. Only 2 M.T.B's serviceable Enemy air R/C (?) Suda Bay during forenoon/17. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1551C/17 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta
Air Patrols.

Combined Services report Malta up to 1600 hours 17/5. Times G.M.T. Enemy activity. Nil, beyond 1 morning high level escorted recco. In anticipation of visits by enemy aircraft standing patrols are now being employed. In this case patrol was up and above enemy but unfortunately W/T trouble prevented interception. (H.Q., R.A.F., Malta, 1600/17)

Suda Bay
Bombed.
Ships damaged.

Suda Bay dive bombed by about ten aircraft at 1600/17. ELEONORA MAERSK hit and on fire. THEMONI very near miss burning. One small bomb on pier, no serious damage. VOLO alongside, no serious damage. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1651/17 to C. in C. Med.,) (2) ELEONORA MAERSK bombed amidships on fire ADAMSMONI (? THEMONI) blew up after hit forward.

/VOLO.....

MOST SECRET.

MOST SECRET

523(A)

1457/17 May.
OUT.

To: Commander in Chief, Mediterranean. 65.
Commander in Chief, East Indies. 241.
repeated S.N.O. Persian Gulf.
A.O.C. Middle East.
S.B.N.O. Suez Canal. 672.
F.O.I.C. Alexandria. 57.
S.N.O. Red Sea,

Inter Departmental Cypher (11).

From Admiralty.

IMPORTANT. AIDAC.

Now that it is known that German aircraft have reached Syrian and possibly Iraqi aerodromes it must be assumed that aircraft mines may be laid in the Shatt el Arab and also in the Red Sea. Similarly air attack on merchant ships must be considered likely.

2. As regards minesweeping, action has been initiated in C. in C. East Indies' 0636/5 to Admiralty only, and C. in C. Mediterranean's 1400C/8 May. It will be some time however before the necessary ships arrive. In the event of mines being laid in the intervening period C. in C. Mediterranean is requested to arrange for the early transfer of D.W.I. aircraft to Basra and for the necessary preliminary arrangements to be made now. In order to implement the minewatching of Shatt el Arab which is a very difficult problem, C. in C. Mediterranean is requested to confer with A.O.C. Middle East as to the possibility of sending an R.D.F. station to C. in C. East Indies. This set to be erected so as to plot movements of aircraft. Minesweeping would then only be necessary where aircraft are plotted low over the river.

3. As regards defence of ships against air attack all ships from United Kingdom will have their short range A/A weapons and crews on board. There will however be many ships from Australia and Eastern ports and also returning troop ships who may not be so fitted. C. in C. East Indies is requested to report whether a shuttle service of guns and crews is available at Aden, and also his proposals for defence of ships using the Shatt el Arab.

4. Information at present available indicates that two Focke Wulf Condor aircraft of the type used for attacking ships at home are included in those that have passed through Syrian aerodromes.

5. Should a serious air threat develop in Red Sea or Shatt el Arab it will be necessary to return some of the A.A. sloops lent by C. in C. East Indies to the Mediterranean.

6. C. in C. Mediterranean is requested to arrange for Commander L.M. James to be flown to Basra as Port Minesweeping officer.

1457B/17.

1st Lord.	C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	
1st S.L.	D. of P. (2)	for A.C.N.S. (F)
2nd. S.L.	D.O.D. (F)	D.A/S.W. (Approved V.C.N.S.)
3rd. S.L.	D.DO.D. (F)	D.M.S.
4th S.L.	D.O.D. (H)	I.P.
5th S.L.	D.D.O.D. (H)	W.D.
V.C.N.S.	D.N.I. (4)	E.P.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.S.D.	Duty Captain. D.T.D. (2)
A.C.N.S. (F)		Head of M. N.I.D. LO. (Pay. Cdr.
A.C.N.S. (T)	(2) D. of L.D.	Wilson).

MOST SECRET

War Diary17.5.1941.
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean cont.Suda Bay
Bombed.
Ships damaged
-Contd.

VOLO slight hull damage from direct hit on quay. ARAYBANK burnt out. *LICHAI SUMD ^{not} _{identified} ships cargo still burning. KYTHERA burnt out bridge to forecastle bunkers and cargo on fire. LEICLN (?LOGICIAN) (b) towed from quay and beached. NICOLAOU OURANIA fire extinguished bunkers and starboard plating damaged. (SSTO Suda Bay 1756/17) ELEONORA MAERSK is on fire and is not available for oiling. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1915/17 to C. in C. Med.) Situation report 2100/17. ELEONORA MAERSK burning fiercely. Endeavouring to confine fire to after hold. THEMONI blew up and sank. LOGICIAN machinery seriously damaged and cannot steam. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 2227/17 to C. in C. Med.)

THEMONI
SunkGLENROY
PROTECTOR
VAMPIRE

My 1617C /15 (N.T. in W.R.) arrangements cancelled. GLENROY and PROTECTOR should unload Alexandria. A Lighter No 12 should unload minelaying gear and return Alexandria. Naval party for Sollum should return Alexandria from Mersa Matruh. VAMPIRE to remain under orders of R.A. Alexandria. N.O.I.C. Sollum with signalmen to remain for Liaison duty with Mob. Force. (C. in C. Med., 1727C/17 to S.O. Force I R.A.(D) etc.)

NAIAD
PERTH

NAIAD, PERTH and 2 destroyers return to Alexandria now to arrive p.m./18.
(C. in C. Med. 1829/17)

UNDAUNTED
Lost.

UNDAUNTED is overdue since 13/5 and must be considered lost. UNDAUNTED was operating in Northern Approaches of Tripoli. There is no news of any enemy claim. (C. in C. Med., 1835C/17 to Admty.)

/German....

War Diary17.5.1941.
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean-Contd.German &
Italian Ships.

My 1731/14 Ankara reports YALOVA bound Mitylene and Chios with foodstuffs passed Chanak 0900/15 Turkish time. ITHAKA reported by Ankara carrying ammunition passed Istanbul 14/5 bound Salonika with CORDELIA loaded grain, ITHAKA and CAMPINA Roumanian tanks fully loaded sailed Chanak 0730/15 for Aegean. PIER LUIGI Italian reported to be loaded 4000 tons grain for Cavallo passed Chanak a.m. 16/5 All local authorities informed. (S.O(I) Alexandria, 1846/17 to Admty.)

ABDIEL

As soon as mines are embarked return to Alexandria at high speed. (C. in C. Med. 1851/17 to ABDIEL)
Following from ABDIEL E.T.A. 0100/18.
Request lights from 0015. T.O.O. 1327/17.
(R.A. Alexandria, 1854/17 to N.O.I.C. Haifa) *See p 522*

U-Boats

Suspected in following areas: Two between Kaso Strait and 034° 30' N., Two west of Antikithera Channel North of 035° 00' N., (C. in C. Med., 1919C/17 to Med. Fleet)

Crete
Patrol

M.T. Boats will not be patrolling Elaphonisos channel tonight owing to engine defects. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1943/17 to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal
Mines.

Situation 1930/17. Eight ships swept over northern mined section and eight over southern. No mines have been exploded. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1943C/17 to Admty. etc.)

New Type Mine
at Malta.

Your 2120B/16 and my 1921B/16. Suggestions. (V.A. Malta 2105B/17, to Admty.)

DIDO
4 destroyers.

DIDO and 4 destroyers arriving Alexandria 0600/18 from Northward. (Capt. S. 1. 2329C/17 to PERSEUS)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.W.S.7
U.S.10B.Ref. D.S.T.O. Suez 1837/14. Not agreed
Military. Ships must discharge Suez.
(Middle East, T.H.I. 0140/17 to P.S.T.O.
Egypt).CORNWALL'S action
~~action with~~ with
RAIDER. Raider.My 0648/11. Average time from first raider
alarm until raider leaves victim sinking
appears one and quarter hours except when
victim is fully looted. Prisoners and lascar
survivors left Seychelles 16/5 for Mombasa.
(C. in C. E.I., 0632/17, to Admty etc).MinesweepersMy 0636/5/5 para one. LAXMI found unsatis-
factory and HIRAVATI allocated instead and
will sail as soon as skid generator fitted.
(2) LILAVATI due Shatt-el-Arab about 22/5.
(3) Four skids shipped from Bombay 16/5 two
more to follow.
(C. in C. E.I. 0652Z/17 to Admty).TRIPOLITANIA.
PROMETEO.
CAPITANO BOTTEGO
GIUSEPPE MAZZINI
URANIA.
NAZARIO SAURO.Italian, hearsay report (D.S. 28/4) of
scuttling at Dahlak Island now confirmed.
(D.S. 620, 17/5).CLAN
BUCHANAN.My 0744/3 and N.O.I.C. Durban's 1840/13.
Senior surviving officer from CLAN BUCHANAN
reports official mail carried was thrown
overboard and seen to sink before boarding
party from Raider arrived.
(C. in C. E.I. 0710Z/17 to Admty).HAWKINSTo proceed to Durban arriving p.m./18.
(C. in C. E.I. 0730Z/17 to HAWKINS).CERESMy 0742/11 CERES is to leave patrol to arrive
Mombasa a.m./20.
(C. in C. E.I. 0732Z/17 to CERES).

Mombasa congestion.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. (contd).Mombasa
congestion.

Owing congestion of this port and consequent delay bunkering vessels request permission to divert vessels requiring coal and water only to Zanzibar as soon as stocks are available there. Smith Mackenzie are prepared to lay down stocks. But only very limited supplies available at present.
(D.S.T.O. Mombasa 0900Z/17 to C. in C. E. I.)

A/C lost
Samawa.

On return from bombing attack on military Barracks Samawa 15/5 one aircraft of 814 Sqn. force-landed 3 miles south of barracks and was surrounded by armed natives who opened fire. Crew were rescued by accompanying machines in face of opposition. Machine badly damaged and beyond repair but no time to burn aircraft.
(C. in C. E. I. 1228Z/17 to Admty).

EXETER
SHROPSHIRE
CORNWALL
GLASGOW
CANBERRA.

Your 0732Z/12. Intend that EXETER should join your flag temporarily after escorting W.3.8B, and that SHROPSHIRE and CORNWALL should remain on your station for the present. Hoped this will enable you to refit GLASGOW as proposed. A.C.N.B. will be asked if they can still provide a cruiser to relieve CANBERRA as in their 1324Z/25/3. These dispositions are made on the assumption that it remains necessary to retain a force in Persian Gulf.
(V.C.N.S., 1310B/17 to C. in C. E. I.)

AQUITANIA
and use of
Durban.

D. of S.T.'s 1834B/10. Master of AQUITANIA estimates draught on arrival Durban 34 feet and on sailing 36 feet 10 ins. He protests that Durban is not a suitable port for vessel size of AQUITANIA. She is now ready to sail. Request immediate reply.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt, 1731C/17 to C. in C. E. I., D. of S.T.)
Your 1731/17.

(i) Matter has already been reported to Admiralty and D. of S.T. Following received from N.L.O. Durban. "Port Captain Durban is satisfied he can handle ship in and out at top high water provided weather is favourable with regard to both wind and swell.

Date of arrival.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. (continued)AQUITANIA
and use of
Durban. Contd.

Date of arrival is important as there is very little depth of water to spare. Depth in channel at L W O S is 34 feet. Rise on 26/5 is 5.4 feet but on 3/6 is only 3.9 feet. Subject to orders to the contrary from D. of S.T. ship should be sailed to arrive Durban for high water a.m./28. Ship will be unable to leave Durban before 8/6.
(C. in C. E.I. 2058Z/17 to P.S.T.O. Egypt, (Port Said).)

Flying boat.

One Catalina flying boat from Ceylon arrived Diego Garcia 16/5.
(C. in C. E.I. 1750Z/17 to Admty).

Contraband
Control,
Persian Gulf.

(1) a.m. 0110B/9 regarding introduction of Navicert system in Persian Gulf is being passed all addressees who are requested to communicate its contents to the appropriate local authorities.
(2) Khor Kuwait patrol is to intercept as many ships as possible entering or leaving Gulf and deal with them in accordance with para 5 of A.M.
(3) All British tankers entering or leaving Gulf may be assumed to be in possession of Navicerts N.C.S.O. Harmaq is to ensure that all British tankers leaving are in possession of Navicerts. (4) Commodore R.I.N. and N.O.I.C. Karachi are requested to ensure that name of any ship leaving Bombay or Karachi for Persian Gulf without Navicerts are signalled immediately.
(S.N.O. Persian Gulf 1820/17 to Persian Gulf Force.)

Search for
Raider.

Ref. D/R position at 1537Z/17. I am assuming position is within 200 miles of 6° 50' S., 73.40 E. Dispositions. Catalina flying boat from Diego Garcia searching area 18th and 19th. CORNWALL and GLASGOW leave Mauritius in company about 2300Z/17 at 20 knots to search.
(C. in C. E.I. 2122Z/17 to Admty).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.ERITREA

My 1057/13 A two. Italian sloop ERITREA reported at Mitsubishi dockyard Kobe under repairs.
(C.O.S. Singapore 0303Z/17 to Admiralty D.N.I. Melbourne, S.O.(I) Wellington D.N.I. Ottawa, S.O.(I) Kingston, S.O.(I) Hong Kong, S.O.(I) Colombo.)

BERNARDIN DE
ST. PIERRE.
(French).

Departure 17/5 for Manila.
(Saigon 0421Z/17 to D. of S.T.)

Singapore
Conference.

Provisional comments on telegraphed summary of agreement No F.E.8.
(1st S.L., 1335B/17) F.E.9 (1st S.L., 1336B/17)
See Lion Copy.

America & West Indies.

"Q" Report
DUNELMIA.

Following from Resolution Island (begins)
"0056 G.M.T. QQQQ 5823 N 41.26 W DUNELMIA, suspicious vessel has ordered us to stop. 0055/17" Bearing 104 approx. Poor spark signal and weak (ends).
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 0330Z/17 to Admty).
My 0330Z/17. Unlikely American.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 0331Z/17).
Your 0330Z/17. Have you any further information?
(Admty., 2000B/17) Reply: No. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 0157Z/18).

MONTCLARE
ALAUNIA.

Your 2311/10. Request MONTCLARE and ALAUNIA be directed to arrive five miles east of Boston Lightship at 2000Z +5 on date of arrival and await pilot. Request definite dates as soon as possibly convenient (ends) 1647/15.
(B.A.R.M., 0615/17 to R.A. 3 B.S.)

Exchange of.....

MOST SECRET

529(A)

~~MOST SECRET~~

OUT

1335B/17th May

TO:- C. in C. China 955

C. in C. East Indies 239

DATE:- 17.5.41.

NAVAL CYpher (F)

FROM:- Admiralty

IMPORTANT

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.8 addressed C. in C. Far East, C. in C. China, C. in C. East Indies, C. in C. India, Military Mission, Washington (Boxes No. 43) Australian Commonwealth Naval Board for Australian Chiefs of Staff, and New Zealand Navy Board for New Zealand Chiefs of Staff.

Begins. Reference telegraphic summary of A.D.B. Conference at Singapore in Telegram 398/2 of 27/4 from C. in C. Far East.

We congratulate you on the satisfactory results achieved, and realise the hard work entailed in reaching agreement on combined American Dutch and British action in event of Japanese aggression. Ratification by H.M.G. in the United Kingdom must await receipt of full report. In meantime following are our provisional comments on telegraphic summary. Action should proceed on basis of these comments pending ratification by governments concerned.

2. We are in general agreement with appreciation and plans and approve recommendations subject to following observations.

3. Importance of Luzon. Agree that Luzon is a key position the retention of which would be of great value. It is clear however from the report of the recent Staff Discussions at Washington that it is not the present intention of the U.S.A. to reinforce the Far East and failing considerable reinforcement there is little prospect of holding Luzon against Japanese attack. In these circumstances doubtful if Manila would constitute a serious deterrent to Japanese southward advance. We would welcome any strengthening of the Philippines which could be effected otherwise than at the expense of the U.S. effort in the Atlantic theatre but we prefer not to press the U.S. Chiefs of Staff any further on this point, beyond informing them of our views at this stage.

4. Mutual Interest in Defence of Far East. Reference paragraph 6 of telegraphic summary, possibility of declaration giving political recognition to this strategic truth is being actively pursued. Key lies in attitude of U.S.A. which is not at present encouraging.

5. Value of Hong Kong. Hong Kong must be regarded as strategic liability not an asset. The fortress is virtually invested already and is unlikely to be of any great use as an advanced base for operations against Japanese lines of communication.

6. Necessity of Collective Action. Question of procedure for reaching a quick decision is being pursued on political plane.

7./.....

7. Capacity to Operate Air Forces against Japan. Scheme for international air force already initiated would be a useful step in this direction as well as providing much needed encouragement to Chinese. We have authorised C. in C. Far East to give unobtrusive support to scheme by providing facilities in Burma and we had made available a considerable number of aircraft, but position as regards development of scheme is obscure and we would welcome energetic action by U.S.A. to further it, always subject to the proviso that appreciable weakening of their assistance in the main theatre is entailed.

We would also welcome in furtherance of the object of operating air forces in China any assistance which the U.S.A. could give in connection with the schemes now in hand for improving road and rail communication with China from India and Burma and keeping the Burma/Yunnan road operating at full capacity.

8. Command. Arrangements for Naval Command are contained in Admiralty Message 0050B of the 11th May to C. in C. China, by whom it should be passed to C. in C. Far East. Arrangements for command of air force is accepted in principle.

9. Liaison with U.S. Pacific Fleet. Consider that the link with the C. in C. U.S. Pacific Fleet in connection with operations to the westward of meridian 180 degrees might conveniently be established by means of a representative of C. in C. U.S. Pacific Fleet on the combined naval staff in Singapore and an Australian liaison officer on staff of C. in C. U.S. Pacific Fleet.

10. Preparation for Support to Chinese Forces and Subversive Activities in Japan. Consider most suitable method of giving effect to the recommendations of the Conference regarding establishment of mission, organisation of guerilla forces in China and subversive activities in Japan would appear to be for the U.S.A. to associate themselves with the activities which we have already put in train.

11. C. in C. Far East pass above information to Netherlands East Indies Defence Authorities. H.M.G. will inform Dutch Government in London.

12. M.M. Washington inform U.S. Chief of Staff and Chief Of Naval Operations. (Ends).

1335B/17.

Secretary to First Sea Lord.

1st. Lord.	Duty Capt.
1st. S.L.	E.P.S.
5th. S.L.	Hd. of M.
V.C.N.S.	I.P.
A.C.N.S. (F)	W.D.
C.S.O. to 1st. S.L.	N.I.D. 10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.
D.O.D. (F)	D.N.A.D.
D.D.O.D. (F)	D. of L.D.
D.N.I. (4)	D.S.D.
D. of P. (2)	

MOST SECRET

529/15

1336B/17th May.

MOST SECRET.

MESSAGE.

OUT.

To: C.in C. China. 956.
C.in C. East Indies. 240.

Date. 17.5.41.

NAVAL CYPHER (F).

From. Admiralty.

IMPORTANT.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.9 addressed
Commanders-in-Chief Far East and China.

(Begins). Reference your telegram 408/2 cypher
28/4, the following remarks should be read in conjunction with
C.O.S. No.F.E.8.

2. Reference your paragraph 2. Consultation with British
Delegation to Washington Conversations discloses no ground for
belief that weakness of Malaya was an important factor in U.S.
decision not to reinforce Far East. Governing factor was over-
whelming importance of putting maximum effort into decisive theatre.

3. While we cannot entirely rule out the possibility that
action against a Japanese convoy approaching Malaya might in very
exceptional circumstances be necessary without prior approval
of His Majesty's Government, in view of the gravity of the issues
at stake we are unable to subscribe to the view expressed in
paragraph 5 of your telegram under reference as a general statement
until such time as the United States have made clear their
attitude and we emphatically reaffirm the instructions in
paragraph 3(b) of telegram 56253 (M.O.10). (Ends).

1336B/17.

Secretary to First Sea Lord.

L
1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(F)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D.O.D.(F)
D.D.O.D.(F)
D.D.I.(4)
D.of P.(2)
Duty Captain.
E.P.S.
Head of M.
I.P.
W.D.
N.I.D.10 Pay. Cdr. Wilson)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. (contd).Exchange of
Prisoners.

Your 1151B/6. U.S.A. Govt. have requested their representative at Rome by telegraph to communicate British Govt's proposal to Italian Govt.
(N.A. Washington, 0920/17 to Admty).

CIRCASSIA

My 1744B/13. Proceed direct to Halifax as soon as defects made good.
(F.O.C.N.P. 1016B/17 to Northern Patrol).

Corvettes.
Refit in
U.S.A.†

UYARM 234.
Decided that 2 corvettes are actually to be in hand at a time for refit in U.S.A. where structural alterations to Forecastles and Bridges of these ships are also to be carried out.
Requested you will inform Admiralty of proposed refit programme.
(Controller, 1047B/17 to C. in C. W.A.)

SHEHERAZADE
French.

In position 027° 30' N 080° 00' at 0705Q/16 course 080° destination Casablanca. Proceed forthwith to carry out curve of search for SHEHERAZADE at 20 knots assuming her mean course from above position lies between 080° and 095° speed 12½ knots. U.S. Naval Aircraft will Co-operate in search. Ship is to be brought into Bermuda under armed guard.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1051Q/17 to PRINCE DAVID).

SOUTH AFRICA.

My 2008/7. What is delaying SOUTH AFRICA when is she likely to sail?
(D.T.D. 1157B/17 to N.C.S.O. Aruba).
Your 1157B. Engine repairs under estimated. Sailed 16/5 surveyor.
(N.C.S.O. Aruba 1505/17 to Admty),

TUSCANIA
(Italian) renamed
MINATITLAN
(Mexican flag).

Italian ship TUSCANIA, renamed MINATITLAN Mexican Flag sailed Tampico 14/5 for Puerto Mexico.
(S.O.(I) Jamaica, 1609R/17 to Admty etc).

RHAKOTIS.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. (contd).RHAKOTIS
FRANKFURT.
(German).RHAKOTIS sailed from Antofagasta 2100 G.M.T.
17. FRANKFURT sailed from Talcahuano 2035
G.M.T./17.
(S.O.(I) Callao 1736/17 to D.N.I. etc).Dakar
Intelligence.Following from Naval Dep. From Dakar 14/5
Arrived KILISSI from North. Sailed PORTHOS
for Conakry.
(N.A. Washington 1830/17 to Admty).
From Dakar 16/5. War ships present as
follows:- Destroyers TERRIBLE and FANTASQUE.
Cruisers GLOIRE, GEORGES LEYGUES. Battleship
RICHELIEU, on which repairs have been carried
out, but believed (?outer) starboard propeller
and shaft removed. Several small naval craft
and several submarines.
(N.A. Washington, 1841/17 to Admty).BOGOTA
QUITO
(German).Sailed Coquimbo. Time of origin denotes
local time of sailing.
(N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1910/17 to S.O.(I)
Callao) (S.O.(I) Callao 1914/17 to C. in C.
A.W.I.)Martinique
Intelligence.Following from Navy Dept. From Fort de
France 17/5. Sailing of DUC D'AUMALE for
New York with 300 refugees, scheduled for
to-day, has been cancelled by order of French
Embassy Washington. 335 more refugees
are expected here soon. Night of 16/5 BÉARN
returned unexpectedly to port here.
(N.A. Washington, 1920/17 to Admty).S.S. MARQUES
DE COMILLAS
(Spanish).My 1809Q/4/5/41. Examination of heavy
baggage belonging to enemy national travelling
to Germany in Spanish S.S. MARQUES DE
COMMILLAS revealed large quantities of
contraband which was seized.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 2206Q/17 to Admty).

RANPURA.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. (contd).RANPURA
B.H.X. 129Intend RANPURA to escort B.H.X. 129 and sail from Halifax a.m./21 E.T.A. Bermuda at 1000 Q/25.
(R.A. 3 B.S. 2323/17 to C. in C. A.W.I.)Marseilles
Intelligence.Following from Navy Dept. From Marseilles (Arrivals and Departures only).
(N.A. Washington 2350/17 to Admty).Australia.AUSTRALIA
CANBERRA.You will appreciate that developments in Iraq have increased cruiser commitments of C. in C; it is, therefore, hoped that you will still be able to attach AUSTRALIA to his Flag when you decide to withdraw CANBERRA for refit.
(V.C.N.S. 1309B/17 to A.C.N.B.) Reply: 0744/19.PURIRI.
Loss.New Zealand.
Your 1927B/15. Loss of PURIRI was announced in morning newspapers of 15/5 but not broadcast. The presence of minefield laid in June. 1940, in Hauraki Gulf is well known in New Zealand and area dangerous on account of mines was publicly notified in New Zealand N. to M. No.25/940. As reason for and locality of loss could not possibly be kept secret in New Zealand no object was seen in suppressing this information.
(N.Z.N.B. 022Z/17 to Admty).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.17.5.1941.
Saturday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.IXION
(torpedoed
7/5).

86 survivors from IXION torpedoed 7/5 in O.B. 318 landed by NAILSEAMOR. 900 bags of mail including diplomatic mail lost. (N.C.S.O. Sydney, C.B., 0306Z/17 to D.N.I. Ottawa).

AELYBRYN.
(torpedoed
10/5).

HOLYHOCK and ZWARTE ZEE arrived towing steamship AELYBRYN. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1529Z/17 to C. in C.WA).

GAND.

43 Belgian survivors landed from H.M.S. BURWELL ex SS GAND (Belgian); (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1726/17 to Admty). My 1726/17. 4 Belgian Military Gunners (D.E.M.S) included in 43 survivors landed. Names forwarded in my 1810/17. At present retained here. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1809/17 to Admty.). GAND, 5086 tons, bound from Liverpool to Sydney, N.S., in Convoy O.B. 318, was presumably sunk by S/M but no date or position has been reported. (D.S. 622).

ALFRED.
OLSEN.

Norwegian tanker ALFRED OLSEN in ballast shelled by submarine at 2230 G.M.T/9 in 02° 59 N. 20° 26 W after being missed by one torpedo. When last seen ship was burning fiercely. Submarine very large with conning tower well forward possibly U.B. whole crew left ship, three survivors arrived Freetown 16/5. Remaining 31 of crew in two boats not yet accounted for. (C. in C.S.A. 2038N/17 to Adty.).

SALOPIAN.
(torpedoed
13/5).

Sailed 1445/17 in IMPULSIVE (?11 or 41) Officers and 32 Ratings ex SALOPIAN including C.O. and all those necessary for Board of Enquiry as it is not possible hold Board at Reykjavik under present conditions. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2235/17 to A.C.O.S. C. in C.W.A., Admty.).

War Diary.

17.5.1941
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

2134/16. F.O.C.N.A. 0123Z/17, 0231/17, 0315Z/17.
See North Atlantic.

1849/16. Your 2034/16 not to Admiralty. At 1849 G.M.T. on 5025 kc/s. Bearings from Home Stations placed an Italian U.Boat in Bay of Biscay approx. 45° 30' N. 4° 00' W. Bearing from Gibraltar 215/2 at 1850 G.M.T. not received by Admiralty. (D.D.I.C. 0637B/17 to F.O.C.N.A).

Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1415B/17).

1345.

~~Form Orange~~
FORM ORANGE from A/C on Met. Flight. 1 S/M 48.10 N 0910 W - course 138° T., speed 12 knots A/C circled S/M at 600 ft. but could not identify S/M. S/M remained fully surfaced within 15 miles on course 340° T. 2 ships observed coater type one funnel and ships one aft. both ships flying French flag. 1255 1 fishing vessel two masted no decks with Misen set vessel square sterned painted green. Auxiliary motor - flying French flag. Vessel was approaching large buoy position 48.25 N 09.00 W. crew crouched down in bottom of boat on approach of A/C. (Plymouth 1715/17 to 19 Group).

~~FORM ORANGE~~ ref. telephone conversation, one Sunderland to attack and destroy enemy U Boat last sighted on surface in 48.10 N., 9.09 W. at 1345/17 by A/C of Met flight. Course 138° speed 12 knots. Sunderland to carry out creeping line ahead search base line joining posns. 48.040 6.36 W and 47.20 N., 6.52 W., mean line of advance 286° A/C also sighted 2 coastal type MVs flying French flag approx, 15 miles north of U boat in line astern course 340° and large buoy with iron frame superstructure with light on top in 48.25 N. 9.00 W. U boat was in submerged bombing restriction area and is only to be attacked if surfaced or submerging.
(A.C.H.Q. Plymouth, 1801./17 to Admty.).

/Hunt.....

War Diary.

17.5.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. (contd).

Hunt by
D.3.

Operations cease 1400Z/17. D.C's expended nil. Request C.O. 30 Wing be informed. (Capt. D.3, 1723Z/17 to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. H.F).

1109.

A.L.O. interrogated Captain of Civil Lord A/C (incoming) from Lisbon. States. At 1109 I was flying at 10,000 ft. sighted a S/M on starboard 6 to 8 miles off in 48 N. 9.20 W. course E.S.E. speed 12 to 14 knots. (approx) saw S/M for about 2 minutes. S/M not so big as one sighted 6 weeks ago. Am absolutely definite it was S/M saw him with naked eye as binoculars no good despite repeated requests for good pair binoculars. S/M in the glare of the sun Also position accurate as I had just checked my position. Name of Pilot Verhoeven. (O.I.C., 17/5). Comment. Some useful reports are received from these Civil Aircraft and it would seem to be important for authorities to provide these with adequate binoculars.

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C.

Aircraft reports having dropped A/S bombs on N.W. end of Horseshoe shape oil streaks 10 miles long in position 61.56 N., 20.30 W. at 1953. Oil rose more thickly from this point as result. Other aircraft sighted lifeboat with corpse in 62.04 N., 19.40 W. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0047/17 to SCIMITAR, WATCHMAN, GAMBIA, VERBENA.). N.O.I.C. Iceland's (c) 0047/17. Am proceeding toward position. Consider it rather late to do much good. Request instructions. (BURNHAM, 0829/17 to Cdr. D. 12th Escort Group).

By BURWELL.

While escorting CIRCASSIA attacked firm contact in 063° 16' N., 023° 20' W. at 0420 G.M.T/16. Fired 8 d.cs. large oil patch seen. Returned to escort CIRCASSIA after 15 minutes. (BURWELL, 1005/17 to Admty. C. in C.W.A).

By MALCOLM.

MALCOLM attacking firm contact in 062° 40' N. 024° 30' W. HELIOTROPE and BURWELL in contact. (S.O. 12th Escort Group 2341Z/17 to C. in C.W.A)

536

18.5.1941.
Sunday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

Cruiser
redeployments.

An important signal concerning cruiser redeployments was made by the Admiralty this morning.

Cruiser
Patrols

EDINBURGH left Scapa Flow this evening to patrol between latitudes 44° N., and 46° N., with the object of intercepting enemy shipping bound from and to the Bay of Biscay ports. The following are believed to be at sea: DRESDEN (left Santos 28/3), BABITONGA (left Santos 25/4) LECH (left Rio 28/4), FRISCO (left Ceara 28/3), FRANCO MARTELLI (Left Pernambuco 28/3)

A vessel closely resembling HOHENFELS, which may be Raider No. 16 was sighted on 3/5 in 24° 45' S., 24° 29' W.

NIGERIA and KENYA are patrolling S.E. of Ireland.

MANCHESTER and BIRMINGHAM sailed this morning to relieve them. CHESHIRE is in N.P. 71.

SUFFOLK is to remain on patrol in the Denmark Straits to the reasonable limit of endurance and is to watch especially the passage in both directions close to the ice.

Sabotage

Sabotage is suspected on board JUPITER.

Channel
Convoys.

Repeated small air attacks are being made on shipping in the Channel. Fighter escort has failed to prevent these attacks, which may develop into heavy attacks at any time. C. in C. Portsmouth proposes to reinstitute night sailings of escorted groups in his Command during the dark period.

537

18.5.1941.
Sunday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

British Air Operations

Minor attacks were made last night by Bomber Command on Boulogne.

Enemy Air Activity

N.W. Approaches

Convoy H.G. 61 was bombed this morning in 54° 14' 26' W and again this afternoon in 54° 41' N., 13° 8' W. No damage is reported.

W. and S.W.

At 0500 today an aircraft bombed and damaged the coaster JOFFRE ROSE which had been previously beached in Dale Roads (Milford Haven) following bomb damage at sea. At 2230 coaster CLARA MONKS was unsuccessfully attacked off St. David's Head. M.V. BEGERIN reported being bombed at 2313 17 miles west of the South Bishops and is presumed sunk. An unknown ship reported being attacked at 2030 off the South Bishops.

Mining

Belfast

H.M. Drifter JEWEL was mined and sunk in Belfast Lough today.

Thames Estuary.

Minelaying by enemy aircraft in the Thames Estuary was suspected last night. Mines were detonated in the Estuary.

Liverpool

Balloon barrage vessel HILDA was mined off Liverpool this evening and was damaged.

War Diary18.5.1941.
SundaySITUATION REPORTSouth Atlantic

NEWCASTLE reports she has intercepted the Vichy French LIEUTENANT ST. LOUBERT BIE, Marseilles to Madagascar, with 1700 Indo-Chinese troops and cargo, in 21° 31' S., 5° 56' W. and is escorting her towards Simonstown.

NEWCASTLE is to R.V. with CUMBERLAND and is to take over the flag of R.A.S.A.D. CUMBERLAND is to return to U.K. to refit.

MediterraneanWestern
Desert.

Sollum is apparently unoccupied. The military situation prevents our forces from using it at present.

Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour last night.

Enemy air activity in Cyrenaica has decreased during the last few days but attacks on Tobruk continued today.

Suez Canal

Traffic in the Canal continues south of Km. 60 only.

Crete

Suda Bay was attacked seven times today. YORK was hit again, oiler OLNA was again set on fire and Corvette SALVIA was damaged. Further heavy attacks were carried out this afternoon. A.A. concentration is insufficient. WIDNES has been damaged. Heavy bombing and machine gun attacks were also made on Maleme, Heraklion and Canea area this afternoon. Heraklion aerodrome was rendered temporarily unserviceable.

German R/C aircraft were unusually active around Crete today. (cf 20/5)

MOST SECRET18.5.1941.
SundayWar DiarySITUATION REPORTAmerica & West Indies

ERLANGEN (German) sailed from Santiago de Chile last night.

Vichy French situation.

It is reported (A 3) that the U.S.A. are blockading Martinique and Guadeloupe. The Navy Dept., Washington state that it is intended to maintain the status quo as regards the French Fleet and French gold now in the West Indies.

No British or Allied shipping is to visit ports in the Antilles or French Guiana pending further instructions.

All unescorted Vichy French merchant ships are if possible to be intercepted and sent into a British port. Interception may be effected anywhere outside neutral territorial waters and Cabo Santa Maria - Cape ~~Neu~~ Antonio line.

U-Boat CampaignFreetown Area

It is reported that SS CITY OF SHANGHAI was torpedoed at 2240 G.M.T./10 in approx. 6° 40' N., 27° 50' W. The explosion shattered her wireless and she was unable to make a distress signal.

SS PIAKO sailing independently was reported torpedoed at 2035 in 7° 3' N., 14° 48' W.

MOST SECRET.18.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.Present
General
Situation.

Present situation. Details. Dispositions desired. Request your views as to ships to be detailed. Names and dates of Cruisers expected available shortly from Dockyards. (1st S.L. 0059/B/18 to C. in C. H.F.) See Operations Volume.

Destroyers for
South Atlantic
Command.

Admiralty 2051B/17. I have now WIVERN, WILD SWAN, and VANSITTART here and, in view of strain on W.A. destroyers, suggest all three should be detailed for this new commitment. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1317B/18).

Rescue Work
by M/L's

It is not now intended to detail any one flotilla or unit of M.L's specifically for Air/Sea Rescue Work. Arrangements should be made locally to back up Air/Sea Rescue Service as prevailing circumstances require observing that the primary duty of M.L.s is to maintain anti E-Boat patrols. (C. in C. Nore 1505B/18).

Movements.NORFOLK
NIGERIA
KENYA.

Aircraft Report heavy air attacks on Iceland are imminent.
(ii) NORFOLK to proceed Seidis Fiord.
(iii) NIGERIA and KENYA are to proceed Skaale Fiord, Faroes and complete with fuel. (C. in C. H.F. 0932B/18).
My 0932B/18. If BIRMINGHAM is undamaged. proceed patrol with all convenient despatch. (C. in C. H.F. 1032B/18 to MANCHESTER BIRMINGHAM).
E.T.A. Seidis Fiord 0130/19 G.M.T. (C.S.L. 1159B/18 to N.O.I.C. Iceland.)
My 0932B/18. Paragraphs 2 and 3 are cancelled. Aircraft report has been cancelled. Cruisers proceed in execution of previous orders. (C. in C. H.F. 1242B/18).

RODNEY.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.(contd).RODNEY
BRITANNIC.
SOUTHERN
PRINCE.

Admiralty's 2014B/13. In view of slow speed of SOUTHERN PRINCE, I do not like RODNEY proceeding in close company in U-Boat water.

(ii) F.O.C.D.F.H.F. is to sail an additional destroyer to arrive Clyde a.m./21.

(iii) Propose RODNEY and BRITANNIC should proceed together with 4 destroyers, SOUTHERN PRINCE being escorted by the other of these.

(C. in C. H.F. 1734/B/18).

C. in C. H.F. 1734B/18. IMPULSIVE detailed. (R.A.D. 2322 B/18).

IMPULSIVE is to remain at Greenock acting under the orders of Captain (D) 6th. (R.A.D. H.F. 2350B/18)

ARETHUSA.

ARETHUSA is to sail from Scapa at 1800/19 to take A.C.O.S. to Faroes and Iceland as required by him.

(C. in C. H.F. 2359B/18).

Operations.Iceland
Faroes
Patrol.

Scapa Departure MANCHESTER and BIRMINGHAM. (A.C.O.S. 0704/18).

East Coast
patrols.

Tonight EGLINTON, WHITSHED will cover N.68 from dark until S. 92 is met then S.92 until daylight. M.L. patrols at Newarp Light Float and vicinity 54D buoy motor gunboat at Aldeburgh Buoy.

(C. in C. Nore 1013B/18).

Weather permitting carry out following operations tonight.

- (1) One unit M.T.B's P.W.9
 - (2) One Unit M.T.B's Offensive sweep in vicinity of Flushing. Surface craft met East of 2° 40' E may be attacked without challenge.
- (C. in C. Nore 1250B/18).

CONQUEROR.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. (contd).CONQUEROR.Sailed 0955 CONQUEROR.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1110/18).GIANNA M.
(Intercepted
10/5).Your 1130/17. Destination of prize GIANNA
M. Belfast.
(C. in C. W.A. 1356/18 to VANQUISHER).Biscay S/M
Patrol.Your 1256/13. While it is true that submarines
in the Bay of Biscay patrols have recently
achieved little success, it is considered
that this is probably due to:-

- (a) The increasing use of the Spanish
Neutral waters route.
- (b) The very limited number of submarines
available for operations against shipping.
- (c) The fact that the U boat on passage
to and from his base has become increasingly
aware of the menace of the blockading
British submarine.

2. It is considered that, for the reasons
given by F.O.(S) in his 2359B/13 with which
Admiralty concur, the present patrol policy
should remain in force.

(V.C.N.S. 1533/18 to C. in C. Plymouth).

Denmark Straits
Patrol.SUFFOLK is to remain on patrol to reasonable
limit of endurance. Passage in both
directions close to ice requires special
watch.

(C. in C. H.F. 1808B/18).

Biscay Patrol.Scapa departure F.O.C.18th C.S. in EDINBURGH.
(A.C.O.S. 1857/18).Your 1808B. Is it intended that NORFOLK
should reinforce SUFFOLK on patrol at once
or remain at Hvalfjord until SUFFOLK is
forced to return.

(C.S. 1 2210B/18 to C. in C. H.F.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols

^{"Unst"}
Patrol ~~UNST~~ in operation until 0830.
Patrol ~~UNST~~ will be flown p.m. today.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0556/18).
A/S patrol Sunderland A/C will be flown from
1400 until 2000/18 as follows.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 0646/18).
My 0556/18 ~~UNST~~ returned owing to weather.
(C. in C, Rosyth 0648/18).

^{"Apples"}
Signification of prefix ~~APPLES~~ was overlooked
when it was given to this aircraft as code
word for her task.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 0911/18).

^{"Unst"}
My 0556/18 and my 0648/18. ~~UNST~~ in operation
from 0900 till 1145.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0920/18).

^{"Occasion"} ^{"Nation"}
Request extension of ~~OCCASION~~ and ~~NATION~~ until
1/6 inclusive.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1040/18 to H.Q.F.C.)

My 0646/18. Patrol will now be by Whitney
Aircraft from 1730 until 2130. Sunderland
has been diverted to search for S/M reported
in Aircraft O/201's 1250 and 1300 and will
remain in that vicinity until 2300.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1424/18 and 1626/18).

^{"Unst"}
Patrol ~~UNST~~ will be flown from first light.
tomorrow.
(C. in C. Rosyth 2230/18).

Smoke Screen.

Your 1442/17. A meeting of all local inter-
ests concerned was held under the District
Commissioner p.m./16th.
(F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1042B/18).

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

STATESMAN
(Bombed 17/5)

STATESMAN sunk at 0745B. Have 50 survivors on board all well. Proceeding Clyde. (HEPATICIA 0005B/18). Report if TROJAN STAR has transferred survivors to you. If so return to Lough Foyle. Otherwise rejoin O.G. 62. (C. in C.W.A. 0120B/18 to HEPATICIA). My 0005 referred to transfer of survivors from TROJAN STAR. In accordance with your 0120B now proceeding to Lough Foyle. (HEPATICIA, 0530B/18 to C. in C.W.A).

Iceland.

German long range aircraft may be operating round Iceland (c) this morning. (D.D.I.C. 0058B/18).

Convoy "Camel"
H.G. GLASP.

Help ^{"Camel"} ~~GAMBL~~. 1 aeroplane bombing convoy position 54° 34' N. 14° 26' W. (? Origin 1032/18). Convoy ^{"Camel"} ~~GAMBL~~ requires fighter assistance being bombed by enemy aircraft in 54° 41' N 13° 8' W. (H.G. Convoy 1705/18).

Thames
Estuary.

Enemy aircraft activity in Thames Estuary for night of 17th/18th May was as follows:-
2240 Enemy aircraft bombed and machine gunned M/S Group near B.5 Buoy.
0015 Plane circled over Shoeburyness-Sheppey area and machine gunned Balloons.
0030 Aircraft dropped four bombs at Southend. (S.O. T.L.D.F. Sheerness 1542/18).

ARCHANGEL
(Bombed 16/5).

F.O. i/c Aberdeen's 1227/17 C.O. BLANKNEY stated today that bombs were not chained together. Report originated in BLANKNEY but after investigation C.O. entirely discredits it. (C. in C. Rosyth 1547/18).

Convoy W.N.
Even.

Convoy ^{"Mutual"} ~~MUTUAL~~ is being shadowed by one enemy aircraft. My p.c. and s. 58° 28' N. 2° 33' W + 148° 8. (GLENER, 1658/18). Fighters have been despatched to convoy "Mutual" ~~MUTUAL~~. (Lyness W/T 1707/18).

/Unknown ship.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity.(contd).Unknown ship
attacked.Attacked 6 miles North West of South Bishops.
(Plymouth W/T 2030/18.)Scapa
Flow.Unidentified aircraft flew over Flow at 10,000 feet 2010 and 2035 today on easterly course. Fighters up but failed to intercept. Fire was opened by shore batteries and ships. Aircraft was not seen. Height of cloud 2,000 to 3,000 feet with patches of clear sky. This may have prevented aircraft obtaining view of the Flow.
(A.C.O.S. 2221/18).Mining.Milford Haven.Port is closed owing to suspected minelaying.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0640/18).
Port is open subject to local restrictions.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1303/18).Operation B.S.
61.Particulars.
Minelayer TEVIOT BANK. Cin C. Nore is requested to provide surface escort and to arrange air escort in conjunction with C. in C. Rosyth.
F.O.I.C. Tyne is requested to detail two paddle minesweepers to comply with the requirements of C.O. TEVIOT BANK.
To be carried out on 21/5 or as soon after as practicable.
(D.D.O.D. M. 1239B/18).Thames
Estuary.2 S.A. mines detonated as follows at 0625/18.
Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1431/18).From 0200 to 0300/18 plots of low-flying A/C at south end of Barrow Deep, possibly minelaying.
At 0252 two heavy surface Explosions, probably Mines, near East Barrow Sand.
At 0625 a Mine exploded spontaneously near East Red Sand Buoy.
(S.O.T.L.D.F. Sheerness 1542/18).

Faroes-Shetland passage.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining. (contd).Faroes-Shetland passage.

Proposed doubling of South end of S.N.4 as soon as possible. Request early remarks. (D.O.D. H. 1806B/18)
(See Operations Volume).

JEWEL.

(M/S Drifter). Mined and sunk 215° one mile approx from Pile light Belfast Lough. Feared no survivors.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1940/18).

Enemy Intelligence.Fishing Boat.

Small fishing boat, 2 masted, brown sails, sighted at 2013 hrs. in 48° 42' N 8° 10' W. steering 290°. Hull white, numbers on black background 03-02.
(Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 0028/18).

Suspected Sabotage in JUPITER.

My 1208/18. Investigation into the presence of pieces of boiler tubing in the main steam system of JUPITER reveals that it is most improbable that such could have occurred accidentally, and a suspicion of sabotage exists. Submit that a Board of Enquiry be held.
(Capt. D. Plymouth 1220/18).

Brest.

R/C of Brest at 0820/18 shows SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU still present at usual berths.
(D.D.I.C. 1310B/18).

Large Warship.

It is reported that a very large German warship was observed in region of Aalesund on 5/5., believed course north. Graded C.2. This could have been an 8" Cruiser but it is thought probable that the size of the ship is likely to have been exaggerated.
(D.D.I.C. 1802B/18).

E-Boats.

W/T Intelligence suggests that E.boats may be operating to-night.
(D.D.I.C. 1857/18).

Enemy.....

MOST SECRET.18.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.(contd).Enemy A/C
report.

Following received from No. 105 W/T section Essex Division Chelmsford begins. A German plane has reported to its base the presence of ten tankers ten miles south of Saint Gowan's Head course 90° speed of between eleven and seventeen knots. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2329B/18).

Miscellaneous.Priority of
Signals.

Concur with first sentence of your 0029/13/4. It is not considered that a collective address is best solution. Desirable to avoid introducing fresh complications and proposed remedy is to endeavour to limit use of "Most Immediate" to cases where speed outweighs all considerations of security and to encourage use of "Emergency" for all other signals requiring greater degree of priority than "Immediate". It is hoped that "Emergency" will suffice for signals such as my 1529/6/4 but will be sufficiently common not to attract undue attention by enemy.
(D.S.D. 0023B/18 to C. in C. H.F.)

SECRET

MESSAGE

1741/18th May

IN

From Stockholm.

Date. 19.5.41
Recd. 1936

547(A)

RECIRCULATION by D.N.I.

Inter Departmental Cypher (V12) by L/T

Addressed Admiralty.

Following from N.A. for D.N.I.
Following were impressions week ending 17th May.

One. Conquest of Britain by present blockade methods is no longer believed possible. Invasion plans being postponed, it was not politic to probe any authentic opinion as to the prospects of success nor strategy to be employed. N.I.D. comment this will be considered by C.I.C.

Two. German strategy in Baltic could not be discussed in Berlin, but German N.A. who is normally truthful to source and who is just back from Gdynia says they intend to maintaining BISMARCK and TIRPITZ in these waters as insurance against Russia. TIRPITZ has not yet satisfactorily completed trials. N.I.D. Comment. Although this may be true at present both these ships could be employed on raiding activities at short notice.

Three. Strong opinions were expressed in confidence by prominent party journalist and well informed diplomat that Germans intend acquiring French Fleet. This to be achieved by provoking some form of British attack on French. N.I.D. Comment. This is possible but there are no indications seizure is imminent.

Four. (a) Recent raids on Kiel described in Berlin as most effective. U Boat constructions greatly hampered. Germania works now concentrating on increased production at Gotenhaven on account of severe damage at Kiel.

(b) Attacks on Brest have severely dislocated harbour facilities as well as damaging SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU. Considered that repairs must retain them in port for some unspecified period. Criticism against Naval Staff for sending these vessels within radius of British bombing. N.I.D. Comment. This is believed to be possible.

Five. Naval Staff have no delusions about German published shipping losses. Though they think British figures slightly minimized, Naval opinion and man in street have little faith in what they admit are their own propaganda figures.

/ Six. Other

Six. Other items of interest.

(a) Admiral Fleischer is in command of small craft sent by train to Balkans. These are assembled at Constantza and Ikata and described as "Schnelboote" of 30 metres length. N.I.D. Comment. Presence of E. Boats at Constanza has been already reported but is not yet confirmed.

(b) German Naval Officers are perturbed at destruction of so many U Boats and consequently lowering of morale amongst crews.

N.I.D. Comment. Probably true but their concern is more probably over the loss of experienced Commanders and crews than over the number of boats.

(c) At the time of the Hess episode all Attaches were hurried away to Berlin for Balkans tour. Though no opinions could be discussed source explains he was conscious for first time in his recollection of distinct fear with possible lack of conviction for regime amongst certain responsible Germans on account of this incident.

1741/18.

NOTE. All above are from a source Grade A.

1st Lord.	D.N.I. (4)
1st S.L.	D.S.D. (2)
3rd S.L.	D.A./S.W.
Vice Controller.	D.P.D.
4th S.L.	D.
5th S.L.	M. (6) and for Air Ministry
V.C.N.S.	W.O. F.O.
A.C.N.S. (H)	D. of P. (2)
A.C.N.S. (F)	I.P. (3)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	W.D.
Nav. Sec.	
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	
P.A.S. (8)	
Ops. (4)	
O.D. (5)	
O.I.C. (2)	

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.Examination
Ports.

All ships (except in convoy, etc) to call at one of the following ports for search. A.M. 0024/22/6/1940 and A.M.S.I. 145 are cancelled, (D. of L.D. 1709B/18 to A.I.G. 12 A.I.G. 19, F.O.I.C. Iceland) (See Lion Copy).

East Coast
Convoys.

Admty 2044/17/5. Most undesirable for the set speeds of convoys to be varied from the programme time table arranged between C's in C. concerned. Not considered that N.C.S.C. Southend should have authority to vary the speed of convoys. Suggest that the supersession of medium speed convoys effected by Admty 1936B/14/5 should be reconsidered. No objection is seen to a medium speed convoy at 7 knots. Necessary that one authority only arranges the programme of East coast convoys. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1129/18 to Admty).

Ships from
Iceland.

Cancel my 1359/16/1. Owing to time lost in transmission of cablegrams ships from Iceland (C) are often halfway to U.K. before Admiralty is aware of their movements. In future the intention to sail is to be cabled and confirmatory message is not required unless time of departure is changed. 48 hours notice is desirable. (D.T.D. 1205B/18 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

Night
Sailings
Proposed.

In view of repeated small attacks which are being made in the channel, on shipping sailing by day, which the fighter Escort provided has failed to prevent and which may develop into heavy attacks at any time, it is proposed to re-institute night sailing of escorted groups in this command during dark period. This should not affect the schedules of sailings in the Plymouth Command if groups are sailed 12 hours earlier from the Needles. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1247B/18 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Your 1247B/18. This will entail lengthening the total voyage but as you consider it will increase the safety of the convoy I concur. Possibility of avoiding necessity for a call at Dartmouth will be investigated. (C. in C. Plymouth, 2014/18 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

CONFIDENTIAL

M E S S A G E

1709B/18th May
OUT

Addressed:

Date: 18.5.41.

- A.I.G.12.
- A.I.G.19 (for N.C.S.O.)
- F.O.I.G. Iceland: 874.
- Repeated: C. in C. Home Fleet. 602.
- C. in C. America and West Indies. 138.
- C. in C. Western Approaches. 703.
- C. in C. South Atlantic. 183.
- F.O.C.N.A. 363.
- War Office
- G.H.Q. Home Forces
- Air Ministry
- Coastal Command
- Bomber Command
- Fighter Command
- Home Security
- Secy. to Customs & Excise
- Trinity House
- Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
- Scottish Home Dept.

NAVAL CODE "J" & P/L BY T/P & by hand

FROM: Admiralty.

NITE NOTWT.

With the exception of vessels in British Convoys and British and Allied liners and coasting traffic between United Kingdom ports, all merchant vessels, British sea-going Fishing vessels and all foreign Fishing vessels arriving in the United Kingdom must, before proceeding to their destinations, call at one of the following ports for search.

- Plymouth Sound for Plymouth
- Brixham for Dartmouth to Exmouth
- St. Helena Roads for Portsmouth or Southampton
- Falmouth or Weymouth for all other South Coast ports
- Milford Haven for Milford Haven
- Swansea Bay for Port Talbot and Bristol Channel ports, to the Westward (except Milford Haven)
- Barry Roads for Bristol Channel ports Eastward of Port Talbot
- Fishguard for Fishguard
- Workington for Cumberland Ports (except Millom)
- Fleetwood for Fleetwood and Millom
- Holyhead, Rothesay or Belfast for all other West Coast and N. Ireland ports
- Rothesay, Oban or Loch Ewe for East Coast ports (other than for Fishing vessels)
- Thurso (or Kirkwall if weather is unsuitable) for Fishing vessels proceeding to East Coast Ports.

- 2 -

A.I.L. 0024/22 June 1940 and A.I.L.S.I. 145 are cancelled.

1709 B/18.

for D. of L.D. (251)

V.C.N.S.	D.S.D. (2)
A.C.N.S. (H)	E.P.S. (2)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	D.P.D.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	W.D.
D.T.D. (4)	I.P. (3)
D.T.D. (M)	D.M.S.
Ops. (4)	D.M.S. Basement
O.D. (5)	D.D.T.M.
D. of N.	D. of L.D. (L.D.02083/41) (3)
Hydrog. (2)	
D.N.I. (4)	
M. (2)	
D. of P. (3)	
O.I.C. (2)	
D.S.D.9.	

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. (contd).

H.X.123

42 hours late at R.V. with all ships.
Thick fog 29/4 hove-to 1/5.
(D.T.D. 1542B/18 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Commodore, Rear-Adm. H.H. Rogers. 23 British
8 Allied, 3 neutral ships. Cargoes.
(D.S. 623, 20/5).

S.C.29

Congratulations on succesful way in which
you brought S.C.29 to U.K., all ships now
arrived at their destination.
(C. in C. W.A. 1804/18 to Rear-Adm. B.W.
Barrow).

War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.LYDD.

My 1959/17. LYDD delayed owing to dynamo defects.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0920/18).

ORCHIS

ORCHIS delayed with defects.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1532B/18).

ULSTER
MONARCH.

F.O.I.C. Glasgow's 1637B/14. Request information when defect to mounting was first discovered and what steps were taken to effect a remedy.
(Vice-Controller, 1553B/18 to V.A.C.T.C.)

551

War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.IZARRA
(French.)

Your 0900/17 not to N.C.S.O. St. Johns. Sail captured French Auxiliary Schooner IZARRA for St. Johns, Newfoundland. (A.C.N.S.(F) 0057B/18, to REGISTAN.)

LONDON.

Part company as requisite to pass Northern entrance at 2000/18. (F.O.C.N.A., 0948A/18, to LONDON.)

Gibraltar
Evacuation.

Your 2312/16 and C. in C. S.A.'s 1003/17. Can total accommodation of 240 in ARUNDEL CASTLE now be used, this plus 350 in NEA HELLAS will not complete Gibraltar evacuation, and Governor has recommended that no refugees be sent from elsewhere. (F.O.C.N.A., 1046/18, to Admty.) In view of C. in C. S.A. 1251N/16, restriction in para. 1 of my 2312 B/16 may be waived. Ship (ARUNDEL CASTLE) should be sailed as early as possible escorted by LONDON and two "H" class destroyers. Service personnel requiring passage should also be embarked in escorting warships. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1813B/18 to F. O.C.N.A.).

French
Ships.

0115/18. French destroyer⁴ AVENTURER class escorting French S.S. of about 4000 tons steering 185° 8 knots 290° Cape Espichem 30 miles. Gibraltar 0116/18 French minesweeper ENGAGEANTE, French S.S. MONT VISO laden with number of troops on board, CHELMA deck cargo lorries and steamboats, AMGERIE laden, passed Westbound. (S.O.I. Gib., 1455A/18 to Admty., etc.) French Convoys passing Gib., on 16/5, see D.O.R., 19/5.

SCARBOROUGH
0.21.

3 heavy ships and screen sail westbound at 0300/19. Keep Netherlands submarine O 21 in company until arrival Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A., 1738A/18 to SCARBOROUGH.)

PORTLAND
(German.)

Photographs indicate she is in Bordeaux, but give no confirmation of report that she had been damaged. (D.S.621.)

552

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

FOSNA
CHINESE PRINCE.

FOSNA has been instructed to proceed to Trinidad via new position Y which is 1740 miles 270° from position C, and CHINESE PRINCE to Ponta Delgada via new position Z which is 950 miles 270° from position D. Both bunkers permitting.
(D.T.D. 0024B/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

KING EDWIN,
NAIRNBANK.

Proceed direct to Cape without bunkering if possible. If bunkers required call St. Vincent, Cape Verde Is.
(C. in C. S.A., 1018N/18.)
Route. For NAIRNBANK only.
(C. in C.S.A., 1206N/18.)

NEWCASTLE
CUMBERLAND.

Admty. 1308B/17. NEWCASTLE is to proceed direct L.31 to take over flag of R.A.S.A.D. from CUMBERLAND unless otherwise directed by R.A.S.A.D. After transfer of flag CUMBERLAND is to be sailed for Freetown at speed of advance 18 knots. NEWCASTLE should arrive L.31 25/5, will require fuel. Assume Walrus for CUMBERLAND can now wait.
(C. in C. S.A., 1125N/18, to NEWCASTLE, R.A.S.A.D.)
C. in C. S.A.'s., 1125/18. Proceed to R.V., with CUMBERLAND at F.O. on completion of Duty vide C. in C. S.A.'s 1225/18.
Report E.T.A., at first opportunity of breaking W/T silence.
(R.A.S.A.D. 2217Z/18 to NEWCASTLE.)

S.S.DEFENDER.

To omit call at Freetown and proceed if possible direct to Cape without bunkering.
(D.T.D. 1142B/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

INDRAPOERA.

Your 0300/8. Will be sailed from Capetown for Halifax 20/5... and should arrive Halifax by 11/6.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1157B/18, to D. of S.T.)

/LIEUTENANT.....

553

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic Contd.

LIEUTENANT
ST. LOUBERT
BIE intercepted
by NEWCASTLE.

NEWCASTLE reports has intercepted Vichy LIEUTENANT ST. LOUBERT BIE Marseilles to Madagascar with 1700 Indo Chinese troops, wine and small quantity of explosive in 21° 31' S., 5° 56' W. Ship has coal for 30 days steaming and can make good 9 knots. No sabotage attempt but captain will not co-operate in bringing ship in. She has been ordered to escort ship towards Simonstown. Intend PRETORIA CASTLE now in neighbourhood shall R/V with NEWCASTLE, take over armed guard and prize crew duties, and escort French ship to Simonstown. NEWCASTLE' then to proceed in accordance with my 1125/18.
(C. in C.S.A., 1225N/18, to Admty.)

Vichy
French
Ships.

All unescorted Vichy French merchant ships should if possible be intercepted and sent into a British port. Interception may be effected anywhere outside neutral territorial waters and Cabo Santa Maria-Cape Neum Antonio line.
(R.A.S.A.D., 1326Z/18, to S.A. Div.)

CITY OF
DURBAN.
S.L.75.

Departure 1100/18, CITY OF DURBAN to join Convoy S.L.75. (S.O.I., Freetown, 1521N/18, to Admty.) See also 2349/18. *(Next page)*

WISHART.

To leave Freetown 0800/19 proceed to Bathurst to arrive a.m./20 complete with fuel and sail on completion for Gibraltar passing east of Canary Islands speed being adjusted to arrive 1700A/24.
(C. in C. S.A., 1721N/18 to WISHART.)

QUEEN OF
BERMUDA.

After completing with fuel to proceed through J 35 J 34 B I 34 to St. Pauls Rock which should be examined for presence of shipping thence to operate in H 34 leaving patrol to arrive Freetown by 3/6. Recent D/F indications have shown possibility of surface units in vicinity of 7° 59', 27° W. (C. in C. S.A., 1811N/18, to QUEEN OF BERMUDA.)

/HIGHLAND.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic (contd).HIGHLAND
PRINCESS.
NEW NORTHLAND.Re numbers for Takoradi and Lagos.
(C. in C. S.A., 2137B/18, to D. of S.T.)GABON
French.Left Lome 2000/15 steaming East.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 2231N/18 to Admty).Enemy
Identification.Importance of definitely identifying all ships met with at sea is emphasized. In addition raiders themselves German supply ships merchant vessels and prizes may be well disguised possibly as British ships and it is important if any doubt whatever exists ships shall be boarded to establish identity.
(C. in C. S.A. 2257N/18, to S.A. Sqdn).NELSON
EAGLE.St. Helena departure 2359/18 due Freetown outer end of search channel 0800/23.
(General St. Helena, 2345/18 to Admty).CITY OF
DURBAN.Return to Freetown.
(C. in C. S.A., 2349N/18, to CITY OF DURBAN)
(See also Admty 0056/19). *(Previous page)*Mediterranean.Situation
Report 29.

Fleet Operations in accordance with my 1321/15 without further developments. 2. Suda Bay dive bombed 1730/16 by 25 aircraft and 1600/17 by 10 aircraft. Raid 16th LOGIGIAN damaged but seaworthy. About 25 casualties amongst Australians loading her. ARAYBANK hit again and NEFIR ?KYTHERA and Greek NICOLAOU OURANIA damaged. Raid 17th ELEONORA MAERSK hit and on fire. THEMONI near missed.

1. 5 M.T.B.'s.....

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean Contd.

Situation
Report 29.

1 5 M.T.B have now reached Crete and Elaphonisos patrol in force night 16-17. Western Desert. Sollum apparently unoccupied and Military situation prohibits its use by our forces at present. VAMPIRE transported personnel to and from Tobruk night 16/17. Enemy air activity reduced. Malta. See V.A.M. 1903/16 and H.Q.Malta 0330/16. Canal Area. Movement of shipping has recommenced results not yet known.
(C. in C. Med., 0014c/18 to Admty.)

Danger
Zone
Notice.

H.M.G., gives notice that limits of areas in Mediterranean which have been declared dangerous to shipping in February and April 1941 are extended to include all waters to eastward of a line drawn from Ras Kanais in a direction 024° to point three miles 180° from Cape Kheledonia in Turkey, with exception of Turkish Waters. Any vessel sailing in these areas without permission of British Naval Authorities will do so at own risk and peril.
(Malta W/T 1013B/18 to all stations.)

Enemy Ships,
Dardanelles.

My 1755/15 reporting officer now reports that ships were also met by six Italian Destroyers outside Turkish territorial waters. (S.O.I. Istanbul 1130/18, to C. in C. Med., S.O(I) Med., 1855C/18 to Adty.)

Corinth
Canal.

Your 1051/17 ^(no trace) Consider bombing Corinth Canal quite in-effective with bombs of size available. Mines which arrived for Wellingtons are incomplete and cannot be used at present. Only effective measures that can be taken would be the laying of Cucumbers of Swordfish operating either ~~the latter~~ or Carrier. None of my Swordfish are available at present. Have you any?
(H.Q., M.E., 1131/18 to C. in C. Med.)

/ABA

MOST SECRET.War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).ABA
bombed 17/5.

Hospital ship ABA was twice deliberately dive bombed p.m./17 in broad daylight South of Kaso Strait. Request there will be no further delay in giving decision on my 1254/26/4 and that I should now be authorized to capture any enemy Hospital ships met at sea. (C. in C. Med., 1150C/18 to Admty). (W.D. Note. - ABA was damaged, see 1757/21).

Decision on this question. See May 30, pp. 1029, 1046.

Crete
bombed.

General Situation unchanged. 2 Single Planes bombing attack and 1 dive bombing attack by 17 planes, Oiler OLNA set on fire again. SALVIA damaged. Engine room and Boiler Room out of action 2 dead and 8 injured. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1151C/18 to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal
Mined or
bombed.

Ops. Summ. 342 up to 1200 hrs., 18/5. Night 17th/18th. About 8 JU.88's and HE. 111's dropped mines or bombs in Suez Canal Zone between Port Said and point south of Suez, enemy also machine gunned from low height. 15 mines or bombs exploded, further 31 mines unexploded. No damage no casualties. Reported 2 enemy destroyed by A.A. fire Port Said 1 destroyed by fighters south of Ismailia. Enemy arrived and departed North-West.

Derna &
Benghazi
bombed.

Night 15/16. 2 Wellingtons bombed Derna Aerodrome and harbour. Night 16/17 2 Wellingtons bombed Benghazi. Derna harbour brightly lighted presumed for ships unloading.

Tobruk
bombed.

Day 17/5. 30 enemy aircraft bombed Tobruk harbour and distillery, no damage no casualties. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E. 1218/18).

Rhodes
Bombed.

Part 2. Ops. Summ. 342 up to 1200 hrs. 18/5. 4. Dodecanese. Night 16/17th, 2 Wellingtons bombed Maritza aerodrome Rhodes.

Suda Bay.....

557

18.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean Contd.Suda Bay
bombed.

5. Crete. My A.873 17/5 para. 3.
Following details enemy attacks Suda Bay and Maleme 16/5 cancel previous report. Between 20 and 25 JU.87's, JU.88's and ME.109's bombed anchorage Suda Bay hitting 2 ships. Our A.A. fire destroyed two enemy and probably destroyed further 2. Day 17/5 20 JU.87's bombed Suda Bay no casualties further 4 enemy subsequently driven off from Suda Bay by A.A. fire. Sunderland reported British hospital ship being bombed 100 miles South East of Crete. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1219/18.)

Hospital
Ship
bombed.Enemy A/C.
Recco,
Crete.

German reconnaissance aircraft seems unusually active around Crete today 18/5, R/C of Suda Bay made at 0630 and again at 0830 G.M.T. R/C also made of Candia. No evidence of Naval Force sighted at sea. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1246C/18, to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal
Raid.

Air raid on Suez Canal between 2205/17 and 2357/17. All sections of canal attacked. U.X. No. in canal at km. 40.5 and between km55 and 58.2. About 9 bombs or mines exploded on landing on bank or in canal. One enemy A/c shot down by fighters near Ismailia and possibly another by A.A. at Port Said. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1257c/18, to Admty.)

New Type
Mine.

Your 2105B/17 and 1921B/16. Reply.
(D.T.M. 1314B/18 to V.A. Malta.)

Corinth
Canal.

(NT. & W.D.)
Your 1042 B/12. Admiral Turle was directed on 8/3 to concert (?) all necessary measures with other services for blocking Corinth Canal. On 22/4 he was also authorized to take up a ship for blocking duty ? deeper measures proposed using explosives. Actual task was issued to Lieutenant (?) Cumberlege and method used was reported in N.O. 1/c Suda Bay's 1214/8 to Adty. [page 250]
Two. It has not yet been possible to ascertain exactly what happened nor why a ship was not used as directed. Lieutenant Cumberlege was under the impression his efforts (?) had been successful.
(C. in C. Med. 1430C/18 to Adty.)

558

18.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean Contd.EMPIRE
SONG.
(mined 9/5.)

V.A. Malta's 2112B/16. Desirable to find out as much as possible about loss of S.S. EMPIRE SONG. Request formal enquiries be held at Alexandria, Malta, and Gibraltar if necessary in order that all important witnesses may be interrogated. (V.C.N.S. 1434B/18 to C. in C. Med., F.O. Force H., V.A. Malta.)

CAPO ARMA
(Italian.)

My 1650/10. Agents have produced bank guarantee sum mentioned and ship consequently released. (S.O.I. Istanbul 1555/18 to C. in C. Med.)

Italian
Force
Taranto.

Reported that all available light units of Italian fleet will assemble in Gulf of Taranto on 15/5. Graded D2. (D.D.I.C. 1622B/18 to C. in C. Med. etc.)

M.T.B.'s
Crete.

2 M.T.B's will be patrolling in Elaphonisos Channel during night 18/19. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1703/18.)

Operation
'Splice.'

From a signal made by S.O. Force H to V.A.M. 17/5, it became apparent S.O. Force H under impression Sunderland and Marylands being sent to R.V. for escorting Hurricane formations. This was surprising after your A.170 8/5 to Air Ministry. After consulting with Naval Authorities here have decided to send three Marylands to R.V. to escort first three formations leaving fourth and fifth formations to be led in by Fulmars with experienced observers. This decision influenced by fact that Naval Authorities here considered S.O. Force H hard pressed to find really experienced observers in such numbers required for all three operations. Further my A.802, 17/5. Request for 4 Wellingtons escort duties Malta to you made as extra insurance against non-arrival delivery Wellingtons from Gibraltar. (H.Q. Malta, 1725/18, to H.Q., R.A.F., M.E.)

/CACHALOT.....

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean Contd.

CACHALOT
TETRARCH.

CACHALOT proceed so as to spend daylight/20 off Apollonia thence proceeding (route) direct arriving Alexandria Sanctuary 0500 C/22. If you are already to eastward Apollonia report p.c. and s. TETRARCH leaves patrol ? spending the day 22/5 off Apollonia thence routed as CACHALOT arriving Sanctuary 0500.C/24. British units are operating between Crete and Libya and traffic may be met between Tobruk and Alexandria. (Capt. S.I, 1731c/18, to CACHALOT, TETRARCH.)

TRIUMPH.

Reports on return to Alexandria from patrol boarding and sinking a 400 ton schooner off Marsa Brega. TRIUMPH also carried out a bombardment of Apollonia, firing 48 rounds. (D.O.R., 19/5.)

GLENGYLE
operation.

GLENGYLE, AUCKLAND, COVENTRY, VOYAGER, WATERHEN E.T.A. Tymbaki Beach 2359/18. Embarked in GLENGYLE 680 personnel 2 trucks 4 Bren carriers. M.E. request few trucks to meet to assist beach clearance if possible. Pass to Crete forces. (C. in C. Med., 1816C/18, to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay.) *See also next page*

→ PERSEUS.

My 0848/17. S/m sanctuary is extended till 0200/19 G.M.T. for PERSEUS leaving. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria 1821C/18.)

Flags of
C. in C.
F.O.7C.S.

Flag of C. in C. Med., Fleet will be transferred from WARSPITE to MEDWAY and Flag of F.O.C. 7th C.S. from ORION to WARSPITE at 1900/18. Signals for F.O.C. 7th C.S. are to be directed to WARSPITE from that time, correspondence is to continue to be sent to ORION. (C. in C. Med., 1903/18 to Med. Stn.)

→ PERSEUS.

Leaves Alexandria about 0400/19 (route). (Capt. S.I., 1925/18, to C. in C. Med. Amended 2215C/18.)

560

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean Contd.

Suez
Canal
Raid.

Situation 1930/18. Canal raid between 2205 and 2357/17 by about 8 enemy aircraft. 6 unexploded mines dropped in Canal at K.m 40.5 54.9, 55.1, 57.9, 58 and 58.6. About 20 bombs or mines exploded on land or in Canal. No damage or casualties. 1 enemy aircraft shot down by fighter in village near Ismailia caused 10 native casualties and 1 shot down in sea by Port Said A/A. Traffic in Canal continues south of Km. 60 only. No mine exploded today. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1941C/18 to N.O.I.C. Port Said.)

Movements.

Summary 202 ABDIEL due Alexandria early 19th from Haifa. GLENGYLE, COVENTRY, AUCKLAND, VOYAGER, WATERHEN due Messara Bay 0001/19 sail Alexandria 0400/19 through (?305) 45 132 and 64. KOS 19 and 1 A (?) proceed direct at six knots Alexandria to Messara Bay due about 19th. then returning Alexandria. 5th D.F. operating from Malta. (C. in C. Med., 1950C/18 to S/M's Med. Fleet.) *See previous page*

M.W.8.

C. in C. Med's, 1108/14. Propose to commence loading CLAN CHATTHAN, CLAN LAMONT, CLAN CAMPBELL for M W 8 on completion of discharge of present cargo, do you concur? NEW ZEALAND STAR sustained damage on voyage to Egypt, extent cannot be ascertained until completion of discharge. (ii) Is fourth vessel required for M.W.8? (P.S.T.O. Egypt. 2001C/18 to C. in C. Med.)

Suda Bay.
bombed.
A/A defence.

Situation report 2100. General situation no change. Unloading today seriously delayed owing to more frequent and heavier raids. Bombers as well as dive bombers employed and attacks are being pressed home. Heavy attacks 1700 and 1800. Approx. (?70) heavy bombs on harbour and nearby shore today. Reorganising A.A. defences to provide umbrella over pier area but A.A. concentration is insufficient. Local patrol vessels are behaving splendidly, working as tugs, foil fighters and supplying steam for unloading damaged merchant vessels. Casualties in

561

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean Contd.

Suda Bay
bombed.
A/A.defence.

SALVIA and WIDNES being reported.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2101c/18 to C. in C.Med.)

Situation
report No.30.

My 1321/15 WARSPITE flying flag of C.S.7. and VALIANT have sailed with destroyers to relieve Force A. Other fleet movements as in my 1152/18. C. in C. Med., is remaining at Alexandria for the present. 2. Crete no developments. My 0014/18 para. 2. THEMONI has sunk LOGICIAN machinery seriously damaged cannot steam. SALVIA damaged in further raid 18th. 3. My 1150/18 ABA was attacked at 1348/17 just South of Kaso Straits R.A.D. came to her assistance with Force C. at 1730. Cruisers and ABA again attacked at 1846/17 by 8 JU. 87 of which two were shot down. COVENTRY slightly damaged by near miss. 4. Canal area A S.B.N.O.C.A.1943/17. Further raid night 17th/18th has stopped traffic in Northern section details not yet known. 5. Western Desert P.M./17th air recco reports 2000 ton ship sunk off Benghazi. No change general situation. 6. Alexandria, good progress with ~~TIGER~~ "Tiger".
(C. in C. Med. 2316/18.)

East Indies.

ILE DE FRANCE.
AQUITANIA.

Cancel my 2058/17. ILE DE FRANCE and AQUITANIA are to be sailed in accordance with A.M. 1459/17. (C. in C. E.I., 0034Z/18, to P.S.T.O. Egypt.)

Italian
Surrender.

Part 3. Ops. Summ. 342. Duke of Aosta surrendered to our troops at Amba Alagi with his forces.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1221/18.)

/Raider No.33.....

562

War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. Contd.Raider No.33
PINGUIN
(Sunk 8/5.)

Further details of action. (C. in C.E.I. 1434Z/18.) See Lion Copy.

Iranian
Trade.

Your 1126/9 and 0730/12. To reduce interference with Iranian trade to minimum it is suggested that (a) neutral (other than Japanese ships) be allowed to proceed at once, to ports in the Gulf and up river to Abadan to offload Iranian cargoes subject to an undertaking not to go on to Basra unless so permitted: (b) Japanese ships be similarly allowed to proceed to any parts outside Shat el Arab, being informed that they cannot at present be permitted to proceed upriver. (Head of M.1605B/18 to C. in C. E.I.)

Duke D'Aosta.

May be flown Nairobi but all political or other discussion beyond ordinary formalities should be avoided pending further instructions.
(W.O. 1700/18, to C. in C. M.E.)

Search for
Raider.

My 2122/17. Consider D/F position is indefinite and is probably more to the Westward, Catalina, carried out a 100% search of area bounded by 09° 30' S., 06° 30' S., 72° 30' E., 77° 30' E., 18/5 without result. Will search area radius 100 miles from 11° S., 72° 30' 19/5. CORNWALL and GLASGOW are no longer in company. CORNWALL will search area enclosed in 10° S., 12° S., 67° 71° commencing about 0400Z/19. GLASGOW will search Western area of Chagos Archipelego commencing P.M./20.
(C. in C.E.I., 1734/18, to A.C.N.B., N.O.I.C., Simonstown etc.)

CLAN BUCHANAN.

Your 1100/15. Policy is to inform owners of vessel in confidence as soon as news of loss is received. Owners then pass all necessary information to Agents abroad. Owners of Clan Line have been requested to hasten action in accordance with your 1100/15. (D.T.D. 1915B/18 to C. in C.E.I.)

SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

1434Z/18th May

Date: 20 5.41.

From: C. in C. East Indies.

Recd: 1321

Naval Cypher X By W/T.

Addressed. Admiralty. C.O.S.S. New Zealand Navy Board, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, C. in C. South Atlantic, F.O.I.C. Simonstown.

717 My 0632/17 (0632/17)

- (1) Survivors report raider sighted R/D.F.D. repeat R/D.F.D. CORNWALL 2230Z/17 (2230/7) to do which she must have made good 142 degrees 13 knots. Probably then altered course to 230 degrees 13 knots which were course and speed when sighted by CORNWALL'S aircraft at 0207Z/8 (0207Z/8).
- (2) CORNWALL opened fire 1215Z (1215Z-, ceased fire 1226Z (1226Z) sighting report T.O.O. in error, having been prepared in anticipation and not corrected.
- (3) CORNWALL fired 23 salvos 112 rounds S.A.P. non delaying. Seven straddles. Fire not effective till five inch salvo due to temporary failure of director training circuit just before opening fire. At least three hits forward and one aft before last salvo. Survivors say bursts very effective.
- (4) Our speed 28 knots. Enemy 17 knots, range 10500 yards.

1434Z/18th.

Advance copy sent Ops. O.D. O.I.C. Trade.

- 1st. Lord.
- 1st. S.L.
- 4th. S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
- Naval Sec.
- C.S.O. for 1st S.L.
- Ops. (4)
- O.D. (5)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.T.D. (4)
- D.T.D. (M)
- O.I.C. (3)
- D. of P. (3)
- D.S.D.9.
- D. A/S.W.
- I.P. (3)
- W.D.
- D.P.D.
- D.S.D. (2)
- H. (2)
- Cdr. Holbrook
- N.L.

Raider
No. 33
PENGUIN
Smk 8/5

MOST SECRET.18.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.DUNELMIA
"Q" Report,
17/5.Your 2000B/17. No.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 0157Z/18 to Admty).Martinique
Intelligence.

Following from Navy Dept., From Fort de France 17/5. U.S. Consul accompanied by U.S. Naval observer (?called) on High Commissioner today. He informed them that: (a) In accordance with instructions from his Government he intended to maintain status quo as regards French Fleet and French gold now in West Indies. (b) He had been informed French West Indies had not been involved in conversations between Darlan and Hitler. (N.A. Washington, 0421/18, to Admty).

QUITO
BOGOTA
RHAKOTIS.
(German).Following from Navy Dept. Following German ships sailed from Chilean Ports 17/5. QUITO, BOGOTA, from Coquimbo, RHAKOTIS from Antofagasta. One ship, Name not available from Talcahuano.
(N.A. Washington, 0432/18, to Admty).*See also next page*LADY SOMERS.Leave Bermuda on completion of practice 18/5 and proceed by most direct route to Halifax. Instruction as to your future movements will be issued by F.O.C.N.P.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 0822Q/18, to LADY SOMERS.)Crews Ex
Enemy Ships.Consul General San Jose (C.R.) reports 93 men ex German Italian ships sunk Punta Arenas to be put either (A) on Southbound Japanese ship at Punta Arenas with possible transshipment Balboa (B) on U.S. ship at same port for transshipment Balboa or San Francisco.
(S.O.(I) Jamaica, 0928R/18 to Admty).

No Visits.....

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. Contd.

No Visits to French Ports.

No British or Allied shipping or boats of any description are to visit French ports in Antilles or French Guiana pending further instructions. Small British or Allied vessels engaged in local trading which may be on passage to French ports may however complete present voyage. - Request Admiralty arrange for co-operation ~~Notraship~~ and "Notraship". ~~Notraship~~. (C. in C.A.W.I., 1001Q/18, to Canopy.)

→ German ships.

"QUITO" and BOGOTA sailed from Coquimbo 1100Z/17. RHAKOTIS sailed from Antofogasta 2100Z/17. FRANKFURT sailed from Talcahuano 2055Z/17. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1008Q/18.)

See previous page

ERLANGEN
(German.)

Sailed during night. (N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1100/18, to S.O.I., Callao.)

Bermuda.

Owing to shortage of coal and water at Bermuda request ships proceeding there may bunker and complete with water at intermediate ports before arrival. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1302Q/18, to C. in C.S.A.)

→ RHAKOTIS.
(German.)

My 1736/17. Antofagasta reports RHAKOTIS cleared for Talcahuano. (S.O.I., Callao, 1553/18, to C. in C.A.W.I.)

See previous page

EMILE BERTIN
Martinique.

Following obtained by CARADOC at Tortola (A.3) French cruiser EMILE BERTIN left Martinique suspected destination West Africa. 16 U.S. destroyers which bunkered St. Thomas 17/5 now patrolling of Martinique. 12 U.S. S/Ms expected augment patrol force immediately. Martinique and Guadaloupe blockaded by U.S.A. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1602Q/18, to Admty.)

BROOKLYN
HEIGHTS.

Your 2202/16, our information is BROOKLYN HEIGHTS arrived Basra 6/5/41. (D.T.D. 1916B/18, to Consul-Gen., New York.)

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

U - BOAT CAMPAIGN.

BENGORE HEAD }
ESMOND. }

Torpedoed 9/5 in Convoy O.B. 318.
Now presumed to have sunk. (D.S., 621, 18/5.)

SOMERSBY.

Torpedoed 13/5, now presumed to have sunk.
(D.S. 621, 18/5.)

Ship's Attacked.

→ CITY OF SHANGHAI
(torpedoed 10/5.)

Torpedoed and sunk by gunfire by submarine in 6° 40' N., 27° 50' W., at 2200/10. British RICHMOND CASTLE Rescue Boat with master and 7 European and 10 Lascar survivors in 5° 10' N., 25° 50' W. 12/5 27 other boats reported in-vicinity. Wireless shattered by explosion, no distress signal sent out. RICHMOND CASTLE broadcast distress signal but failed to raise "any British Man of War" or Sierra Leone W/T Station. (DIOMEDE, 1117Z/18, to C. in C. A.W.I.) British, 5828 tons. Independently routed from Tyne to Capetown and Turkey. (D.S. 622.)

PIAKO.

Following has been received: S S S S 7.03 N., 14.48 W., PIAKO Torpedoed. (Freetown W/T, 2035/18.) (British, 8286 tons, Sailing independently from Albany to Freetown and Liverpool (D.S.622.)

RODNEY STAR
(torpedoed 16/5.)
→ CITY OF SHANGHAI
(torpedoed 10/5.)

Following intercepted by S.S. MARYLYN at 0600/16/5. (Begins) 05° 03' N., 19° 02' W., RODNEY STAR torpedoed (ends) Following intercepted by S.S. CITY OF EVANSVILLE at 2050/12 from S.S. RICHMOND CASTLE. (Begins) At 2000 G.M.T./12 position 5° 10' N., blank 45' W., picked up Captain and 17 crew Steamship CITY OF SHANGHAI torpedoed 2240 G.M.T./10 approx., 06° 40' N., 27° 50' W. Two other Lifeboats somewhere in vicinity (ends.) Both messages handed in by Masters on arrival Freetown 18/5. Nothing heard at Freetown. (C. in C. S.A., 2141N/18, to Admty.)

566

War Diary.18.5.1941.
Sunday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked Contd.EMPIRE
CARIBOU
(torpedoed
10/5.)

British, 4861 tons. Now known to have been torpedoed and sunk at 0555/10 about 465 miles S.W. of Reykjanes during S/M attack on Convoy O.B. 318. Was bound from Loch Ewe to Boston. (D.S. 622.)

SANGRO.
(torpedoed
6/5.)GENTIAN and RHODODENDRON 054° N., 016° W., 056° 14 knots following route H.G.61. Have 4 Italian survivors from SANGRO on raft 5 days.
(GENTIAN, 2400B/18 to C. in C. W.A.)Submarines Reported.

2319/17.

Own aircraft sighted U Boat at 2319/17, in 047° 40' N., 006° 50' W., on surface escorted by 2 surface craft.
(F.O.(S) 1014B/18 to SOKOL, TIGRIS.)U/B's
Towing
Kites.

One certain case and one probable case in which a U-Boat has been sighted towing a kite have recently been reported. Both cases occurred to the southward of Iceland. (D.A/S.W. 1118B/18 to "A" Home & Abroad.)

1250.

Aircraft Duty O. Am investigating suspicious object as indicated in position periscope position 60.13 N., 3.31 W.
(A/C Duty O, 1250/18 to 18 R Group.)
Periscope only sighted 165 true 3 miles.
(A/C Duty O., 1300/18, to 18R Group.)
My 0648/18. Patrol will now be by Whitley A/C from 1730 until 2130. Sunderland has been diverted to search for submarine reported in A/C O/201's 1250 and 1300 and will remain in that vicinity until 2300.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1424/18, to Orkneys, etc.)
Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1341B/18) (F.O.S., 1516B/18.)

2035.

Admiralty message AF 07. 03 N., - 14.48 W., 2035Z. (C. in C. S.A., 1938N/18.)

War Diary.

18.5.1941.
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

S/M's Attacked.

By MALCOLM
etc., 17/5.

My 2341 Z. MALCOLM fired 13 d.c.'s.
HELIOTROPE fired (corrupt group) d.c.
at 2130 in 062° 44' 011° 20'. Disregard
consider this submarine area. Proceed
meet O B 322. (S.O., Escort Group 12,
0036Z/18, to C. in C. W.A.)

568

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

VISENDA reported an unknown merchant vessel at 0928 in 61° 42' N. 14° 40' W. steering 125°.

Northern
Patrol.

C.S.1. in NORFOLK left ^{Iceland} ~~Seapa~~ this afternoon to reinforce SUFFOLK in Denmark Strait.

See p. 574

British Air Operations.

Aircraft of Bomber Command last night attacked the shipyards and other industrial targets at Kiel. A minor attack was made on Emden.

Swordfish of Coastal Command last night attacked the docks and Gare Maritime at Cherbourg.

Enemy Air Operations.

North
Western
Approaches.

Finnish S.S. JOSEFINA THORDEN and IMMO RAGNAR were bombed and set on fire this morning in 62° 0' N. 11° 5' W. The former had been intercepted at 0325 by NORTHERN CHIEF (A/P Trawler).

Convoy H.G. 61 reported being bombed at 0016 in 54° 56' N. 11° 49' W. No damage has been reported.

S.S. UMGENI shot down a F.W. aircraft at 0545 G.M.T. today in 55° 10' N. 17° 10' W. and rescued 5 survivors.

North Sea.

S.S. ESKBURN was attacked off Blyth last night and was damaged.

/A Dornier.....

569

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Enemy Air Operations. (contd).

A Dornier attacked Lowestoft at 1209 and was shot down by the guns of the ships in harbour before causing any damage.

Convoy E.C. 22 was attacked this afternoon east of Felixstowe. No damage was caused.

At 2342 today an enemy aircraft was brought down off Cork L.V. (Thames Estuary) by H.M. Trawlers.

Channel
and west.

BANGOR and M/S Trawlers were attacked this morning off Portland by 9 enemy aircraft. DARTHEMA and COMPUTATOR were slightly damaged. BANGOR and DARTHEMA claim to have damaged 2 enemy aircraft.

Greek S.S. DIMITRIOUS, INGLESSIS was bombed and slightly damaged at 0500 today in the Convoy Anchorage at Milford Haven.

Mining.

Operation
P.W. 9.

M.T.B's last night carried out a mining operation.

Thames
Estuary.

S.S. WINKFIELD in Convoy F.S.492 was mined and sunk and DIXCOVE was damaged in the Thames Estuary this afternoon. At 0210 an aircraft dropped a mine which sank paddle vessel CITY OF ROCHESTER off Rochester. Traffic was stopped in a portion of the Medway from 0130 to 1030 on a report from a minewatcher, now thought to be unreliable. Three mines were detonated late tonight in the area where WINKFIELD and DIXCOVE were mined.

North Atlantic.

From D/F bearings a German 8 inch cruiser may be at large.

570

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Minesweeping.

C. in C. Med. today enters a strong protest against the Admiralty instructions (1457/17) regarding the assistance which he will have to send to C. in C. E.I. for minesweeping.

Operation
"Splice".

S.O. Force H in RENOWN with ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD and 3 destroyers left Gibraltar at 0332A for Operation "Splice" (aircraft reinforcement of Malta) FURIOUS, LONDON and 4 destroyers left for the operation at 1530A; LONDON is to part company p.m. today.

Cyrenaica.

TRIUMPH on return to Alexandria from patrol reported boarding and sinking a 400 ton schooner off Marsa Braga. She also carried out a bombardment of Apollonia.

UNBEATEN probably sank a merchant vessel of 5000 tons at 1240 today in 38° 47' N. 14° 0' E.

Wellingtons bombed Benghazi last night.

Crete.

Suda Bay was dive bombed at 0800 and at 1915, but no damage was caused in either attack. There were continuous bombing and machine gun attacks on Maleme and Heraklion today; the remainder of the serviceable aircraft have been despatched to Egypt.

7 Wellingtons dropped 8 tons of bombs last night on the German occupied aerodromes of Hassani and Eleusis used by the enemy as bases for air attack on Crete.

M.T.B's 67 and 214, on patrol in Elaphonisos Channel last night are reported to have shot down one aircraft and probably a second.

GLENGYLE landed a battalion of troops with 14 days' supplies on the beach in Messara Bay (South coast) last night.

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

Situation
in Iraq etc.

C. in C. M.E. considers that the present grave situation in Arabic speaking countries is largely attributable to superiority of enemy propaganda and cognate activities and inefficiency of our own, this latter being due primarily to inter-departmental conflicts of interest hindering improvement "While we are fiddling, Rome is burning".

SNAPDRAGON left Simonstown today to reinforce C. in C. E.I.

America & West Indies.

From D/F bearings this evening an enemy unit may be north of 55° N. and west of 50° W.

SHEHERAZADE.

At 1321Q PRINCE DAVID, and if possible DIOMEDE were ordered to intercept French tanker SHEHERAZADE, reported at 1200Q in 28° 52' N. 65° 61' W. steering to the eastward. (The tanker escaped from New Orleans 16/5, 2 hours before U.S. guards were due to go on board).

BEARN
EMILE BERTIN.

It is reported that BEARN and EMILE BERTIN are preparing to sail from Martinique shortly at night.

German
merchant
ships.

It was reported today that RHAKOTIS (German, left Antofogasta 17/5) was sighted by 2 vessels at 2130 G.M.T/17 in 24° 50' S, 70° 50' W, steering 190° at 9 knots with all lights on.

It was reported at 1950 today ^{from} ~~that~~ PUERTO MONTANA and ERLANGEN ~~were~~ sighted at 1100 G.M.T. /18 in 42° 37' S. 73° 9' W.

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign.

N.W. Approaches Convoy H.G. was attacked by U boat at
0315B in 55° 0' N. 11° 14' W.

S.S. EMPIRE RIDGE in Convoy H.G. 61 was
torpedoed and sunk early this morning about
100 miles west of Bloody Foreland.

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

4 Trawlers
for service
abroad.

Adty. 1257/13 and F.O.I.C. Belfast 1820/17. It will now be possible to give a fortnights warning before these trawlers are required. They should therefore resume their normal duties for the present subject to the above. (D. A/S W. 0119B/19).

4 Destroyers
for S.A.

C. in C. Portsmouth 1317B/18. Concur that C. in C. Portsmouth should supply three and C. in C.W.A. one only destroyers in accordance with A.M. 2051B/17. (V.C.N.S 0957B/19).

Your 2051B/17. Owing to difficulty of providing a "V" or "W" class at short notice without disturbing organization of escort groups it is intended to allocate VIMY for this duty. Propose that HIGHLANDER should be lent to C. in C.S.A. until relieved by VIMY, probably be end of June. (C. in C. W.A. 1457B/19 to Admty).

Your 1457B/19. Approved.
(D.O.D.H. 2041B/19 to C. in C.W.A).

Anti-Invasion
orders.
Distribution.

In view of the most secret nature of the unified anti-invasion orders and with regard to economy of paper it is considered essential that the issue of part 1 and, as far as possible, appendices of other commands should be restricted to corvettes and above only. If this view is concurred in request all other commands may be instructed to limit their requirements of copies accordingly. (C. in C. Nore 1654B/19).

Movements.

NIGERIA.
KENYA.

Scapa arrivals C.S. 10 in NIGERIA, KENYA. (A.C.O.S. 0642/19).

NORFOLK.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Iceland 0805/19).

VICTORIOUS.

C. in C.W.A. 1946B/18 para 5. VICTORIOUS should R/V in position (a) at 0530B/23. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1206B/19).

Four U.S.A.
Coastguard
cutters.

It is anticipated that the four American Coastguard cutters will arrive Clyde about 23/5. (C. in C.W.A. 1357B/19).

/RODNEY.....

574

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. (contd)

RODNEY.
BRITANNIC.
SOUTHERN
PRINCE.

C. in C.W.A. 2341B/18. Request you will sail SOUTHERN PRINCE to R/V with BEDOUIN and IMPULSIVE in position (a) at 0500B/22. Intend sailing RODNEY, BRITANNIC, and escort at 1300B/22 to R/V with SOUTHERN PRINCE in position (x) at 1800B/25. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1626B/19). Admiralty's 2014B/13. My 1952B/17. Concur C. in C.H.F. 1734B/18. Route and R/V. (C. in C.W.A. 2341B/18).

Operations.

Denmark
Strait
Patrol.

Reinforce SUFFOLK after disembarking depth charges. (C. in C.H.F. 0928B/19 to C.S.1). F.O.C. 1st C.S. in NORFOLK sailed 1500. (F.O.I.C. Iceland 2125/19):

DIANA
intercepted.

Am boarding Spanish DIANA in 061° 42' 014° 40' dead reckoning. Not in Lloyds. (VISENDA, 0945/19 to S.O.N.T). My 0945/19. Escorting Kirkwall E.T.A. 1400/21. (VISENDA 1114/19 to S.O.N.T).

CONQUEROR.

Intend sailing CONQUEROR to Brixham at 0500/20, E.T.A. 1100/20. Thence to Falmouth at 1000/22, E.T.A. 1900/22, routed via Q.Z.S. 180. (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 1051/19).

Jan Mayen.

Your 1853/10. Request you will ascertain from Jan Mayen whether:-
I. (a) Mobile (b) Static Bofors can be landed, installed and manned.
II. What is maximum size and weight of gun or mounting which could be landed and installed with existing resources at Jan Mayen or Iceland. (D. of L.D. 1737B/19 to N.O.I.C. Iceland).

575

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Enemy
Convoy.

Own aircraft sighted 11 merchant ships at 0745 in 047° 15' N. 005° 10' W. course 167°. Blenheims are being sent to attack. (F.O.S. 1044B/19).

Patrols.

One Whitley A/C will carry out A/S patrol today in following area. To be on datum at 1400. (C. in C. Rosyth 1138/19). R/D's of Narvik and Trondheim will be carried out today. (C. in C. Rosyth 1230/19)

PEGASUS.

Anticipate PEGASUS will be ready for next operation A.M./28th. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 1534B/19).

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy 'Camel'
GAMBL.

4 Aeroplanes bombing. 54° 56' N. 11° 49' W. (? Convoy ~~GAMBL~~ 0016/19).

JOSEFINA.
THORDEN
bombed.

(Finnish Tanker, 6549 Tons) Intercepted in 061° 38' N. 012° 16' W. Am escorting and routing as per I.N.P. (NORTHERN CHIEF 0325B/19). JOSEFINA THORDEN hit and burning. Picking up survivors. Position 062° N. 011° 05' W. (NORTHERN CHIEF 0945B/19). R/V with NORTHERN CHIEF at JOSEFINA THORDEN. Take on board survivors and endeavour to tow ship to Thorshaven. After turning over survivors NORTHERN CHIEF resume patrol. (S.O. T.N.P. 1038B/19 to NORTHERN SUN). My 0945B/19. Picked up 17 survivors, some badly injured. Ship burning fiercely. Proceeding Thorshavn with survivors. (NORTHERN CHIEF 1059B/19); NORTHERN SUN attempting to tow to Thorshavn. NORTHERN CHIEF proceeding to Thorshavn with survivors. Request rescue tug may assist. (A.C.O.S. 1621B/19 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

/Your.....

576

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. (contd).

JOSEFINA,
THORDEN
bombed.
(contd).

Your 1155/19. Still burning fiercely. Hope to take in tow later. 062° 04' N. 011° 10' W. (NORTHERN SUN 1630B/19 to C. in C.W.A).

Request you will sail BRIGAND and MARAUDER to assist JOSEFINA THORDEN. NORTHERN SUN is attempting to tow to Thorshaven. A.C.O.S. is requested to instruct NORTHERN SUN to escort tugs to most convenient port. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1822B/19 to N.O.I.C. Stornoway).

BRIGAND, MARAUDER, sailed to comply with your 1822B/19. FREEBOOTER at 2 hours notice. (N.O.I.C. Stornoway 2019B/19). Took JOSEFINA THORDEN in tow by anchor but rope parted. Fire subsiding. Still unable to board but anticipate doing so at noon/20. 062° 08' N. 11° 7' W. (NORTHERN SUN 2330B/19)

ESKBURN

(British, 472 Tons) Now lying at T 2 buoy, reports having been attacked by A/C off Blyth last night. Near miss caused damage to engine room and put D.G. out of action. Ship in no danger of sinking. Tug is proceeding to her and will tow her into Tyne. No casualties. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0729/19) My 0729/19. ESKBURN is now in Tyne. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1208/19).

Convoy.

Fighter aircraft are being sent to assist convoy proceeding from Dartmouth to Needles. (Plymouth W/T 0920/19).

JOFFRE ROSE
(British 719
Tons)

DIMITRIOS
INGLESSIS
(Greek, 5275
Tons)

damaged.
COEN
(Dutch, 290
Tons)

CLARA MONKS
(British,
577 Tons)
attacked.

Following attacks on shipping at Milford Haven have occurred. 1. At 0500/18 single Aircraft bombed and damaged Coaster JOFFRE ROSE previously beached in Dale Roads following bomb damage at sea, and then machine gunned Dutch Coaster COEN at anchor. No casualties. 2. At 0500/19 single aircraft bombed and machine gunned Greek DIMITRIOS INGLESSIS in Convoy anchorage, causing damage on deck from near miss no casualties. Aircraft probably damaged by M.G. fire. 3. At 2230/18 Coast CLARA MONKS bombed and machine gunned by single aircraft off St. Davids, Head. Ship undamaged and engaged A/C. D.E.M.S. rating slightly wounded landed Fishguard. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1040B/19).

/STATESMAN.....

577

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. (contd).

STATESMAN
(Bombed 17/5).

HERPATICA arrived 1900. Landed 50 survivors from S.S. STATESMAN. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1100/19).

3 M/V's
attacked
on 18/5.

British M/V DRAKE reports that at 2030 G.M.T/18 in 51° 56' N. 5° 3' W. one Heinkel 111 gunned steamer with black funnel and yellow band and three masts. Two explosions heard and splash seen about two ships length astern of steamer. Plane gunned two other small steamers. Plane did not come within range of DRAKE's guns. (N.O.I.C. Barry 1145B/19).

Lowestoft
attacked.

Lowestoft attacked at 1209 by Dornier. A to D. nil. Enemy destroyed by guns of ships in harbour, and crashed in sea off Corton. One survivor rescued. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1321B/19).

Convoy "Usage"
USAGE.

1 Aeroplane bearing, 330° course 160° my position 52° 38' N. 2° 9' E. (VERDUN 1633/19). Convoy ~~USAGE~~ being attacked by enemy aircraft. (VERDUN 1633/19). My 1633. ME 110. 2 bombs no damage. (VERDUN 1646/19).

Convoy "Sharp"
SHARP.
DARTHEMA
COMPUTATOR
(M/S Trawlers)
damaged.

^{"Sharp"} SHARP attacked at 1113B/19 in QZX 267 by 9 ME 109's. Three bombs dropped, aimed at BANGOR, DARTHEMA, and COMPUTATOR from 200 ft. low level attack. DARTHEMA and COMPUTATOR suffered slight damage by near miss. No casualties. BANGOR and DARTHEMA claim damaged 2 enemy aircraft. Both retired to Southward, making smoke and losing height. Air escort in area. (F.O.I.C. Portland 1800B/19).

Convoy
E.C. 21.

Fighters have been sent to assist ^{"yield"} ~~FIELD~~. (Rosyth 2238/19).

BEBINGTON.

(British 732 Tons) Damaged in Air-Raid at Birkenhead on 15/5. (D.S. 622).

578

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Operation
P.W. 9.

Operation P.W.9 completed. No ships seen.
(C. in C. Nore 0736B/19).

Operation
B.S. 61.

Intend to sail from Spurn Point at 0500/22.
Laying will begin at 1300. Return to
Flamborough Head and thence to Humber.
F.O. Tyne is being requested to arrange an
exploratory sweep in vicinity of the above
route to be carried out on Wednesday.
(TEVIOT BANK 0936/19).

Your 0954B/19. CATTISTOCK detailed.
(D. 21. 1100/19 to C. in C. Nore).

Faroes-
Shetland
Passage.

Admiralty 1806B/18. Minelayers will not
be ready till P.M./22. Confirm that only
two destroyers will be available from
17th division. (R.A.M. 1001/19).
Adty. 1806/18 amended by R.A. (M) 1001/19.
Para. 2 concur. Para 3 one destroyer and
cruiser as A/A escort available. (C. in C.
H.F. 1246B/19).
C. in C. H.F. 1246B/19 and R.A.(M)'s 1645/18
R.A. (M) is requested to forward detailed
proposals for a two ship lay.
It is particularly desired to place the
Southern end of the line as far to the
South as possible. (V.C.N.S. 1910B/19).

Proposed
operation.

C. in C.H.F. 1250B/19. See Operations
Volume.

River Medway
CITY OF
ROCHESTER
(British,
194 Tons)
sunk.

As result of a report from a mine watcher at
Bulls Nose traffic was stopped in short and
Gillingham reaches of River Medway at 0130/19
Traffic resumed at 1030 after sweeping.
Report now considered unreliable. At
0210 a low flying aircraft, thought to be
single-engined, dropped a mine on a lighter
alongside paddle vessel CITY OF ROCHESTER
lying near gasworks at Rochester. Paddle
vessel sank at 0310. No casualties.
(C. in C. Nore 1245B/19, A.S.Chatham 1305/19)

/Convoy.....

579

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd).

Convoy
F.S.492.
WINKFIELD
sunk.
DIXCOVE
damaged.

WINKFIELD (British, 5679 Tons) Mined and sunk near B.4 Buoy. (LEEDS 1515B/19). My 1515 and 1525. WINKFIELD sunk in position 300° 1 cable No. 12 Barrow Buoy. N.C.S. (LEEDS 1555B/19). DIXCOVE (British, 3790 Tons) Damaged by mine 1542B/19. Slight damage port side below water line. Making water but own pumps keeping it under control. Tugs HIBERNIA and SUN X standing by pending towage to No. 10 Shed King George V Dock tomorrow. (N.C.S.O. Thames 2136B/19).

HILDA.

(Balloon barrage motor vessel) Mined at 1944/18 in position 140° Q2A buoy 1/2 cable. Vessel now docked. Hull strained and engine castings fractured. Mine detonated 20 ft. on beam when engines were given a kick astern while anchoring. Ship had anchored in same spot 14 nights in succession. Last suspected minelaying in this area night 3rd/4th May. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1522/19).

Chatham.
Skid
towing craft
required.

A shallow draught skid towing vessel is urgently required in Chatham area, to deal with mining in the river Medway and other shallow water areas. A tug with a hinged funnel is desirable so that vessel can go under Rochester Bridge. Request such a vessel may be allocated. (C. in C. Nore 2237B/19).

Enemy Intelligence.

E-Boats.

Further Admiralty Intelligence suggests E-Boats may be operating. (C. in C. Nore 0045B/19).

Unknown M/V.

1 unknown Merchant Vessel bearing 080°, 4 miles, course 125. My position 61° 42' N. 14° 40' W. (VISENDA 0928/19).

/Enemy.....

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence. (contd).

Enemy
M/V's.

The following enemy merchant ships are believed at sea, and may be arriving at French West Coast ports shortly:-
German. DRESDEN left Santos 28/3/41.
BABITONGA left Santos 25/4/41.
LECH left Rio de Janeiro 28/4/41.
Italian. FRISCO left Ceara 28/3/41.
FRANCO MARTELLI left Pernambuco 28/3/41.
(D.D.I.C. 1125B/19 to EDINBURGH).

Enemy
T.Boats
or
Destroyers.

W/T Intelligence suggests that movements of T.Bs or destroyers south bound from Frisian Islands may take place tonight. (D.D.I.C. 1959B/19).

JUPITER.
suspected
sabotage.

Reference Capt. (D) Plymouth 1220/18. Suspected sabotage JUPITER. Security service would like to send representative to attend enquiry if held. (D.N.I. 2130B/19).

581

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

- H.X. 125. Capt. (D) 3 INTREPID and ESCAPADE are available to act as striking force with H.X. 125 while on passage to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F. 1052B/19 to C. in C. W.A).
- W.S. 9A. Ready to leave U.K. (date) List (D.O.D.(H) 1235/19 to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. H.F) See Lion Copy.
- H.G. 60. Commodore, Vice-Adm. Mackworth, has arrived safely, 12 British, 1 neutral, 2 allied ships. Cargoes (D.S. 622).
- T.C. 11. My 1817/4. ANDES will be included in T.C.11 and not EMPRESS OF CANADA. Additional ships are now available as follows. (D.S.T., 1244B/19 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).
- W.S.8B. My 2256B/10 para 2. Delete SAMARIA. (D.O.D.(H), 1250B/19 to C. in C. W.A. etc).

A/A Training.

Following measures are being adopted at shipping ports in U.K. and Northern Ireland in order to train Officers and Men of the Merchant Navy in A.A. Gunnery. (A.C.N.S. (T) 1524B/19 to Secty. A.C.N.B. Secty. Wellington for information).

EXETER.
W.S.8B.

EXETER is to proceed, passing Hoxa boom at 0800/20 to Clyde. EXETER is detailed as ocean escort for W.S.8B. (C. in C. H.F. 1457/19 to N.O.I.C. Greenock). Para 1. of my 1457B/19 is cancelled. EXETER is to proceed to arrive Clyde in time for C.C. to attend Convoy Conference at 1500/22. (C. in C. H.F. 1905B/19 to EXETER).

/W.S.8X.....

MOST SECRET ^{OUT.}

58(A)

Date. 19. 5. 41.

To. C. in C. Western Approaches, 425.
 O. in C. Home Fleet, 612.
 Repeated. C. in C. South Atlantic, 191.
 F.O.C. North Atlantic, 373.
 S.O. Force "H", 920.
 R.A.D. Home Fleet, 438.
 F.O.I.C. Liverpool.
 F.O.I.C. Greenock.
 F.O.I.C. Belfast.
 F.O.C. Northern Patrol, 928.
 DUNNOTTAR CASTLE.
 H.Q.F.C.
 H.Q.C.C.
 N.C.S.O. Liverpool.
 N.C.S.O. Clyde.

~~222~~
~~222~~

Naval Cypher (D) and (A 1)

From Admiralty.

Convoy W.S.9.A will be ready to leave U.K. on 31st May.

2. Ships will sail from the following ports :-

From Mersey SAMARIA
 CAPE TOWN CASTLE
 HIGHLAND BRIGADE
 EASTERN PRINCE
 AAGTEKERK

From Clyde EMPRESS OF JAPAN
 FRANCONIA
 MOCLIFAN
 ORBIFA
 LLANGIEBY CASTLE
 DURBAN CASTLE
 EMPIRE CONDOR
 EMPIRE CURLEW
 EMPIRE EGRET
 EMPIRE WIDGEON.

3. Speed of the slowest ship 14 knots.
 4. Ocean escort will be provided by a cruiser to be detailed by C. in C. Home Fleet and by DUNNOTTAR CASTLE.
 5. C. in C. Western Approaches is requested to
 (a) Provide one A/A cruiser to about 25 degs. W.
 (b) Report the number of destroyers available as A/S escort.
 (c) Sail ships in accordance with route to be provided by Admiralty.
 6. C. in C. Home Fleet is requested to provide a cruiser in accordance with paragraph 4. and to make up A/S destroyer escort to 10.
 7. MAIN convoy conference will be held at Greenock. Arrangements should be made for Senior Officer of escort to attend.

1235B/19.

D.O.D.(H)

1st Lord	D. of P. (2)	I.P.
1st S.L.	D.O.D.(F)	W.D.
2nd S.L.	D.D.O.D.(F)	Duty Captain.
3rd S.L.	D.O.D.(H)	Head of M.
4th S.L.	D.D.O.D.(H)	D.T.S.D.
5th S.L.	D.N.I.(4)	D.D.I.C.
V.C.N.S.	D.S.D.	E.P.S.
A.C.N.S.(H)	D.N.A.D.	D.T.D.
A.C.N.S.(F)	D. of L.D.	N.I.D.10 (Pay Cdr. Wilson)
A.C.N.S.(T) (2)	D.A/S.W.	D.T.D.(M)
G.S.O. to 1st S.L.	D.M.S.	

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys. (contd).

W.S.8X.

A small fast convoy to be known as W.S.8(X) and consisting of WAIWERA from Newport and PORT WYNDHAM from Mersey will be ready to leave U.K. about 27/5. Speed of slowest ship 15½ knots. Ocean escort will be provided by NEPTUNE from Home Fleet. C. in C. W.A. is requested to provide A/S escort. WIVERN, VANSITTART and WILD SWAN from Portsmouth are available as part of the escort. These three ships should be ordered to break off and proceed to Gibraltar when fuel considerations so demand. (D.O.D.(H) 2236B/19 to C. in C.W.A., H.F., Portsmouth).

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

BARRHEAD
(Grounded
29/12/40).

(Boom Defence Vessel) Salved and now at Reykjavik. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1604/19).

PACIFIC)
(British,)
2816 Tons)
BARON)
NEWLANDS)
(British,)
3586 Tons)

In collision at 0640/16 at Oban. Both damaged. (D.O.R. 19/5).

COSSACK.

Delayed with density in feed water. (C. in C. Plymouth 2256/19).

Plymouth
Command
trawlers.

State of and inadequacy of Dockyard to deal with repairs. (C. in C. Plymouth 2357/19) See Lion copy.

583(A)

POSTAGRAM

SECRET

IN 2357/19th May

From C. in C. Plymouth

Date 21.5.41
Recd. 1135

Addressed Admiralty, repeated A.S. Devonport.

241.P. I have been investigating the state of affairs about trawlers in the Plymouth Command as there are insufficient fit for sea for operational purposes.

Of 22 A/S trawlers 11 are under repair
of 35 M/S trawlers 7 are under repair.

2. The Dockyard state they are at present incapable of refitting more than three at a time. The average duration of their refits is three weeks instead of two, largely because of alterations and additions. It will thus be seen that with biennial refits only 26 out of the 57 can be refitted at Devonport.

3. When the PARIS is properly equipped as a depot ship for small craft the length of refits should be shortened to two weeks and thus admit of 39 out of the 57 being refitted at Devonport.

4. The above figures are maxima and will be decreased if and when ships are damaged by enemy action.

5. Falmouth is already kept fully occupied.

6. The alterations and additions referred to in para.2 above are largely because the living spaces of some trawlers are virtually uninhabitable, chiefly due to water leaking through the deck. This must be remedied.

7. Lack of trawlers will necessitate a very definite slowing down of the coastal convoy programme; lack of M/S trawlers must result in partial immobilisation of the ports. The following steps are proposed to remedy this state of affairs:-

- (a) Completion of equipping of PARIS by Dockyard to be given Priority I.
- (b) PRINCE CHARLES to be transferred to Falmouth for completion.
- (c) At least three of the trawlers that either have been damaged by enemy action or require major repairs to be transferred to Bristol Channel or other commercial repair ports.
- (d) All trawler repair work in the Dockyard to be given Priority I.

I would urge on Their Lordships' the need for early action on the above proposals to help the Dockyard to recover to the full their pre-"Blitz" vigour and activity.

2357/19

Advance copy Ops., O.D., O.I.C.

			T/P for	
	D. OF P. (3)	D.S.V.P. (2)	Depy. Cont. (2)	} B } A } C } D
1st Lord	O.D. (5)	D.T.D. (4)	D. (4) for action	
1st S.L.	O.I.C. (2)	D.T.D. (M)	D.N.C. (2)	
3rd S.L.	D.S.D. 9.	D.57 O.B.	E. IN C.	
Vice Controller	M. (3)	D.N.C.	D.A/S.W. (2)	
V.C.N.S.	O.D. 8.	E. IN C.		
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.N.I. (4)	E.P.S.		
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	D.A/S.W.	A.H.Q.H.F.		
NAVAL SEC.	D.M.S.	I.P. (3)		
G.S.O. to 1st S.L.	D.M.S. Easement	W.D.		
Cps. (1)	D.D.T.M.			

241

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

LATONA

As Force H is leaving Gibraltar earlier than was anticipated you should adjust your course and speed so as to arrive Gibraltar as early as practicable. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0029B/19 to LATONA).

Operation "Splice".

Gibraltar departures S.O. Force H in RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, HESPERUS, HAVELOCK, HARVESTER for Operation "Splice". (S.O.I. Gib. 0332A/19 to Admt). 1530A, departures FURIOUS, LONDON, FAULKNER, FORESTER, FOXHOUND, FURY for Operation "Splice". My 0332A/19, HAVELOCK, HARVESTER, will be detached by S.O. Force H. p.m./19 to R.V. with ARUNDEL CASTLE. (S.O.I. Gib., 1540A/19 to Admt. etc). Add to my 1540A/19. LONDON parts company p.m./19 and returns to base p.m./20. (S.O.I. Gib., 2014A/19).

LONDON.

Your 1813/18. NEA HELLAS is expected to arrive Gibraltar 23/5, is it intended that LONDON should escort both transports sailing about 24/5? (F.O.C.N.A., 1012/19 to Admt). Your 1012/19. Owing to escort commitments delay is not acceptable. LONDON, two H Class destroyers and ARUNDEL CASTLE should be sailed on 22/5 to U.K. Further signal will be made in regard to NEA HELLAS. (A.C.N.S. (F) 2059B/19 to F.O.C.N.A.).

O.G.61.

Gibraltar Section and BARON KELVIN arrived. (F.O.C.N.A. 1034/19 to Admt.).

PANDORA.

Intend to sail U.K. p.m./22 (route). PANDORA is available for short patrol Bay of Biscay if required. Request F.O. (S) issue onward route and arrange bombing restriction. (F.O.C.N.A. 1134/19 to Admt.).

/Air.....

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (contd).

Air Report.

No flying owing to unserviceability of aircraft. (200 Group, 1700/19).

Enemy
Unit
? 8-in
Cruiser.

At 1712 G.M.T. German Naval Unit bearing 318° 1st Class from Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1840A/19 to N.A. Station).

JACQUES
ODETTE.

(The following is an extract from a Fairmiss telegram). Arrival 18/5 French Drifter JACQUES ODETTE. (N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1857/19 to D. of S.T).
A German 8-inch Cruiser may be at large. (F.O.C.N.A. 2026/19 to N.A. Station).
Your 1840B/19 Other bearings place this unit N. of 55° N. and W. of 30° W. (D.D.I.C. 2312B/19 to F.O.C.N.A) (F.O.C.N.A. 2346A/19 to N.A. Stn).

H.G. 64.
BIDEFORD.

Estimated 0300/28 BIDEFORD will bring back H.G. 64. Detailed orders will be issued by F.O.C.N.A. (C. in C.W.A. 2201B/19 to BIDEFORD).
Request you will issue necessary orders for BIDEFORD to bring back H.G. 64. (C. in C.W.A. 2206B/19 to F.O.C.N.A).

South Atlantic.

CITY OF
DURBAN.

Recall CITY OF DURBAN to Freetown. Further instructions follow. (1st Sea Lord 0056B/19 to C. in C.S.A).
Return to Freetown. (C. in C.S.A. 2349N/18 to CITY OF DURBAN). Arrived 1515/19. (S.O.I. Freetown 1815N/19).

RABAUL.

Overdue shipping RABAUL due Capetown 14/5 not arrived. (S.O.I. Capetown 1030B/19 to Admty).

/Unknown.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).Unknown ship
16/5.

It now appears possible that 3SSS intercepted by Freetown from unknown ship at 0620/16 giving position 5° 02' N., 10° 02' W. was corrupt version of distress message from RODNEY STAR position 5° 03' N., 19° 02' W. reported by .S.S. MARYLYN in my 2141/18. Original report resulted in diversion of two destroyers and one flying boat to area but nothing was found.
(C. in C. S.A. 1345N/19 to Admty).

Routeing of
ships.

My 1359N/19 part two final. (Part 1 is possibly 1345/19). Three ships were sunk about lat. 7° N within 160 miles between 6th and 10th. Routes are being dispersed as far as possible but original route dispersion in this area is important. Accurate knowledge of time and date that ships will pass lat. 24° N (my 1608/15) is very important to enable diversion to be effective. Lack of knowledge of position on route sometimes 48 hours in error causes great difficulty. Request investigation of any means possible to make this estimate time of crossing 24° N more accurate.
(C. in C. S.A. 1359N/19 to Admty).

CORNWALL
action with
raider. 8/5.

Following is summary of CORNWALL'S action with raider PENGUIN or No. 33 in 003° 30' N 57° 48' E on 8/5 and information obtained - Raider reported 60 miles astern by aircraft at 0219/8. All day chase ensued. Raider disguised herself as TAMERLANE. Ship sighted her at 1100. PENGUIN turned away at 17 miles carrying out normal merchant recognition procedure. Disguise of vessel not fully penetrated until range 12000 yards. She opened fire accurately after two warning shots from CORNWALL, blowing up with large explosion 10 minutes later. Information. 8,000 tons. Armament 5 5.9" guns, 3 4" guns, 3 torpedo tubes, mines. One aircraft. Ship left Germany in June, 1940, met one supply ship in Feb. 1941 and one on 1/4/14. to which she transferred prisoners. One prize probably OLE WEGGER sent home in February with 300/400 prisoners. Ship sank EMPIRE LIGHT 25/4 CLAN BUCHANAN 28/4. BRITISH EMPEROR 7/5. Ship not working on definite information, fitted with some form of R.D.F. Whale Catchers was alongside

5/5but no other.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).CORNWALL
action with
raider. 8/5.
(contd).

5/5, but no other German ships co-operating. PENGUIN patrolled at slow speed with frequent stops: after a sinking she steamed at 13/14 knots for 24 hours then stopping to send up aircraft. Aircraft in frequent use. (C.C.S.A. 1431N/19 to S.A. Sqdn).

SNAPDRAGON.

Simonstown departure 1500/19 SNAPDRAGON for Durban, Mombasa, and Persian Gulf in accordance with Admty 1904/12. Speed 11.5 knots E.T.A. Durban 1400/22. Route to Mombasa in accordance with C. in C. E.I. 1110/18/4. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1507Z/19 to Admty Etc).

PHILOMEL

Admty 1737/18/2 Weather conditions permitting earliest date of departure PHILOMEL is 22/6 Constructional work on large magazine not yet completed. (N.O.I.C. Port Stanley, 1530Z/19 to C. in C. S.A.)

ALBATROSS

A.T. 1233/25/1. Request you will report the estimated dates when ALBATROSS will be away from Freetown for refit. (D.O.D. (F) 1636B/19 to C. in C. S.A.)

Dakar

Report graded C.2 16/5. MONTCALM confirmed left. RICHELIEU Caissons removed, divers still at work. Departures 12/5 convoy of 4 ships s small S/MS and two destroyers, Vessels in port VILLE DE DUNKERQUE, FORT DE FRANCE, CHEF MECANICIEN ARMAND BLANC, CAPITAINE LUIGI, ALSINA and GARONNE. All between May 12th and 14th, report not graded states one gun weighing approximately 30 tons loaded at Marseilles and discharged at Dakar from Capt. Pmieu 2/5. (S.O.(I) Freetown 1911N/19 to Admty).

Visit to
Free French
Port.

Visit of a British Warship to one or more of the Free French African ports would be of great value in encouraging local morale, which is suffering from the effects of isolation and the present developments in the political situation in France. Request you consider arranging such a visit as early as practicable. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1919B/19 to C. in C. S.A.)

Guns in M.V.'s.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).Guns in
M.V.'s

Your 1125B/16. As all ships from U.K. are now normally fitted with four permanent machine guns, Military Light A/A personnel who are expressly required for ships operating within the Atlantic Ocean should not continue past the Cape. C. in C. E.I. has been asked whether a Shuttle Service of guns and crews is available at Aden and also to forward proposals for the defence of ships using the Shatt-el-Abrab. 12 pdr. guns should not be removed from vessels proceeding to the Persian Gulf.

(D.T.D. 2002B /19 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

Spanish Gunboat
to Visit
Freetown.

My 2021/12/4 and Admty 2329/20/4. Am informed Spanish Gunboat CALVO SOTELO will arrive Freetown 25/5 do not know length of stay. Movements at this period. NELSON and EAGLE arrive 23rd or 24/5. ANSON arrives 27/5. Convoy S.L. 76 sails 27/5.
2031N/19.

RHAKOTIS
ERLANGEN
QUITO BOGOTA
& FRANKFURT.
(German).

All left west coast ports on 17/5. M.S.O.(I) Callao reports all have ample bunker.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2141Z/19 R.A.S.A.D.)

War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.PANDORA
R. of P.

Reports spending 5 days off Capri nothing seen: 2 days West of Palmarola where one BOLZANO class cruiser sighted northbound 8th: one day between Licosa and Palinuro where 2 southbound ships seen, one a tanker 3000 tons unsuccessfully attacked. C.O., PANDORA suggests patrolling 5 miles 130 from Palinuro where traffic after hugging coast steers 130. In view of profitable patrol South of Sardinia suggest this as primary position. A patrol off Genoa however would provide opportunity during passage from Gibraltar.
(Capt. S.8. 0043/19, 0045/19 to Capt. S.1.)

ABA

H.M. Hospital Ship ABA arrived.
(N.O.I.C. Haifa, 0800C/19 to C. in C. Med).
Damaged, see 1659/19.

Suda Bay
Bombed.

No change in situation. Suda Bay dive bombed 0800/19. No damage.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0901/19 to C. in C. Med).

Benghazi
bombed.

Operational Summary No. 343 up to 1200 hours 19/5/41.
Night 17/18, May, eight Wellingtons bombed Benghazi Harbour and large concentrations enemy aircraft reported on Derna Aerodrome. Two Blenheims followed up attack at dawn/18 their bombs bursting near hangars. One failed to return.

Rhodes
bombed.

One Wellington bombed Calato Aerodrome (Rhodes) on night 17/18 May starting seven small fires in S.E. corner.

Suda Bay
bombed.

Seventeen Ju.87s escorted by ten Me. 109s dive bombed Suda Bay during morning/17 while five Me. 109s patrolled over Maleme. A.A. fire destroyed one Do.17 reconnoitring anchorage during raid. Two British ships destroyed by fire. Four enemy reconnaissances of Suda Bay during morning 18 were followed by several heavy bombing and machine gun attacks on Suda Bay, Maleme, Heraklion and Canea Area in afternoon. A.A. fire destroyed unidentified aircraft. One ship sunk and Heraklion Aerodrome rendered temporarily unserviceable.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1038/19).

3 ships
destroyed.

UNDAUNTED.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).UNDAUNTED

Recommended date for paying off UNDAUNTED 13/5.
(C. in C. Med., 1058C/20 to Admty).

LATONA

Consider that LATONA should proceed by Cape of Good Hope. C. in C. M.E. agrees.
(C. in C. Med., 1059/19 to Admty).

UNBEATEN.

Leave patrol p.m./20 through 33° 20' 14° 13' and 35° 30' 14° 13' to arrive off Marsamxett about 0600B/22..
(Capt, S.I., 1103B/19. to UNBEATEN).

Ammunition.

Your 2340/28/4. T.L. are glad to know that a good proportion of your reserve is now afloat. Remarks.
(D.T.S.D. 1117B/19 to C. in C. Med).
Ref. a.m. 1704/29/1/40. Revised new delivery forecast. — cancelled see 0225, of 12/1/41.
(D.T.S.D. 1118B/19 to C. in C. Med).

ABDIEL
Operation
"Mat"1.

My 1355/17. Sail 1500/19 and proceed through 0330 50' N 024° 00' E to reach 035° 30' N 021° 10' E negative at 2000/20. Circumstances permitting force A (1) should join ABDIEL p.m./20 and afford her support during daylight ABDIEL to proceed at 2100/20 to carry out operation MAT 1/ retiring on completion to south westward, proceeding at daylight/21 then to join force A(1). ABDIEL to part company with force A (1) p.m./21 and return to Alexandria is to be reported.
(C. in C. Med., 1121C/19 to ABDIEL).
My 1355/17 M.A.T.I. If laying of line B in position given is found to be impracticable the laying of line B from position 0900° Cape (Duktone?) one mile in a direction 210° for two miles should be considered. S.P.'s etc. except those detailed in A.F.O.'S 66/41 are to be landed.
(C. in C. Med., 1241C/19 to ABDIEL).

Italian Convoy.

Report Small Italian convoy will leave Naples evening/19 bound for Gulf of Patras probably with a mean speed of advance 10 knots. Request you will endeavour to locate by R/C and if located sail 5 D.F. to intercept during night of 20 /21 returning to Malta on completion.
(C. in C. Med., 1123C/19 to V.A. Malta.)

/Small....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).Italian Convoy.
(contd).

Small convoy reported to leave Naples 19/5 bound for Gulf of Patras. Destroyers from Malta may attempt to intercept. (Cdr. S.I. 1510B /19 to UPHOLDER). To carry out your 1123C/19 one Blenheim R/C will leave Malta 0600 and sweep some 80 miles route Messina - Naples returning westabout Sicily. If convoy is seen a 2nd R/C of 5 Armed Blenheims will search E and N E. Spartevento Cape to give a possible p. and c.of Convoy to destroyers and also attack. In second case this will mean Capt. (D) 5 leaving Malta at latest 1000. If convoy takes direct route Cape Spartevento - Patras it might be possible for Capt. (D) 5 to intercept between midnight and dawn but should convoy take any other route to northward and change course after R/C I consider with no moon the problem of interception has little or no chance. G. Mines in grand harbour still intact. All times Malta. (V.A. Malta, 1945/19 to C. in C. Med).

M.T.B.
Patrol in
Elaphonisos
Channel.

My 1703/18. No surface ship sighted. At 0100/19 fixed white all round light exhibited for about half an hour on Cape (?ST) (?ELIA). About 0300 when just east of Kithera white unreadable flashing light obscured probably from enemy aircraft. M.T.B.s 67 and 214 credited with bringing down one aircraft certain and one probable. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1217/19 to C. in C. Med). One M.T.B. will be patrolling Elaphonisos Channel during night 19/20. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1913/19).

VOLO

As soon as VOLO or other merchant ships are unloaded they should sail for Alexandria under cover of darkness. Route should be signalled to Mediterranean Fleet. Endeavour will then be made to detach a destroyer to escort. (C. in C. Med., 1220C/19 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay). S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1700/19 (N.T. in W.D.) C.S.7 is requested to detach one destroyer to escort VOLO joining her a.m./20 N.O.I.C. Alexandria is requested to sail GRIMSBY and FLAMINGO at 0600/20 to relieve escorting destroyer who is then to rejoin 7 C.S. (C. in C. Med., 2235C/19 to C.S.7 etc).

Requisitioning....

MOST SECRET.19.5.1941.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).Requisitioning
Craft, Crete.

Cdr. Matheos Royal Greek Navy now in Crete to select craft urgently required. Request he be given every assistance to select craft to be taken up on T.98, terms. (P.S.T.O. Egypt, 1221C/19 to S.T.O. Suda Bay).

Patrol for
Malta.

Your 1822/16 and D. of S.T.'s 1703/14. There is not likely to be an opportunity of running in a white tanker to Malta at present. Cased kerosene and Benzine will be (?sent in) BRECONSHIRE as opportunity offers and possibly bulk of kerosene in submarine. V.A. Malta pass to Governor Malta.
(C. in C. Med., 1243C/19 to V.A. Malta).

Use of Syrian
Aerodromes.

Reply to Admty 1457/17. Seriousness of scale of attack by German air force.
(C. in C. Med., 1329C/19 to Admty). See Mediterranean Volume. *Reply: page 708A.*

Greek
S/MS &
T.B.'s

My 1329/15. Greek submarines have now been out exercising several times and Greek torpedo boats and destroyer are working satisfactorily. I now intend further step forward and using the submarines for patrol in safer areas. For this purpose Liaison officers and wireless ratings together with the necessary cyphers will be embarked N/T My 1203/19 refers.
(C. in C. Med., 1337C/19 to Admty).

Alexandria,
Air Defence.

Re Co-operation between fighter aircraft and A.A. guns.
(R.A. Alexandria, 1553C/19 to Med., Fleet).

No Malta
Raid.

Report Malta up to 1600 hours 19.5.41.
Enemy air activity Nil.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1600/19).

A/C's in

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).a/c's in
Operations
"Splice" &
"Rocket".

Reference Air Ministry's 1835B 16 Part One Fulmars being flown to Malta in ~~Splice~~ and ~~Rocket~~ may not be able to rely on landing at aerodrome in Crete for their outward passage. If not it may be necessary to carry out a special operation to fly them direct to FORMIDABLE. Presume full crew will accompany them who will be (?group Missing) of doing this. Crew could return to U.K. via Takoradi.
(C. in C. Med., 1619C/19 to Admty).

Italian
Ships.

Following passed Istanbul 2140/18/4 (?18/5) for Aegean GIUSEPPE MAZZINI, GIUSEPPINA GHIRARDI, CATERINA MADRE. Local authorities informed.
(S.O.(I) Med., 1637C/19 to Admty).

ABA
bombed, damage.

Hospital ship ABA arrived 0830/19. Sustained damage (summarized). Caused by air attack. Repairs in hand, date of completion to be signalled later.
(S.T.O. Haifa, 1659/19 to D.S.T.)

ex-Greek
Martlet a/c.

It has been decided by the Chiefs of Staff that the Navy is to have first call on the 30 ex Greek Martlets. You are requested to consider re-equipping 805 Squadron with these aircraft and putting the Fulmars surrendered into reserve.
(5th S.L. 1711B/19 to C. in C. Med).

EMPIRE SONG
(Mined 9/5).

Re type of mine encountered by EMPIRE SONG.
(D.M.S. 1750B/19 to V.A. Malta).

S.S. TURKIA
(Greek).

Burnt out and sunk 2½ miles 160° from Zafarana. Lighthouse. Foremast showing above water.
(ii) Fire started at 0400/17 ship sank. 0700.
(iii) General cargo embarked at New York. Other ports of call West Africa, St. Lucia Pernambuco, Bosphorus, Durban.
(iv) Master had no suspicion of anyone on board C. in C. E.I. 1858Z/18 refers.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal area 1755C/19).

Movements.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (contd).Movements.

SOUTHERN SEA and TIBERIO ^{leave} left at 1900/20 and SOUTHERN MAID and ZINGARELLA leave 1800/21 for Mersa Tobruk S.O.A. 6 knots. U boat was reported 1500C/19 22 miles North of Ram Melh.
(Capt S.1. 1917C/19 to TETRARCH, CACHALOT).

Mines.

Your 0908C/16. 1,000 Flooders were shipped in following vessels, 250 in each:-
BELLEROPHON, HANNINGTON COURT, STANMORE and NEW ZEALAND STAR. 2000 electric fuzes for Flooders were shipped in NEW ZEALAND STAR.
(D.D.O.D. (M) 1920B/19 to C. in C. Med).

GLENGYLE

GLENGYLE, COVENTRY, AUCKLAND, VOYAGER, WATERHEN, expect to arrive 0715C/20. My p.c. & s. are at 2000C/19 032° 52' N 026° 52' E Course 125° 15 knots. COVENTRY requires temporary berth alongside to facilitate disembarkation of wounded,
(GLENGYLE, 2001C/19 to R.A. Alexandra).

Crete,
Situation.

No change.
(C. in C. Med., 2003C/19 to C.S.7., C.S.15., B.S.1., R.A.D.M.)

Suez Canal
Situation.

Situation report. Mine at 40.5 found by diver and destroyed. Mine at Kilometres 55.1 exploded by HOPPER 42. Further search reveals that aeroplane shot down near Port Said dropped about 180 small bombs in desert of which about 80 are unexploded.
(S.B.N.O. Suez, 2003C/19).

Suda Bay Raid.

Suda Bay dive bombed at 1915/19. About 25 planes. No damage. General situation unchanged
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2101/19 to C. in C. Med).

REGENT
passage of
Narrows.

Your 1201B/19. REGENT reports no trouble during passage of Narrows, she proceeded both at periscope depth and deeper when off Cape Bon.
(Capt S.8. 2110A/19 to Cdr. S.1).

Efficiency of
Fleet and F.A.A.

Whilst the work of the fighters has at all times been admirable, it appears that the efficiency of the gunfire of the Fleet has made rapid strides lately.
(1st Lord, 2213B/19 to C. in C. Med).

594A

SECRET

M E S S A G E

2335/19th May

IN

Date: 22.5.41.

Received 09.0.

FROM: C. in C. Middle East

CYPHER

Addressed: War Office.

Propaganda Policy, Middle East.

IMPORTANT

14407.

9356, cipher, 19/5.

Your 66646 (I.P.(1)) of 14/5. Following from C. in C. Mediterranean, C. in C. Middle East and A.O.C. in C. for C.O.S.

Following are our comments on F.O. Tel.1416 to Cairo which we have just seen. We have not seen Embassy reply.

1. Paragraph 2. We are not content with existing arrangements for covert propaganda and still consider both types should be under unified direction in Middle East. We only agreed to continuance present arrangement for cover in view of Troopers 55035 (I.P.1.) of 6/3 as next best expedient, vide our 9210 of 1/3. Subsequent experience has confirmed weakness in present arrangements and in endeavour to effect some improvement we have made Jerusalem Bureau (our telegram 9344 of 15/5) responsible for general direction of covert propaganda in Arabian countries through S.O. organisation. Latter lacks personnel with knowledge of special problems involved. We would repeat our view that only logical and efficient arrangement in Middle East area would be appointment of one individual to co-ordinate execution of H.M.G.'s propaganda policy. See Paragraph 5 below.

2. Paragraph 3. We confirm that theoretical arrangements described do not work either as regards advice or execution.

3. Paragraphs 4 and 5. See second part our telegram 2093 of 20/1. Would again stress that propaganda concerns all three services and not merely army authorities as those paragraphs imply. We have previously made it clear that we do not desire to control propaganda policy, which must rest with H.M.G. We do however want better machinery here for practical application and execution, to avoid delay, and to ensure that service requirements are adequately met.

4. Paragraph 6. Exclusion of Egypt would completely nullify proposals. See Paragraph 5 of memorandum attached to MEIC/1/5 of 27/10. Also Paragraph 8 as to type of personality required.

5. Official discussions on this problem have dragged on for over six months while need for centralised co-ordination has been apparent since first month of war. It is now fourteen months since representative of Miniform visited Middle East to discuss this matter. Present grave situation in Arabic speaking countries is largely attributable to superiority of enemy propaganda and cognate activities and inefficiency of our own this due primarily to inter-departmental conflicts of interest hindering improvement. In our telegram 9275 of 18/4 we recommended appointment of representative of H.M.G. to Middle East to control and co-ordinate political policy generally. We feel that best solution to this propaganda problem is appointment of one individual who would represent both Minister of Information and Minister of Economic Warfare and end present anomalous situation as far as Middle East is concerned. We cannot believe that there can be any basic divergence in propaganda policy of these two ministries or that interests of H.M.G. in Middle East could possibly be injured by their being jointly and equally represented by one individual carrying out H.M.G.'s propaganda policy we suggest that complexity

.....referred to by

594 B

-2-

F.O. lies not in question itself but in reconciling departmental and national interests and feel that it is more than time that this was squarely faced. While we are fiddling Rome is burning.

2335/19.

Advance Copy Ops. D.N.I. M.

+ 2100/14.

1st Lord
1st S.I.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(F)
Nav. Sec.
C.S.O. to 1st S.I.
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)

D.N.I. (4)
O.I.C. (2)
D.S.D.9.
D. of P. (3)
D.P.D.
M. (3)
W.D.

ARW.

Received from War Office
0820/21.

595

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

BRITISH
EMPEROR.

Overdue ship, BRITISH EMPEROR left Durban 24/4 for Abadan. C. in C. E.I.'s 0230/9 refers. (S.O.I. Colombo, 0512Z/19, to Admty etc.)

HAWKINS.

To leave Durban A.M./22 to comply with C. in C. S.A's 2119/17.
(C. in C. E.I., 0822Z/19, to HAWKINS.)

Colombo.

Your 1956/21/3. I again urge the appointment of a representative here with executive powers in Ministry of War Transport affairs.
(C. in C. E.I., 0838Z/19, to D. of S.T.)

PANAGHIOTIS.

Crew refuse to sail on grounds of articles expiring and wish to be repatriated. Ship ready for sea and bound for Durban. Pressure (? previous) could be brought on crew to sail but master fears mutiny at sea resulting in ship being taken to Madagascar by crew. Intend to consult CERES on arrival.
(N.O. i/c Kilindini 0850Z/19. to C. in C. E.I.)

Basra
Trade.

Until further orders no commercial cargoes for Baghdad, Turkey, or Syria can be accepted at Basra owing to congestion and risk at port. N.O.i/c inform shipping agent concerned confidentially and pass to Reporting Officer.
(C. in C. E.I., 1258Z/19, to N.O.I.C's) East Indies, 1300Z/19 to S.B.N.O. Suez etc.)

Raider
Search.

My 1734/18. Area searched by Catalina 19/5 was enclosed by 10° 12' 30" 70° 40' 73° 20'. She also searched West Chagos Bank Islands as far North as 06° 10' S Catalina unserviceable 20/5 and returning Ceylon 21/5. If no further intelligence received CORNWALL will leave area dawn 20/5 and proceed Durban via. Mauritius arriving Durban P.M. 26/5. GLASGOW will complete her search and then proceed Colombo to arrive 23/5. (C. in C. E.I., 1330Z/19 to Admty.)

596

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Enemy
Shipping.

A.2 report, Japanese nationality is to be given to all German and Italian ships refuging in Japan. Japanese Ministry of Marine disclaim any knowledge of this report. 5 Germans and 5 Italians already reported as under Japanese flag and presumed employed on Coastal trade. In addition there are 11 Germans and 4 Italians in Japanese harbours. (D.S., 622.)

America & West Indies.

RHAKOTIS.
(German)

Sighted by 2 vessels in 24° 50' S., 70° 50' W. 2130 G.M.T./17 steering 190° making 9 knots all lights on. See my 1553/18. (S.O.I. Callao, 1023/19, to C. in C. A.W.I.)

FRANKFURT
RHAKOTIS
QUITO
BOGOTA.
ERLANGEN
(German.)

My 1009 Q/18 not to Admiralty. Following estimate of fuel in German Ships. FRANKFURT coal for 70 days plus 920 tons of wood. RHAKOTIS Diesel oil 450 tons. ?QUITO and BOGOTA full bunkers. ERLANGEN left Puerto Mont during nights May 17/19 with fuel for 70 days. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1139Q/19, to C. in C. S.A. etc.)

/Italian.....

597

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies Contd.

Italian
Fleet
Strength.

Following from Navy Dept., From U.S. Naval Attache, Rome. Estimated state of Italian Fleet as (? on) 16/5:-

	Original Strength.	Numbers sunk.	Numbers Damaged or not in Service.	Remaining Total.
<u>Battleships.</u>	6	1	3	2
<u>Heavy Cruisers</u>	7	4	0	3
<u>Old Armoured Cruisers.</u>	1	1	0	0
<u>Light Cruisers.</u>	14	3	3	8
<u>Monitors.</u>	5	0	0	5
<u>Destroyers.</u>	128	27	1	100
<u>Submarines.</u>	117	42	0	75

(N.A.Washington, 1145/19.)

VAN KINSBERGEN
CARADOC.

My 1002Q/18 VAN KINSBERGEN leaves Bermuda a.m./21 to relieve CARADOC on patrol. CARADOC and VAN KINSBERGEN R.V. at Saint Johns, Antigua at 0800Q/24. After turning over patrol CARADOC proceeds to Trinidad to refuel and provision. CARADOC will probably leave Trinidad 27/5 to resume patrol with VAN KINSBERGEN under his orders. SAN ADOLFO will leave Bermuda about 30/5 to act under CARADOC's orders. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1151Q/19, to CARADOC, VAN KINSBERGEN.)

DUNELMIA
"Q" Report.

Your 0157Z/18. Request you will endeavour to get in touch with DUNELMIA by W/T. (D.D.I.C. 1248B/19 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa) See 1519/20.

/French.....

598

War Diary.

19.5.41.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies Contd.

French
Tanker.

French Tanker reported 028° 52' N., 065° 61' W., at 1200Q/18 steering to Eastward. Assume her course 085°. PRINCE DAVID proceed at best possible speed along her track. DIOMEDE steer to intercept if fuel and circumstances permit. Estimate speed of Tanker 13 knots. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1321Q/19, to PRINCE DAVID, DIOMEDE.)

BEARN.
EMILE
BERTIN.

Ships Control Officer, New York, informs me that he has heard from more than one source that BEARN and EMILE BERTIN are preparing to sail shortly at night. He has received further confirmation of above today. (N.A. Washington, 1445/19, to C. in C.A.W.I.)

Sydney N.S.,
Oil Supply.

Your 1917B/14. Re oil fuel supply at Sydney N.S. It seems desirable that on frequent occasions merchant ships in Sydney should be topped up with oil before proceeding to U.K. in convoy. Remarks. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1626Z/19, to Admty.)

Coal Bunkers,
M.V.'s.

In view of small size of BDA Coal stocks and labour difficulties it is necessary for coal burning ships destined for Homeward Convoy from East Coast South America or Caribbean to (a) bunker at Caribbean Port or (b) proceed to Halifax for Convoy instead of Bermuda. In case of (b) more cargo can be carried but voyage is longer than in (a). Request information as to which is preferable. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1712Q/19, to Admty.)

ERLANGEN
(German.)

Puerto Mont ~~t~~ ERLANGEN sighted at 1100 G.M.T. 18/3 (? 18/5.)? May position 42° 37' S., 73° 9' W. (S.O.I., Callao, 1950/19, to C. in C. A.W.I.)

599

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia.

AUSTRALIA
CANBERRA.

Your 1309 B/17. Present intention is to attach AUSTRALIA to flag of C. in C. E.I., when CANBERRA is withdrawn for refit except as necessary escort of U.S. Convoys. (A.C.N.B., 0744Z/19, to Admty.)
Your 0744/19. Thank you. (1st. Sea Lord 1856B/20.)

600

War Diary.19.5.1941.
Monday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.ALFRED OLSEN.
(shelled 10/5.)

Norwegian tanker, 8817 tons, independently routed Freetown to Aruba, shelled by U/B after being missed by a torpedo about 550 miles S.W. and W. of Freetown, and when last seen was burning furiously. 3 survivors reached Freetown 16/5, but all the crew are reported to have left the ship. (D.S. 623, 20/5.)

H.G. Convoy.

VANQUISHER reports H.G. Convoy attacked by U Boat in position $055^{\circ} 00' N.$, $011^{\circ} 14' W.$, at 0315B/19th. (C. in C. W.A., 0705B/19, to GENTIAN.)

EMPIRE RIDGE.

British, 2922 tons, from Melillo to Workington with a cargo of iron ore in Convoy H.G.61, was torpedoed about 90 miles W., of Bloody Foreland at 0630/19. No further details yet known. (D.S. 623, 20/5.)

SALOPIAN
(torpedoed
13/5.)

Arrived Clyde IMPULSIVE with survivors of SALOPIAN. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1557B/19, to Admty.)

S/M's Reported.

Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1351B/19, and 1352B/19 to N.A. Washington.)

1126.

By D/F at 1126 G.M.T. Italian U/B in $51^{\circ} 30' N.$, $23^{\circ} 30' W.$ Unreliable fix. May be reporting S.L.73.
(D.D.I.C. 1417B/19, to ESPERANCE BAY.)

0530.

Grade B.1. Portuguese steamship COLONIAL on passage Lisbon to Madeira reports unidentified submarine surfaced and encircled vessel at 0530/19 in approx., $34^{\circ} 12' N.$, $14^{\circ} 50' W.$, and then proceeded on surface in Northerly Direction.
(Consul, Madeira, 1735/19, to Admty.)
Description of S/m (Consul Funchal 2308/19.)
Submarine reported in $084^{\circ} 12' N.$ $014^{\circ} 50' W.$ at 0530/19 proceeding on surface in Northerly direction. (F.O.C.N.A. 2157/19, to N.A. Stn.)

601

War Diary.

19.5.1941.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

S/M's Attacked.

1640.

By Sunderland A/C, 45.58 N., 4.34 W., 150'
W. of Gironde, Italian U/B on surface
attacked with D/C's and G/F. No result.
(D.S., 623, 20/5.)
Have attacked enemy with d.c. in 45.58 N.,
5.15 W.
(Bomber Command Duty J. 1657/19 to 19 Group
H.Q.)
Aircraft reports attacking enemy submarine
with d.c.s in 45° 58' N., 05° 15' W., at
1657/19.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1804/19, to F.O.S.)
(F.O.S. 1819B/19 to TIGRIS.)
My 1804, aircraft reports, enemy submarine
was on surface, nothing further seen.
U boats course 225°, am returning to base
E.T.A. arrival 2020. T.O.O. 1715.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1828/19, to F.O.S.)

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

It was reported this evening that 11 German merchant vessels, and later, two large warships escorted by 3 destroyers, 5 escort vessels and 10 or 12 aircraft passed through the Kattegat northward today.

British Air Operations.

All Operations by Bomber Command last night and today were cancelled owing to unfavourable weather.

Mining.

Mines were reported dropped in the Thames Estuary at 0057. Four more mines were detonated in the Sheerness area early this morning in the area where WINKFIELD and DIXCOVE were mined yesterday.

The Clyde was opened without restriction this evening.

Mediterranean.

Malta.

Malta was attacked at 0200. The main water supply was damaged but there were no Services damage or casualties. At 1000 Luqa Aerodrome was attacked and damage was caused, and at 1530 12 aircraft bombed Takali Aerodrome slightly damaging one Hurricane

Tripoli
convoy
attacked.

URGE today attacked a southbound convoy west of Lampedusa and sank a 7000 ton tanker and a 9000 ton troopship. UPHOLDER at 1844 in 37° 58' N. 15° 40' E. attacked an eastbound escorted convoy of 2 tankers and one merchant vessel, and estimates one hit on a 4000 ton laden tanker.

Libya.....

20.5.1941.
Tuesday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT (Provisional)

Mediterranean

Air borne
attack on
Suda Bay Area.

At 0820 a heavy air attack developed on Maleme, Canea and Suda Bay area, a very large number of enemy aircraft being employed.

At 0900C S.B.N.O. Suda Bay reported that about 1500 Air borne troops wearing New Zealand battle dress had been landed south and south west of Canea.

F.O. 7th C.S. with his flag in WARSPITE, who left Alexandria p.m./18 with VALIANT, ORION, AJAX and 8 destroyers, was ordered with F.O. 15th C.S. and R.A. (D) Meditn. to move up towards Crete.

At 1200 the situation was reported to be in hand. The capture of Maleme is reported to have been the apparent object of the enemy; this failed, thus upsetting their plans. The method of attack was by Stukas, Messerschmidts, gliders and parachutes. The troop carriers which attempted to land are reported mostly to have crashed.

Continuing at 1630 further

~~Later reports give the number of~~ air borne troops landed in the Suda Bay-Canea area, ~~as~~ ^{now 1800} about 3000. Of these, 1200 were unaccounted for at 1830.

Attack on
Candia Area.

At 1500C it was reported that Heraklion and Retimo area were being bombed, and at 1804 that parachute troops had landed west of Candia and on Heraklion Aerodrome. Parachute troops are also reported to have landed at Retimo. These troops were reported to be wearing English battle dress.

/seaborne....

20.5.1941.
Tuesday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT (Provisional)

Mediterranean-Contd.

Seaborne Attack
on Candia Area.

At 2108 the enemy were reported to be patrolling off the beach west of Candia, with small boats carrying troops waiting to land. Our naval forces were moving in to the north of Crete from both east and west, to deal with seaborne attack, but lack of air reconnaissance greatly hampered naval assistance.

At 1844C R.A.(D) Meditn. was ordered to establish a patrol to cover Maleme Canea area, and if possible Kissamo Bay.

C.S. 15 (NAIAD, DIDO) is to establish a patrol to cover Heraklion and neighbouring coast.

CALCUTTA is to be off Candia at 0700/21.

Retimo is to be covered by M.T.B's and local craft from Suda Bay.

Force B. (GLOUCESTER and FIJI) to join Force A. (presumably 7th C.S's Force)

Force E. (NIZAM, ILEX, DEFENDER) Leaves Alexandria at 1400/20 to bombard Scarpanto at 0400/21.

At 0200/21 it was reported that four ships were landing troops in a bay west of Candia.

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean. (contd).

Libya.

Between 15/5 and 20/5 UNBEATEN harassed coastal shipping in the Khoms area under very difficult circumstances. A large schooner is believed sunk and a smaller one was shelled and hit in Khoms anchorage.

Suez Canal.

The northern section of the Canal is still closed.

Crete.

HOTSPUR reported being attacked by enemy aircraft at 0715 in 34° 42' N. 23° 20' E.

WIDNES and KOS 23 were both damaged by air attack at Suda Bay today and were beached.

An "A" lighter landed 5 Y tanks and stores at Messara Bay last night.

Operations "Mat".

ABDIEL is to carry out a minelaying operation tonight, west of Crete.

East Indies.

Minesweepers BATHURST and LISMORE from the China Station have been ordered to proceed to Aden as soon as possible.

CAPETOWN arrived at Bombay today in tow of TAIKOO.

606

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Dutch Naval vessels are to endeavour to intercept French Ships bound for unoccupied French Madagascar and Reunion.

America & West Indies.

At 0559/20 it was reported that Commodore OB 322 had reported at 1050G.M.T./19 that he had heard a merchant ship raider report made by S.S. CONTRACTOR in 48° 25' N. 46° 50' W.

Owing to U-boats operating as far westward as 40° or 41° W. a base on the western side of the Atlantic is to be used for escorting destroyers and corvettes.

3 of the U.S. Coastguard Cutters for U.K. sailed from Halifax today with CALIFORNIA.

U-Boat Campaign.

Attack on
H.X. 126.
9 ships
torpedoed
(See also
21/5).

Convoy HX 126 was attacked and scattered today and 8 ships are reported to have been torpedoed viz:-
NORMAN MONARCH at 0250G.M.T. in 56° 47' N 40° 55' W. (sunk).
HARPAGUS at 0250G.M.T. in 56° 47' N. 40° 55' W. (sunk).
DARLINGTON COURT at 1300 in 57° 28' N. 41° 7' W.
BRITISH SECURITY at 1300 in 57° 28' N. 41° 7' W.
ROTHERMERE at 1548 in 57° 53' N. 41° 39' W.
JOHN P. PEDERSEN, (Norw. Tanker on Govt. Service) at 1620 G.M.T. (no position given).
GLENBEG at 1645 G.M. T. in 57° 57' N, 41° 58' W. (At 1644/20 AURANIA reported 8 ships of H.X. 126 already sunk).

/SAN....

607

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign. (contd).

SAN FELIX
torpedoed.

SAN FELIX (Tanker.) which had dispersed from O.B. 322 earlier in the day was torpedoed at 1453 G.M.T. in 57° 32' N. 40° 29' W, but reached St. Johns N.F. safely on 21/5 badly holed.

Attack on
S.L. 73.

S.S. STARCROSS was reported torpedoed at 0458 in 51° 48' N. 20° 48' W. and sank later. Additional escort has been sent to the convoy.

JAVANESE
PRINCE sunk.

S.S. JAVANESE PRINCE, independently routed is reported to have been torpedoed and sunk today about 155 miles N.W. of Butt of Lewis.

Convoy
O.B. 318
(attacked
9/5 and 10/5)

It is now reported that a sixth ship EMPIRE CARIBOU was torpedoed (at 0555/10) in the attack on Convoy O.B. 318 on 9/5 and 10/5 west of Iceland. A seventh ship, S.S. GAND was torpedoed at 2045Z/10 after dispersal of the convoy, in 57° 54' N, 37° 34' W. and was later sunk by gunfire. The U-boat is reported to have been fitted with a wakeless periscope.

608

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

BLACK SWAN
STORK.

C. in C. Rosyth's 1131/18; BLACK SWAN and STORK are urgently required in Western Approaches. Request you will report when they will have completed working up. (C. in C. W.A. 1227B/20 to R.A.D.H.F).

Iceland
Position
for H.D.A.
station.

Adty. 1432 A.2. Propose station be sited in $064^{\circ} 19' 40''$ N. $021^{\circ} 51' 02''$ W. Request minimum depth in which H.D.A's can be laid. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1653/20).

Movements.

CONWAY.

Arrangements have now been made for CONWAY to be towed to Menai Straits leaving Liverpool p.m. tomorrow. P.C. 74 will be required to escort. F.O.I.C. Liverpool is requested to sail P.C. 74 and arrange R/V. (C. in C.W.A. 1314B/20).

Three U.S.A.
Destroyers.

Three United States destroyers arriving from Halifax. E.T.A. 2200Z/21. Suggest that if possible you arrive a little before that time. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1336/20 to A.C.O.S).

SURCOUF.
JENNET.

Following are approx. estimated p.c. and s. of SURCOUF and JENNET at 1200 G.M.T./21. JENNET is S.O. of convoy of six boom defence vessels. (A.C.N.S. F. 2131B/20 to SURCOUF).

20.5.1941.
Tuesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

CONQUEROR

My 1051/19. Sailed. (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 0742/20).

Clyde-Iceland Ferry.

LANCASTER and WELLS detailed for D.S. 4. (R.A.M. 1006/20)

East Coast Patrol

Departures M.G.B's 65, 60 and 62. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2147B/20)

JUSSI H
(Finnish, 2323
Tons)
Intercepted.

Have intercepted JUSSI H in 062° 18' N., 13° 28' W. on course 075°. Too rough to board. Ordered her to steer 096° for Skopen Fiord. Am keeping her in sight. (NORTHERN SKY 2153B/20)

British Air Activity

Patrols

Air patrols today. S.9 at 0430 ~~HORNBY~~ "Hornby" at 1400 (C. in C. Rosyth 0140/20)
3 Whitleys 30 miles apart will fly A/S sweep along track of O.B. 323 to a depth of 300 miles leaving vicinity of Cape Wrath 1600/20. (C. in C. Rosyth 1240/20)
Cancel my 1240/20. Aircraft returned owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth Recd. ? 1900/20) 3 Whitleys will (? search) following area, commencing 0400/21. (C. in C. Rosyth 2126/20)

Fighter Protection Conference.

Agenda fighter protection conference. Proposals. (A.C.O.S. 1840/20)

Bombing Restrictions.

OPS 546 20/5. Cancel our OPS 544 20/5. Institute T.S.B.R. as follows from 1800/20 until 0800/23. Institute submerged B.R. as follows from 0600/22 until 0800/25 and as follows, from 0600/24 until 1000/27 (H.Q.C.C. 2206/20)

610

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

JOSEFINA
THORDEN.
(Bombed 19/5).

NORTHERN CHIEF arrived 2330. Survivors landed. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 0011/20). N.O.I.C. Stornoway's 1822B/19th and S.O.N.T's 2126B/19. Continue with tow through Skopen Fjord. If weather and condition of JOSEFINA THORDEN permit continue to Kirkwall instead of Thorshaven. Report E.T.A. Skopen Fjord and ultimate destination as soon as practicable. (A.C.O.S. 1608B/20 to NORTHERN CHIEF).
Hended JOSEFINA THORDEN over to BRIGAND, MARAUDER, NORTHERN CHIEF 062° 05'N. 009° 40'W. (NORTHERN SUN 2000B/20).

HOTSPUR.
(C. in C.)

Air Attack. Position 34° 42'N 25° 20'W. Course 154°, Speed 10 Knots. (Nore W/T 0715/20).

BEGERIN.

(British, 485 Tons) Reports at 2315/18 when 17 miles 295° South Bishops being bombed by enemy aircraft and is presumed sunk. Crew of 8 landed Milford Haven one injured. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1040B/20).

Enemy A/C
shot down.

F.O.I.C. Harwich reports that at 2342/19 an enemy aircraft crashed in flames approx. two miles N.N.E. of Cork L.V. Aircraft was first engaged in pom pom fire from PRINCESS ELIZABETH which probably damaged it and was finally brought down after H.M. trawlers TRANIO, CASWELL, THOMAS LEEDS, and STELLA LECNIS had engaged it. Body of one German airman recovered by PRINCESS ELIZABETH. (C. in C. Nore 1215B/20)

ETHEL
RADCLIFFE.
(Bombed 16/5)

Owing to further extensive bomb damage consider vessel no longer salveable. (Chief Salvage Officer, Eastern Area, 1247B/20).

/ARCHANGEL.....

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. (contd).

ARCHANGEL.
(Bombed 16/5).

C. in C. Rosyth's 0905/17. Was there any reason why ARCHANGEL should not have made the passage by day? (1st S.L. 1957B/20 to A.C.O.S).

ALA.
(Bombed 17/5).

Salvage operations successfully completed. Vessel now berthed in Shoreham harbour. (R.N.O. Shoreham 2230/20).

Mining.

DIXCOVE.
(Mined 19/5).

Situation well in hand. Details. One foot of water in tunnel shaft and steering gear damaged. Two London tugs standing by, third tug arriving daylight. Vessel should be able to proceed. (Adty. Salvage Officer, Southend 0205/20).

Thames Estuary.

Foreness C.H.L. reports mines dropped at 0057/20 on bearing 353° distance 27 miles height about 2500 feet. Time of fall 40 seconds. (C. in C. Nore 1150B/20).

Seven S.A. Mines detonated as follows on 19/5 and 20/5. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1209B/20).

Operation)
S.N. 64A.)
S.N. 64B.)

Propose to carry out as follows, sailing 1700/22. Details. (R.A.M.L. 1237/20). See Operations Volume.

WINKFIELD.
(Mined 19/5).

Wreck of S.S. WINKFIELD in 51° 34' 14" N. 01° 09' 16" E. (C. in C. Nore 1801/20).

Clyde.

Dumbuck mine located by sweeping and detonated by depth charge today. A d.c. was exploded on suspected mine off Dumbarton yesterday without results. River will now be opened without restrictions. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1941B/20).

/Forthcoming.....

612

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd).

Forthcoming Operations.

A.C.N.S. (H) 2152B/20. See Operations Volume.

B.S. 57.

B.S. 57 will be carried out tomorrow night sailing about 1930B. One corvette and three of 4th M.S.F. will be required to accompany PLOVER. (C. in C. Nore 2224B/20).
Details of Operation. (C. in C. Nore 2304B/20)

Enemy Intelligence.

JUPITER.
Suspected
sabotage.

Your 2150B/19. Board of Enquiry being held on board JUPITER at Devonport 0930/21. (C. in C. Plymouth 1145/20 to D.N.I).

German
Cruiser.

One German cruiser believed LEIPZIG or NÜRNBERG arrived at Sassnitz together with Hospital Ship 19/5. Graded C.2. (N.A. Stockholm 1619/20).

2 New
Destroyers
in North
Sea.

Two new German destroyers have been detected operating in the Southern part of the North Sea this evening. (D.D.I.C. 1914B/20).

Brest.

Brest 1845/20. Visual R/C shows both battlecruisers present in usual berths. (D.D.I.C. 1959B/20).

Kattegat
movements.

(BISMARCK and PRINZ EUGEN)

Kattegat today. (a) This morning eleven German merchant vessels passed Lenker North. - (b) At 1500 two large warships type unspecified escorted by three destroyers, five escort craft, ten or twelve aircraft passed Marstrand course North West. Graded B.5. (N.A. Stockholm 2058/20).

JOUANNE NEZ.

At 1845 sighted French Fishing vessel approx. 50 ft., crew of approx. 12 seen, name JOUANNE NEZ No. D5401. Black hull, red keel, in position 4800 N. 0655 W. Twin Masts with Mizzen, brown square sails, small wheelhouse. A/C report. (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 2230/20)

613

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

W.S.9

Following are proposed arrangements for
Convoy W.S.9 (D.S.T., 0340 B/20 to P.S.T.O.
W. Scotland)

Blue Stern
Lights.

Test of blue Stern Lights to be carried
out in O.B.329 S. (D.T.D. 1402B/20 to
N.C.S.O'S)

Convoy Speed.

Pass to N.C.S.O's, Cancel my 2044/17
(re speed of advance of northbound convoys)
D.T.D. 1614B/20 to C in C's Nore Rosyth.)

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

STOKE CITY.

Defective donkey pump. Anticipate sailing P.M. 21/5. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1112/20)

MOOLTAN.

MOOLTAN Has not been able to do her DG test today on account of engine room defects. (S.S.T.O. London 1325/20)

OSIRIS

My 1140B/17/5. Sailing of OSIRIS delayed by defects. Intend sailing vessel with F.N.70 on 23/5 to Methil for onward routeing. (C in C. Nore 1556/20)

LORD AUSTIN

Has developed boiler defects preventing further patrol. (F.O.C.N.P. 2150B/20)

615

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Irish Sea
Route.

Admty. 1958/4/4. Ref. Admty. 2035/19/4.
Is new dividing line in force?
(F.O.C.N.A., 1010/20, to C. in C. W.A.)
Reply 1056B/21.

French
Destroyer.

At 2000/17 off Cape Carvoeiro a French
Destroyer course S.W., 10 knots.
At 1600/19 off Cape Roca an unidentified
destroyer course N.W., 12 knots.
(N.A. Lisbon, 1023/20, to Admty.)

TRUANT.

Leaves Gibraltar 1930/20 through 036° 00' -
011° 00' speed 10 knots.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1043A/20 to N.A. Stn.)

See next page.

Gibraltar
Evacuation.

Further to your 1046/18, estimate of accom-
modation available in ARUNDEL CASTLE and
NEA HELLAS presumably based on normal
circumstances. In view of urgency for
removal of unnecessary persons from
Gibraltar these figures should be capable
of being considerably exceeded.
Proposals for evacuation of balance of
persons remaining will be notified in due
course. (D.O.D. (F) 1735B/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)

PANDORA.

Your 1134/19. Onward route to R.V.
off St. Catherines Point. PANDORA is to
proceed submerged by day after passing
position (D). F.O. (S) will arrange T.B.R.
in area 40 and s.b.r. onwards.
(F.O.S., 1844B/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Bunkers
Fayal

Your 1313B/15 addressed to Ponta Delgada
regarding bunkering 5 Boom Defence Vessels
22/5 at Horta, Fayal. Capt. of Port
states in accordance with Article XV.13th
Hague Convention only 3 vessels may be
allowed here in one day unless otherwise
authorised by Lisbon. Awaiting your
instructions. (Vice Consul, Fayal, 1920/20,
to Admty.)

/TRUANT.....

616

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic Contd.

TRUANT.
left for
U.S.A.

Sailed in accordance with Admty., 1808/16 W/T Watch (details) until 0001 Z/28 at which time TRUANT enters A.W.I. Station and shifts W/T Watch.
(S.O.I. Gib., 1946A/20, to Admty.)

See previous page.

TODARO.
ARCOLA.
(Italian.)

Teneriffe reported TODARO (Tanker) 5162 tons and ARCOLA (Tanker) 6349 tons both loading, intend leaving p.m./20.
(S.O.I. Gib., 2231A/20, to N.A. Stn.)

South Atlantic.

ZAMZAM
(sunk by
raider.)

Report from Alexandria Egyptian liner ZAMZAM sunk in South Atlantic, presumed by German raider. About 200 Americans on board, including 170 missionaries and 24 members of British-American Ambulance Corps going out for service with Gen. de Gaulle's Free French Forces in Africa. Cargo included 20 ambulances, etc. Vessel arrived Pernambuco 9/5 from Jersey City. (The Times 20/5.)

Following for Admiralty from State Dept., Washington. Following telegram has been sent to American Consul in Capetown by Dept., of State in Washington:-

American Embassy at Buenos Aires has reported that S.S. ZAMZAM did not call at Buenos Aires and that the agent was not advised that the vessel had received orders to proceed there. American Consul at Pernambuco has reported that the ZAMZAM left Pernambuco on 9/4 at 7 a.m. direct for Capetown and that there is no information that the orders were changed after the vessel departed.

/He has no.....

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic Contd.

ZAMZAM
(sunk by
raider.)
Contd.

He has no information concerning the sinking other than that the vessel was due at Capetown on 21/4. He adds that the British Naval Intelligence at Pernambuco issued to the Captain orders to go through, en route to Capetown, the following positions: (First) 22° 40' S., 19° 00' W., and (second) 30° 20' S., and 1° 10' E. Speed of vessel was 13½ knots. (Alusna 0330/20, to Admty.)

SALEIER.

Overdue shipping. SALEIER due Durban 15/5 not arrived. (S.O.I. Capetown, 1001B/20.)

Dakar.

Spanish source reports 14 Danish and Norwegian merchant vessels in Dakar. (D 3) (N.A. Madrid, 1207/20 to Admty.)

Southbound Shipping.

Your 1608N/15. Southbound shipping is reported to F.O.C.N.A. crossing 45° N. Provided some additional volume of signaling is accepted similar information can be passed to you for 45° N., or any parallel further South. All positions are Dead Reckoning and may be subject to cumulative errors between dispersal point of convoy and reporting parallel. (A.C.N.S.(T) 1212B/20 to C. in C. S.A.)

S/M's
Argentina.
Prohibition.

Argentine decree 90,764, 13/5/1941 prohibits belligerent S/Ms from using Argentine territorial waters except when sheltering owing to state of sea or to repair damage or for (? humanitarian) reasons. In such cases S/M must navigate on surface showing superstructure and flying international signal indicating cause of entering Argentine waters. She must follow usual routes and navigation channels and generally follow established routine for surface men of war. Penalty for infraction is internment. (N.A. Buenos Aires, 1340z/20 to C. in C.S.A.)

/Avoiding.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.20.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).→ Avoiding
Freetown.

For Commodores of O.B.323, O.B.324.
No ships are to proceed to Freetown unless they have cargo, passengers of a Commodore for that port or are proceeding there to load cargo. Ships requiring bunkers should call at St. Vincent (C.V.) or Walfish Bay for coal, and Azores or St. Vicent (C.V.) for Oil.
(D.T.D. 1357B/20 to KEPPEL, WANDERER).

Destroyer
Reinforcements
HIGHLANDER
to return U.K.

My 2051B/17.
Following destroyers have been detailed WIVERN, VANSITTART, WILD SWAN and VIMY. First three are sailing in accordance with A.T.2236B/19. VIMY is expected to arrive Freetown end of June. On arrival of VIMY at Freetown, HIGHLANDER is to be sailed for U.K. via Gibraltar. F.O.C.N.A. is requested to arrange onward passages from Gibraltar.
(D.O.D.(F) 1642B/20 to C. in C. S.A.
F.O.C.N.A.)

→ Freetown

Re diversion of ships coming to Freetown from areas in which submarines are known or suspected.
(Sierra Leone, 1831N/20 to S.O.(I)'s Freetown, Capetown).

FORTH

My 866/SM04371 of 19/5/41 para 11. In order to effect necessary transfer of material and personnel it will be necessary for FORTH to call at Gibraltar before proceeding to Freetown.
(F.O.S., 1908B/20 to Admty).

ASPHODEL
ANCHUSA
AMARANTHUS
CALENDULA.

Proceed to Bathurst for fuel with despatch, report. E.T.A.
(C. in C. S.A. 2340N/20).

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Enemy
Shipping
Bosphorus.

x given in Lloyd's as Italian

The following vessels are reported as passing through the Bosphorus a.m./19:-
1. Rumanian CARMEN SYLVA from Braila to Mytylene - A declared cargo of 2,3000 tons of wheat.

2. ~~Roumanian~~ CATHERINE MADRE from Braila to Salonika - 5,850 tons Wheat.

3. Italian GIUSEPPINA GHIRARDI from Constanza to Dede Agach - 4,850 tons Benzine. (O.I.C. No.T.O.O. circulate 20/5)

Italian
Convoy

My 1945 B/19 R/C to Northward Messina did not sight any convoy. Visibility v.g. Am cancelling sailing of 5th D/F... Intend to sail FORESIGHT in accordance with
* S.O.Force H 1103/16, p.m./21 weather permitting. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1049B/20 to C in C.Med) * N.T. & W.D.

Opefation
"Tiger"
use of A/A
Armament.

A.T.0134B/16. All ships fired a few rounds from Bofors Pompoms and Harvey projectors during attacks in Western Mediterranean (FOH 1930/9) No experience of effectiveness of Armament was gained as no aircraft approached convoy close enough to be a suitable target. Consider ships similarly employed in future should be armed with greatest possible number of close range AA weapons and guns capable of barrage fire. Their immunity from attack on this occasion was due to abnormal weather conditions. (C.in C Med, 1054C/20 to Admty.)

OLYMPUS

Leaves Malta P.M./21 North of Pantellaria through 037° 13' (7011° or 036°) 33' 037°10' 010° 45' Skerki Channel to 038° 10' 009° 00' thence as directed by you. Anticipate OLYMPUS will arrive last position about 2100B/24. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1059B/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)

OLYMPUS cont.
/Malta....

620

War Diary.

20.5.1941
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

OLYMPUS contd.

Malta S/M Sanctuary conditionally in force 1600 to 2300B/21 for OLYMPUS exercising and leaving to North West. (V.A.Malta 1142B/20 to Med. Fleet.

OLYMPUS
FORESIGHT

Informing URGE of positions. (Cdr.S.1. 1107Z/20 to URGE)

Benghazi
bombed

Operational Summary No. 344 up to 1200 hours 20/5/41. During night 18/19 two Wellingtons dropped nearly two tons of bombs on Benghazi.

German air
bases bombed.

Seven Wellingtons dropped 8 tons of bombs on German occupied aerodromes of Hassani and Eleusis used by enemy as bases for air attack on Crete. Further five Wellingtons failed to locate objectives owing to bad visibility one of them bombing Island in Saronic Gulf.

Air attack
on Crete
YORK damaged.

18/5. 7 raids on Suda Bay during day. Most raids carried out with Fighter escorts. One oil tanker, one ship set on fire. One bomb hit YORK. 8 ME. 109's machine gunned Maleme. Canea Hospital bombed and machine gunned. During 19/5 continuous bombing and machine gun attacks on Maleme and Heraklion, attacks on latter being delivered at half hour intervals. Remainder of serviceable R.A.F. aircraft despatched Egypt. Occasional enemy reconnaissances of Suda Bay during day. In early morning 20/5 enemy landed gliders and parachute troops Maleme and Suda Bay after intensive bombing and machine gunning of whole area. Up to 1000 hours L.T. approximately 500 parachutists and 50 transport aircraft reported. Further transport aircraft reported approaching Island. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1112/20)

/ROVER.....

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. -Contd.

ROVER
(damaged)

Your 1048/6 and C. in C. E/I 0626/15.
Prefer ship should refit Singapore.
(D.O.D. (F) 1215B/20 to C. in C. Med)

REGENT

Addressed: F.O.C. North Atlantic.
Repeated C. in C. Med. N.O.1/c Malta 1230B.
Request information of earliest date
REGENT will be ready for patrol in Tyrrhenean
Sea and subsequent passage to Alexandria.
(Capt.S.1, 1227C/20 to F.O.C.N.A)

Greek Cyphers

Your 1329/15, para. (V), presume you are
satisfied that Greek Cyphers and Codes have
not been compromised or alternatively that
keys have been changed. (D.N.I.1300B/20
to C. in C. Med.)

Syria
Free French
Policy .

Chiefs of Staff No.112 (1st S.L., 1529/20
to C. in C. Med.) See Mediterranean Volume.

Greek Fleet.

Financial requirements approximate number
at present borne - 3,000 officers and men.
(C. in C. Med. 1554C/20 to Admty.)

Malta Air
Raids.

C.S.R. Malta up to 1600 hours G.M.T. 20/5
times G.M.T. Night raid 0200 hours, 3
aircraft dropped bombs demolishing church
and fifteen houses in Valetta, civilian
casualties. No services damage or
casualties. 1000 hours about 20 ME.110's
and ME.109's bombed Luqa aerodrome. 1530
hours 12 ME.109's bombed Takali aerodrome.
(H.Q. Malta, 1650/20)

TZAR FERDINAND
(Bulgarian)

My 7/5 TZAR FERDINAND passed Istanbul
1300 C for Black Sea. (S.O.I Istanbul
1801/20 to C. in C. Med.)

/Enemy Convoy....

622

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

Enemy Convoy.

Three Merchant ships one escort vessel P/C and S of enemy 037° 56' 015° 40' 140° 9 knots. (UPHOLDER, 1844B/20 to V.A. Malta)

JADE
FORESIGHT

A/S Trawler JADE will be in vicinity of position 255° Cape San Dimitri 18 miles from 0845/21. FORESIGHT will also be to the westward of Malta. (V.A. Malta, 1917B/20 to S.O. Force H.)

Suez Canal

Situation report, no change, intend to resume traffic of sweeping vessels over mined area on 22/5. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1931C/20 to Admty. etc.)

Mined area
Port Said

Port Said. Area within one mile from 31° 29' N. 032° 27' 50"E suspected dangerous due to mines. T.O.O.1902/20 (R.A. Alexandria, 1936/20, to Q.B.C. 254)

SALVIA

Sailed for Alexandria at 2000 (route) Speed 8½ knots. ETA position 81 at 0700/21. 1 boiler only has been damaged. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1953C/20, to C. in C. Med.)

Funds for
Greek Fleet.

Your 2018/7. Greek Admiral should be requested to apply for cash advances to his own Government in Crete, to which credits for use in Egypt have been transferred by H.M.G. Should unacceptable delay result you are authorised to make initial advance of £20,000. (Head of F. 2042B/20 to C. in C. Med.)

Situation
report 32.

Crete. See my 1922C/20. Fleet movements given in my 1152/18 have been adjusted to meet situation. During night 18/19 a battalion of troops with 14 days supplies was landed by

/GLENGYLE....

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. -Contd.

Situation
report 32
(contd.)

GLENGYLE on beach in Messara Bay. GLENGYLE now reported to Alexandria. An 'A' Lighter also landed three Y tanks and stores at Messara Bay night 19/20. WIDNES and *KOS 22 near missed and beached today 20th. Canal Area. Canal still closed in Northern Section. Malta air R/C endeavoured to locate convoys passing between Italy and Greece but nothing was sighted. (C. in C. Med. 2120c/20 to Admty.)

* Should be KOS XXIII - M. 013209/41. (C. in C. Med. R. of D)

MOST SECRET

623A.

1920/20th May

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

From C. in C. Middle East.

Date 21.5.41.

Recd. 0825.

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office, Repeated Spears Mission, Brazzaville.IMMEDIATE

14528

LSN/65860 cipher 20/5.

FIRST OF TWO PARTS.

(E.L.S.81)

Following for Spears Mission from General Spears.

The following information given by Capitaine de Corvette Jacques, until recently sub-chief of naval staff and orderly officer to Admiral Beyrout. He escaped by car from Damascus, headed for Transjordan. He did not meet a single patrol or gendarme, as he escaped at eve of German landings has not personal evidence of reactions to recent events.

2. Nevertheless his knowledge of military mentality in Syria makes him assert it is essential to act immediately to take advantage of moral shock. In two weeks will be too late. In short time discipline will have re-asserted itself or Germans will have taken matter in hand.
3. He hopes Free French will not be in vanguard if advance made on Syria. Like many Frenchmen fears fratricidal fight. He believed British would meet with far less opposition.
4. The first intimation he had that Germans might be landing was an order about a month ago to the effect that women and children were to evacuate aerodromes at Palmyra Rayak and Aleppo.
5. There is only one very scattered division in Syria and 3 aviation squadrons.
6. Roads and bridges extensively mined.
7. In Syria, contrary to other French possessions, Senior officers are better disposed than young ones, many of whom fresh from France. Many seniors feel there is better chance of quiet life on our side.

LAST PART.

Vichy sailors at Alexandria.

- (1) Returning from Alexandria where saw C. in C. Jacquet states Vichy sailors there more and more anti British though there are a few sympathisers among officers. This largely due to propaganda from Vichy Admiralty which sends out every month via Beirut circulars and orders containing insidious anti British propaganda. The sailors are made to feel they are unfortunate and their unhappy condition due to British.
- (2) Capitaine de Vaisseau Dillard commanding Suffren issued a written order to his men to attack Free French saying he would assume responsibility. Described as spiritual son Darlan.

/5).....

623 B

- 2 -

(3) Capitaine de Frigate Serre commanding Destroyer Division also very anti British.

(4) Garreau commanding submarine Pryte and Commandant de Corvette Acqulogue perhaps for as fleet in Syria violently anti British Jacquet appalled when told by Free French possibility of allowing Lebanon to remain in Vichy hands. Said this was the equivalent of allowing use Germany of Latakia Beirut and Tripoli. Approach to Beirut can be mined but not those to other 2 harbours.

1920/20.

Received from War Office 1250/22.May.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F).
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D.O.D. (F).
D.D.O.D. (F).
D.N.I. (4).
D. of P. (2).
Duty Capt.
E.P.S.
Hd. of M.
I.P.
W.D.
N.I.D. 10. Pay. Odr. Wilson.

302

ceb

624

War Diary.20.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack on Crete.Air
Attacks.

maleme
~~MALEME~~ being heavily attacked. Suda Bay
 A/A defences attacked. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay.
 0820C/20 to C. in C. Med.) Heavy bombing
 and machine gunning Maleme, Canea and Suda
 Bay area. Very large number of enemy
 aircraft being employed. Situation evident-
 ly developing. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0855C/20
 to C. in C. Med.)

Troops
landed.

Air borne troops have been landed South and
 South West of Canea. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay,
 0900C/20, to C. in C. Med.)

Orders to
Fleet.

Move up towards Crete. (C. in C. Med.,
 1002C/20 to F.O.C. 7th C.S. F.O. 15th
 C.S., R.A.D. Mediterranean.)

AJAX.

Following received from R.A.D. (Med.)
 addressed C. in C. Med. Attacks continue.
 AJAX reduced to 25 knots. Both port
 shafts distorted. (Nore W/T, 1102C/20 -
 to Whitehall W/T.)
 W.D. Note: Presumably wrong code time,
 should be 1102C/21.

Naval
Dispositions.

Unless other developments occur following
 movements are intended.
 Force D pass Antikithera Channel by 2200/20
 and sweep Malea Hydra Phaloncera to be off
 Canea at 0700/21.
 Force C pass Kaso Strait 2200/20 sweep
 round Stampalia to be off Candia at 0700/21.
 Part 2 my 1138C follows.
 (C. in C. Med., 1132C/20 to Med. Fleet.)

/My 1132C.....

625

War Diary.20.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Naval
Disposition.
Contd.German Attack on Crete.

My 11320/20. Force B GLOUCESTER, FIJI to pass between close off Cape Matapan at 0400/21 then join Force A. (1) in 35° 20' N., 22° 25' E., at 0700/21.

CALCUTTA pass Kaso Strait after Force C to be off Candia at 0700/21.

New Force E. (D. 14,) NIZAM, ILEX, DEFENDER leaves Alexandria 1400/20 to bombard Scarpanto Aerodrome at about 0400/21, using own Illuminants, returning to Alexandria on completion unless otherwise ordered.

CARLISLE sails when ready to join Force E at 0700/21 in 034° 30' N., 027° 00' E. (C. in C. Med., 1138C/20, to Med. Fleet.) *See next page.*

Enemy
Disguise.

Situation 1200/20 approx. 1500 enemy troop wearing New Zealand battle dress landed by gliders parachute and troop carriers Canea-Maleme area. Military report situation in hand. Bombing of targets at Suda Bay A/A Defences. No news from Heraklion.

Small bodies of parachute troops landed in Retimo area. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1201/20, to C. in C. Med.)

Lighters at
Tymbaki.

Three D Lighters were left by GLENGYLE at Tymbaki. They had orders to lie up on 19/5 and complete disembarking stores during night of 19/20. If no orders were received from you they were to make their way to Suda Bay. (C. in C. Med., 1356C/20, to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay.)

Maleme Held.

Situation at 1500/20. Capture of Maleme apparently the enemy's object. This has failed thus upsetting their plans. Continuous enemy R/C accompanied by sporadic bombing and machine gunning chiefly against AA defences. Military hospital between Canea and Maleme was captured now recaptured. Fairly strong enemy party South of Canea - Maleme road not yet mopped up remaining parties reported accounted for. Heraklion bombed but no landings. Retimo not yet attacked. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1501C/20, to C. in C. Med.)

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. - Contd.

KOS.23 and
WIDNES damaged.

Situation 1700/20. *KOS (?23) and WIDNES damaged near miss. Both beached. Sporadic bombing and machine gunning considerable. Military situation as follows, parachutists Canea Area mopped up. Up to 1200 parachutists south of Canea Maleme Road being engaged, situation not yet clear. Maleme in our hands. Troop carriers which attempted to land mostly crashed. G.O.C. anticipates enemy will attempt reinforcing tomorrow. 150 planes attacked Heraklion this afternoon and parachutists were dropped at Retimo. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1701C/20 to C. in C. Med.) ** Confirmed by M. 013209/41*

M.T.B.
Patrol.

One M.T.B. will be patrolling in Elaphonisos Channel night of 20/21. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1731C/20 to C. in C. Med.)

Landing at
Heraklion.

Parachutetroops landing in this area. (Heraklion, 1732/20 to Alexandria, Suda Bay) Books destroyed. (Heraklion, 1743/20, to Alexandria, Suda Bay) Parachute troops landed West of Candia and on Heraklion Aerodrome. (Heraklion 1804/20, to Suda Bay) Parachute troops landing in town and on aerodrome, situation not clear. (Heraklion, 1829/20, to Suda Bay) Following has been read: Parachutists are wearing English battle dress. (Heraklion, 1858/20) More troop carriers arrived east of Aerodrome. No more information. (Heraklion, 1958/20, to Suda Bay)

CARLISLE

My 1138C/20, CARLISLE is delayed and cannot reach R/V. CARLISLE is to proceed when ready direct from Beirut towards R/V with all convenient despatch reporting time of sailing and expected speed of advance to Capt (D) 14. (C. in C. Med. 1812C/20 to Capt D. 14 D.F.)

See previous page

/C. in C. Med ...
(CARLISLE cont:)

627

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete.

→ CARLISLE
(contd.)

C. in C. Med's 1812C/20. Intend to sail at 0001C/21 making good 23 knots. (CARLISLE, 2032C/20 to Capt. D.14.)

Naval Patrols.

My 1138C/20. Cancel sweep of forces C and D. R.A. (D) Med. establish patrol, to cover Maleme Canea area and if possible Kissamo Bay. C.S.15 establish patrol to cover Heraklion and coast in vicinity. Retimo to be covered by M.T.B's and Suda Bay local craft. Dividing line between forces C and D. 025° 00' East. (C. in C. Med. 1844C/20, to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, Med. Fleet.) British Forces are operating tonight as follows against possible sea borne attack on Crete. (1) 4 destroyers approaching from south bombarding aerodromes southern part of Scarpanto commencing 0400/21 retiring to (? Alexandria) on completion. (2) Destroyers force pass through Kaso Strait 2200/20, sweep north of Stampalia, thence be off Candia at 0700/21. (3) CALCUTTA in 035° 00' N 027° 20' E. at 2300/20 proceeding Candia. (Capt.S.1, 1849C/20 to RORQUAL, PERSEUS.)

→ Forces C.D.
→ CARLISLE.

If all is quiet at 0700/21 Force C withdrawn to South through Kaso Strait. Force D withdraws towards Force A (one) Force E to Alexandria. CARLISLE joins Force C. H.Q. R.A.F. M/E pass to G.H.Q. M/E. (C. in C. Med., 1920C/20 to Capt. D.14, R.A.D., R.A. 15 C.S.)

C. in C.
Report.

Airborne attack by parachutists, gliders and troops carriers developed on Crete at 0800 accompanied by heavy bombing and has continued throughout day. Main object Maleme attack failed. Fresh parachute attack now developing at Heraklion, no

/details....

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. -Contd.

C. in C.
Report
(contd.)

details yet. Naval forces moving in to North of Crete from both ends to deal with any seaborne attack, but naval assistance greatly hampered by lack of air R/C. (C. in C. Med. 1922C/20 to Admty.)

Enemy Boats
off Candia.

Enemy patrolling off Beach West of Candia small boats carrying troops waiting to land. (Heraklion, 2108/20 to Alexandria, W/T, Suda Bay)
Amplifying report re boats is required. (Suda Bay 2241/20 to Heraklion)

Summary.

My 1922 C/20. Suda Bay (? area). (? Here) airborne attack commenced 1630. About 3000 enemy (? landed) 1200 unaccounted for at 1830. Situation reported in hand at (? 21) 00. (? Method of) attack Stukas, Messerschmidts, Gliders and Parachutes.
2. Heraklion area and Retimo airborne attack commenced (? 1730). Parachutes at Retimo in Candia and on Heraklion aerodrome. Troop carrying aircraft east of (?) aerodrome at 2000. No details yet. Boats carrying (corrupt group) troops reported off Candia Light (? closing) now. (C. in C. Med., 2340/20 to Admty.)

War Diary20.5.1941.
TuesdayFOREIGN STATIONSEast IndiesCAPETOWN
(Torpedoed 7/4).CAPETOWN, BOTLEA arrived, former in tow
TAIKOO. (S.O.I. Bombay, 0546Z/20 to
Admty. etc.)LEANDERTo leave Colombo at 0600Z/21 and proceed
to Trincomalee arriving p.m./22 and
carrying out practices en route as arranged.
LEANDER is to leave Trincomalee 23rd and
proceed to R/V with troopship ERINPURA at
end of searched channel Madras on 24.
Time of R/V will be signalled also further
instructions. (C. in C. E.I., 0634Z/20 to
LEANDER)Convoy C.M. 9.Re composition and troop numbers.
(D.S.T.O. Mombasa 0920Z/20 to C. in C. E.I)Hotchkiss
Guns for
M.V's.My 0850/19 (not to Admty but my 0846/19
to Admty refers). There are 32 Hotchkiss
guns at Aden consigned Singapore for
Bathurst. In view of urgency of
situation propose to retain 20 for shuttle
service between Aden and Suez. (C. in C.
E.I. 0952Z/20 to C. in C. China).
Your 0952/20, Concur. (C. in C. China,
1516Z/20 to C. in C. E.I.)
Your 1125/16 and my 0848/19 latter not to
Admiralty. I am retaining these 14 guns
for Red Sea Shuttle service. My 0846/19
to Admiralty refers. (C. in C. E.I., 0954Z/20
to N.O.I.C. Simonstown).SS PANAGHIOTIS.My 0850Z/19 ship's crew have now agreed
to sail. (N.O.I.C. E.Africa. 0945Z/20 to
C. in C. E.I.)Mombasa
congestion
coal stocks.Your 0900/17 approved. Report when stocks
are available and quantity. Presume
British Governor Zanzibar has been con-
sulted and concurred. (C. in C. E.I.
0956Z/20 to D.S.T.O. Mombasa).

SS PANAGHIOTIS.....

630

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (contd).

S.S. PANAGHIOTIS Your 0850/19 being passed to Adty for Greek Shipping Committee. If crew are persuaded to sail and Master still fears trouble armed guard is to be put on board. Keep me and Adty informed of developments. (C. in C.E.I. 1000Z/20 to N.O.I.C. E. Africa & Zanzibar).

Convoy
Escorts.

My 1834B/10 para 3; please confirm that escort is available for fast convoys (ILE DE FRANCE, MAURETANIA and NIEUW AMSTERDAM), referred to in para 3 (ii) of D. of S.T's 0300B/8, and also slow convoys referred to in para 3 (iii) of that signal. (D.O.D.(F) 1047B/20 to C. in C.E.I).

SHOREHAM.
ANTENOR.

Your 0705/19 not to S.N.O. Persian Gulf and Admiralty. SHOREHAM is to be sailed with BP 4 and ANTENOR to Persian Gulf on 23/5. inner Persian Gulf Division temporarily. SHOREHAM is to escort BP 4 to Rooka after ANTENOR parts company. (C. in C.E.I. 1450Z/20 to N.O.I.C. Bombay).

China.

Chinese
Officers
in R.N.

I have received from Admiral Chen through Chinese Military Mission now in Malaya a request that British Govt. will accept in principle a proposal that Chinese Naval Officers should serve in H.M. Ships so as to intensify cordial relations between the two countries. These Officers would be trained. Officers available to serve in any part of the world, to gain experience or for service. (C. in C. China, 0351Z/20 to Admty).

German Ships.

The following German Ships departed on 18/5:- Coquimbo QUITO (563), BOGOTA (84); Antogagasta, RHAKOTIS (576) Talcahuano FRANKFURT (212). (Capt. O.S. Singapore, 0413Z/20 to Admty).

/Thailand.....

SECRET

MESSAGE

1202/20th May.

IN

From Military Attache, Teheran.

Date 21.5.41.

Recd. 1905

CIPHER.

Addressed The War Office, Repeated C. in C. India.

14769. 663 cipher 20/5.
Situation report.

1. Shah in Tehran.
2. Minister of Finance Khosroui reported pro Soviet suddenly dismissed and Gulshayan reported pro German appointed to officiate. Comment. This (?Change) had been anticipated but may well have been due to German pressure.
3. Party of 30 German engineers for Kerej blast furnaces entered Iran via Julfa recently.
4. German pressure being exerted on Iran Government to take over Military Control of oilfields - Abadan area to forestall British and for cancel British concession.
5. Our failure to clear up Iraq situation causing adverse comment and loss in prestige.
6. Kinninmonth U.K. commercial corporation chief representative here reported to be in prison at Bagdad where he had gone to negotiate business for Iran Government.

1202/20.

Recd. from War Office 2120/22.

Advance copy Ops, O.D. & O.I.C.

1st Lord
 1st S.L.
 4th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 Nav. Sec.
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 P.A.S. (S)
 Ops (4)
 O.D. (5)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D. of P. (3)
 M. (3)
 O.I.C. (2)
 D.S.D. 9.
 E.P.S.
 Admiral Bellairs
 I.P. (3)
 W.D.

631

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. (contd).

Thailand.

Re supply of oil. (C. in C. China, 0745Z/20 to Brit. Min, Bangkok).

N.E.I. Navy prepared to intercept French Ships.

Naval C. in C. N.E.I. has suggested that Dutch Naval vessels should endeavour to intercept French Ships bound for unoccupied French Madagascar Reunion. He realizes we may not wish on political grounds to effect interception ourselves but Dutch are quite prepared to do so. They also think some such action by them might mean effective release of Dutch Ships RHEA, PLUTO at present held up by French in Algiers and Oran. I have concurred this suggestion and will supply Dutch with all available information. (C. in C. China, 0943Z/20 to Admty.).

LIVERPOOL.

Sailed from Singapore 20/5 for Manila. (S.O.I. Singapore, 1047Z/20 to Admty.).

BATHURST LISMORE.

To be sailed to Aden as soon as possible. R.A. Malaya is to report if it has been possible to supply them with any close range A.A. armament. (V.C.N.S. 1919B/20 to C. in C. China, etc).

BUFFALO loss.

Your 11332/5/4. Signal result Board of Inquiry loss of BUFFALO. Confirm Airey was on duty and state whether deceased was in any way to blame for loss of ship. (Head of P.M. 2216B/20 to C. in C. China).

America & West Indies.

A/S Convoy Escorts.

We are considering dispositions which would be required in event of A/S convoy escort being needed in the Newfoundland focal area. It would be of assistance to know how many of your corvettes are now available for duty on the Eastern seaboard and numbers likely to become available during next six months. (V.C.N.S. 0016B/20 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa). Reply: 2108Z/21, Operations Volume.

/"Q".....

632

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies Contd.

"Q" Report
CONTRACTOR.

Received at 1050 G.M.T/19 from Commodore O.B. 322. QQQ steamship CONTRACTOR 048° 25' N., 046° 50' W. signal very weak and no station heard to answer or repeat. (S.O. 12th Escort Group, 0559/20 to C. in C. W.A.)

DUNELMIA
"Q" Report.

Your 1248B/19. Following from DUNELMIA (begins) Vessel large passenger type, did not give correct identification procedure, asked destination and departure. We gave false reply and prepared action. Challenged and he again refused to identify. He stated satisfied British and ordered to proceed. Cancel QQQQ at 0155 and 0255 as indicated A.M.S.I. (ends) (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1519Z/20 and to Admty.)

St. Johns
N.F. as
A/S Base.

Owing to U-boats operating so far to the Westward, we are now forced to use a base on the Western side of the Atlantic for escorting destroyers and corvettes. We should like to use St. Johns and request your views as to whether fog conditions will permit of this. If St. Johns is not practicable what is the nearest base further West that could be used? (1st. S.L.1717B/20 to N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F).
Your 1717B/20. St. Johns N.F. is defended and has best facilities in Newfoundland. Average fog not more than two to three days per month. New tank holding 4,000 tons Admiralty fuel will be ready by 1/6. Alternative would be Botwood, less fog but not yet defended and without Admiralty fuel oil as yet and ice bound from December to May. Harbours on south coast more fog, undefended, without facilities. Request information whether enquiries should be made for wharfage and storage facilities at St. Johns N.F. as all those available are privately owned. (N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F. 2232Z/20 to Admty.)

/Dakar.....

633

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. (contd).

Dakar
Oil Stocks.

Following from War Dept. From U.S. Consul -Dakar 14/5. (Details of petrol stocks and civilian consumption) (N.A. Washington. 1722/20, to Admty.).

Trade with
Martinique.

Your 0951/20/4 and 1001/18/5. Question of co-operation with regard to Dutch shipping is being taken up with Dutch Govt. It is confirmed that no Norwegian shipping will be visiting these ports. (D.T.D. 1722B/20 to C. in C.A.W.I).

Ex. U.S.
Cutters.

Departure WALNEY, SENNEN, TOTLAND.
(S.O.I. Halifax, 1804Z/20 to Admty etc).

634

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

STARCROSS.

British, 4662 tons, on passage from Lagos to Hull in Convoy S.L. 73 with a cargo of West African produce, torpedoed at 0438/20 about 400 miles W. of Valencia. (D.S. 623 20/5).

STARCROSS 51.48 N. 20.48 W. torpedoed 0237/20. (Valentia Radio, T.H.I. 0340/20). (Liverpool, T.O.R. 0438/20).

Report if STARCROSS still afloat and whether salvable. (C. in C.W.A. 1014B/20 to BOADICEA).

Your 1014B/20. STARCROSS still afloat.

Master does not consider salvable as everything forward of engine room is flooded.

First attempt at towing has failed. Ship sinking slowly. (ST. FRANCIS, 1105/20 to C. in C.W.A).

STARCROSS sank 1157B/20. Master all Officers and men on board SAINT FRANCIS.

Result of counter attack on U Boat not known but large quantities of diesel oil seen at daylight. Am rejoining convoy Following received from H.M.S. EGRET, escort of one destroyer one sloop 2 corvettes 1 trawler considered inadequate for SL 73.

Urgently request reinforcements. (ST. FRANCIS 1204/20 to C. in C.W.A).

A/C Report of STARCROSS, rescues, and direction of destroyer to U/B, which was attacked 0815. (A.C.H.Q. Liverpool 1617/20 to Admty) See Lion Copy. ST. FRANCIS report of counter-attack, see ST. FRANCIS 1307B/20 in S/M's Attacked.

JAVANESE PRINCE.

British, 8593 tons, independent. Reported sunk p.m./20 by torpedo, 59.46 N, 10.45 W., 300° Butt of Lewis 155'. (D.S. 624, 21/5) (No signal received in W.D).

EMPIRE CLOUD
BENGORE HEAD
(torpedoed 9/5).

Arrived ^{Greenock} tug THAMES towing EMPIRE CLOUD escorted by ST. APOLLO with 12 survivors from BENGORE HEAD. 0831B/20.

/GAND.....

MESSAGE

1617/20 May IN

634A.

From A.C.H.Q. Liverpool.

Date 20.5.41.
Recd. 1916.

P/L BY T/P

Addressed Admiralty for O.I.C. only.

IMMEDIATE. (Ship) Form Orange NOTWT.

A Lough Erne LE/01/30/5.

B nil

C Report of J/209
1700/19

Escort of S L 73 (A/S)

1753 Sighted 1 MV 600 tons with "Eire" and flag on
each side FC DU 0544 180-9

2033 C/V in distance escorted by Catalina. A/C
about 30 MV -- RNWM 4223 COR 200 8

2120 2 DR in RNYE C537 COR 220 15

DR signalled by V/S "Can you find C/V about 40
miles ahead for me please"?

2220 Met SL 73 no escort 38 MV and 1 straggler
HJTY 5012 COR 030 -- 7 recognition by V/S from 15
miles. Carried out A/S sweep visibility 20 miles.

2336. Returned to 2 DR ahead, and directed them to
C/V.

0414/20 Lost C/V in darkness visibility about 500
feet.

0425 Star shells seen, then two white rockets,
which enable A/C to locate C/V again more star shells
at intervals.

0430. Dropped parachute flare from 1000 feet, nothing
seen.

0435 Three or four explosions seen on water.

0440 Dropped parachute flare from 700 feet over
Flickering light. Light seen to come from MV other
MVs in convoy seen nearby.

0445. Dropped parachute flare from 500 feet, nothing
seen.

0447 Signalled to base "C/V CHILD being attacked by
U Boat."

0450 Firing of star shells ceased, visibility
almost zero C/V lost, circled till dawn.

0450 Intercepted message "SSS 51 degs. 48 N. 20
degs. 48 W STARCROSS torpedoed 0235" (GMT).

0655. Sighted two large oil patches HJTY 4636 COR
circled to investigate. No wreckage or bubbles.

0705. Located STARCROSS heavily down by bows.
DR193 standing by in HJTY 4642 COR and picked up one
boat load of crew.

0710. Signal from 193 "Have you seen any patches of
oil as result of my D/C attacks".

A/C replied "Yes I can direct you to them"

193 signalled "Wait till I have picked up survivors"

A/C signalled "I must return to base soon".

/ 0720 193

0720. 193 signalled " I have picked up all survivors. Please inform C/V escort".
 0750. Started 193 towards oil patches returned to STARCROSS second lifeboat still alongside and some crew on deck A/C took photographs.
 0805. Reported remaining boat to 193.
 0810 Directed 193 to oil patches.
 0815. Signal from 193 " I think we bent him"
 0815. - 0905. Maintained contact between 193 and STARCROSS
 0910. 193 rejoined STARCROSS and signalled "Thank you" for assistance and for standing by ST. FRANCIS to C. in C. Western Approaches" All crew on board, trying to tow STARCROSS by the head 200 tons fuel remaining 0650"
 1100 Signalled to Base "L 180" A/C landed 1355

D. (A) 52 degs 15 N 19 degs 45 W height 100
 (B) 0810
 (C) Cloudy haze and fog
 10/10 ST 200
 3-5
 20 KPS from 280
 (D) 1021 +14 moderate.
 E Nil

1st Lord.	1617/20
1st S.L.	
4th S.L.	
5th S.L.	A.H.Q.H.F.
A.C.N.S.(H)	I.M.N.G.
A.C.N.S.(T)(2)	D.N.A.D.
Parl Sec.	D. of P.(3)
Nav. Sec.	D.M.S.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	D.M.S. Basement.
D.S.D. 9	D.T.S.D.
M.(6)	D.D.T.M.
D.N.I.(4)	Hydrog.(2)
D.T.D.(M)	D. of N.
Car. Holbrook.	Salvage Dept.
D.T.M.	Ops.(4)
D. of S.T.	O.D.(5)
O.I.C.(2)	D.T.D.(4)
D..../.S.W.	D.A.A.W.
I.P.(5)	
W.D.	
Press Division.	
C.C.R.T.	

635

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (contd). *5086 in Lloyd's.

GAND.
(torpedoed 10/5)
Wakeless
Periscope.

Belgian S.S. GAND^{*4974} on Charter to Ministry of Shipping torpedoed after dispersal of OB 318 at 2045Z/10 in 057° 54' N. 037° 34' W. Later sunk by gunfire. All C.B's seen to sink in weighted bag. 1 casualty. Boats shelled and machine gunned. U-Boat fitted with wakeless periscope. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1301/20 to Admty.).

CITY OF SHANGHAI
(torpedoed 10/5)

Pernambuco reports that Argentine ship JOSEPHINEAS has landed there survivors of British Ship CITY OF SHANGHAI, torpedoed by submarine in 6° 15' N. 28° 5' 30" W. on 10/5. (S.O.I. Montevideo 1404Z/20 to S.A.D. A & W.I. Stn).

SAN FELIX.

Intercepted at 1453 G.M.T. SSSS 57.32 N. 40.21 W. SAN FELIX torpedoed, 1448/20. (Port Patrick Radio, 1453/20 to Navy charge Greenock) (Halifax W/T, 1500Z/20). SAN FELIX tanker, 13,037 tons, bound from Clyde for Curacao, and had dispersed from Convoy O.B. 322 early on 20/5 (D.S. 624).

DAPHNE.
(torpedoed 3/4)

Finnish, 1939 tons, which sailed from Newport News on 19/3, and overdue at Petsamo, now known to have been torpedoed on 3/4. (D.S. 624, 21/5).

8 Ships Sunk in H.X. 126 (escort AURANIA).

NORMAN MONARCH
HARPAGUS.
(H.X. 126)

NORMAN MONARCH and HARPAGUS torpedoed in 056° 47' N. 040° 55' W. at 0250 G.M.T. (AURANIA, 0631Z/20 to Admty.). HARPAGUS 058° 03' N. 040° 30' W. 030° 9. All crew of NORMAN MONARCH on board. Some of convoy believed to be to WNW. BURWELL searching in that direction. Am proceeding to (?search to) southward. (BURNHAM 1801Z/20 to C. in C.W.A.).

/DARLINGTON.....

636

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

8 Ships Sunk in H.X. 126 (escort AURANIA) Ctd.

DARLINGTON
COURT.
BRITISH
SECURITY.

57.28 N., 41.07 W., DARLINGTON COURT,
BRITISH SECURITY, torpedoed. (Valentia
Radio, 1300/20).
Following from Resolution Island 1300/20
G.M.T. SSS 57° 28' N. 41° 07' W. DARLINGTON
COURT torpedoed bearing 97 1/2, uncalibrated
(ends) (Naval, Ottawa, 1442Z/20 to Admty).

H.X. 126.

Total 8 ships in H.X. 126 sunk so far.
Convoy scattered. My P.C. and S. 057° 41' N
041° 29' W., 032° 13 knots. (AURANIA 1444Z/20
to Admty. etc.)

Unknown
ship.

Following from Resolution (begins) 1448/20
G.M.T. SSSS 57° 36' N. 40° 25' W. Torpedoed,
name missed (Ends) Bearing 97= 1/2
uncalibrated. (Naval Ottawa 1516Z/20 to Admty)

ROTHERMERE.

SSSS. ROTHERMERE torpedoed 55.53 N. 42.30 W
position doubtful. (Valentia Radio 1558/20).
SSSS 1611Z/20 57.53 N. 41.39 W. ROTHERMERE
torpedoed 1548/20. (Cape Race Radio, 1634Z/20)

Convoy
Scattered.

H.X. 126 has scattered. BULLDOG and 3rd
Escort Group joining S.C. 31. MALCOLM and
12th Escort Group endeavouring to reform
H.X. 126 detailing Corvette to pick up
survivors. BRITISH SECURITY and DARLINGTON
COURT torpedoed 057° 28' N. 041° 07' W.
(C. in C.W.A. 1558B/20 to MALCOLM, BULLDOG).

JOHN P.
PEDERSEN.

(Norwegian tanker on Govt. service, 6128 tons)
SSSS PEDERSEN torpedoed, no position given.
(Malin Head, 1624/20).

GLENBEG.

57.57 N. 41.58 W. GLENBEG sighted
suspicious object, probably submarine on
surface 1530/20 (ends). (Valentia Radio
1646/20 to Admty.).

/Detach.....

War Diary.20.5.1941.
Tuesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.8 Ships Sunk in H.X. 126 (escort AURANIA) Ctd.

Detach HELIOTROPE or another corvette to proceed with all despatch to take HONTESTROOM in company to position of torpedoed ships SAN FELIX 057° 32' N. 040° 21' W. DARLINGTON-COURT and BRITISH INTEGRITY(?BRITISH SECURITY) 057° 28' N. 041° 07' W. ROTHERMERE 057° 53' N. 041° 39' W. Pick up (? survivors) report progress. Four other ships torpedoed positions not yet known. (S.O. 12th Escort Group 1821Z/20 to MALLOW, HELIOTROPE).

Take charge of corvettes and trawlers and endeavour to protect scattered ships of H.X. 126, detaching what ships you consider necessary. All ships endeavour to regain route by position 061° 00' N. 036° 00' W. Bring merchant ships. Report progress. (S.O. 12th Escort Group, 1841Z/20 to MALLOW). Endeavour to protect scattered ships acting as far as possible in accordance with my 1841Z/20. (S.O. 12th Escort Group, 1905Z/20 to BURNHAM).

464 NORTHERN GEM and NORTHERN WAVE are to search area for ships torpedoed in H.X. 126 under orders of Corvette detailed by MALCOLM. Corvette detailed is to report her name. A most thorough search for all survivors is to be made, trawlers using corvette as wireless link if they have difficulty in communicating with C. in C.W.A. HONTESTROOM is to assist but is to be escorted. (C. in C. W.A. 1910B/20 to MALLOW, VERBENA, ARABIS, HONTESTROOM, HELIOTROPE, NORTHERN WAVE, NORTHERN GEM).

Your 1910B/20 ARABIS detailed. (S.O. 12th Escort Group 2004Z/20 to C. in C. W.A). Following from Resolution Island (begins) 1812 G.M.T. SSSS 99 degrees no particulars. Interference (ends) (Naval Ottawa 1940Z/20 to Admty.)

Following from Resolution Island:- 1620 G.M.T. "PEDERSEN torpedoed" No position given, no bearings signals too short. Also 1645 G.M.T. "SSS 57° 57' N. 41° 58' W. GLENBEG sighted suspicious object, probably submarine on surface at 1530/20" Bearing 99° (Ends)-(Naval Ottawa 1957Z/20 to Admty.).

War Diary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Your 1146B and My 0601Z (N.T. in W.D) MALCOLM proceeding to H.X. 126. SCIMITAR proceeding to fuel. My P.C. and S. are 060° 10' N. 036° 55' W. 218° 12 knots. (S.O. 12th Escort Group 1131Z/20 to C. in C W.A).

1150Z.

One S/M bearing 113 distance 8 miles course 035° position 313° 57' N. 41° W. 19 S. (AURANIA, 1150Z/20 to Admty.) My 1150Z, S/M diving. (AURANIA 1213Z/20). AURANIA's 1150Z. Am proceeding with BURWELL MALLOW following with remainder. (BURNHAM 1259Z/20 to C. in C.W.A). Following received from AURANIA (quotes 1150Z/20 and 1213Z/20) (C. in C.W.A. 1522B/20 to WOLFE). P.C. and S. BURNHAM (? BURWELL) 058° 09' N. 040° 13' W. 218° 27 knots. MALCOLM 059° 16' N. 038° 18' W. 218° 27 knots. 35% fuel remaining MALLOW with corvette, trawler and HONTESTROOM 058° 42' N. 039° 03' W. 214° 10½ knots. (S.O. 12th Escort Group, 1651Z/20 to C. in C W.A).

By NICOYA
1600 G.M.T.

Following has been read. SSSS 1800 G.M.T. 57.56 N. 40.00 W. Sighted Submarine on surface. (NICOYA 1813/20 Valentia Radio 1813/20). I went to position given NICOYA found nothing. Present P.C. and S. 058° 15' 040° 05' 037° 10 with DORELIAN joined ship ahead. Saw no other ship to Southward. (BURNHAM 2129Z/20 to MALCOLM).

0912.

Admty. report an Italian U-boat probably carrying out tests off the Mouth of the Gironde River at 0912/20. One Beaufort of 217 Squadron armed with 4 X 250 lbs A/S bombs and 2 X 250 lbs. GP bombs is to locate and destroy. Aircraft is to approach position from the West. Returning northwestwards along French Coast to attack enemy shipping in the event of the U-Boat not being located. (Plymouth A.H.Q. 1115/20 to Admty.)

Estimated U/B dispositions. (D.D.I.C. 1213B/20) (F.O.S. 1444B/20).

WarDDiary.

20.5.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. (contd).

2340.

Submerged submarine bearing 165 distance 1 miles course unknown my position 52.50 N. 18.17 W. (ST. FRANCIS, 2340/20 to Admty.).

Submarines Attacked.

By ST.
FRANCIS.

(ST. FRANCIS, 1204/20 A.C.H.Q. Liverpool 1617/20) See Ships Attacked.

C.A.F.O. 380/41.

(A) Contact obtained at 0454 approx. 3 miles 270° from STARCROSS. 2 Counter attacks at 0510B and 0518B in approx. position 279° 4 miles from STARCROSS. Result unknown but very large quantity of Diesel oil seen on surface at daylight.

(B) Portside forward. Yes.

(C) Zigsag 3000 yards from Port beam of STARCROSS. 2 escorts only present.

(D) STARCROSS Column pendant 14. Last ship of port column. Sunk at 1157B.

(E) 0405B/20 in 051° 48' N. 020° 47' 30" W.

(F) Course 080° from 0330B/20. No Zigzagging.

(G) Weatherovercast sea slight Visibility 2½ mls.

(L) At 0235 heard noise very similar to echoing sound of machines. Noise varied as from deep to shallow set and was not recognized as coming from Submarine. Investigated off Port Beam of convoy until 0345. No echo obtained extent of target varied from 30° to Starboard side. Noise classified as non-submarine and rejoined convoy. U-Boat on the surface approached astern between ST. FRANCIS and STARCROSS 2 torpedoes fired 1 hitting. (ST. FRANCIS 1307B/20 to Admty. C. in C.W.A).

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS | - | Policy |
| (Classification | - | Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects) | - | Movements |
| | - | Operations |
| | - | Allied Air Activity |
| | - | Enemy Air Activity |
| | - | Mining |
| | - | Enemy Intelligence |
| | - | U-Boats |
| | - | Navigational |
| | - | Technical |
| | - | Casualties and Defects |
| | - | Shipping and Convoys |
|
 | | |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - | North Atlantic |
| (Classification | - | South Atlantic |
| by stations) | - | Mediterranean |
| | - | East Indies |
| | - | America and West Indies |
| | - | Australia and New Zealand |
| | - | U-Boat Campaign |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

640

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

SUFFOLK left Denmark Strait Patrol this morning for Hvalfjord to fuel, after which she is to join F.O.1st C.S.

Enemy
main
Units.

A BISMARCK class battleship and a HIPPER class cruiser were seen at Bergen by aircraft R/C at 1550B/21. A destroyer, 9 large merchant vessels and 6 small craft were also reported.

MINERVE is to patrol near 61° 55' N. 5° 15' E and P.31 west of Stadlandet.

Aircraft were despatched to attack during dark hours tonight, but failed to locate the enemy ships.

Cruisers'
aircraft.

9 Home Fleet cruisers are to have their I.E. complements increased to 2 Walrus provided from 701 Squadron which is to be disbanded.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command Aircraft attacked Heligoland this afternoon.

Owing to the weather all aerodromes on the west coast became unserviceable during the forenoon, so that patrols and escorts had to be recalled.

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Enemy Air Operations.

N.W. Approaches Convoy O.B. 324 reported being attacked at 0815 in 58° 54' N. 8° 47' W. There is no report of damage.

-An enemy aircraft reconnoitred the Thorshaven area today and machine gunned the H.F. D/F Station. Sumbo Sydero village was also machine gunned.

Mining.

Milford Haven was closed at 0241 owing to suspected minelaying.

South Atlantic.

S.S. ZAMZAM.

The Egyptian ZAMZAM left Pernambuco on 9/4 and was due at Capetown on 21/4. On 13/5 the London Agents were informed that the ship was missing, presumed lost. On 7/5 C. in C.S.A. was informed that the ship may have been attacked by a raider. A German broadcast, which is not confirmed states that passengers and crew have landed in occupied France.

642

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

French
Naval
Units.

It is reported that 3 S/M's and other French naval units left Beirut a.m./19 for an unknown destination. A later report indicates the possibility that the ships are engaged on operations.

Malta.

Luqa Aerodrome was bombed today and some of our aircraft were damaged and destroyed.

Operation
"Splice".

S.O. Force H. reported on this operation today. 5 Fulmars and 47 Hurricanes arrived at Malta. One Hurricane was lost in the sea off Cape Bon, cause unknown, and one Hurricane was destroyed after landing by air raid. "Lack of endurance and unreliability of Fulmars for this type of operation clearly demonstrated".

Enemy force
attacked.

URGE today attacked a force of 2 CONDOTTIERI cruisers and 3 or 4 destroyers in 35° 30' N. 12° 25' E, north of Lampedusa. It is reported that one destroyer was sunk.

Attack on Crete.

Bombardment
of Scarpanto.

Capt. (D) 14 and 2 destroyers bombarded Scarpanto early today.

Air attack
on Greek
air bases.

Six, out of 10 Wellingtons despatched last night bombed Molaai, Eleusis, Menidi and Toplia aerodromes which the Germans are using as bases for the present operations against Crete.

The enemy are reported to be preparing a landing ground in Milos.

/Force C.....

643

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Force C.

Force C. was attacked last night in Kaso Channel by torpedo carrying aircraft and by E. boats. No damage was caused to our ships, but JUNO sank two E boats.

JUNO sunk.

The force was continuously and heavily bombed from 0950 onwards. At 1251 JUNO was sunk by bombing in $34^{\circ} 35' N. 26^{\circ} 34' E$ (off the S.E. end of Crete) CARLISLE joined the force early in the afternoon.

RORQUAL last night sank by gunfire 2 caiques full of enemy troops.

The 5th D.F. left Malta at dusk to join the forces operating off Crete.

Suda Bay Area.

E-boats are reported to have operated in Kissamo Bay last night.

R.A. (D) Med. covering the Maleme Canea area reported this morning that his force had been subjected to considerable dive bombing since dawn and that AJAX had been damaged.

Light German Naval units were reported in $35^{\circ} 40' N. 23^{\circ} 25' E.$ at 0850.

More troops were dropped in the Maleme area from 0950 and 1615, and there was heavy bombing at 1000. The enemy are reported to be preparing a landing ground at Aliakanon S.W. of Canea.

KOS 21 and ~~22~~. SYVERN were heavily attacked at 1315 (presumed in Kissamo Bay) *by E-Boats*. At 1530 naval armament dumps was hit and exploded.

At 2316 the enemy held Maleme Aerodrome and the area to the west.

/Candia.....

644

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Candia
Area.

At 0200 it was reported that four ships were landing troops in a bay west of Candia.

At 1820C the port of Heraklion and part of the town were in the hands of the enemy.

Enemy
Convoys.

At 1600 the approximate positions of the enemy convoys were reported to be as follows:-

- (a) 13 ships 5 miles north of Polykandio.
- (b) 15 ships with 3 T.B.D's in 37° N. 24° 10' E. course 190° (N.W. of Milos).
- (c) 9 ships with T.B.D. in 36° N. 24° 20' E. (about 30 miles N. of Suda Bay).
- (d) Convoy escorted by 2 destroyers in 37° N 25° 55' E. (This is possibly the convoy of 17 ships reported at 1820 20 miles North of Canea Bay, steering south).
- (e) 20 fishing vessels escorted by A/C in 36° 10' N. 24° 0' E.

America & West Indies.

Atlantic
convoy
escorts.

The R.C.N. offer to undertake the task of A/S convoy escorts in the western part of the North Atlantic.

SHEHERAZADE
intercepted.

DIOMEDE intercepted French tanker SHEHERAZADE at 0700Z today, 800 miles east of Bermuda, whithershe is being sent.

Unprecedented air activity is reported at Martinique.

645

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign.

Attack on
H.X. 126.

The attack on H.X. 126 continued today. The Dutch S.S. ELUSA is reported torpedoed early this morning in 59° 0' N. 38° 5' W. Survivors from S.S. COCKAPONSET were picked up today in 57° 20' N. 41° 52' W. approx.

S.S. MARCONI was torpedoed today. CHURCHILL landed survivors, all in a serious condition at St. Johns N.F. on 30/5.

South
Atlantic.

An unknown ship reported being torpedoed at 2147 G.M.T. today in 6° 25' N. 23° 0' W. This is possibly S.S. TEWKESBURY, reported torpedoed in 6° 0' N. 24° 0' W.

The Master of S.S. BERKEL reports that he engaged a submarine on 21/4 in 53° 38' N. 17° 29' W. and considers the submarine was badly damaged by the stern, although it managed to submerge.

646

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

W.O. and
A.M. Vessels.

It is requested that all vessels operating under your control may be instructed that before making a coastal passage they are to obtain the latest routing instructions. 2. Captains of such vessels should also be acquainted and adhere to the traffic regulations of the port of arrival. (D.of.L.D. 0841B/21 to War Office and Air Ministry.) Military and Air Force authorities have been asked to instruct Captains of all vessels operating under their control that, before making a coastal passage, they are to obtain the latest routing and traffic instructions. 2. Naval authorities are to ensure that these have been applied for before such vessels are allowed to leave harbour. (D.of.L.D. 1150B/21.)

BLACK SWAN.
STORK.

Your 1227B/20. BLACK SWAN arrived Scapa 16th and STORK 19th May. Both these ships are newly commissioned and have a large percentage of their ships companies who have never been to sea. Though every endeavour will be made to work up these ships as quickly as possible it is not anticipated they will complete before 12/6. (R.A.D. 1115B/21 to C.in C. W.A.)

Defence of U.K.

Faroes A/A
Defences of
Thorshaven.

One Heinkel aircraft reconnoitred Thorshaven Area Air operation 0915 to 0945 today. High frequency D/F Station was circled three times at low altitude and machine gunned. No casualties or damage or attack elsewhere. In view of importance of this station request adequate A/A protection Thorshaven area may be regarded as a priority allocation. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1106B/21 to A.C.O.S.) Your 1533/9. It has been decided that the provision of A.A. defences for Thorshaven is not justifiable at present. (D.of.L.D. 1740D/21 to A.C.O.S.)

/Isle of Wight

647

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K. (contd.)

Isle of Wight.
Net Defences.

A.M. 2219/9/4.1. Intend sailing ATALANTA
0800/22 to commence laying defences Isle
of Wight. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1813B/21)

Movements.

REPULSE.

R.A.D. H.F. is to sail 3 destroyers, as
soon as ready, to Clyde as A/S Screen for
REPULSE. REPULSE, screened by these
destroyers, is then to proceed Scapa with
all convenient despatch. (C.in C.H.F.
2353B/21.)

Operations.

IRIS.

Cable ship IRIS at present loading cable at
Dalmuir will be ready to sail about 23/5
to lay a cable between Benbecula and Loch
Slapin.

2. Request you will arrange such escort or
protection as you consider necessary during
these operations.

3. IRIS will proceed to Port Z.A. on com-
pletion to lay another cable. (D.O.D.H.
0036B/21 to C.in C. W.A.)

SUFFOLK.

SUFFOLK is to leave patrol and proceed to
Hvalfjord. (C. in C.H.F. 1042B/21)
SUFFOLK is to join F.O.C. 1st C.S. as soon
as refuelled. (C. in C. H.F. 2004B/21)

3rd D.F.

Return to Scapa on reaching Butt of Lewis.
(C. in C.W.A. 1557B/21 to 3rd D.F.)

/Enemy

648

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.(contd.)

see p 654

Enemy
Battleship and
Cruiser at
Bergen.

Admiralty 1717B/21. If you can possibly spare P.31 request she may be sailed forthwith and proceed with despatch to patrol 25 miles West of Stadlandet. (F.O.S. 1826B/21 to C. in C. H.F.)

BISMARCK and *HIPPER sighted at Bergen today. Proceed to patrol in vicinity of 61° 53' N. 03° 15' E. proceeding with despatch when it is reasonable to do so. T.B.R. arranged east of 03° E. between 58° N. and 62° N. (F.O.S. 1853B/21 to MINERVE.) *PRINZ EUGEN ~~sighted~~.

Request Capt. (D) 3 and his Destroyers may be ordered as quickly as possible to proceed to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F. 1950B/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

Your 1826B/21. Entirely concur.
→ (C. in C. H.F. 2045B/21 to F.O.S.)

To A.C.O.S. Regret inconvenience. ARETHUSA is to remain at Hval Fiord at disposal of F.O.C.1st C.S. (C. in C. H.F. 2124B/21 to ARETHUSA)

MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM proceed to Skaabay Fjord Faroes, with all convenient despatch. After refuelling resume patrol. (C. in C. H.F. 2136B/21)

→ P.31 sailed, escort HAMLET passing Switha Gate at 2300/21 eastward of Orkneys and Shetland to position 61° N. 0° 30' E. thence routed 62° 20' N. 2° 50' E. 62° 20' N. 4° E. (A.C.O.S. 2301B/21, 2102/21)

649

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

MARMION
Fighter
protection.

Intend sailing paddle M/S MARMION in tow of tug KENIA escorted by an A/S trawler at 0600/22 to Southend, speed of advance 6 knots. Request fighter protection. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0110B/21) ~~see~~ p.651

Patrols.

Cancel my 2126/20. (C. in C. Rosyth 0600/21) Following air patrols being flown today taking off 0700 ~~BEAT, STAB, TROST.~~ (C. in C. Rosyth 0614/21.)

Special R/C of Trondheim being carried out a.m. today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0804/21)

My 0614/21. Add Patrol ^{"Stand"}~~STAND~~ taking off about 1030. (C. in C. Rosyth 0950/21)

R/C Trondheim returned owing to mechanical failure. Further attempt being made p.m. today. Patrol ~~STAND~~ cancelled owing to lack of cloud cover but area will be covered by P.R.V. R/C. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1202/21)

Admiralty's 1717/21. Following R/C's will take place at first light/22, ~~TROST, STAB, St. C, BEAT, STAND:~~ (C. in C. Rosyth 2302/21.)

701 Squadron
to disband.
I.E. complements
of ships.

C. in C. H.F. 1203/17, C. in C. Coastal Commands 0930/16 and Admiralty's 1408/15. 701 Squadron is to be withdrawn forthwith from operations under Coastal Command and are to proceed to Hatston where Squadron is to be disbanded. The I.E. complements of ships addressed will then be increased to two Walrus. Aircraft and crews are to proceed to Hatston as soon as possible, but the observer position does not at present admit of a second observer being appointed to each ship. 1504/3/1 is cancelled. (D.N.A.D. 1120B/21)

/Escorts

650

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd.)

Escorts.

Expect air escort by Ansons tomorrow 22nd and by Hudsons throughout 23rd. Blenheims will be standing by at Sumburgh on 23rd to reinforce escort if Focke-Wulf activity develops. (C. in C. Rosyth 1250/21 to R.A.M.)

Unable to continue air escort owing to weather. (C. in C. Plymouth 1536/21 to TYNEDALE)

Enemy Warships at Bergen.

Admiralty's 1603/21. 6 Whitley and 10 Hudson Aircraft detailed to attack during dark hours tonight. (C. in C. Rosyth 1824/21)

651

War Diary

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Air Activity

JOSEFINA
THORDEN
(Bombed 19/5)

Connected and towing JOSEFINA THORDEN. Tow parted, ship steering badly, impossible make fast present conditions. Ship still burning. Request instructions. (BRIGAND 0021/21)
Your 0021/21. Continue standing by and endeavour to pass tow when conditions permit. (A.C.O.S. 0154B/21 to BRIGAND)
Your 0754. Unidentified aircraft sighted at 1030B/21 steering N.W. JOSEFINA THORDEN's fire appears to be out. Ship has heavy list to starboard. Tugs will connect as soon as practicable. Position D.R. 062° 11' N., 009° 28' W. (NORTHERN CHIEF 1200B/21)

Convoy
O.B. Even.

Even convoy O.B. is being attacked by aircraft in 58° 54' N., 8° 47' W. (Plymouth, 0815/21.)

MARMION
(Bombed 9/4)

My 0110/21. Postponed 48 hours. Request similar arrangements be made. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1020B/21)
MARMION refloated at High water and berthed Trinity Pier. (Salvage Officer Harwich 1230/21) *See p. 649*

ARCHANGEL
(Bombed 16/5)

Your 1957B/20. ARCHANGEL was sailed to arrived outer buoy Aberdeen at 0400/17 giving her an estimated position about 25 miles North of Kinnairds Head one hour after sunset. With fighter and A/A destroyer escort this was considered safe. It is desirable to adhere to the weekly relief programme and a daylight passage would have entailed a delay of at least twelve hours. (A.C.O.S. 1100/21 to Admty.)
My 1227/17. Chief Salvage Officer Scotland recommends no further action possible to salvage SS ARCHANGEL and that vessel would be considered a constructive total loss. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1159/21)

/A/C shot down.....

652

War Diary

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Air Activity-Contd.

A/C shot down
by UMGENI

UMGENI 8180 tons shot down F.W. aircraft
55° 10' N., 17° 10' W. at 0545 G.M.T./19
5 survivors rescued and landed Belfast.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1315B/21)

Faeroes
Bombed.

German aircraft un-specified type machine
gunned village Sumbo Sydero at 1950 today.
Slightly injured 2 children. (N.O.I.C.
Faeroes, 2015B/21)

SAN FABIAN

(British Tanker, 13,031 tons) Damaged
during recent Air-Raids at Liverpool.
(D.S. 624)

BLUESTONE

(British Passenger Steamer, 106 tons)
Constructive Total Loss by Air Attacks
on London (D.S. 624)

Mining

Milford Haven

Port is closed owing to suspected
minelaying. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven
0241/21)

S.N. 64.

Departure Port Z.A. SCOTT. (TRELAWNEY
0805/21)
R.A.M. 1237B/20. Concur. (C. in C. H.F.
1000B/21)
My 1237/20. Item Z. Delete Code word.
(R.A.M. 1231/21)
Paragraph 2 of my 1057 B 20 is cancelled.
Escort is not now available for operation
S.N. 64. (C. in C. H.F. 2356B/21)

/S.N. 66.....

War Diary

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Mining-Contd.

S.N. 66.)
S.N. 67. A.)
S.N. 67. B.)
S.N. 70.)

Propose to carry out after S.N. 64 as follows. Particulars. (R.A.M.L. 1014/21) See Operations Volume.

Thames Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 0026/21/5 by LL Trawlers in position 214° B. 5 2 cables. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1049/21)

→ B.S. 57.

Your 2304B/20. Intend to sail 1950 today to lay at 0245/22. (PLOVER 1101B/21 to C. in C. Nore)

P.W. 10.

Weather permitting carry out Operation P.W. 10 tonight. (With P.D.M. settings given in my 1114/22/4) Report boats detailed and time of sailing. (C. in C. Nore, 1140B/21 to BEEHIVE)

Faeroes N. Rona Minefield.

Admiralty's 2152/20. Para 2. not to C.D.B. or Hatston. Propose Monday 26th for conference. (C. in C. H.F. 1507B/21)

→ B.S. 57 postponed 24 hours due to bad weather. (C. in C. Nore. 1947B/21 to PLOVER)

Enemy Intelligence

PRINZ EUGEN

My 1126B/20. It is reliably reported that PRINZ EUGEN was at Gdynia on 14/5. Graded B. 1. (D.D.I.C. 0008B/21)

Kattegat Movements on 20/5.

Your 2058/20. Para 1. signal latitude and longitude of ~~LENZER~~ ^{LENZER}. (N.A. Stockholm 0400B/21)
Following has been received from N.A. Stockholm. Grade B.3. On the morning of 20/5 11 German merchant vessels were reported in the Kattegat Northward bound. At 1500/20 2 large German warships, escorted by 3 destroyers 5 escort craft, and 10 to 12 aircraft passed Marstrand, Co. N.W. (D.D.I.C. 0421B/21 and 0435B/21)
Your 0400B/21. ~~ZULLEN~~ ^{ZULLEN} 56° 18' N., 12° 27' E (N.A. Stockholm 0738/21 to Admty.)

/Baltic....

War Diary

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Intelligence-Contd.

Baltic
Movements.

- (a) Rugen on 14/5 a number of transports passed Northwards to Belts.
- (b) Danzig May 8th - large vessels HAMBURG and IBERIA observed in port.
- (c) Swinemünde 10/5 - ISAR loaded a number of special floats each believed to be motor at eight knots and carry fifty men.
- (d) Trinerwerft floating dock left in tow of four tugs first week anchored. Still unlocated. B.2. repeat B.2. (N.A. Stockholm 1019/21)

Unknown
Trawler
S.W. of
Faeroes.

Spanish DIANA GT. 1196 reports sighting at 2305/18 in approx. 62° 21' N., 12° 13' W steering 060° small grey painted Trawler. Red Flag at peak of main mast which could not be identified. Gun mounted aft. (C.C.S.O. Kirkwall 1233/21)

2 Cruisers
and 1 Destroyer
at Bergen.

Visual R/C of Bergen at 1330B/21 reports 2 HIPPER Class cruisers and one destroyer present. (D.D.I.C. 1603B/21)

Photographs taken at 1330/21 show a battleship 795 X 105 feet presumed BISMARCK anchored at 60° 19' 48" N., 5° 14' 48" E. with 3 M.V's 450 - 500 feet and cruiser 670 X 75 feet presumed Hipper class anchored at 60° 25' 16" N., 5° 1' 20" E with one destroyer 415 feet and 6 M.V's 200 to 400 feet and 6 smaller craft. * (P.R.U. Wick 1715/21 to 18 Group) My 1603B/21. Photographs show ships to be one Bismarck class battleship and one Hipper class cruiser. (D.D.I.C. 1717B/21)

Photographic Reconnaissance Unit

655

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

H.X. 124.

Congratulations on successful way in which you brought all ships of Convoy H.X. 124 safely to U.K. (C. in C. W.A. 1757/21 to Adm. A.J. Davies).
36 ships, including 7 Allied 1 Neutral Cargoes. (D.S. 626, 23/5).

Continuous
Atlantic
Escorts,
St. John's
Base.

Initial arrangements to implement decision to escort convoy continuously to Canada are well in hand. OTTAWA and RESTIGOUCHE are proceeding St. John's (NF) on completion of duties with W.S.8B. SAGUENAY, PIORUN, and ASSINBOINE will follow after escorting W.S.9 These will be followed at intervals to focal points required by other destroyers and Corvettes as they become available. Questions of operational control at St. John's (N.F) and in Canada have been considered and I am very agreeable if a F.O. and Capt. (D) from R.C.N. are appointed this duty. Considered that desirability of appointing a Capt. (D) and staff for duty in Iceland (C) is becoming apparent. (C. in C. W.A. 2257B/21 to Admty.).

656

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

BRIGHTON.

BRIGHTON has a defective Dynamo and will not be available for S.N. 64. (R.A.M. 1221/21)

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

General - Raiders.

Atlantic.

My 2217B/14. A report, B.2, received that No. 10 returned to Germany in April. By D/F one unit was in area 20° to 30° N. 40° to 50° W. on 16/5. Three ships overdue at Freetown and one at Rio de Janeiro all from U.K. but these may be U/B casualties. Germans announced Egyptian ZAMZAM sunk and all passengers and crew landed in Occupied France. Raider may have been No 46, sending prisoners back in Supply Ship. A ship resembles No. -16 was sighted in 24° 45' S. 24° 29' W. on 5/5. If this was No. 16 she may be returning home.

Indian Ocean.

By D/F one and possibly two units were South of Chagos on 17th 18th and 19th/5. No 33 was reported to be expecting a supply ship. If two units are present one may be a raider as two raiders operated in Indian Ocean, August to November 1940.

Pacific.

Shelling of TAMESIS on 15/4 now discredited. No evidence of raiders in Pacific. Five German ships have recently left Chile. Some may R/V with raiders in South Atlantic in same way as PORTLAND and RIO GRANDE. (D.D.I.C. 1748B/21 to C. in C.H.E. N.A. Washington etc.).

658

War Diary.21. 5. 1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Irish Sea
Route.

Your 1010/20, new dividing line is now in force and buoys have been laid.
(C. in C. W.A., 1056B/21, to F.O.C.N.A.)

ARUNDEL
CASTLE.

Catalina Air Borne 1030 to locate ARUNDEL CASTLE. (F.O.C.N.A. 1058/21, to HAVELOCK.)

Bunkers
at Fayal.

Your 1920/20. Request you will explain to S.O. in JENNET who is to make the necessary arrangements to comply with Portuguese requirements.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1104B/21 to V. Consul, Fayal.)

WRESTLER.

If fuel restrictions ^{INT. W.D.} do not permit you to comply with my 2342/20 return to Plymouth.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1133A/21, to WRESTLER.)

S/M's.

Position 1200 A/22 and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1210A/21.)

MARON.

Intend sailing MARON at 2130B/21 for V.1, V.2. patrols routed through 033° 30' N., 009° (?40' 26') W., 029° 05' N., 012° 30' W speed 12 knots.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1248/21 to Admty, OTTAWA.)

RENOWN
escort duty
Operations
"Tracer"
"Rocket."

A.T. 1311B/17 and 2059B/19. Request arrangements be made for RENOWN to afford escort for VICTORIOUS, ARGUS and S.S. NEA HELLAS to U.K. In order that ships may sail as early as possible, suggested that aircraft for operation "~~ROCKET~~" should be landed at Gibraltar to await return of ARK ROYAL and FURIOUS from operation "Rocket". Request you report your intended programme. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1516B/21 to F.O.C.N.A.) (Cancelled, see 1020B/22.)

/French.....

659

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic Contd.

French
Units.

At 1900/19 off Cape Carvoeiro a French cargo boat escorted by French (?destroyers), course W., 8 knots.

At 1230/20 off Cape Santa Maria, 2 unidentified cruisers, course W., 15 knots.
(N.A. Lisbon, 1637/21, to Admty.)

Unidentified
Cruisers.

At 1600/20 off Portimao 2 unidentified cruisers, course W., 13 knots.

At 1700/20 off Sagres 2 Spanish cruisers, course N., W., 14 knots.
(A.N.A. Lisbon, 1744/21, to Admty.)

Operation
"Splice".

Results and recommendations for future operations. (S.O. Force H., 2120/21, 2140/21 to Admty.) See Lion Copy. Your 2140/21 (A) Para. 2 (preference for escort is in order given. In any case not more than one Sunderland Machine accepted. (B) A.O.C. Med., and I concur generally. (V.A. Malta, 2206B/22, to S.O. Force H.)

South Atlantic.

U/B Reports.

Suggested diversion of shipping. (D.T.D. 0122B/21, to C. in C. S.A.) Your 0122/21/5. Diversions have been made. Last report of known submarine was 2035/18/5 area afterwards searched by aircraft and surface vessels. General policy is (details). Suggestions in any particular case welcomed as other knowledge may be available to Admiralty or some factor overlooked.
(C. in C. S.A. 2131 N/21, to Admty.)

/ERICA.....

660

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. Contd.

ERICA.

Simonstown departure 0840/21 ERICA for Durban, Mombasa, and Aden. E.T.A. Durban 1000/24. Route to Aden in accordance with C. in C. E.I. 1110/18/4. (F.O.I.C. Simons-town, 0857z/21, to Admty., etc.)

NORSEMAN
cable ship.

My 2104 Z/20. Western telegram request that search be made for cable ship NORSEMAN. Vessel left Montevideo 8/5 for 35.30 S 52. 30 W., and last communication received from her 12/5.
(S.O.I., Montevideo, 1314 ?Z/21 to R.A.S.A.D.)
My 1314Z/21 Western report that NORSEMAN has just communicated with Aden and that ship is safe. (S.O.I., Montevideo 1506Z/21.)

SIR ERNEST
CASSEL.

Due Capetown 17/5 not arrived.
(S.O.I., Capetown, 1515B/21.)

INTREPIDO
(Panama.)

Due Durban 16/5 not arrived.
(S.O.I., Capetown, 1516B/21.)

CHARLES L.D.
(French.)

Arrived.
(Port Elizabeth, 1706B/21.)

D/F Reports.

Your 0526Z/12/5 not to Admiralty. Positions suggested by D/F Bearings from S.A., and F.E. as follow. Reported that German Agents giving shipping information simulate amateurs.
(C. in C. S.A., 1755N/21, to Capt. O.S. Singapore.)

/BUTTERFLY.....

661

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. Contd.

BUTTERFLY.

Italian, at Pernambuco, has proceeded alongside to load 40 tons of rubber. No indications of sailing at present. (S.O.I. Freetown, 1757N/21, to D.N.I.)

ALBATROSS.
refit.

Your 1636B/19/. Anticipate ALBATROSS will leave Freetown 29/5. Dates to arrive Simonstown and return to Freetown. (C. in C. S.A., 2017N/21, to Admty.)

662

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

ZANZAM

Your 1142/20. s.s. ZANZAM sailed Pernambuco 9/4 due Capetown 21/4. London Agents informed 13/5 that ship was missing presumed lost. C in C.S.A. informed 7/5 that ship may have been attacked by raider. German broadcast not confirmed states passengers and crew landed occupied France. (D.T.D. 0134B/21 to R.A. Alexandria)

CACHALOT
PARTHIAN

Alexandria Submarine Sanctuary will be in force 0200 to 0600/22 for CACHALOT arriving from Westward and PARTHIAN from Eastward. All times G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 0205C/21, to Med.Fleet, Force "I")

DERNA

22/5 departure for Genoa (Barcelona 0302/21)

FLAMINGO.
GRIMSBY.
VOLO.

Expect to arrive 1800 with GRIMSBY and VOLO. (FLAMINGO, 0710/21 to R.A. Alexandria)

French Units,
Beirut.

Report graded A.2 that 3 submarines and other French Naval Ships left Beirut a.m./19 for unknown destinations. (Capt.O.S., Alexandria, 0735C/21 to Med. Fleet.)

Beaufighters.

Four Beaufighters acting as escort to Hurricanes off "Splice" operation leave here for Dekheila today or early 22/5. O.C. 252 is now very concerned over state of Beaufighter Aircraft and it is considered advisable to despatch all his Aircraft to U.K. first opportunity since they cannot receive attention they require either here or in Egypt until spares and equipment become available. Four Aircraft not proceeding you on escort duty have therefore been despatched Gibraltar from here. (H.Q. Malta 0804/21)

/Enemy Units

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Enemy Units.

3 Merchant ships one escort vessel in
037° 56' 015° 40' E. and S. 140° 9 knots.
report at 1844B/20. (C. in C. Med. 1008C/21
to Med. Fleet)

ABDIEL

My 1121 C/19. Do not join force A.1.
Proceed direct to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med,
1035C/21, to ABDIEL)

Enemy
Ships in
Bosphorus

The following vessels are reported as
passing through the Bosphorus on 19.5.41.
a.m. Roumanian Ship CARMEN SILVA from
Braila to Mytilene - A declared cargo of
2,300 tons of wheat.

*CATHERINE MADRE
IN LATEST REG.*

Italian ship CATHERINE MADRE from Braila
to Salonika - 5,850 tons wheat.
Italian ship GIUSEPPINA GHIRARDI from
Constanza to Dede Agach - 4,850 tons Benzine.
(D.D.I.C. 1057B/21 to C. in C. Med, C.O.I.S.
Alexandria, V.A. Malta)

UNION
UNBEATEN
UPRIGHT
URSULA
UTMOST
URGE

Malta Sanctuary in force 0100 to 0700/B 22.
for UNBEATEN arriving. 1930 to 2200 B/23
for UPRIGHT leaving. (N.O.I.C. Malta
1123B/21 to Med. Fleet)

Intend following dispositions. * UNION leaves
Malta p.m./21 for area K. as in my 1500B/11.
UNBEATEN due Malta a.m./22. UPRIGHT leaves
Malta p.m./23 for Calabrian coast then to
area M to relieve UPHOLDER. UTMOST pro-
bably leaves Malta p.m./24 for Hammamet then
to relieve URGE in area L. URSULA leaves
Malta p.m./24 for coast patrol from Misurata
westward to Zuara and return via Gabes.
URGE and UPHOLDER from Malta a.m./26.
(Cdr.S.1, 1128B/21, to Capt. S.1)

** for route see next page*

/OLYMPUS

664

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

OLYMPUS

My 1059/20 OLYMPUS delayed about four days by defective air compressor. (V.A. Malta, 1131B/21 to FORESIGHT, F.O.C.N.A) Cancel my 1131B/21. OLYMPUS sailing tonight 21/5 as arranged. (V.A. Malta, 1750B/21 to FORESIGHT etc.)

LISBOA
(German)

Arrived Cartagena 20/5. (V.Consul, Cartagena 1137/21)

9 Italian
Destroyers.

My 0844 (9 Italian destroyers reported at Chios). Place should read Keos Island. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1154C/21, to F.O.C. 7th C.S.)

Greek
shipping
German
control.

**THIRASIA NOMIKOS.*
Lloyds Reg.

* Greek Consul states Master of Greek Steamer THERESIA NOMIKOS has received instructions from owner in Athens to proceed to Salonica and carry food from there to Piraeus. Consul suspects other Greek ships have had similar instructions via German channels. Master of VARLIFA is in fact showing insubordination having been ordered by Consul to claim his cargo of coke here. Puppet Greek Gov. have decreed forfeiture of property of Officers and crews if they are refusing to return to occupied Greece. (S.O.I. Istanbul, 1215/21 to C. in C. Med.)

UNION

Leaves Malta p.m./21 through 036° 20' 012° 40' for area K. 035° 28' 011° 10' - 320° - 30 - 65. (Cdr.S.1. 1225B/21 to URGE)

See Mediterranean page

CAVAR/NA
Roumanian

Arrived from Braila 20/5. Cargo 150 tons of German munitions of war for Persia, 830 tons machinery. (Samsun, 1230/21 to M. of W.T.)

/CAPO ARMA

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

CAPO ARMA
(Italian)

Left Istanbul 20/5 for Braila. (N.C.S.O. Galata, 1322C/21)

KATSONIS.

Alexandria Submarine Sanctuary will be in force 0300 to 0600 and 1200 to 1600/23 for KATSONIS leaving and returning. Exercise Sanctuary will be in force 0600 to 1200/23 area (R.A. Alexandria, 1406/21 to Med. Fleet, Force I.)

Sardinia
patrol.

Your 0045 A/19. Request I may be informed why area South of Sardinia is considered profitable. (Capt.S.I., 1607C/21 to Capt.S.8)

Malta Air
Raid.

C.S.R. Malta up to 1600 hours 21.5.41 times G.M.T.
21/5. Morning recco by JU.88 at 20,000 feet followed later by 10 to 15 ME.109's which bombed Luqa. R.A.F. damage. 1500 hours. 3 formations enemy fighters parolled off west of Island for one and a half hours. Possibly screen for Convoy reported by Glenn Martin. Following naval information of 3 small MVS and 1 escort vessel Ionian Sea, 5 Blenheims 139 Squadrons despatched to attack but failed to locate. (H.Q. Malta, 1615/21)

ABA
(bombed 17/5)

Essential repairs to ABA should be completed 1800/22. Minor repairs probable date of completion 26/5. At 24 hours for steam. My 1659/19 refers. (S.T.O. Haifa, 1757/21 to D. of S.T.)

FORESIGHT.

You have been reported by A/C. Take precautions to conceal your future movements. (V.A. Malta, 1810/21 to FORESIGHT)

Submarines.

Restrictions on crossing 200 fathom line have been removed vide my 1501/1/1 not to Capt. S.8. Request you will inform all submarines operating in Mediterranean accordingly. (Capt.S.1., 1831C/21 to Capt. S.8.)

/Italian

666

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Italian tankers.

Reliably reported two more Italian tankers due to pass to Aegean within next 24 hours. (S.O.I Istanbul, 1844/21, to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal mines.

Situation 1930 May 21st. (? R.A.F.) G'L plot of Suez indicates possibility that mines were laid South Eastward from Newport rock Channel Suez Bay. Also suspect mines off Port Said. Neither interfere with navigation. No mines exploded today. S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1931C/21 to Admty.etc.)

5th D.F.

5th D.F. leaves Malta dusk to-night 21/5 north of Hurd Bank thence to eastward. (V.A. Malta, 1931B/21 to UPHOLDER)

Greek Fleet, Finance.

Your 2018/7 and 1554/C/20 and my 2042/20. Financial arrangements. (Hd. of F. 2027B/21 to C. in C. Med.)

URGE S/M's

URGE is returning to Malta from Westward, E.T.A. Malta 0600/22. S/M's are not to be attacked to-night 21/22nd. (Cdr. S.1, 2249B/21 to OLYMPUS, UNION.)

PATRIA. Materials.

Your 1912C/16. No objections to use of materials from PATRIA as you suggest in view of remote prospects of salvage. (D. of S.T. 2355B/21 to C. in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET

666A

MOST SECRET.

M E S S A G E

1537/21st May.

IN.

From N.A. Angora.

Date 22.5.41.

Time 09.00

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CYPHER (V.12)

by C. & W.

Addressed Admiralty. C. in C. Mediterranean. Repeated H.M.
Amb. Angora.

AIDAC.

Following from Admiral Kelly.

May 21st Marshal Chakops asked me to visit him gave me his views on war. The present operations in Crete Syria and Iraq are with a view to encirclement of Turkey and until their success or failure has been established Turkey will feel menaced. Redistribution of Turkish forces to meet new menace is being made. Better arrangements have been carried out in Thrace for positions of covering force. There is no intention of altering reported strategical plan for holding Thrace. Black Sea garrison behind strengthened against possible landing in force, coast between Dardanelles and Smyrna now held by three divisions. Concentration of 2 Army corps on Syrian-Iraqi frontier will be completed in the course of a week. If Germany attacks Turkey they would act on the defensive in Thrace and immediately effect junction between this force and British mid East forces so protecting their rear.

- (2) They are nervous about (? air) borne attack and have information of Turkish uniforms being manufactured in Vienna.
- (3) Turks without exception deplore our confidence in Arabs.
- (4) They consider Russia may grant facilities to Germany for passing arms and troops through Iran to Iraq.
- (5) They are now more hopeful of facilities for arms transit from Sweden through Russia as Russia openly fear Turks might join Germany against them so will grant some concessions.
- (6) The Marshal's idea of course of war - if we obtain air superiority and retain command of sea in Mediterranean with possession of Crete which is very vital to (? Turkey), German eastern campaign will fail. They will then start campaign in southwest Europe and then against England.
- (7) Discontent against German occupation accompanied by entire lack of everything is increasing in Roumania Bulgaria and Italy.
- (8) The Germans will eventually get tired and attempt to come to some agreement with England by disposing of Nazi party and then saying they are democrats like the rest of us. When this time comes they should then be told they must act for democracy by (corrupt) present regime in Russia after which we would talk peace.
- (9) He still wants his 1200 planes for victory. When asked how and where he would maintain them he said British had told him Germans could at the most use 600 air planes in Balkans but they had in effect made most efficient use of more than 2000 planes.
- (10) It was evident that (corrupt) disorganisation is (corrupt) in all Govt. offices moment war breaks out with resultant inevitable inefficiency. The argument of London is quite useless.

- 2 -

(11) Von Papen brought nothing but professions of peace, (? group omitted) to the old allies and stories how England had always been the trouble-maker and enemy of Turkey. Fortunately Marshal's knowledge of history better than Germans'.

1537/21

Advance copy sent O.I.C.
D.N.I.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
SECRETARY.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.N.I. (4)
D. of P. (2)
Duty Captain.
E.P.S.
Hd. of M.
I.P.
W.D.
N.I.D.10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.
Admiral Bellairs.
Admiral Herman Hodge.

EO

666^c

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 2120/21 May IN

From S.O. Force H. Date 22.5.41.
Recd. 0554.

Naval Cypher D by W/T.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated F.O.C. North Atlantic, C. in C. Mediterranean, V.A. Malta.

IMPORTANT.

833. Operation "SPICE" Preliminary movements and poor visibility avoided detection until 0750 excluding 3 when one of the Hurricane formations was reported steering 150 degs. followed by composition of Force H at 0855.

2. Flying off commenced 0600 and concluded 0730 from approximate longitude 005 degs. 01 west. Fulmars of first H.M.S. FURIOUS flight unable retract undercarriage. Stand by Fulmars flown off but difficult for participating Hurricanes to follow second Fulmar. Formation eventually split and defective Fulmar most gallantly proceeded East with part that would not leave him and has failed to arrive.

3. At 0750 H.M.S. ARK ROYAL's 2nd flight reappeared Fulmar having split oil tank. Flight Commander requested new leader and stand by Fulmar flown off. ARK ROYAL estimated Hurricane had 40 minutes in hand.

4. Last shadowers report was at 1100. Subsequently visibility deteriorated and no attack developed.

5. Lack of endurance and unreliability of Fulmars for this type of operation clearly demonstrated. My 2140 21 refers.

2120/21.

Advance copy Duty Capt. D.O.D. (F) D.N.A.D.

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- 2nd S.L.
- 3rd S.L.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
- G.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- D. of P. (2)
- D.O.D. (H)
- D.D.O.D. (H)
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)
- D.N.T. (4)
- D.S.D.
- D.N.A.D.
- D. of L.D.
- D.A/S.W.
- D.M.S.
- I.P.
- W.D.
- Duty Capt.
- Head of H.
- D.T.S.D.
- D.D.I.C.
- E.P.S.
- D.T.D.

~~300~~

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRETMOST SECRET ~~SECRET~~ 2140/21st May IN

From F.O. Force H.

Date 22.5.41.

Reed 0639.

Naval Cypher (D) by W/TAddressed Admiralty, repeated C. in C. Mediterranean,
F.O.C. North Atlantic, V.A. Malta.IMPORTANT.AIDAC.834 My 2120/21. As a result of experience in "SPICE"
consider repetition of using Fulmars undesirable for
following reasons:-

- (a) Fulmars not sufficiently reliable and endurance
not comparable to Hurricanes.
- (b) Longitude and time of operation off ~~Never~~ *now*
definitely compromising.
- (c) Inadequate force available and low speed of
FURIOUS invites attack under unfavourable
conditions.

(ii) For operation ROCKET propose Hurricanes be flown
off at still air distance 600 miles escorted by Wellington
Blenheims or Sunderlands from Gibraltar. No difficulty
anticipated in effecting rendezvous by day.(iii) To put enemy off propose flying off from about
1300B to 1430B. Enemy would probably expect operation to
take place next morning.(iv) Hurricanes with all tanks full experience no
difficulty in taking off in very light wind. Fulmars
required in Eastern Mediterranean to be flown off from
ARK ROYAL in separate operations to arrive Malta shortly
after dawn.(v) I feel we have tried our luck pretty high and that
to ensure success further operation of this character these
proposals merit careful consideration. --(vi) V.A. Malta please remark. ~~200~~

2140/21.

Advance copy sent Duty Captain, D.O.D.(F) & D.N.A.D.

1st Lord	D. of P. (2)	I.P.
1st S.L.	D.O.D. (H)	W.D.
2nd S.L.	D.D.O.D. (H)	Duty Captain
3rd S.L.	D.O.D. (F)	Hd. of M.
4th S.L.	D.D.O.D. (F)	D.S.D.
5th S.L.	D.N.I. (4)	D.D.I.C.
V.C.M.S.	D.S.D.	E.F.S.
A.C.F.S. (F)	D.N.A.D.	D.T.D. (2)
A.C.F.S. (F)	D. of L.D.	N.I.D. 10 Pay. Cdr. Wilson.
A.C.F.S. (F) (2)	D.A./W	
C.S.O.		

MOST SECRET

667

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete.

Reported Landings.

Searchlight on bay west of Candia and believe landings have started. (Heraklion 0130/21 to HIGHLANDER) Following received on 5000 kcs. ~~ALEXANDRIA~~ ^{ALEXANDRIA} W/T from Heraklion. Four ships landing troops in Bay west of Candia. (Nore W/T 0200/21 to Whitehall W/T)

Situation report.

Crete 20/5 Suda Area. Further air borne attack commenced 1630. Approx. 3,000 men dropped. 1200 not accounted for at 1830. Situation reported in hand at 2100. Fighting continuing at Maleme and Canea. Method of attack Stukas and M.Es followed by gliders and parachutes. Heraklion area. Attacks commenced 1730 Parachutists landed in Candia and on Heraklion aerodrome. Troop carrying aircraft landed east of aerodrome at 2000. Boats carrying troops reported off Candia by coast watchers. Our light forces closing in there. Believed that parachute landings were made at Retimo, starting about 1730. Prisoners indicate continuation of attack on 21/5 when seaborne landing west of Heraklion appears also intended. (C. in C.M.E., 0250/21 to W.O)

C.S.15

Your 1920C/20. All quiet to seaward of Candia. Force C and CALCUTTA disbanded. (C.S.15 0705C/21 to C. in C. Med.)

R.A.(D) Report.

Night report blank. Air activity from dawn with considerable dive bombing by JU 87's. DIDO has already expended 22% of B.25 ammunition. (R.A.(D) M. 0735C/21 to C. in C. Med.)

/Heraklion

668

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Heraklion
attack.

Things developing south flank, should welcome return of warships. (Heraklion, 0813/21, to Alexandria W/T)
My 0813 . South flank 2 miles S/E Candia, anticipate fresh parachute troops. (Heraklion, 0827/21 to Alexandria)

Situation.

0900/21. A night of alarms of sea borne landings in which the fear was father to thought, and the presence of our own naval forces forgotten. Retimo patrol reported all quiet. Only small air activities successful Canea, Maleme, so far today. Situation Heraklion obscure. But consider enemy may be receiving some success in that area. Land line communications temporarily interrupted in successful area. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0902C/21 to C. in C. Med.)

Force C.
A/C and E/B
Attacks.

Destroyers less NUBIAN have 46% fuel remaining at 0800/21. Force C. was attacked by Torpedo A/C and E. Boats in Kaso Channel last night. No damage except to E.Boats. (C.S.15, 0922C/21 to C. in C. Med.)

See also p. 670

Air Attacks
on Destroyers.

Am being pursued to sea by high level and determined JU 87 attacks. (R.A.(D) M., 0924C/21 to C. in C. Med.)
Following received from R.A.D. Med. Addressed C in C. Med. My P.C.S. at 1000, 034° 56' 022° 27' 200° 20 knots. (Nore W/T. 1010C/21 to Whitehall W/T)

German Units.

Light German naval units 35.40 N. 23. 25 E. at 0850. (Suda Bay 0930/21)

Heraklion
Reports.

Heraklion appears to be continually reporting our own ships. Request you will endeavour to control his report. (C. in C. Med. 0943/21 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay)

/Situation

669

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Situation.

Report 1000/21. Further parachutists dropped Maleme W.S.W. from Canea. Heavy bombing across Canea-Suda Bay road. No news from Heraklion or Retimo. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1001C/21 to C. in C. Med.)

Enemy Units.

17 vessels reported in 035° 52' N. 023° 55' E. course 195° at 1820. Three small ships reported at Retimo. (C. in C. Med., 1005C/21 to R.A.D. Med.)

More Parachutists.

Following has been read:- More troops dropped 0950. Heavy bombing. Request instructions if any. (Malta W/T 1025/21)

Air Report.

Operational Summary No.345 up to 1200 hours 21.5.41.
Crete. Further to my previous summary German troops landed on 20/5 in Canea, Maleme, Retimo and Heraklion areas by glider and parachute, landing being preceded by intensive dive-bombing and machine gunning attacks all areas. Of 3000 troops in New Zealand uniforms landed Canea area, over half were killed. Hospital at Canea was captured in morning by enemy but regained by us. About 160 enemy aircraft bombed Heraklion for one hour during afternoon. After quiet night enemy air dive bombing and machine gun attacks Canea area recommenced early morning 21/5 followed by further landings of parachute troops at Maleme and Aliakanou, S.W. of Canea. Enemy troops reported concentrated between Aliakanou and Canea and immediately west Maleme and preparing landing ground near Aliakanou. Reconnaissance 20/5 reported enemy using landing ground on Melos Island. (H.Q., R.A.F. M.E. 1044/21)

/7th.C.S.....

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

→ 7th C.S.

Following received, addressed R.A.D. Med. From F.O. 7th C.S. my P.C.S. 035° 36' N. 022° 00' E. 030° 15 knots. (Nore W/T. 1045/21 to Whitehall W/T.)

AJAX
damaged.

see also

p. 672

Following received from R.A.D. Med. Addressed C in C. Med. Attacks continue. AJAX reduced to 25 knots. Both port shafts distorted. (Nore W/T, 1102C/21 to Whitehall W/T.)

→ 7th C.S.

My course is 140° (C.S.7 1115/21 to R.A.(D) Med.)

Force E.
KANDAHAR.
KINGSTON.
JUNO.

Force E proceed to join F.O.C. 15th C.S. at R/V. arranged by F.O.C. 15th C.S. On relief by force E. KANDAHAR, KINGSTON, JUNO return to Alexandria as fast as fuel will allow. Capt. (D) 14 reports P.C.S. at 1300/21. (C. in C. Med. 1215C/21 to F.O.C. 15th C.S., Capt. D.14.) Cancel my 1215C/21. Force E. return to harbour with all despatch. (C. in C. Med. 1600C/21 to D.14)

JUNO
sunk.

JUNO sunk by bombs in 034° 35' N. 026° 34' E. (F.O.15 C.S., 1255/21 to C. in C.Med)

Enemy War
Ships.

2 Cruisers 3 Destroyers P.C. and S. of enemy are 035° 38' 012° 22' 270° 22'. All torpedoes expended returning to harbour E.T.A. 0600/22. (URGE 1305B/21 to N.O.I.C. Malta)

Force C.
bombed.

Force C has been continuously and heavily bombed since 0950. No serious damage so far except as reported in my 1255 (sinking of JUNO) CARLISLE joining (F.O.15 C.S., 1350C/21 to C. in C. Med.) *see p. 668*

/14th D.F. ...

671

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

14th D.F.

See also

b. 674

My P.C. and S. at 1400, 031° 48' N. 029° 03' E. 330° 21 knots. Oil fuel remaining noon: JERVIS 299 tons, ILEX 275 tons, NIZAM 300 tons. (Capt.D.14, 1401C/21 to C.S.15)

E Boats
KOS 21 and
SYVERN
attacked.

Your 0943/21. My 0901/21. Have been cut off from Military H.Q. and Robertson by telephone breakdowns now repaired. Communication Heraklion poor and Military situation obscure. Continual definite information from M.T. that E Boats were operating off Cape Spada and in Kissamo Bay last night. KOS 21 and SYVERN heavily attacked 1315/21 1330/21 1 Naval Armament dump hit and exploded. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1415/21 to C. in C. Med.)

Destroyers.

Destroyers of Force D should be exchanged with Destroyers of Force A (1) which are full of fuel. (C. in C. Med. 1551C/21 to F.O.C. 7 C.S.)

Situation.

My 2340/20. Military situation in Crete is obscure and no further details of position in Heraklion area. Captured operation orders show Suda Bay as main objective for first (? attack) This certainly failed and situation was in hand at dark. Little activity towards area during the night but heavy bombing of Canea - Suda Bay road this morning with parachutists dropped Maleme and W. S.W. from Canea.
(2) Report of seaborne landing near Candia not confirmed and consider no enemy surface force yet employed. Enemy aircraft using Melos as landing ground.

/JUNO

672

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete.

Situation
(contd.)
JUNO.

(3) C.S.15 was off Candia at daylight with force C. now retired South of Kaso. JUNO sunk by bombing in position $034^{\circ} 35' N.$ $026^{\circ} 34' E.$ This force was attacked by E boats and torpedo bombing A/c in Kaso Strait during the night but no damage except to E boat (s).

AJAX.

See also p.670

(4) R.A.(D) Med. was off Retimo at daylight with force D. and has been heavily dive bombed since now proceeding South (? Westward) from Kithera Channel. AJAX reduced to 25 knots with both port shafts distorted. (5) Force A (I) now closing S.W. of Kithera Channel. Capt.(D) 14 and 2 destroyers bombarded Scarpanto 21, now relieving destroyers of Force C. who are short of fuel. (C. in C. Med. 1601C/21 to Admty.)

Forces
C and D.

Force C and D should enter the Aegean as soon as possible. (C. in C. Med. 1613C/21 to R.A.(D) Med. F.O.C. 15 C.S.)

U/Boat.

CACHALOT sighted U Boat submerged in 0320 $35' N. 025^{\circ} 27'$ at 1053 C/21. (Capt.S.1 1617C/21 to TETRARCH)

Heraklion.

Town partly occupied by enemy who have mounted machine gun on mole. (S.N.O. Heraklion, 1620/21 to N.O.I.C. Suda)

Enemy Naval
Forces.

Estimate approx. positions at 1600 (corrupt group) of enemy forces reported 21/5
(a) 13 ships 5 miles N.W. of Polykandio.
(b) 15 ships with 3 T B D $037^{\circ} N. 024^{\circ} 10' E.$ course 190° .
(c) 9 ships escorted by T B D $036^{\circ} N. 024^{\circ} 20' E.$
(d) Convoy escorted by 2 Destroyers $037^{\circ} N. 023^{\circ} 55' E.$
(e) 20 fishing vessels escorted by A/C $036^{\circ} 10' N. 024^{\circ} 00' E.$
(C.O.S. Alexandria, 1653C/21 to Med.Fleet)

/Force B. ...

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

→ Force B.

Details of Force B. GLOUCESTER, FIJI and two destroyers if available to move up towards Aegean. (C. in C. Med. 1657C/21 to F.O.C. 7 C.S.)

D.10 to R.V. A.1.

Sail when ready with VOYAGER, VENDETTA at 15 knots to R/V with Force 'A.1'. West of Crete A.M./23 as ordered by C.S.7 (C. in C. Med. 1701C/21 to Capt.D.10)

Enemy Convoy.

Following from Most Secret Source (Begins) Convoy 036° 10' N. 024° 10' E. at 1300 (Ends) Pilotage Heraklion reports town partly occupied by enemy who have mounted machine guns on the Mole. Further parachute landing West of Canea at 1615/21. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1704/21 to C.in C. Med.)

Canea P/C Landing.

A/C Recco.

Special aircraft R/C is leaving now for Aegean and will report on 6540 Kc's. (C. in C. Med. 1724C/21 to R.A. 7th C.S., R.A. 15 C.S. R.A.C. (D) Med.)

→ Force B.

My 1637C/21. Force B move towards Kithera Channel ready to carry out night sweep for convoys if ordered. (C. in C. Med. 1723C/21 to GLOUCESTER) *See also p. 675*

Communications.

Am in good touch with May Suda Bay and May 3 Heraklion, can act as link. (Alexandria W/T, 1819/21 to Suda Bay, Heraklion)

Heraklion Partly Occupied

Part of Harbour of Heraklion is in enemy hands. (C. in C. Med. 1820C/21 to Force C)

/Fuelling

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Fuelling
Destroyers.

You will have to (?leave) your destroyers tomorrow morning 22nd so that they can (corrupt group) on their fuel. I will send Oiler CHERRYLEAF 100 miles off Alexandria in case any are very short. (C. in C. Med. 1839C/21 to C.S.15)

D.14

On arrival fuel as quickly as possible and sail on completion with NIZAM, ILEX, HAVOCK. Proceed 20 knots towards Kaso Strait to join C.S.15 as ordered by him. Report time (?of) sailing. (C. in C. Med. 1901C/21 to D.14)

See p. 671

Enemy Units.

2 cruisers 3 destroyers were sighted in 036° 31' N. 011° 55' E. course 350° 15 knots at 1547B/21. Convoy of 7 merchant ships escorted by 4 destroyers were in 036° 26' N 012° 00' E course 280° 10 knots at 1530B/21. Doubt exist as to the course mentioned above. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1936/21 to FORESIGHT)

Spilia
Landing
Report.

Following from most secret source. Landing from sea and air imminent Spilia. (F.O.C. 7 C.S. 1945/21 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay)

7th C.S.

Unless otherwise ordered shall be in 035° 14' N 022° 45' E at 0530/22 and thereafter on MLA 280° 10 knots. until 1000/22 (F.O.C. 7th C.S. 1957C/21 to Med. Fleet)

Enemy
Convoys.

Enemy Convoys of 17 Ships was 20 miles north of Canea Bay at 1820C steering south. Other group small enemy vessels are south of Milo steering for Crete. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria 2001C/21 to Med. Fleet)

/5th D.F.

675

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

5th D.F.

Your 1653. Sailed 5th D.F. at 2130 Proceeding 28 knots through 035° 51' (?N) 015° 15' E. direct to R/V. E.T.A. R/V 1100. All times zone - 3. (V.A. Malta 2045B/21 to C. in C. Med.)

JAGUAR.
DEFENDER.

After embarking ammunition detailed in my 1900/21 JAGUAR and DEFENDER are to sail at 1000/22 to R/V with Force A (1) to westward of Crete at 0800/23 as ordered by C.S.7. (C. in C. Med. 2209C/21 to JAGUAR, DEFENDER)

U/Boat.

U. Boat reported in 032° 34' N. 028° 56' E at 1730C/21. (Capt.S.1, 2211C/21 to RORQUAL)

Coast
Watch.

Watch your sea coast tonight. (Suda Bay 2215/21 to Heraklion)

Orders to
Force C.
Force B.

My 1843C/21 CS15 1836C/21 not to GLOUCESTER. Force C not expected to arrive off Heraklion until 0400. Force B proceed with all despatch to Heraklion keeping clear of Force D. and patrol off Heraklion until 0330 then sweep to northward until north of 036° 00' N (?) then in accordance with my 1843C/21 para B. Part of Heraklion Town and Harbour believed to be in hands of enemy. (C. in C. Med. 2255C/21 to GLOUCESTER)

See p. 673.

Enemy
Light
Craft.

Following has been read: Enemy light craft appear to be in vicinity am investigating. (M.T.B. 21, 2256/21 to Suda Bay (?))

Maleme held
by enemy.

Enemy hold Maleme Aerodrome and area west, elsewhere in this sector coast line in our hands, F.A.A. R.A.F. will bomb Maleme 2400-0200, own troops fire green verey light. (C. in C. Med. 2316/21 to Med.Fleet)

/Convoy

676

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Convoy
Engaged by
R.A.D.

Following has been read: Am engaging
Convoy in position 100 36°N. 24° E. 12.
(R.A.(D) M. 2350/21 to Malta W/T)

Situation
report No.33.

C. in C. Med 2351C/21 - see Lion Copy.

MOST SECRET

lion

676A

MOST SECRET. MESSAGE 2351C/21st May, IN.

From C. in C. Mediterranean. Date 24.5.41.
NAVAL CYPHER (X) By Cable. Time 0415

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated F.O. 'H' V.A. Malta.
S.B.N.O. Canal Area.

465. Situation report number 33. Crete
My 1601/21. Further parachute landings west of Canea at
1615/21. Air reconnaissance at 1700 reported no enemy surface
forces within 40 miles of Crete reports indicate that several
groups of fishing vessels and small ships, escorted by TBDs
and possibly destroyers are approaching Crete from northwards
our light forces patrol Canea Maleme and Heraklion areas
tonight and sweep northwards at daylight.

2. p.m. on 16th repeat 16th Suda Bay was attacked by
30 JU 87s and 88s and 15 to 20 ME 109s. Three pilots of 305
Squadron in Hurricanes of 33 Squadron shot down 3 ME 109s
certain one probable and one JU 87 probable. 2 ME 109s
forced landed at Maleme 2 Hurricanes and pilots missing.

3. ABDIEL laid mines night 20th/21st in area North
of Cephalonia not yet returned to Alexandria.

4. Western desert. VAMPIRE evacuated wounded
and transported stores Tobruk, night 20th/21st.

5. Alexandria. All 'TIGER' convoy have completed
unloading except for certain heavy lifts in NEW ZEALAND STAR
for which ship now proceeding Port Said.

2351C/21

Advance copies sent P.O. C.S.O. A.C.N.S.(F)
D.C. D.O.D. (H) D.D.I.C.
D.P.D.

1st Lord.	D.N.A.D.
1st S.L.	D. of L.D.
2nd S.L.	D. A/S W.
3rd S.L.	D.M.S.
4th S.L.	I.P.
5th S.L.	W.D.
V.C.N.S.	Duty Captain.
A.C.N.S. (H)	Hd. of M. (30)
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.T.S.D.
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	D.D.I.C.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	
D. of P. (2)	E.P.S.
D.O.D. (H)	N.I.D.10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.
D.O.D. (H)	D.P.D.
D.O.D. (F)	D.D.O.D. (M)
D.D.O.D. (F)	D.S.D.
D.P.D. (2)	D.N.I. (4)

677

War Diary.

21. 5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

TURKIA
(Greek)
sunk.

S.S. TURKIA, 1911 tons, with cargo of explosives and general from America, burnt out and sunk in Gulf of Suez a.m./21. Cause of fire not known. (D.O.R., 22/5.)

Zanzibar,
bunkers.

My 0956/20. Number of ships at Zanzibar for bunkers at any time is not to exceed 4. (C. in C. E.I., 0724Z/21, to D.S.T.O. Mombasa.)

Greek Ships
Bushire.

Captain of Greek Ships now at Bushire are asking for instructions urgently as facilities for unloading there are quite inadequate. (S.N.O. Persian Gulf, 1200Z/21, to C. in C. E.I.)
S.N.O. Persian Gulf 1200/21 passed to you for instructions with reference to your 1457/15 and 2127/14 (both to C. in C.E.I. only). (C. in C. E.I., 1628Z/21, to Admty.)

CORNWALL
SHROPSHIRE
CANBERRA.

Your 1047/20. Intend CORNWALL shall escort one of these convoys and if ready in time SHROPSHIRE the other. If SHROPSHIRE is not ready, CANBERRA must be used instead, which will leave no cruiser in Seychelles area for a time. (corrupt) dates of sailing of these convoys from Durban and completion of SHROPSHIRE are not yet known to me. (C. in C. E.I., 1224Z/21, to Admty.)

CAVARNA.

Extract from A Fairmiss Telegram from Samsun. Roumanian S.S. CAVARNA arrived from Briala 20/5. Cargo 150 tons of German munitions of war for Persia 830 tons machinery. (Consul, Samsun, T.H.I. 1230/21.)

Raider.

My 0632/17. Further details. (C. in C. E.I., 1346Z/21.)

MESSAGE. 1400Z/21st May.

MOST SECRET.

I N.

From C. in C., East Indies.

Date. 23.5.41.

Recd. 0214.

Naval Cypher "X" by Cable.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated C. in C., Mediterranean.
 S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area. F.O.C.R.I.N. 474.
 S.N.O.R.S. N.O.I.C. Alexandria, for Nile.

774. (1) Except for the arming of merchant vessels, the protection of shipping in Gulf of Suez and Shatt El Arab against German bombing and/or mining attacks from the air presents two very difficult problems. The former place is completely unwatched and unguarded. The latter is practically unguarded.

(2) Factors. (A) Gulf of Suez shipping is at present proceeding independently. There are no surface or air patrols and no observation posts. Water throughout is suitable for magnetic mining. Jubal Strait and immediate approaches to Suez most probable places for mine attack. Sinkings will not necessarily prevent passage of ships. (B) Shatt El Arab. Due to navigational difficulties ships must repetition must proceed about one mile apart. Mine watching system not yet complete but presence of enemy aircraft is likely to be observed. Water is very suitable for magnetic and Acoustic mining throughout the ninety miles from Rooka to Basrah. Rooka and Karun Channels most effective localities for mining but sinkings elsewhere may also stop traffic.

(3) My proposals for dealing with the air threat in Gulf of Suez are as follows.

(4) Against mine attack. (A) Subject to confirmation that they are suitable (see para. five below) send to Suez as soon as possible twelve skids. Seven can be made available now from Ceylon where construction of replacements and additions is already in hand. (B) As soon as generators are available from other sources on East Indies Station equip for skid towing a minimum of four ships, probably NETRAVATI, RATNAGIRI and ZERANG plus SAGITTA already fitted but life of boilers nearly ended. It is under consideration with Kenya Government to send IMPALA (fitted for skid towing) from East African patrol to Red Sea. These vessels to be employed in normal duties in Red Sea until mining threat develops. (C) Skids at Suez to be a pool available for C. in C., Mediterranean if canal or Suez Bay situation requires them on understanding that if mining of Gulf of Suez develops he will if possible operate them in the Gulf until his ships are relieved by ships referred to in (B) above. (d) As soon as other Red Sea force commitments allow, establish a watching patrol in Jubal Strait. Question of watchers at the Strait is being investigated but there are obvious difficulties. Request that establishment of RD/F stations in Gulf be considered.

(5) In connection with foregoing, information is requested whether skids are affective in depths of water to be found on Gulf of Suez particularly in Northern portion and in Straits of Jubal. The only other counter measure to the magnetic mine available on East Indies Station is the Magnet Spar sweep but I assume it is not practicable in Gulf of Suez. I also assume Gulf of Suez is unsuitable for magnetic mining.

6. Against bombing etc. attacks. (A) It may be necessary to pass ships through Gulf of Suez in convoy with A.A. escort between Suez and about 27 degs. North. The present Red Sea Force contains no repeat no ships with anything but the weakest of A.A. armaments and reinforcement from elsewhere will be essential if the convoy system is again forced on us. Except for cruiser escort continuing with personnel convoys, there is nothing available from East Indies Station. Fighter escort will also be required. (B) Provision of close range armament and kites for merchant vessels already in hand (see my 0846/19 not to F.O.C.R.I.N.)
7. Proposals for measures in Shatt El Arab will be signalled later.
8. Request information of probable Gauss (Gauss) settings enemy would use in Gulf of Suez and Shatt El Arab.

1400Z/21

1st Lord.
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 D. of P. (2)
 D.G.D. (H)
 D.D.O.D. (H)
 D.O.D. (F) for action.
 D.D.O.D. (F)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D.S.D.
 D.N.A.D.
 D. of L.D.
 D.A./S.W.
 D.H.S.
 I.P.
 V.D.
 Duty Capt.
 Hd. of M.
 D.T.S.D.
 D.D.I.C.
 E.P.S.
 D.T.D. (2)
 N.I.D. 10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.

MMC.

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Enemy Ships
Transferred
Mexico.

Reported that Axis ships taken over by Mexican Govt., have been renamed as follows:-

<u>Italian.</u>	AMERICANO	renamed TUXPAN.
"	FEDE	" POZA RICA
"	GENOANO	" FAJA DE ORO.
"	GIORGIO FASSIO	" PANUCO.
"	LUCIFERO	" POTRERO DEL LLANO.
"	MARINA O.	" TABASCO.
"	STELVIO	" EBANO.
"	TUSCANIA	" MINA TITLAN
"	VIGOR	" AMATLAN.
<u>German</u>	HAMELN	" CAXACA.
"	ORINOCO	" PUEBLA. (D.S. 624, 21/5.)

SHEHERAZADE.
(French.)

Have intercepted SHEHERAZADE.

(DIOMEDE, 0701Z/21, to C. in C.A.W.I.)
French ship SHEHERAZADE intercepted by DIOMEDE 800 miles east Bermuda at 0700z/21. (C. in C. A.W.I) 0912Q/21, to Admty.)
Request instructions action to be taken as regards French Ships brought into British Ports. Should Ships be treated as Prizes and Crews as Prisoners of War? In order to avoid risk of Sabotage intend in any case to remove those Members of Crew of SHEHERAZADE who do not volunteer to join Free French. Ship is due Bermuda 24/5. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1001Q/21, to Admty.)

/ROYAL.....

679

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. Contd.

ROYAL SOVEREIGN.

Navy Yard requires four weeks to complete essential defects. I have approved.
(Ends) 1707/20.
(B.A.R.M. Washington, 0843/21, to Admty.)

Martinique Activity.

St. Lucia reports one aircraft carrier and one other warship sighted six miles off Castries proceeding north. Aircraft seen to leave deck of carrier. Other reports indicate unprecedented air activity at Martinique.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1721Q/21, to CARADOC, VAN KINSBERGEN. Report incorrect.
See 1033Q/27.

Suspicious Schooner.

ZAGLOBA ?

Three masted fishing schooner which appeared to have excessive speed, approx., 10 knots on engine, reported by master of Polish ZAGPOBA position 45.10 N 44.50 W at 0800Z/3. (N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, 1834Z/21.)

St. John's N.F.

A.M. 1717B/20.. Request information whether the following ships could be berthed simultaneously if it is decided to use this port:-
(V.C.N.S., 1840B/21, to N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F.)

U.S. Coastguard Cutters.

To all ships (begins) United States Coast-guard cutters NORTHLAND and MODOC at 1900 GCT 56.20 N., 47.30 W., proceeding to rescue of convoy survivors. Request information nearby ships. (signed) NORTHLAND (ends). (Valentia Radio, 1907/21, to Admty.)

A/S Convoy Escorts.

Reply to Admty. 0016B/20, number of corvettes available and dates. Policy and control. (N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, 2108Z/21 to Admty.) See Operations Volume..

/B.H.X.....

680

War Diary.

21.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. Contd.

B.H.X.
Convoys,
bunkers.

Your 1712Q/19. Arrangements made by Ministry of Shipping for vessels of 9 knots and over to bunker in a Brazilian or Caribbean port for passage to U.K. via Bermuda in BHX Convoy. Vessels of under 9 knots to bunker at a Brazilian or Caribbean port and if necessary at Sydney. (D.T.D. 2232B/21 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

BEARN
JEANNE D'ARC
EMILE BERTIN

Air R/C a.m./21 May showed BÉARN at Martinique and JEANNE D'ARC at Guadaloupe. EMILE BERTIN not located. (C. in C. A.W.I., 2242Q/21, to CARADOC, DIOMEDE.)

BRITANNIC.

^{NTWD}
N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 1932Z/15. Admiralty have no objection to 800 passengers for New York remaining on board. (A.C.N.S.(H) 2300B/21 to R.A.3.)

681

War Diary.21.5.1941.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ship's Attacked.HARPAGUS
NORMAN MONARCH
(torpedoed 20/5)

Have picked up survivors of HARPAGUS and NORMAN MONARCH. Rejoining BURWELL with Convoy of 17 ships my position is $058^{\circ} 52' N. 039^{\circ} 10' W.$ (BURNHAM, 0234Z/21, to S.O. Escort Group 12.)

ELUSA.

Torpedoed position $059^{\circ} 55' N., 038^{\circ} 39' W.$, survivors picked up. (BURNHAM, 0412Z/21, to Admty etc.) Position amended, see 0546/21. BURNHAM taking off survivors from ELUSA on fire in $058^{\circ} 53' N., 039^{\circ} 45' W.$ Prospect of salvage good. Reached vicinity of wreck one hour after explosion. Searched without result. Rejoining convoy 16 ships bearing 359° 10 miles course $44^{\circ}, 9$ knots. (S.O. 12th Escort Group, 0511Z/21, to C. in C. W.A.) My 0412Z/21 amend position to read $059^{\circ} 00' N., 038^{\circ} 05' West$ (could be $23'$ or $53' W.$) (BURNHAM, 0546Z/21.)

STARCROSS
(torpedoed 20/5)

Enemy report made at 2340B/20 was of hydrophone contact. BOADICEA was unable to confirm. Search lasting 6 hours. BOADICEA has gained convoy. Intend returning to Clyde as both evaporators are defective and unable to maintain minimum supply feed water. Have sufficient for 36 hours. Master, all officers and ships company STARCROSS 40 in number on board and all well. $54^{\circ} 25' 12'' 25'$. Weather. (ST. FRANCIS, 1415B/21, to C. in C.W.A.)

COCKAPONSET
BRITISH
SECURITY.
(H.X.126.)

Following from ARABIS. HONTESTROOM picked up 12 survivors from COCKAPONSET in $057^{\circ} 20' N., 041^{\circ} 52' W.$, approx. BRITISH SECURITY in the vicinity on fire but apparently seaworthy. Continuing to search for survivors. Unable to contact C. in C. W.A. Time of origin 0800. (Ends.). (S.O. Escort Group 12, 1501Z/21, to C. in C. W.A.)

/COCKAPONSET.....

War Diary21.5.1941.
WednesdayU-BOAT CAMPAIGNShips Attacked-Contd.COCKAPONSET
Cont:-

COCKAPONSET, British, 5996 tons, apparently sunk on 20/5. Bound from Houston for Holyhead and Cardiff with general cargo. (D.S. 626, 23/5)

? * ELUSA
 ? * CROWN ARUM *
 ? * NORTHERN MONARCH
 (Torpedoed 20/5)

*? HARPAGUS

BURNHAM with VERBENA searching for U-Boat sighted in the vicinity of wreck ELUSA position 058° 55' N., 039° 30' W. BURNHAM has on board survivors of ELUSA 47, *CROWN ARUM 17, ^{NORTHERN} NORTHERN MONARCH, 14. (12th Escort Group, 1606Z/21 to ARABIS)

H.X. 126
 (Attacked 20/5)

Following report of survivors of H.X. 126 received. NORMAN MONARCH, HARPAGUS and ELUSA rescued by BURNHAM. No report survivors from DARLINGTON COURT and BRITISH SECURITY torpedoed in 57° 28' N. 41° 07' W., at 1500B/20 or ROTHERMERE 55° 53' N., 42° 30' W at 1758/20 position doubtful, JOHN P. PEDERSEN no position given, or SAN FELIX 57° 32' N., 40° 21' W at 1648/20. Any ships rescuing survivors are to report unless in company with reformed convoy when first ship detached should signal details. ARABIS, NORTHERN WAVE, NORTHERN GEM and HONTESTROOM continue search until satisfied that all survivors in this area have been rescued. (C. in C. W.A., 1639B/21 to ARABIS, HELIOTROPE, MALLOW, BURNHAM, NORTHERN WAVE BURWELL, NORTHERN GEM, HONTESTROOM)

CITY OF
 SHANGHAI.
 (Torpedoed 10/5)

My 1404/20. Ship was attacked by two submarines and after being torpedoed was eventually sunk by gunfire from close range. (S.O.I.) Montevideo, 2231Z/21 to R.A.S.A.D.)

NICOYA

Repeated Submarine Attack 59.16 N., 32.29 W., NICOYA sighted submarine on surface 2200G.M.T. (? 2259/21)

683

War Diary

21.5.1941.
Wednesday

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarines Reported

0128 Your 0041B/21 (N.T. in W.R.) 059° 46' N., 010° 45' W., 8 miles to N. E. of Convoy. Submarine. No contact. (LINCOLN, 0128B/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

1000 Submarine reported submerging 2-1/2 miles off Skigerste and near Brag Rock, Lewis, proceeding in Northerly direction about 1000/21 seen by several civilians. (N.O.I.C. Stornoway 1048B/21 to A.C.O.S.)

0309 A/C reports possible U/B in 58° 50' N., 9° 30' W., at 0309/21. (D.D.I.C. 1049B/21 to WANDERER, INGLEFIELD)

0910 By D/F at 0910/21. G.M.T. position of German U-Boat was approx. 58° 00' N., - 59° 00' N., 35° 00' W - 37° 00' W. Unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1216B/21 to BURNHAM, etc.)

Estimated U-Boat dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1435B/21)

1800/20 S/M reported 2 miles N.E. of North Cape 0001/21 by SS BOLLSTA. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1450/21 to C.S.I. SUFFOLK, ASCANIA, CHESHIRE)
My 1450/21. Further information shows submarine was sighted by 1 man only. Sighted at ? 1800/20 not 0001/21. (F.O.I.C. Iceland, 1603/21)

1344 By D/F at 1344Z/21 position of German U/Boat 59° - 60° N. 32° - 34° W., Position is indication of area only. (D.D.I.C. 1643B/21)

1822 Position of U-Boat by D/F fix at 1822Z/21 was 057° 50' 010° 40' West a good fix. (C. in C. W.A., 2215B/21 to WALKER)

War Diary21.5.1941.
WednesdayU-BOAT CAMPAIGNSubmarines AttackedBy VERBENA

Have attacked enemy submarine in 058° 55' N. 039° 30' W. (VERBENA 0903Z/21 to N.O.I.C. Iceland.)

VERBENA sent back to stand by wreck of ELUSA engaged U-Boat on surface 058° 55' N 039° 30' W., at 0902 G.M.T. U-Boat dived at 0918 G.M.T. BURNHAM detached from convoy to assist. Reference position of wreck from convoy 217° 28 miles. Weather report. (S.O. 12 Escort Group 0921Z/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

If contact is not regained after searching up wind do not leave vicinity of Green Cape unless otherwise ordered by C. in C. Remain 48 hours. During four hours of darkness keep U-Boat down with star shells and steaming high speed using searchlight. Force U-Boat to exhaust batteries and surface diving daylight. Get this U-Boat without fail. (S.O. 12th Escort Group 1538Z/21 to BURNHAM)

VERBENA'S 0903Z/21. Several attacks carried out on definite submarine contact. Contact lost at 1430 not yet regained. VERBENA has now only one depth-charge left. Am continuing search. (BURNHAM 1544Z/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

Your 1510Z/21. Concentrate on getting U-Boat. Consider question of salvage after U-Boat is sunk or taken. U-Boat must still be near you with battery low. (S.O. Escort Group 12, 1744Z/21 to VERBENA)

By SS BERKEL
21/4.

Master BERKEL reports engaged submarine in position 053 38 N., 017 29 W. on April 21st. Considers submarine badly damaged by the stern although managed to submerge. Report follows by safe hands. (S.O. (I) Jamaica 1152R/21)

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

D.S. NAUTILUS
Sunk.

Dutch minelayer NAUTILUS was sunk at 0130 today as result of collision with SS MURRAYFIELD off the Humber. There were no casualties.

Watch for
German
Naval Units.

(BISMARCK ?
PRINZ EUGEN.)

6695
Aircraft R/C at 1939 today showed that the German battleship and cruiser have left Bergen. The merchant ships did not leave with them. Photographs at 1730 showed 3 destroyers and a catapult ship in Trondheim. Most of the coast was fog bound. F.O. 1st B.C.S's Force (HOOD, PRINCE OF WALES and 6 destroyers) (to be known as Battle Cruiser Force) and Force with C. in C. H.F. (KING GEORGE V, VICTORIOUS, GALATEA, AURORA, KENYA, HERMIONE and 7 destroyers) to be known as Battle Fleet, were ordered at 2207B to cover a possible break out of the enemy westward through the Denmark Straits, Iceland Faeroes passage or Faeroes Shetlands passage. The Battle Fleet will operate south of 62° N., and the Battle Cruiser Force north of 62° N. 18th C.S. (BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER and ARETHUSA) are to patrol the Iceland Faeroes passage, west of the mine barrier, and SUFFOLK is to join F.O.I.C.S. in NORFOLK on Denmark Strait patrol. REPULSE is to proceed from the Clyde to Scapa.

Air R/C is to be maintained in the Iceland Faeroes Channel, Denmark Straits, Faeroes Shetlands Channel and Coast of Norway.

U.S.
C.G. Cutters.

American Coastguard Cutters FISHGUARD, CULVER, BANFF and HARTLAND arrived at Greenock today.

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

British Air Activity

In order to economise personnel and stores it is proposed to close down the Naval Air Section at Sullom Voe and the Naval Air Station, Stornoway.

Two Hudsons of Coastal Command attacked the enemy naval units at Bergen in the early hours of this morning. Results were not observed. Bad weather caused other Hudsons to return without attacking.

Owing to bad weather all operations by Bomber Command last night were cancelled.

Blenheims today searched for shipping off the Frisian Islands and Danish coast north of Sylt. One small merchant vessel is thought to have been damaged off Borkum.

Enemy Air Operations

SS EMPIRE PROGRESS was bombed and damaged in Totland Bay today.

Mining

TEVIOTBANK
PLOVER today laid mines in the East Coast Barrier. See p 700

Operation
B.S. 61.

Mines were detonated today in the Thames Estuary.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

It is reported that German E-boats have arrived at Oran and are possibly painted with French colours.

D/F bearing at 1957Z today indicated an enemy surface ship in the area between 42° - 43° N. 11° - 13° W., probably homeward bound.

South Atlantic.

A French aircraft flew over Bathurst and Cape St. Mary docks today, and was engaged by light machine gun fire.

Mediterranean.

Minesweeping.

The Admiralty today replied to C. in C. Med's. protest of 19/5 against possible depletion of his minesweeping forces to reinforce East Indies.

Reinforcements.

FARNDAL, AVON VALE, ERIDGE and HEYTHROP are to join the Mediterranean Fleet when FARNDAL sufficiently worked up. See p. 692

Operation "Splice".

25 Hurricanes arrived in Egypt today, escorted by 3 Wellingtons, making a total of 42 Hurricanes, escorted by 2 Beaufighters and 3 Wellingtons arrived in Egypt to date in this operation.

French Fleet at Alexandria.

A message regarding these ships was sent by Admiralty to C. in C. Med. today.

Air Attack on Convoy.

Following Maryland R/C 4 Blenheims were sent to attack a convoy. Only one merchant ship was found and was attacked at 1525 G.M.T. 15 miles 20° Pantellaria, whilst steering south. The vessel received 8 hits 4 of which bounced off the deck, and was left stopped, damage unknown. Later R/C reported a derelict ship, presumably identical with the above.

Benghazi.

2 Wellingtons attacked the harbour at Benghazi today.

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean-Contd.

Attack on Crete.

Naval
Operations.
Convoys.

At 0405 R.A. (D) Med. ^{reported that he} engaged an enemy convoy at 2350 in position 100° 36' N., 24° E., 12 miles (about 40 miles N.E. of Cape Spada) and sank one destroyer, 2 merchant ships and a number of caiques, and dispersed the remainder. In view of serious shortage of A.A. Ammunition he proceeded with Force D to Alexandria.

At 1000 today C.S. 15 attacked another convoy, of about 30 small ships in 36° 30' N., 24° 20' E. The remains of the convoys turned north and C.S. 15 was unable to complete its destruction on account of the weight of air attack.

A convoy consisting of three Italian destroyers and numerous other craft, probably caiques were reported to have left Milo at 1622 towards Crete. C. in C Med. ordered our light forces to destroy the convoy if it appeared within striking distance.

Reliable information suggests that Italian forces are preparing to land in Sitia Bay from Rhodes on 24/5.

The dispositions of our light forces prevented any seaborne landings from taking place last night at Suda Bay, Retimo and Candia areas.

Our ships bombarded the enemy positions at Maleme last night and 10 Blenheims bombed the same area at dawn today.

/ORION.....

22.5.1941.
Thursday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete

Naval
Operations.
-Contd.

ORION was slightly damaged and FIJI was damaged during the night.

GLOUCESTER
FIJI, GREYHOUND.
Sunk
NAIAD
CARLISLE
WARSPITE
VALIANT
Damaged.

The following casualties from air attack occurred today:-
GLOUCESTER (1730) and FIJI (after 1920) were sunk, the former in Kithera Channel and the latter after withdrawing owing to acute shortage of A.A. ammunition. It is believed that both ships had expended their entire outfit when they were sunk. NAIAD has only 2 turrets in action and is leaking. GREYHOUND was reported sunk at 1411C. WARSPITE was hit and has her starboard 6 inch and 4 inch guns out of action and one boiler room out of action (probably repairable) VALIANT was hit this afternoon, but her armament and engines are believed to be intact. CARLISLE was hit but not seriously damaged; PERTH had her 6 inch fire control put out of action.

Her Captain, T.C. Hampton, was killed.

ABDIEL and RORQUAL both laid mines successfully (for positions see C. in C., Med. 1810/22)

Naval
Dispositions

Dispositions ordered for 22nd/23rd by C. in C. Med. were as follows:-
Force A. to continue to cover the west of Crete, detaching destroyers to fuel on relief.
New Force D. to be formed of 5th D.F. from Malta, to enter Aegean from westward 2100/22, to patrol Kissamo-Maleme-Suda Bay area during tonight.
Force E. Capt. (D) 14, ORION, AJAX, Capt. (D) 2, NIZAM, HAVOCK to enter Aegean by Kaso Strait 2100/22, to patrol Heraklion area tonight.

/If there

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete

Naval
dispositions
-Contd.

If there were no further developments during the night Forces D and E were to retire on Force A through Anti Kithera Channel, leaving patrol at (? 1200 or 0100) /23.

Remaining ships to return to Alexandria to fuel and prepare for further service. GLENROY escorted by COVENTRY, AUKLAND and FLAMINGO left Alexandria p.m. today to land troops at Tymbaki during the night 23/24 May.

Suda Bay
Area.

The enemy were strongly reinforced by airborne troops during the day at Maleme where it was estimated that 100 troop carrying aircraft landed and at 2107 it was reported that the situation had deteriorated. Many of the troop carriers were destroyed. The aerodrome is in enemy hands.

Retimo.

A few of the enemy are in position at Retimo.

Candia Area

At Heraklion the situation was reported to be well in hand. The enemy dropped supplies, including guns and ammunition, which were seized by our troops.

China

It is reported that all German and Italian ships in refuge in Japan are to be given covering Japanese nationality and used locally.

MOST SECRET

691

22.5.1941.
Thursday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

U-Boat Activity

South
Atlantic

BRITISH GRENADIER was reported torpedoed at 1958 N. today in 6° 15' N., 12° 59' W.

It is reported that Dutch SS MARISA was torpedoed at 2135/16 in 6° 10' N., 18° 9' W.

692

War Diary.

22.5.1941
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

HERACLES.

Finnish HERACLES expected to sail from Gothenburg 22/5 for Buenos Aires routed as follows. Ship should not be molested. (D.O.D.H. 1253B/22)

FARNDALE,
AVON VALE,
ERIDGE,
HEYTHROP for
Mediterranean.

FARNDALE, AVON VALE, ERIDGE and HEYTHROP are to join the Mediterranean Fleet as soon as possible.
2. FARNDALE, AVON VALE and ERIDGE are required to sail as soon as FARNDALE has worked up sufficiently. HEYTHROP will proceed later.
3. C. in C. W.A. is requested to arrange programme in conjunction with R.A.(D) H.F, informing Admiralty of arrangements proposed in due course. (1st S.L. 1548B/22)

Plymouth.
PLYMOUTH.
Priority of
Repair Work.

Your 2357/19.

1. Approved for PARIS to be given Priority 111 (A.L. D.O.4463/41) but it is at your discretion to employ sufficient men to bring the ship into operation at an early date.
2. PRINCE CHARLES must be completed at Devonport. This ship is required now for service and if sent to Falmouth will take a long time to complete.
3. Trawlers can be taken forthwith for normal refits as follows. Trawlers requiring extensive damage repairs cannot be taken in these areas.
4. Trawler repair work in Dockyards must be continued at Priority 111 (A.L. D.O. 4463/41)
We are very short of cruisers and your proposal would give them priority over KENT and TRINIDAD. (Controller 1951B/22 to C. in C. Plymouth)

Air Sections
at Sollum Voe
and
Stornoway to
close.

My 1120/21. In order to economise personnel and stores it is proposed to close down Naval Air Section at Sollum Voe and Naval Air Station Stornoway. (D.N.A.D. 2102B/22 to C. in C. H.F.)

/Faroes Site ...

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

Faroes.
Site for
Aerodrome.

Yesterday I visited a possible site at Sands 061° 50' N. 006° 48' W. in Island. Construction and transport difficulties would be great but not insuperable. In view of great importance of operating striking force and reconnaissance aircraft from Faroes request (vigorous?) hastening action may be taken (A.C.D.S. 0932Z/22 to Adty.)

Movements.

REPULSE.

Cancel my 2353B/21. C. in C. W.A. is requested to provide A/S screen for REPULSE. REPULSE is to proceed Scapa, when A/S screen is available, with all convenient despatch. (C. in C. H.F. 0103B/22 to REPULSE)

LEGION, SAGUENAY, and ASSINIBOINE will be required to escort REPULSE from Clyde to Scapa. (C. in C. W.A. 0151/22)

My 0151B/22. Comply with C. in C. H.F. 0103B/22. (C. in C. W.A. 0309B/22 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Sailed REPULSE, LEGION, ASSINIBOINE, SAGUENAY in accordance with my 0555B/22 arrive 277° Dunnet Head 30 miles at 0930/23. Code word FAITH. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1603B/22)

U.S.A.
Coastguard
Cutters.

Arrived American C.G. Cutters FISHGUARD, CULVER, BANFF and HARTLAND. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1950B/22.

/MOOLTAN.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. (contd.)

MOOLTAN.

My 1540B/13. Southend 22/5 departure
MOOLTAN at 1300 escorted by MENDIP and
COTTESMORE. S. of A. 16½ knots. E.T.A.
2200B/24th (C. in C. Nore. 2116B/22 to
C. in C. Rosyth.)

Operations.

Watch for
Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.

Scapa departure R.A.I.B.S. in HOOD with
PRINCE OF WALES, ICARUS, ANTELOPE, ACHATES,
ANTHONY, ELECTRA, ECHO. (A.C.O.S. 0050/22)

→ Arrived SUFFOLK 0130. (N.O.I.C. Iceland
0915/22.)

A.C.O.S. 2301B/21. P. 31 is proceeding
to patrol 25 miles west of Statlandet.
(Capt. S.9. 0933B/22 to MINERVE)

→ Unless otherwise ordered ARETHUSA relieves
NORFOLK for fuelling 2000B/26 off Isafiord.
(F.O.C.1st C.A. 0934B/22 to ARETHUSA)

→ Remain at Hvalfiord. (C. in C.H.F. 0944B/22
to SUFFOLK) *see next page*

Arrival BIRMINGHAM. MANCHESTER. (N.O.I.C.
Faroes 1017/22)

→ Until otherwise ordered by C. in C.H.F.
ARETHUSA will act as a private ship.
(A.C.O.S. 1025Z/22 to C. in C.H.F.)

/Proceed to

695

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Watch for
Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.
(contd.)

Proceed to join C.S. One. (C. in C.H.F. 2014/22 to SUFFOLK) *See previous page*

ARETHUSA is to proceed to take up N.P. line TR.38. MANCHESTER on arrival in area is to take BIRMINGHAM, ARETHUSA under his orders and dispose ships to patrol (Iceland)? Faroes passage westward of mine barrier.

(C. in C. H.F. 2042B/22)

C. in C. H.F.'s 2042/22. Intend to sail 0020B/23 and make good 18 knots.

(ARETHUSA 2130Z/22)

In view of present situation regret Capt (D) 6 and his destroyers will not be available for H X 127.

Request you will order them to proceed to Scapa at best speed after leaving RODNEY.

(C. in C.H.F. 2142B/22)

Sailed ARETHUSA (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2210Z/22)

F.O.C. 1st B.C.S.'s force is to be known as Battle Cruiser force and force with C. in C. H.F. as Battle Fleet.

Both forces are to cover possible break out westward through Denmark Straits, Iceland Faeroes passage, or Faeroes Shetlands passage.

Battle fleet will operate south of 062° N. Battle cruiser force will operate north of 062° N.

If enemy battleships and cruisers are located in harbour or returning to Germany Battle Cruiser force is to proceed to Hvalfjord and Battle fleet to Scapa.

Failing such information F.O.C. 1st B.C.S. is to use his discretion as to when to take destroyers in to Hvalfjord to fuel.

(C. in C.H.F. 2207B/22)

/SUFFOLK

696

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Watch for Enemy
Warships at
Bergen cont.

SUFFOLK sailed. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2212Z/22)

BIRMINGHAM and MANCHESTER sailed 2200.
S. of A. 21 knots. (N.O.I.C. Faeroes
2213B/22)

Scapa departures C. in C. H.F. in KING
GEORGE V, VICTORIOUS, GALATEA, AURORA,
KENYA, HERMIONE, INGLEFIELD, INTREPID,
ACTIVE, PUNJABI, NESTOR, WINDSOR, LANCE.
(A.C.O.S. 2307/22)

CONQUEROR.

Intend CONQUEROR to sail from Falmouth so
as to arrive Plymouth 1500/23 and leave
Plymouth so as to arrive Portland 1600/24.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1208/22)
Intend to sail for Plymouth CONQUEROR
1030/23. E.T.A. 1500. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth
2208/22)

IRIS
(cable laying
from
Benbecula)

Admiralty's 0036B/21. Report how long
this operation will take and when IRIS
will commence laying. (C. in C. W.A.
1902B/22 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

British Air Activity.

Heligoland
attacked.

Day 19 May. Night 19/20 May, Day 20 May,
and night 20/21 May. All operations
cancelled owing to unfavourable weather.
Day 21 May. This afternoon the naval base
of Heligoland was subjected to a surprise
attack. Details. (H.Q.B.C. 0240/22)

/Patrols

War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity. (contd.)Patrols.

Patrol ~~ONE~~^{"Unst"} in operation until 0800.
(C. in C. Rosyth D552/22)

Sunderland A/C will fly following cross-
over patrol from about 1045 until 1600
today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0734/22)

My 2302/21. All R/C's encountered very
low visibility and saw nothing. Meteor-
ological flights over Norwegian coast are
being maintained and further R/C's will
be flown when visibility improves.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1054/22)

My 0734/22. Aircraft returning owing to
fog. (C. in C. Rosyth 1156/22)

Blenheim A/C are carrying out meteorological
R/C on Norwegian coast between 60° N. and
62° N. from 1400 till 1700 today.
Patrol ~~HORN~~ now in operation.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1438/22)

Request Air R/C be maintained as follows:-
(a) Iceland, Faeroes, Channel.
(b) Denmark Straits (c) Faeroes, Shetlands,
Channel. (d) Norwegian Coast.
(2) Object is to detect enemy battleship
and enemy cruiser breaking out to westward.
(C. in C. H.F. 2043B/22 to Adty.)

Your 2043B/22. Air reconnaissances for
23/5 arranged as follows:-
(A) Iceland - Faeroes by A.O.C. in C.
Coast Command.
(B) Denmark Strait by C. in C. Western
Approaches.
(C) Faeroes - Shetland 18 Group.
(D) Norwegian Coast including PRU 18 Group.
Details follows. (C. in C. Rosyth 2338/22
to C. in C. H.F.)

/Air Attack

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.(contd.)

Air Attack
on Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.

My 1824/21. Owing to low cloud base all aircraft were unable to locate target. (C. in C. Rosyth 0628/22)

Merchant Ship
Fighter Unit.

Since M.S.F.U. Ship Detachments include only one pilot and hours of daylight may be 22 out of 24, a great strain will be thrown on the pilot who will be almost continually at readiness between 30° W. Long and U.K.

Consider that when Naval Catapult Ships are present with Convoy it might be feasible for M.S.F.U. pilot to be given certain hours of release under the orders of the Catapult Ship.

May this policy please be considered and Admiralty views solicited. When no Catapult Ship is present with Convoy it will be necessary for a lesser degree of readiness to be accepted for M.S.F.U. aircraft.

Request decision by signal.

H.Q. 9 Group 1230/22 to H.Q.F.C)

Hatston.

Admiralty 1120B/21. Request the additional aircraft be sent to Hatston when available. (C. in C. H.F. 1927B/22 to RANAS.)

One Merchant
Vessel
attacked.

On 22/5 one C/A attacked a Merchant Vessel of about 1000 tons, just North East of Borkum. Vessel thought to have been damaged.

Night 22/23. All operations cancelled owing to weather. (H.Q.B.C. 2337/22)

699

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

JOSEFINA
THORDEN
(Bombed 19/5)

BRIGAND towing JOSEFINA THORDEN stern first. Speed about 4 knots, course towards Faeroes ? Island. Request destination. (BRIGAND 0045/22 to A.C.O.S)

Your 0045/22. Destination Thorshaven. (A.C.O.S. 0143B/22 to BRIGAND)
BRIGAND and MARAUDER towing JOSEFINA THORDEN escorted by NORTHERN CHIEF arrived. (N.O.I.C. Faeroes 2246B/22)

See also p. 733

EMPIRE
PROGRESS
(British,
5249 Tons)
bombed.

Bombed anchoring Totland Bay. (Niton Radio 1551/22)

MARMION
(Bombed 9/4)

My 0110/21 and 1020/21. Cancel request for onward towage from Southend. Intend that KENIA should continue tow to Tilbury proceeding to Gravesend for the night. (F.O.I.C. Harwick 1802B/22)

TANAGER
WARREN
(Trawlers)
attacked.
Bardsey Island
Lighthouse
damaged on 16/5

Following reports of attack by enemy aircraft received. Trawler TANAGER with bombs S.E. by E. Kish Lightship 5 miles at 0120/11 and 0120/15. Vessel undamaged. Trawler WARREN with bombs E.N.E. Kish Lightship 4 miles 0100/11 vessel undamaged. Bardsey Island lighthouse machine-gunned night 16/5. Light was damaged and lens perforated. Temporary repairs made. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2126B/22)

Convoys
WN. Even and
DAFFODIL. Daffodil.

Fighters have been despatched to assist convoys ~~METRIC~~ and ~~DAFFODIL~~. (Rosyth W/T 2254/22)

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

SN. 64

My 1237/20. Operation S.N 64 postponed.
(R.A.M.L. 0407B/22)
S.N.64 postponed. Return to Butt of Lewis
area to complete survey. (R.A.M.L. 0902/22
to SCOTT)

My 2356B/21. Regret I cannot spare a
destroyer but can make a cruiser available
as soon as you are ready. (C. in C. H.F.
1112B/22 to R.A.M.)
Your 1112/22. Regret I have only one
destroyer. Shall not have destroyer screen
of my own until return of S D 4.
(R.A.M. 1228/B/22 to C. in C. H.F.)
Return to base on completion of present
work. (R.A.M.L. 1403/22 to SCOTT.)

BS. 61

Departure TEVIOT BANK and CATTISTOCK
at 0525. (F.O. Humber 0531B/22)
Operation B.S.61. Completed. (TEVIOT BANK
1700B/22)

Faeroes -
N. Rona
Minefield.
Conference.

C. in C. H.F. 1507/21. Concur.
(R.A.M. 0858B/22)
Cancel my 1507/21. Further signal will
be made. (C. in C.H.F. 2007B/22 to R.A.M.)

SN. 66.
SN. 67A.
SN. 67B.
SN. 70

R.A.M. 1014B/21. Concur.
(C. in C. H.F. 1105B/22)

PW. 9

P.W.(9) ready for sea.
Asdic operating with centre 090° one mile
from Dunkirk C.W. Buoy. Report when
ready. (C. in C. Nore 1114/22 to BEEHIVE)

BS. 57.

Intend to sail at 2000 today to lay at
0247 tomorrow. (PLOVER 1200B/22)
BS.57 postponed 24 hours due to weather.
(C. in C. Nore. 1820B/22)

/Minelaying

701

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd.)

Minelaying
Programme.

A.M. 2152 B/20. D.D.O.D.(M) would like
-to discuss the following points.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1516B/22)

Aberdeen.

It is important to remove the obstacles in
the Aberdeen channel so that dredging may
proceed as soon as possible. If local
resources are insufficient report what
is required to expedite work. (A.C.N.S. T
1755B/22 to F.O.I.C. Aberdeen)

MALCOLM.

~~Sunderland~~
SUNDERLAND will be sweeping ahead of you
between 2130Z/22 and 0300Z/23.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1835/22 to MALCOLM.)

Thames
Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1152/22/5
and one mine at 1156/22. Details.
(Capt.M/S Sheerness 1935/22)

702

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

Milford Haven.

Request following be promulgated.
All vessels waiting outside Milford Haven for convoy or any other reason are to keep within an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:-
(A) 51° 40' 18" N. 05° 11' 06" W.
(B) 51° 39' 42" N. 05° 09' 48" W.
(C) 51° 38' 30" N. 05° 11' 21" W.
(D) 51° 39' 09" N. 05° 12' 36" W.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1051B/22 to Adty)
Admty. A.2. Message, (D.T.D. 2130B/22)

H.G. 61.

21 ships have arrived under Cdre. Avery R.N.R.
2 neutral, 2 allied, rest British.
Cargoes. (D.S. 625, 22/5)

East Coast Convoys.

Admty. 1936B/14 2044/17 and C. in C. Rosyth 1129/18 concur with C. in C. Rosyth. Considered most important to arrange for East Coast shipping to be kept clear of area between Sheringham Buoy and Aldeburgh Buoy in dark hours. Suggest trial given to a medium convoy (F.N. and F.S.) of 7 7½ knot ships to supersede one of the F.N.(S) and F.S.(S) ordered in Admty. 1936B/14. If this is agreed, one convoy in every three would be a slow convoy (7 knot ships)
(C. in C. Nore 1624B/22 to Admty.)

WS.9A.

Proposed embarkation arrangements.
(D.S.T. 1841B/22 to P.S.T.O. W. of Scotland etc.)

BEN MY OREE.

CHREE

Ready to leave Greenock with service personnel for Faeroes and Iceland.
C. in C. W.A. and A.C.O.S. requested to arrange A/A protection as necessary from Clyde and on return.
C. in C. H.F. requested to report on what date A/S escort can be provided from Faeroes to Iceland. (D.O.D.(H) 1956B/22 to C. in C.W.A., C. in C.H.F., A.C.O.S.)

703

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

COMMANDER
HORTON
(Steam
Trawler)

Approx. seven days overdue from
Icelandic fishing grounds.
(N.C.S.O. Humber 1025B/22)

TRIBUNE.

Your 1637B/19. Owing to defects. (details)
request permission to proceed on surface
by day with T.B.R. after passing 025° W.
at about sunset/23. (TRIBUNE 1100Z/22)

NAUTILUS
(Mine-layer)
sunk.

H.N.M.S. NAUTILUS sank at 0130 today as
the result of a collision with S.S.
MURRAYFIELD. - No casualties. Survivors
landed at Grimsby. Position of wreck
reported as 041° Humber L/V. 4 miles.
(F.O. Humber 1140B/22)

Unknown
Vessel.

S.O.S. de GKR at 1356 G.M.T. Signals
failed. No details or bearings obtained.
(Wick Radio 1501/22)

M.G.B.88

Sustained serious damage to hull on passage
from Greenock. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven
1505B/22)

F.16.

F.16 has gone aground off Albert Harbour
Greenock. Troops being disembarked owing
to ship taking dangerous list.
(P.S.T.O. West of Scotland 1529/22)
F.16 afloat. Proceeding anchorage.
(D.S.T.O. Greenock 2141/22)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday. 704

FOREIGN STATION.

North Atlantic.

E/Boats
Oran.

My 2221/7 and 1938/10. Reported that German E boats have arrived Oran. Graded C.3. They may be painted in French colours. (N.I.D. 0022B/22 to S.O. Force H).

Operation
"Splice".

My 2120/21 para 2. This Fulmar arrived. Missing Fulmar was leader of 5th flight possibly force-landed near Cape Bon. This indicates that three out of five Fulmars proved unserviceable. (S.O. Force H., 1013/22 to Admty).

W.S.8B.
Operations
"Rocket"
"Tracer".

A.T. 0025B/22.
As REPULSE is not now sailing as escort to ARGUS and Convoy W.S.8.B., SHEFFIELD is to meet convoy and escort ARGUS to Gibraltar. EDINBURGH is to proceed to Gibraltar on completion of patrol and is to escort ARGUS and NEA HELLAS to U.K. as soon as transfer of aircraft is complete about 31/5. "Rocket" "~~ROCKET~~" is to be carried out as arranged by S. O. Force "H". "~~TRACER~~" is postponed. A.T. 1516B/21 is cancelled. RENOWN will not proceed to U.K. until further orders. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1020B/22 to F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. H.F., S. O. Force H., C.3.18).

FORESIGHT
Force H.

FORESIGHT being shadowed. Force "H" steering east pending further developments. (S.O. Force H., 1046/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

CLYDE

Notifying movements of PANDORA, IMPERIALIST, corvettes, NEA HELLAS, WRESTLER. You will proceed unescorted after passing position (e). Inform me if unable to comply with E.T.A. within 2 hours. (F.O.C.N.A. 1110A/22 to CLYDE).

Corvettes.

Pass through 035° 35' N 015° 00' W thence Gibraltar. My 1210A/21. Para B Track of TRUANT is to be crossed during daylight hours. Estimated your position at 1500B/22 is 040° 10' N 018° 50' W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1139A/22 to FLEUR DE LYS, COREOPSIS, SPIREA.)

PANDORA.....

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

705

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (contd).

PANDORA.

Sailed in accordance with my 1134A/19 and F.O.(S) 1844B/20. (F.O.C.N.A., 1200A/22 to Admty).

S/M
Positions.

My 1210A/21 para (D). Amend time to read 1130A/22. (F.O.C.N.A. 1210A/22 to N.A. Stn).

ALGER
(Portuguese
detained).

Following for M.E.W. My ARFAR 314. Portuguese ALGER ref. my tel. 246 and Ambassador Lisbon 528 20/5, addressed F.O. Vessel returned from Genoa with 32 cases containing tractors and 57 cases of spare parts consigned by Portuguese Consul Genoa to Minister O Dellaguerra, Lisbon, tons. As no previous instructions have been received from you am holding vessel pending reply. (C.C.S.O. Gib., 1540/22, to Admty).

DUNEDIN

Your 1716/20. Delay to DUNEDIN cannot be accepted. A.I. Boiler should be blanked off, and ship sailed for Freetown as soon as ready. (D.O.D. (F) 1657B/22 to A.S., Gibraltar).

U/Boat
Menace.

South Atlantic.
Remarks on U/B activity, and suggestions. (V.C.N.S., 0030B/22 to C. in C. S.A.) See Lion Copy.

LIEUT:
ST. LOUBERT
BIE.

C. in C. S.A.'s 1225N/18. In view of large number of troops on board you should ascertain from Union Authorities whether they prefer LIEUTENANT ST. LOUBERT BIE to be taken into any other port than Simonstown. (Head of M. 0126B/22 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

Enemy Unit.

My 0117/22. Empire bearing indicate position of enemy unit within 150 miles of 10° N 25° W. (D.D.I.C. 0613/22 to C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A.). My 0613/22. It is uncertain whether signal originated from a U/Boat or surface vessel. If the latter suggest this may have been a supply vessel for U.Boats and one or more U. Boats may be in the same vicinity. (D.D.I.C. 1046B/22)(C. in C. S.A., 1711N/22 to NELSON, EAGLE, CATHAY).

D/F bearings.....

SECRET

MESSAGE.

0030B/22 May

OUT

To C. in C. South Atlantic. 253. DATE 22.5.41.

705A.

Naval Cypher (One time)

From: Admiralty.

~~Admittedly~~ Admittedly the information regarding U-Boats in your area is very vague but it would appear that they are spread roughly on an east and west line in about the latitude of Freetown.

2. It is thought that each of these ~~sub~~marines has operated in its own area and experience of enemy U-Boats habits in home waters has shown that unless and until an important target such as a convoy is located each U-Boat operates in its own patrol zone which is often of the extent of 3 to 4 degs. of latitude by 2 or 3 degs. of longitude.

3. Under these circumstances it is inadvisable that any ship should approach Freetown on an easterly course as they then run the gauntlet of successive submarines.

4. It appears necessary for every ship passing through your area to be treated as an individual problem and to be ~~dras~~ drastically re-routed where this appears likely to increase safety.

5. During the month of May all the U-Boat reports have been south of 10 degs. N. and this fact suggests that for the present it might prove advantageous to adjust the routes of ships approaching Freetown from the north so as to keep them to the northward of 20 degs N. between 18 degs. and 30 degs. W. in the manner of convoy SWIFT.

6. It is estimated that one U-Boat left your area homeward bound about the 14th of May. Its position being now somewhere near the Canaries whilst another left L'Orient about 5th May and arrived possibly in the westernmost of the 4 supposed zones about 10 days later.

7. Any forecasts or ideas which may appear possibly helpful will be signalled from time to time. You will appreciate that the phases of U-Boat activity will vary and the areas of attack be shifted thus calling for fresh apprecia- tions and routing instructions.

0030B/22

for D.T.D. (983).
Approved by V.C.N.S.

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
- Naval Secy.
- C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- Ops (4)
- O.D. (5)
- O.D. 8.
- D.N.I.
- D. of S. 2A.
- D.T.D. (4)
- D.T.D. (M)
- D.S.D.9.

- D. of S.T.
- I.P. (3)
- D.A/S.W.
- O.I.C.
- W.D.
- I.M.N.G

JD.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.→ Enemy Unit.
(contd).

D/F bearings at 2115Z/21 indicate probable surface unit within 100 miles 009° N 025° W. Reliability 80%. More likely warship than merchant raider. Proceed towards this position.
(C. in C. S.A., 0631N/22 to NELSON, EAGLE).

CATHAY
S.L. 75

My 0631/22. Steer to pass East of Cape Verde Is. keeping out of sight of land.
(C. in C. SA., 0757N/22 to H.M.S. CATHAY pass to Commodore of Convoy S.L. 75, NELSON, EAGLE, Admiralty).

MONTE TEIDE
suspicious.

Request you ascertain if possible whether Spanish MONTE TEIDE at Buenos Aires carried any enemy personnel. British ship CITY OF VENICE reports that on May 1st in 11° 30' North 27° 31' West vessel was following her with obvious intention of ascertaining her zigzag courses.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1315N/22 to SOI Montivideo)

Ammunition
Free French.

Para. 5 of my 2323/16. Instructions are being issued that ammunition is to be requisitioned and delivered to you for the use of the Free French.
(Head of M., 1634B/22 to C. in C. SA).

→ NELSON
EAGLE, S.L. 75.

Your 1046/22. Movements of S.L. 75 NELSON and EAGLE were ordered on assumption that enemy unit might be warship. Propose convoy continues on route given in my 1617/22 unless other information makes this undesirable. Request information if warship definitely unlikely owing to known position of these. Position appears rather near Freetown and trade route for supply ship and weather in this area probably unsuitable for fuelling U boats. EAGLE probably has fuel for 48 hours and could just reach original position of enemy unit of destroyers for 36 hours only (? and in time to) leave for Freetown a.m./25 Whether NELSON should remain out without destroyers will depend much on likelihood enemy warship being present. 2 destroyers could be sent to escort in later.
(C. in C. S.A., 1749N/22 to Admty)(Reply: 0150B/23). p. 754. 755.

S.L. 76.....

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic-Contd.

S.L. 76

Anticipated there will be about 55 ships
in Convoy S.L. 76.
(C. in C. S.A. 2051N/22 to Admty.)

BULOLO.
ASTURIAS.

Dates of Arrival.
(C. in C. S.A. 2233N/22 to N.A. Washington
for B.A.R.M.)

708

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

PHOEBE.

Has PHOEBE been damaged? (1st S.L., 0014B/22 to C. in C. Med.)

14th D.F.

Sailed Alexandria in accordance with C.in C. Med. F. 1901/21 at 0015/22 with JERVIS, ILEX, NIZAM, HAVOCK. (Capt. D.14, 0016C/22 to F.O.C. 15. C.S.)

Suez Canal.

Anticipated arrivals at the Canal during June. (P & T.C. 0124B/22 to S.O.I. Alexandria).

German Air Threat.

Reply to C. in C. Med. 1329C/19. (1st S.L. 0128B/22) See Lion Copy.

U/B.

U-boat reported by aircraft 032° 32'N. 029°E. 00' at 1730C/21. (Capt. S.1, 0325C/22 to RORQUAL).

RORQUAL.
TETRARCH.

Alexandria s/m sanctuary will be in force 0200 to 0600/23 for RORQUAL arriving from Northward and 0200 to 0600/24 for TETRARCH arriving from Westward. All times G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria 0527C/22).

CAVARNA.
(Roumanian).

Arrived Samson from Braila 20/5 declared cargo 150 tons arms, 850 tons "machinery", "for Iran". Endeavouring to obtain fuller details. Steps being taken to have cargo delayed in transit. (S.O.I. Istanbul, 0958/22 to C. in C. Med.)

/A/C Reports.....

MOST SECRET

408A

MOST SECRET.

MESSAGE.

0128B/22nd May.

OUT.

To. C. in C. Mediterranean. 189.
Repeated. C. in C. East Indies. 321.

Date: 22.5.41.

Naval Cypher (F)

RECIRCULATION.

From. Admiralty.
IMPORTANT AIDAC.

Menace of German Air and Mining.

Personal from First Sea Lord.

(x p. 592)

Your 1329C/19.^x

1. I can assure you that the situation in the Mediterranean vis a vis the German air is fully realised.

2. The magnitude of the mining threat in the Mediterranean is also fully appreciated though I must point out that as compared to home waters the areas shallow enough for the use of magnetic and acoustic mines are very limited.

3. I fully agree as to the value of the D.W.I. aircraft in Egypt and you will note that Admiralty 1457B/17 only requests their transfer to Basra in the event of mines being dropped there before the minesweeping vessels now on passage can arrive.

Two more D.W.I. aircraft leave England for Egypt this week. They will not have rings or generators which I assure you have available from crashed aircraft.

4. Every possible step to augment your sweeping strength has been taken (details were sent to you by air in Admiralty letter M/M.S.0282/41 of 13th April, but it is regretted that Whalers from U.K. have been delayed and cannot start leaving before next week.) This has been done at the expense of building up reserves in the East Indies and China Stations and it is for this reason that if a threat arises in East Indies it is only from Mediterranean resources that it can be met in the first instance. Replacement of your minesweeping resources is being carried out continuously and urgently.

5. It is hoped to send 4 Hunts soon, though this class are urgently required to counter air attack on our vital supply lines in home waters. This attack now extends to shipping all round our coasts as well as to the Western Approaches.

0128B/22.

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

2nd S.L.

3rd S.L.

4th S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

D. of P (2)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.N.I. (4)

D.S.D.

D.N.A.D.

D. of L.D.

D.A/S.W.

D.M.S.

I.P.

W.D.

Duty Captain.

Head of M.

D.T.S.D.

D.D.I.C.

E.P.S.

D.T.D. (2)

N.I.D.10 (Pay Cdr. Wilson)

~~303~~

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd).

A/C Reports
of Enemy
Convoys.

From information available at the Admiralty it appears that information of the following convoys was received from Air R/C in time for action to be taken by 5th D.F.

Time.	Composition	Position.
1438/12	7 M.V.	35 miles S of Lampedusa
0600/13	5 M.V.	20 miles S of Lampedusa
0640/14	5 small M.V.	10 miles S of Lampedusa
0653/15	3 small M.V.	25 miles from Lampedusa

2. Request you will report what action was taken. (1st Sea Lord 1145B/22 to V.A. Malta)
Reply: 2358B/23.

ZAMZAM
(sunk by
raider S.
Atlantic).

Owners of ZAMZAM suspect ship was rendezvoused with enemy raider because she called at Pernambuco 9/4 and agent Ommunbuoyesen cabled on 10th that her date of arrival Capetown was 1/5 that is 10 days extra voyage with fuel margin for 2 days only. Capetown agent Cotts also received similar unprecedented cable. Ship had 2500 tons of lubricating oil. (R.A. Alexandria 12130/22 to Admty.)

UPHOLDER.
UPRIGHT.

Leave Patrol and proceed through 035° 51' 015° 15' and 036° 00' 014° 52' so as to arrive off Marsaxett 0730B/26. UPRIGHT leaves Malta P.M./23 by same route then through 037° 00' 016° 50' to operate in vicinity Stilo until P.M./27 thence in Area M. (S.O. (S) Malta 1225B/22 to UPHOLDER).

/Convoy.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Convoy
attacked by
URGE. 2 ships
sunk, destroyer
probably sunk.
Schooners
attacked by
UNBEATEN.

URGE attacked Southbound convoy west of Lampedusa on 20/5, obtaining two hits on 7000-ton (?tanker) and one hit on 9,000-ton troop ship with mark (viii) torpedo. Both ships already sunk. On 21/5 a dispersed salvo was fired at long range at two "Condottiere" cruisers and three or four destroyers north of Lampedusa, two explosions heard after correct interval and heavy explosion 30 minutes later when a mast and funnel were observed with a flying boat circling round. 2½ hours later air reconnaissance reported two cruisers and three destroyers about 50 miles further north. Seems probable that a destroyer was sunk. Between May 13 and 20 UNBEATEN carried out harassing attack on coastal shipping in Khoms area under very difficult circumstances. A large schooner believed sunk and a smaller one was shelled in Khoms anchorage, at least four hits being obtained out of 21 rounds fired. Particularly requested name of submarines should not be mentioned. (V.A. Malta, 1226B/22 to Admty.)

UPRIGHT.
→ UTMOST.
URSULA.

Malta "Sanctuary" in force 1930 to 2200/23 for UPRIGHT leaving to N.E. 1900 to 2300/24 for UTMOST and URSULA leaving to W. and S. respectively. All times zone minus 2. (V.A. Malta, 1456B/22 to Med. Fleet).

UNION.
→ UTMOST.
→ URGE.

Leave area K P.M./25 and operate in area L as in my 1326B/11. UTMOST will leave Malta P.M./24 through 036° 20' 012° ? 28' for Gulf of Hammamet thence to operate in area K about A.M./28. On 20/5 URGE attacked southbound convoy to west of Lampedusa and Cruiser screen pass several miles to the eastward. Following day Northbound Cruiser screen was attacked North of Island. Most profitable area appears to be to westward 012° 40'. (S.O. (S) Malta 1521B/22 to UNION) *also p. 712.*

/Malta

War Diary.

22.5.1941
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (Contd).

Malta,
Air Raid.

C.S.R. Malta. Up to 1600 hours 22/5 times G.M.T. Night 21/22, 3 aircraft Over. Bombs dropped in sea. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1601/22.)

French
Units.

My 0735/21. Ship reported exercising 60 miles north of Beirut. (Capt. O.S. Alexandria 1741C/22 to Med. Fleet.)

Kotor
exchange of
captives.

Your 1151/6 (see Under America & W. Indies 6/5) Turks have no objection and Turkish Legation Cairo instructed to grant transit visa for Italian Officer on application. (N.A. Angora, 1943/22 to Admty.)

Air attack
on enemy M.V.

Special Operation Summary. Following recco by Maryland reported in my "I" 325 22/5 4 Blenheims 139 Squadron. Despatched to attack. Only single M/V contacted 1523 G.M.T. position 15 miles 20° Pantelleria course 180° M/V reported to be tanker. 8 hits 4 of which bounced off deck 4 explosions and black smoke observed. Tanker left stationary but damage unobserved. No opposition. All aircraft returned safely. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1950/22 to H.Q., R.A.F.M.E)

German
Shipping.

During last few weeks 15 German controlled merchant ships have proceeded from Black Sea to Aegean Sea. (N.A. Washington 1832/22 to Admty.)

Relations
with Vichy.

1st Lord 2007B/22 to C. in C. Med. See Mediterranean Volume.

/Suez.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (Contd).

Suez Canal.

Situation report. Shipping movements carried out without incident. No mines located or exploded. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1931C/22 to Admty. etc).

UNION.
URGE.

My 1521B/22 URGE reports Convoy routes appear to intersect in vicinity of 035° 36' 011° 54'. (S.O. (S) Malta, 1940B/22 to UNION). *p. 710*

A/C's in
"Splice" and
"Rocket".

Your 1619C/19. Confirmed that full competent crews will accompany aircraft but should return as instructed in my 1356B/21. Delays in Takoradi route cannot be accepted. (5th Sea Lord 2009B/22 to C. in C. Med.)

Operation
"Splice".
Recommendations
for future.

Your 2140/21. (a) para 2. Preference for escort is in order given. In any case not more than one Sunderland can be accepted. (b) A.O.C. Med. and I concur generally. (V.A. Malta, 2206B/22 to S.O. Force H).

PARTHIAN.
Greek
TRITON.
TRIUMPH.

Alexandria submarine Sanctuary will be in force between 1600 and 2059/23 for PARTHIAN leaving, and between 1500 and 2059/24 for Greek submarine TRITON leaving at 1500, and TRIUMPH leaving at 1700. All times G.M.T. (R.A. Alexandria, 2240/22 to Med. Fleet Force I).

Sunk
Italian
Ships.

List sunk at Benghazi, Tobruk and Bardia before December, 1940. (D.S. 625, 22/5)

713

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

5th D.F.

V.A. Malta 2045/21. Do not exceed speed 25 knots. (C. in C. Med., 0245/22 to Capt. D.5).

Fleet Operations.

My 1845C/21 para. B. Northerly sweep is to be towards Milo and Forces C. and D. should join Company. C.S. 15 appoint R/V. Object, destruction (? enemy) convoy and fishing vessels. Unless circumstances demand otherwise sweep should be discontinued (?) (25) miles south of Milo and Forces C. and D should retire on Force A by Kithera Channel. Force A should keep close to west of Kithera Straits. D 14 and destroyers in company are to await orders 80 miles south of Kaso Straits. (C. in C. Med., 0402C/22 to Med. Fleet).

Engagement with enemy convoy.

My 2350. One destroyer two steamers and a number of Caiques sunk. Searched area and (?) in view of serious shortage of A.A. ammunition am joining Force A(1) at 0600. (R.A.D. Med., 0405/22 to C. in C. Med. C.S.7, GLOUCESTER).

A/C Recco.

Aircraft R/C will be carried out commencing to Northwards of Crete 0600 by Maryland aircraft. Enemy reports on 6540 kcs. (C. in C. Med, 0407C/22 to Med. Fleet amended 0921C/22).

Enemy Convoy.

At 0119 G.M.T. to-day a convoy of 7 ships was in 036° 44' N. 026° 48' E. steering 240°. (Capt. O.S., Alexandria, 0714C/22 to F.O.C. 7th C.S. F.O.C. 15th C.S. F.O.C. D.F. Med.).

/Forces.....

War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete. (contd).Forces D,
C. A.

Force D. return to Alexandria with all despatch. Force C. joins Force A. F.O.C. 15th C.S. (?report) fuel situation Force C. (C. in C. Med., 0716/22 to R.A.D. F.O. 15 C.S).

No Seaborne
landings.

No seaborne landing took place last night at Candia, Retimo, or this area, thanks to your light forces. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0722C/22 to C. in C. Med.).

15th C.S.

C. in C. Med. 0402C/22. My MLA 330° broad zig zag. Will pass through 036° 15' N. 024° 35' E. at 0930. Thence to 036° 15' N. 024° 15' E. Thence to Kithera Channel. Speed 17 knots. All quiet off Heraklion. (F.O. 15th C.S., 0745C/22 to R.A.D. Med. Amended 0742/22).

Enemy at
Heraklion.

Believed about 300 enemy still in position to Eastward of Aerodrome and small number South of defence area. Enemy occupation of town now confirmed (so 3 or 4 isolated buildings?) (S.N.O. Heraklion, 0800/22 to N.O.I.C. Suda).

Action with
Convoy, 21/5.

My 2351C/21 R.A.D. with Force D engaged enemy convoy at 2350, 42 miles N.E. of Cape Spada, One destroyer two merchant ships and a number of Caiques sank. Force D. now returning Alexandria due to shortage of A.A. ammunition. C.S. 15 reports all quiet off Heraklion, now proceeding North of Crete to join Force A west of Kithera. 6th D.F. also joining Force A. from Malta. (C. in C. Med., 0826C/22 to Admty.) See also 1810/22.

Enemy
Convoy.
Milo.

Enemy Convoy 30 ships 12 miles south of Milo. Six British destroyers are in vicinity closing convoy. (C. in C. Med., 0941C/22 to Med. Fleet).

/U/Boat.....

715

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

U/Boat.

Hunting S/M seen to dive BZ 035° (??? observe)
N 020° 43' E. Being shadowed by float plane.
(D.5, 0945C/22 to C.S.7).

D.5.

During forenoon report whether remain 20
to 30 miles west of Anti-Kithera. (F.O.
7 C.S. 0945/22 to Capt. D.5).

Probable
Minelaying.

Number of parachute mines have probably
been laid from Aircraft 5 to 15 Cables
bearing 000° from Aerodrome. (S.N.O.
Heraklion 0945/22 to Med. Fleet).

Enemy
Convoy.

My 0941C/22. At 0930C enemy convoy turned
E.N.E. Our destroyers were then ten miles
distant. (C. in C. Med 1001C/22 to Med.
Fleet, S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).

Orders
for
Destroyers.

My 1843C/21. Destroyer relief. I am
not sure where Force C. destroyers are but
they must come to Alexandria. When 5th D.F.
join you they will form Western Aegean
striking force supported by cruisers. You
must retain six destroyers as screen. Of
remaining six destroyers of forces A.B and
D send four direct to Alexandria with all
despatch and two to arrive Agria Rumeli
035° 13' N. 023° 58' E. midnight 22/23 to
embark King of Greece and H.M. Minister and
party thence to Alexandria. Separate
instructions follow. Capt. (D) 14 will form
Eastern Aegean striking force night of
22/23 and join you A.M./23. His four with
Capt. (D) 10 three will enable you to
relieve remaining six destroyers of your
original force. 2nd XI will sail to relieve
you as soon as destroyers can be got
together. Orders for cruisers later when
6th C.S. report fuel. (C. in C. Med.
1038C/22, to C.S.7).

/D.5.....

716

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

D.5.

Your 0945. Do not waste too much time. Be sure you join F.O. 7 C.S. by 1600 today. Conserve fuel. (C. in C. Med., 1047C/22 to Capt. D.5).

Air Report.

Crete. 21/5. Enemy air attacks on Canea and Heraklion areas recommenced early morning following by landing of about 600 parachute troops at Maleme and south of Canea. After landing of troops enemy again bombed Canea and gun position Suda Bay. Our Troops successfully counter-attacked enemy at Retimo and Heraklion in co-operation with Greek and Cretan troops. By midday further 300 parachute troops landed Maleme of whom majority believed mopped up by our troops. Further 100 parachutists landed same area during afternoon and 30 Ju. 72's were reported landing on aerodrome and beach at Maleme. Enemy dive bombed our troops Canea and Maleme area. Further parachute troops landed Heraklion area during the day. Reconnaissance of morning 22/5 reported convoy of 26 small vessels south of Milo Island escorted by 6 destroyers or cruisers and 4 fighters. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1121/22).

Damage to ORION FIJI.

Night action damage to ORION (Details). Total Casualties 4 Killed 13 wounded. FIJI, bomb damage from near miss. Remaining holes in ship's side all plugged. Fear serious, damage. Casualties 3 wounded. (C.S.7 1123/22 to C. in C. Med.)

"Glen" Landing Force.

My 1118/22 (N.T. in W.D) Arrange recognition signals and if practicable send lighters and beach party to assist disembarkation. (C. in C. Med., 1136C/22 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).

/NAIAD.....

717

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

NAIAD
bombed.

Damaged by near misses, making water forward, two turrets in action. My P.C. and S. are (? 036°) (? 05') N. 023° (758' ? E) 260° 16 knots. PERTH high angle ammunition practically expended. All other ships getting very low. No W/T. (C.S. 15 1150C/22 to C.S.7).

Your 1100. 1330. Badly in need of your support. (C.S. 15 1156/22 to C.S. 7).

Orders to
Destroyers
for Royal
and Minister's
parties.

My 1038C/22. Two destroyers are to arrive off Agria Rumeli, 035° 15' N. 023° 58' E. at mid-night 22/23 to embark Royal party and H.M. Ministers party. Details of procedure. (C. in C. Med., 1214C/22 to C.S.7, S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).

CARLISLE
bombed.

CARLISLE hit. (C.S. 15 1235/22).
My 1235. No serious damage. (C.S.15 1312/22 to C. in C. Med., C.S. 7).

C.S.7.

My P.C. and S. 221° 36° N. 23° E. 18 miles
040° 23 knots. (C.S. 7 1240/22 to C.S.15).

CHERRYLEAF.
AUCKLAND.

Oiler CHERRYLEAF and AUCKLAND will arrive
032° 30' N. 028° 30' E. at noon/22 and remain
in vicinity. (Capt. S.1. 1251C/22 to RORQUAL)

See also next page

D.5.

P.C. and S. (? 055° 18') N. 020° 50' E.
067° 30 knots. (Capt. D.5 1300C/22 to C. in C
Med., F.O. 7 C.S.).

Enemy
Convoy.

R/C report convoy 26 small vessels 6
Cruisers or destroyers 036° 28' N. 024°
10' E. at 0745 C/22 steering 220° speed
10 knots. (C. in C. Med., 1302C/22 to
S.O. 6 Med. Fleet).

/DIDO.....

718

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

DIDO.
ORION.
AJAX.

My 0716C/22. DIDO continue to Alexandria. Detach ORION and AJAX to join Capt. (D) 14 in approx. position 80 miles S.W. of Kaso Straits. Capt. (D) 14 report position. (C. in C. Med., 1308C/22 to R.A.(D) M).

AETOS.
KOS. 19.
AUCKLAND.
CHERRYLEAF.

Request you divert Greek destroyer AETOS on arrival and sail KOS 19 when ready to relieve AUCKLAND as escort for Oiler CHERRYLEAF. AUCKLAND comply with my 1118C/22, remaining with Oiler CHERRYLEAF as long as possible. (C. in C. Med., 1310C/22 to R.A. Alexandria). *See previous page 7 p. 723*

D.14.

Move up to pass Kaso Strait 2100/22. (C. in C. Med., 1312C/22 to Capt. D.14).

DEFENDER.
JAGUAR.

My 2209/21. DEFENDER and JAGUAR have Military ammunition for Suda Bay on Board. They are to be detached p.m./23 to disembark this during the night 23/24. On completion Ships proceed through Anti Kithera channel. (C. in C. Med., 1324C/22 to C.S.7).

C.S.7.

Am with C.S. 15 in Kithera. (C.S.7 1335/22 to C. in C. Med).

Enemy Base at Milo.

Military Y report some of planes operating over Crete are based on Milo and that there are German troops in Milo harbour. These might be survivors from last night. Also report (corrupt group) Italians. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1335/22 to C. in C. Med.)

WARSPITE hit,
GREYHOUND
sunk.

WARSPITE hit by a bomb in starboard battery No 3 boiler room out of action, probably repairable, starboard 6" and 4" out of action. GREYHOUND sunk. (F.O.7 C.S. 1411C/22 to C. in C. Med).

/Suda.....

719

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Suda Bay
W/T.

Cannot hear Suda Bay W/T Station on 8600 Kc/s at Alexandria. (C. in C. Med., 1426C/22 to C.S. 7)

C.S. 7.

My P.C. and S. are $194^{\circ} 36^{\circ}$ N., 23° E. 17 miles 235° 17 knots. (C.S. 7 1515/22 to Capt. D.5).

C.S. 15.

Request state of fuel and ammunition of your force. (C. in C. Med., 1534C/22 to C.S. 15).

→ GLOUCESTER
bombed.

Ship badly hit. (GLOUCESTER, 1545/22 to F.O. 7 C.S) (Sunk, see 2155, 2157/22).

D.14.

C. in C. Med. 1308. My P.C. and S. 153° 34° N., 26° E, 16 miles 290° 15 knots intend to alter course 045° at 1900. (Capt. D. 14, 1616/22 to R.A. (D) M) Amended, see 1641/22.

Italian Convoy
left Milo.

From Military Y. 3 Italian destroyers and numerous other craft probably Caiques left Milo 1600/22 towards Crete. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1618/22).

→ GLOUCESTER.
FIMI.

GLOUCESTER immobilised. Have ordered FIJI to withdraw and GLOUCESTER to be sunk. (C.S. 15, 1623C/22 to C. in C. Med).

Intentions.

Following are my intentions for 22/23. (C. in C. Med., 1624C/22 to C.S. 7) See Lion Copy).

/5. D.F.....

MOST SECRET

719A

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

1624C/22 May

IN

From. C. in C. Mediterranean.

Date. 22.5.41.

Time. 2022.

NAV.L CODE (L.2) SECRET BY W/T

Addressed. C.S.7. Repeated Mediterranean Fleet., S.B.N.O. Suda Bay.,
V.A. Malja., R.A. Alexandria., 201 Group., 204 Group.,
H.Q. Middle East., H.Q. R...F. Middle East.

EMERGENCY.

Following are my intentions for 22nd/23rd.

(1) Force A continue covering West Crete detaching
destroyers on relief in accordance with my 1038C/22.

(2) H.M.S. DIDO and Force C returning to Alexandria
with all despatch.

(3) New force D to be formed of 5th D.F. To enter
Aegean from westward to patrol Kissamo Maleme Suda Bay area during
night of 22nd/23rd.

(4) Force E. Capt. (D) 14 H.M.S. ORION ALIX Capt. (D) 2
H.M.S. NIZAM ILAVOCK to enter Aegean by Kaso Strait to patrol
Heraklion area night of 22nd/23rd.

(5) Force B H.M.S. GLOUCESTER H.M.S. FIJI return to
Alexandria with all despatch at 2100.

(6) Unless aircraft reconnaissance or intelligence
reveals target (?earlier) forces D and E should move into Aegean at
2100 22nd.

(7) If no developments during the night forces D and E
retire on force A through Anti Kithera Channel leaving patrol at ~~0500~~ /23.
~~{ 21200 or } 23rd.~~
~~{ 0100 }~~

(8) Ships detached to Alexandria proceed at best speed fuel
will allow and prepare for further service on arrival.

(9) GLENROY escorted by H.M.S. COVENTRY H.M.S. AUCKLAND
H.M.S. FLEMINGO sails from Alexandria p.m. 22nd to land troops
Tymbaki night of 23rd/24th.

1624C/22

Advance copy sent Ops, O.D. & O.I.C.

P.O., C.S.O. & A.C.N.S. (F)

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

4th S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

NAV.L SEC.

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

P.A.S. (S)

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.D.I.C.

Duty Capt.

D.N.I. (4)

D.S.D.9.

Head of M. (30)

D. of P. (2)

D.N...D.

D.C.O.

D.D.T.S.D. (C.C.)

E.F.S.

D.F.D.

D. 1/5 W.

D.T.S.D.

D. of L.D. (2)

I.P.

W.D.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

5th D.F.

It has been necessary to withdraw 5th D.F. temporarily from Malta in order to assist in Crete operation by relieving Destroyers who are short of fuel. (Capt. O.S. Alexandria 1636C/22 to Admty, C. in C. Med.)

Situation report.

1630/22. At Heraklion enemy dropped stores from 14 planes into our hands. Situation well in hand. Retimo, there is still small number of enemy across Retimo - Suda Bay Road, otherwise no change. More enemy forces landed Maleme area and battle in progress east of aerodrome which is in enemy hands. Troop carriers being employed but many destroyed. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1640/22 to C. in C. Med.)

D.14.

Amend my 1616, intend to alter course at 1800 to 035° speed of advance 15 knots. (Capt. D. 14 1641/22 to R.A.D. Med.)

Message to Fleet.

Stick it out. Keep in V/S touch. Must not let Army down in Crete. It is essential no Seaborne enemy force land in Crete. (C. in C. Med., 1655C/22 to Med. Fleet at Sea).

VALIANT bombed.

VALIANT hit, 2 bombs, armament and engine at present believed to be intact. (C.S. 7 1706C/22 to C. in C. Med.)

GLOUCESTER.

Left GLOUCESTER in middle Kithera Channel on fire and abandoning ship and with your instructions to sink his ship. My P.C and S. 012° 35° N., 23° E. 30 at 1700, 175° 27 knots. KANDAHAR and KINGSTON in company (C.S. 7 ? 1710/21 to C.S. 15?).

/AJAX.....

721

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

AJAX.
ORION.

My 1624C/22 Paras 3 and 4. AJAX and ORION are to part company with Capt. (D) 14 after passing Kaso Straits and proceed westward to establish patrol between 24° 15' E. and 025° 00' E. keeping outside 15 miles from land. To rejoin force E at daylight/23. Object to support either Force D. or E. (C. in C. Med., 1732C/22 to Capt D. 14, Capt. D.5. AJAX). Cancelled, see 2041/22.

Forces
A.B.C.

In view of result of patrols operations in Western Aegean and Approach suggest for consideration that Force A should escort Forces B and C. on passage to Alexandria tomorrow and that Capt. (D) 5 should withdraw before daylight. (C.S. 15, 1801C/22 to C. in C. Med.) Not practicable, see 1950/22.

Situation,
action with
enemy convoy.

My 0826C/22. Enemy convoy of about 30 small ships was in 36.30 N. 24.20 E, 1055 steering N. having turned back as a result of attack by C.S. 15, S Force. Several Caiques of convoy were set on fire and two sunk, but C.S. 15 reports unable to complete destruction owing to weight of air attack. C.S. 15 asked for assistance from C.S. 7 and force A at Q 1500 and the two forces made contact in Kithera Straits at 1500 and are steering to S.W.
2. DIDO, FIJI, NAIAD, PERTH are returning to Alexandria to refuel and ammunition. ORION, AJAX, joining D. 14 to enter Kaso Straits and to cover Heraklion during the night. D.5 passing Kithera Straits at 2100 to Cover Suda Maleme area. Both forces retiring on Force A at dawn.

/Casualties.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Casualties.

3. Following casualties. GREYHOUND sunk. NAIAD near missed several compartments flooded. PERTH 6" fire control out of action. GLOUCESTER Heavily hit and immobilised, ordered to be sunk by FIJI. CARLISLE hit, no details. WARSPITE 6" and 4" starboard battery out of action, No. 3 boiler room out of action, thought repairable, speed down to 19 knots. VALIANT hit by two bombs, main armament and engines believed intact.

HAMPTON.—In loving memory of THOMAS CLAUD HAMPTON, Captain, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Carlisle, killed in action Battle of Crete, May 22, 1941.—W. M. H.

(p. 766 A)

Minefields.

4. Mine fields successfully laid by ABDIEL between Cephalonia and Le Kas and RORQUAL off Panomi Point in Gulf of Salonika.
5. Two destroyers detailed to bring off King of Greece and H.M. Minister during night. (C. in C. Med., 1810/22 to Admty.).

Addition see 2046/22, p. 725

Attacks on Enemy Convoys.

My (? 1827)G/ 22 Part 1. Our light forces attacked an enemy Convoy 15 miles N.E. of Cape Spada at midnight last night and another in position 036° 25' N. 024° 25' E. at 1000/22. 3 Italian destroyers and other minor Naval units are searching for survivors. Remains of Convoys turned North and two destroyers and 5 Merchant Ships are reported at Milo. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1811C/22 to Med. Fleet, S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).
My 1827C/ part 2 final. 37 fishing vessels loaded with troops are in Milo Bay. One transport is burning in 036° 00' N. 024° 35' E. Reliable information suggest Italian forces are preparing to land Sitia bay from Rhodes about 24/5. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria 1827C/22 to Med. Fleet, S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).

Expected landing Sitia Bay.

/AJAX.....

723

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

AJAX.
ORION.

Your 1308. AJAX and ORION detached in position ? 033° 25' N. 24° 28' E. at 1730. Fuel remaining AJAX 48 per cent ORION 43 per cent. (R.A. (D) Med., 1823/22 to C. in C. Med.)

My position is 245° 34° N., ? 24° E 44. In view of your 1312C and Capt. (D) 14's 1730 cannot comply with your 1308. Am rejoining R.A. (D) Med. (AJAX 1843C/22 to C. in C. -Med.)

AETOS.
KOS 19.
AUCKLAND.

C. in C. 1310/22. AETOS expected to arrive in 032° 15' N. 028° 10' E. at 2100/22. KOS 19 expected to arrive there at 0400/23. (R.A. Alexandria 1900C/22 to AUCKLAND).

p. 718

FIJI
damaged.

My position now is 154° ? 35° N., 23° E., 35. FIJI badly damaged steaming 17. KINGSTON and KANDAHAR have (? only) 40 tons of oil fuel remaining. (KANDAHAR, 1910C/22 to C.S. 7, C. in C. Med.)
FIJI sinking. Require immediate assistance. 061° ? 35° N., 23° E., 35. (KANDAHAR 1920/22 to C.S. 15).

QUEEN ELIZABETH
BARHAM.

You will appreciate that sooner I can get 6 destroyers here sooner can I sail QUEEN ELIZABETH and BARHAM. (C. in C. Med., 1916C/22 to C.S. 7).

Royal Party
and Ministers.

C. in C. Med's 1214C/22. DECOY and HERO detailed. (C.S. 7, 1917C/22 to C. in C. Med.)

[See also 1950/22 next page]

Enemy Convoy.

S.B.N.O. Suda Bay's 1718/22. It is probable convoy's destination is Maleme. Heraklion cannot be excluded. The destruction of this convoy should it appear within striking distance is essential. (C. in C. Med., 1920C/22 to Capt. D. 14, Capt. D.5, AJAX).

/AJAX.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

AJAX.
ORION
Destroyers.

My 1624C/22 and 1752C/22. AJAX and ORION not available. Call on each other for assistance if required. Force E, leave patrol at 0400. (C. in C. Med., 1942C/22 to Capt. D.14 Capt. D.5).

→ FIJI.

Proceed to position 154° 35° N., 23° E. 35 with all despatch. FIJI sinking. (C.S. 7 1944/22 to Capt. D. 10 etc).

Embarking of
Royal party.

Your 1214/22 acknowledged. Endeavouring to pass message. There will be a look out in any case at Rumeli. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1950/22 to C. in C. Med.)

Forces
A.B.C.
Objective.

Your 1801/22. This is not practicable. Our object is to defeat a sea borne attack on Crete. You must proceed to eastward at your best possible speed during the night. You should be fairly clear of air attack when in long: of Sidi Barrani. Force A appears to be in sufficiently good fighting trim to give cover from westward of Crete. (C. in C. Med., 1950C/22 to F.O. 15. C.S., F.O. 7C.S.)

C.S. 15.

My P.C. and S. are at 2000, 034° 48' N. 022° 07' E. 170° 16 knots altering to 110° at 2100. Force A and 5th D.F. in company. -C.S. 7 is sending destroyers to assist FIJI. (C.S. 15, 1951C/22 to C. in C. Med). See 2216/22.

→ FIJI
abandoned.

My 1920, FIJI abandoned. Am returning after dark to pick up survivors. Request Capt. (D) 10 E.T.A. (KANDAHAR 2000/22 to C.S.7 Capt. D.10).

/R.V.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

R.V. for
Destroyers.

You are better aware of conditions than I am but I suggest for your consideration that a position $35^{\circ} 00' N.$ $023^{\circ} 00' E.$ would be suitable for Destroyers to join you at about 0730. Subsequent movements at your discretion but I suggest A (? corrupt) to (? corrupt) and then to Alexandria at best speed. (C. in C. Med., 2020C/22 to C.S.7).

Forces,
D. A, E.

My 1624C/22, Para 8. Force D. is to leave patrol at 0500 at high speed to join Force A. Force E is to leave patrol at 0500 at high speed through Kedgo Strait thence Alexandria. (C. in C. Med., 2038C/22 to 5th D.F. etc).

D. 10.

My P.C. and S. 036° (? $34' 27' 49'$) N. 024° E. 32 miles 274⁰ 30 knots. VOYAGER and (?VENDETTA) following. (Capt. D. 10, 2040/22 to C.S. 7).

AJAX.
ORION.

Cancel my 1732C/22. (C. in C. Med., 2041C/22 to Capt. D.14, AJAX, Capt. D.5).

FIJI
position.

Add to my 1810/22 FIJI sinking about 40' S.W. from Gavdo, no details. (C. in C. Med., 2046C/22 to Admty.)

Maleme
Situation.

Situation at Maleme has deteriorated. Our attack was held up and enemy have attacked strongly. Enemy has been receiving reinforcements by troop carriers up to dusk; Situation elsewhere satisfactory. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 2107/22 to C. in C. Med.).

/FIJI.....

726

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.(contd).

FIJI

Abandon search for FIJI survivors. Patrol Kissamo Canea Suda Bay area. (C.S.7 2143/22 to Capt. D.5).

GLOUCESTER.

(Abandon?) search for GLOUCESTER survivors. Proceed with all despatch and sweep inshore round Kissamo and Canea Bay. Join Capt. (D) 5, at R.V. ordered by him. (F.O. 7 C.S. 2155/22 to JACKAL, KELVIN).

WARSPITE
VALIANT.
Force B.

Your 1946. WARSPITE's starboard 4 inch out of action. 1300 rounds remaining. Plenty of Pom-poms. VALIANT all guns efficient, 57% 4.5 inch, plenty of pom-poms. Destroyer from 10 to 50% remaining. Force B Sunk. (C.S. 7, 2157C/22 to C. in C. Med).

JAGUAR.
DEFENDER.

Ref. 2209/21, C. in C. Med. My P.C. and S. are at 2200, 033° 09' N. 026° 12' E. 305° 20 knots, DEFENDER in Company and 50 tons ammunition and 8 passengers for Crete. Request R/V. (JAGUAR 2203C/22 to C.S. 7).

KANDAHAR.
KINGSTON.

If practicable fuel KANDAHAR and KINGSTON during night and then (corrupt) direct to Alexandria. Failing this they are to proceed Alexandria at economical speed (rest of message undecypherable). (C. in C. Med., 2209C/22 to C.S. 7).

GLENROY.

Passes boom at 2200/22 proceeding as in C. in C. Med's 1118/22. (NOIC Alexandria 220/22 to AUCKLAND).

/C.S. 15.....

727

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

C.S. 15.

My 1951/22. I wish to make it clear that there are no effective cruisers in Force C and that Battle Fleet is remaining with me pending further instructions. Have instructed C.S.7. to report destroyer situation to you. PERTH cannot oil destroyers owing to damaged crane. (C.S. 15 2216C/22 to C. in C. Med.)

FIJI.

Searched position 154 35° N., 23° E. 35. Men in the water showing lights (?) wreck) is afloat, bottom up. (KANDAHAR, 2235/22 to Capt. D.10).

D.10.

Am in position by D.R. searching with VOYAGER and VENDETTA. (Capt. D.10 2250C/22 to C.S. 7 Capt. D.5, HCTSPUR).

Suggest
Force A
rally south
of Kaso.

My 2255/22. Part 2, Final.
C. German main air bases in Greece are closest to Western Aegean.
D. Above factors indicate a strong point to East is better. This would also ease the confused destroyer fuel situation and be closer to support from Alexandria. Propose therefore that Force A should not remain near Kithera, but should form a rallying point south of Kaso as early as possible on 23rd. Capt. (D) 5 should then move East after his patrol.
If you concur request you will issue orders to all Forces as only one (?) set) of books and 40 per cent telegraphist casualties make things difficult here. (C.S. 7 2255/22 to ?).

R.V. for
D.5.

Your 2143. Request R/V after patrol. (Capt. D.5, 2305/22 to C.S.7).

/KANDAHAR.....

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

KANDAHAR.
FIJI.

My P.C. and S. are $154^{\circ} 35' N$, $23^{\circ} E$, $118^{\circ} 15'$ knots. FIJI is still afloat in this position bottom up. Have had to leave some isolated survivors. (KANDAHAR 2325/22 to Capt. D.5, Capt. D.10, C.S. 7 C.S. 15).

Number of White Very lights. Observed from Canea in direction of Cape Spatha since 2300. May indicate presence of small craft making for Maleme along west shore. (Note W/T 2340/22 to Whitehall W/T).

D.5.

F.O.C. 7th C.S. (2155). Will pass through $035^{\circ} 49' N$, $023^{\circ} 37' E$ at 0130, course $105^{\circ} 23'$ knots. (Capt. D.5 2359C/22 to JACKAL, KELVIN).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

729

East Indies.

Tukom
Surrendered.

C. in C. E.I., has reported that the Italians at Tukom, Italian Somaliland surrendered morning 19/5 and prisoners have been embarked in H.M. ships. (D.S. 625, 22/5).

PENNSYLVANIA
Italian.

Beached off Mogadiscio, has had back broken by heavy seas during last few days. Break just abaft bridge.
(C. in C. E.I., 0558Z/22 to Admty).

HAWKINS.

Durban departure in accordance with C, in C. E. I. 0822Z/19.
(N.L.O. Durban 0826Z/22 to Admty etc).

China.

BUFFALO
inquiry.

Your 2216B/20. Please see my 1136Z of 23/4, para 8 of which dealt fully with points mentioned. Written report is in China No. 4659/231 of 29/4/41 now in transit.
(C. in C. China, 0634Z/22 to Admty).

CHENONCEAUX,
French troops
for Saigon.

2 independent reports state French Troop Ship CHENONCEAUX arrived Saigon 5/5 with 2500 troops despatched from France as labour battalions; figures probably include one Annamite Labour Battalion returning from active service. Some troops embarked Dakar. After leaving Madagascar ship was stopped by German Raider flying British Flay. After investigation raider hoisted Nazi colours and allowed ship to proceed. Troops included Legionnaires many being pro Nazi Germans. Comment. Taken in conjunction with interception of French Troop ship by NEWCASTLE (Ref. 1836/19 from Admty). It appears Germany is allowing pro German troops to leave France and Africa and French Indo China. (Capt. O.3. Singapore, 0757Z/22 to Admty etc).

Japanese use of.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

M E S S I G E

1340C/22 May

IN

From. C. in C. Mediterranean.

Date. 25.5.41.

Time. 0907.

729A

N.V.L CYHLER (.) BY C.BLE.

Addressed. Admiralty. Repeated. C. in C. East Indies., S.N.O. Red Sea., S.N.O. Persian Gulf., F.O.C.R.I.N., S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area., A.S. Alexandria., N.O.I.C. Alexandria., D.E.H.S. (C) Port Said., Royal Navy G.H.Q. M.E.

470. C. in C. East Indies 0846Z † 19th. Extension of D.E.H.S. arming with close range anti aircraft weapons to Red Sea Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean shipping will require drastic action to get the necessary close range weapons kites and devices to Eastern Mediterranean and East Indies by quickest route. Until now I have been stripping ships southbound from Suez to meet my own requirements.

2. There are not repetition not captured guns of effective calibre such as 20 H M available in Egypt and my own requirements in face of increasing air attacks are for 150 with replacements as ships are sunk.

3. C. in C. East Indies in his 0852Z 19 not to Admiralty has requested me to provide ./. weapons and kites for tankers working Abadan - Suez route. Regret I can only supply Italian machine guns 6 millimetre and 8 millimetre which have little effect on aircraft. No kite wire yet available. Arrangements for manufacture of kites in India are in hand.

4. I have taken preliminary action with F.O.C.R.I.N. for manufacture of 12 pounder ammunition in India, but combined requirements of C. in C. East Indies and myself will be so great that request centralized Admiralty action may be taken to provide first supplies of all ./. requirements from nearest source and developing manufacture in India.

5. Suggest any ammunition factories developed in India should assemble plant for reforming rectifying and filling fired cartridge cases of all calibres. At present there is serious waste of shipping space and time lags in sending these back to the U.K.

6. In provision of personnel for both areas unreliability of some native personnel in air attack must be considered. D.E.H.S. Port Said 1644 14 to Admiralty refers.

1340C/22

† re mounting of guns.

Advance copy sent Ops, O.D. & Trade.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)

D. of L.D.
D. ./S W.
D.M.S.
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Capt.
Head of M. for action.
D.T.S.D.

(2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.

D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
H.I.D.10 (Ray.Cdr. Wilson)
D.N.N.D.

War Diary.

22.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. (contd).

Japanese use
of Enemy
ships.

Your 1558/18A. 2 report from Kobe states decision has been taken in Tokyo to give covering Japanese nationality to all German and Italian ships in refuge in Japan and use them locally.
(Capt. O.S., Singapore 0816Z/22 to Admty).

S.S. QUEEN
ELIZABETH.

D. of S.T.'s 0748B/14 - QUEEN ELIZABETH in hand 21/5 for docking. Completion date 2/6.
(A.S. Singapore, 0850Z/22 to Admty).

BATHURST.
LISMORE.

Your 1919/20. Ships will sail 26th. Weapons not available but presume they will be provided from those at Aden Vide C. in C. East Indies 0852/20.
(C. in C. China 0901Z/22 to Admty).

America & West Indies.

RECCA

Italian, at Havana, Cuba. New York agents asked Head Office at Genoa on 13/5 to approve sale to a Cuban buyer who said he had consent of Cuban Govt. (D.S. 625, 22/5).

T.C.11

Ref. T.C.11. STIRLING CASTLE is now due Halifax 14/6, but she has already fully loaded in Australia.
(D.S.T., 0352B/22 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Crews ex
German and
Italian ships.

My 0928R/18. Leaving Punta Arenas (CR) this morning per ~~COSTA RICA~~ Launch STELLA MARIS for Canal Zone under escort U.S. Destroyer GOFF. (S.O.I. Jamaica, 1013R/22, to Admty., C. in C. A.W.I. etc.)

/S.L. Convoys...

MOST SECRET.

22.5.1941. 731
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. (contd).

S.L. Convoys
and U.S.
Forces.

Your 1902A/2 para. 2. Only information of movements of our forces so far received from Admiralty is that regarding movement of Task Force in Admty. 1948B/10. Understand that route of this force has now been considerably modified and also that a Task Force 1 and Task Force 3 are also operating on A. and W.I. Station. Request further information may be given to me.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1301Q/22 to Admty).

DUNELMIA
"Q" Report.

N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1519Z/20. This was DERBYSHIRE (B.S.3. 1518P/22, to Admty).

U.S. Signals.

Admty 1838/6. U.S. recognition signals continue as follows during May.
(D.S.D. 1754B/22).

Dakar.

Following from Navy Dept. from Dakar 20/5. Arrived CAP TOURATNE with 300 native troops for demobilization and 150 Indo-Chinese for transshipment to SAIGON. TOURS arrived from North. (2) There is now a midnight curfew and a blackout.
(N.A. Washington, 1800/22 to Admty).

T.C.11.

Sailing date and arrangements. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1833Z/22 to D. of S.T.) See Lion Copy.

H.X.129

My 1113 P 12. Regret no A.M.C. available for H.X. 129 which will have REVENGE as escort. RANPURA should be deleted without alteration to other dates.
(F.O. 3 B.S., 1951P/21 to Admty).

MONSERRATE
German.

Has been brought into dock.
(S.O.(I) Jamaica, 2213R/22 to Admty).

EMILE BERTIN,
Martinique.

My 2242Q/21. Air R/C 22/5 showed similar dispositions and in addition one cruiser probably EMILE BERTIN and one escort vessel at Martinique.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 2302Q/22 to CARADOC, VAN KINSBERGEN).

MOST SECRET

1833Z/22 May

MOST SECRET

I N

From: N.S.H.Q. Ottawa

Date: 25~~05~~41.

731A.

Recd.

NAVAL CYPHER (A) by Cable.

Addressed: D. of S.T., C.O.A.C. Halifax, repeated C. in C. America and West Indies, F.O.C. 3rd Battle Squadron.

D. of S.T. 1244 B 19.

(i) ANDES embarks 2744 Halifax 15th June.

(ii) as limited number only can be (corrupt group) daily to Seaboard and having regard to docking requirements for other ships it is now imperative BRITANNIC which proceeds to New York for engine repairs and to complete with cargo etc. will be returned to embark 2716 at Halifax 16 June.

(iii) WINDSOR CASTLE proceeds to St. John N.B. for dry-docking and embark 1200 Halifax 17 June.

(iv) INDRAPOERA can be dry docked stored etc. at Halifax but BEATTY recommends she be diverted to New York for docking cargo stores and all details then proceeding to Halifax to embark 1001 June 17. Sparks can arrange this. Request your early decision.

(v) STERLING CASTLE embarking 1500 Halifax 17 June.

(vi) D. of S.T. is requested to divert PASTEUR to St. John N.B. for dry docking following WINDSOR CASTLE. PASTEUR then proceeds to Halifax to embark 3570 June 18.

(vii) BEATTY and Sparks New York are requested to make all loading cargo stores and bunkering arrangements.

(viii) Most important of all. Details of repairs other than docking and painting and also all possible details regarding space available in all ships be signalled as early as possible.

(ix) Sailing date T.C. 11 can be maintained provided no undue weather, repairs or other delay.

1833Z/22

Advance copy sent Duty Capt, D.O.D. (H) & D.T.D.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H).
A.C.N.S. (F).
A.C.N.S. (T) (2).
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2).
D.O.D. (H).
D.D.O.D. (H).
D.O.D. (F).
D.D.O.D. (F).

D. of S.W.
D.N.I. (4).
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Capt.
Hd. of M.
D.A./S.W.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2).
N.I.D. 10 Pay. Cdr. Wilson.
D. of S.T. for action.
D.D.T.M.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia.Minefield,
Darwin.Intention to lay. Position.
(A.C.N.S. 1210Z/22 to C. in C. China).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.CITY OF SHANGHAI,
ALFRED OLSEN,
MARISA,
(torpedoed 16/5)
RODNEY STAR.

Survivors, from CITY OF SHANGHAI in second officer's boat picked up by Argentine vessel and landed Pernambuco 20/5, number not stated. (2) 15 survivors from M.V. ALFRED OLSEN landed on Sierra Leone mainland from Lifeboat on 19/5. (3) COLUMBINE picked up 13 survivors from Dutch S/S MARISA on 20/5. Vessel torpedoed in 6° 10' N 18° 09' W. at 2135/16 (4) BOREAS picked up Master and 20 survivors from S/S RODNEY STAR on 21/5. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 0207N/22 to Admty).

Unknown ship.

Following from Resolution Island (begins) 2258 G.M.T. "SSSS 59.16 N., 32.29 W. sighted". Particulars doubtful, heavy interference, no bearing (ends). (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 0250Z/22 to Admty).

JOSEFINA THORDEN.
(Bombed 19/5)
Should be under
Enemy Air Activity
See p. 699.

Tow parted 0800. MARAUDER now towing. Faeroes in sight about 15 miles. S. of A about 4 knots. (BRIGAND, 1135/22 to A.C.O.S.) Both tugs fast towing stern first 62° 06' N 07° 46' W. E.T.A. Skopen Fiord 2200B/22. (NORTHERN CHIEF, 1500B/22 to A.C.O.S.)

Unknown ship.

Heard distress S S S S 0625 N 23.00 W. torpedoed at 2147/21 G.M.T. Name of ship not heard. (ANGLO INDIAN, 1240/22 to Freetown W/T).

LASSELL
(torpedoed
30/4).

CLAN MACGILLIVRAY intercepted 6/5 following LASSELL'S boats in water approx 012° N 025° 30' W 10 miles. Please send assistance. 0720/6 (ends). Sailing orders to alter course to pass through 012° 08' N 025° 46' W at 1200 Z/6 and 012° 00' N 025° 27' W at 1720/6 covering wide area during search. No boats floating wreckage survivors seen. Freetown's 0916 /6 broadcast refers. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 1510/22 to Admty).

H.X. 126
(attacked
20/5).

U.S. C.G. cutter MODOC at 1800 G.C.T. 55.24 N 38.50 W proceeding to rescue Convoy Survivors Requests information nearby ships, MODOC. (Valentia Radio, 1805/22 to Admty).

/U.S. Cutter.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked. (contd).H.X.126
(attacked
20/5). (contd),U.S. Cutter NORTHLAND at 1900 G.C.T. 57.30 N.
40.25 W proceeding to rescue convoy survivors
Request information nearby ship NORTHLAND
(Valentia Radio, 1903/22 to Admty).BRITISH
GRENADIER.Following has been read. 6.15 N 12.59 W.
BRITISH GRENADIER torpedoed.
(Freetown W/T 1958N/22). Tanker 6857 tons
outward bound from Freetown. (D.S. 626).Submarines Reported.

0723

Own aircraft sighted U-boat which dived in
approx. 058°54' N 005° 26' E at 0723.
(F.O.S. 1243B/22 to MINERVE).

2147/21.

For all British and Allied ships. S/M in
006° 25' N 023° W. at 2147 G.M.T./21.
(C. in C. S.A., 1340N/22 to GBMS 6A).Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1411B/22) (F.O.S., 1529B/22).

1419

By D/F at 1419 G.M.T. U/B in 47° N 3° W.
Unreliable fix.
(D.D.I.C. 1732B/22).

1915

By D/F at 1915 G.M.T. U/B in area 55° to 56°
N 35^a to 38° W.
(D.D.I.C. 2212B/22).

1958

Admiralty Message A.F.6.16 N., 12.59 W
at 1958/22.
(C. in C. S.A., 2032N/22 to G.B.M.S.6A).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.22.5.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked.By VERBENA
and BURNHAM
21/5.

Reply following information:

- (A) Range of VERBENA sighting U-boat on surface.
 - (B) Range of U-boat on diving.
 - (C) Any near falling shot.
 - (D) Bearing and distance of U-boat from Wreck of ELUSA on diving.
 - (E) Effect of d.c. attack.
 - (F) d.c.'s remaining.
- (S.O. 12th Escort Gp., 0827Z/22 to BURNHAM)

Reply: 1130/23.

N.O.I.C. passto R.A.F. Iceland. (? Belief that) U Boat with battery low will be forced to surface soon within 50 miles of 058° 55' N 039° 30' W. BURNHAM and VERBENA searching vicinity. If R.A.F. support can possibly be extended to this position destruction or capture of U Boat is assured. During short period of night flares released at intervals will help prevent U Boat getting away on surface. U Boat has not been able to charge battery since 0300/21.

(S.O. 12 Escort Group, 0914Z/22 to Iceland).
N.O.I.C. Iceland pass to R.A.F. Iceland,
S.O. 12th Escort Group's 0914/22. Centre
of area of search 058° 45' 038° 40'.
(BURNHAM, 2059Z/22 to Iceland).

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Search for
BISMARCK &
PRINZ EUGEN.

At 20³²23B NORFOLK in 66° 43' N. 26° 38' W. (Denmark Strait) sighted a battleship and a cruiser 6 miles to the N.N.W. steering 240°. SUFFOLK also sighted them at 2258B and was still shadowing them at 2359B. It was subsequently reported that a third smaller ship, thought to be a destroyer was present, and turned away to the north-eastward.

MINERVE is to patrol near 64° 30' N. 1° E. and P.31 near 65° 30' N. 2° E.

Denmark Straits patrol was not flown today on account of weather. Cross over patrol south of Faroes was only flown from 1330 to 1700.

? Raider.

There was further D/F indication this afternoon of an enemy surface unit in approx. 42° 35' N. 11° 15' W, probably homeward bound.

Atlantic
convoy
escorts.

A/S escort for all HX, S.C. and corresponding OB convoys is to be extended as far as about 45° W. in the latitude of Newfoundland as soon as arrangements can be made.

737

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

British Air Activity.

All operations by Bomber Command last night were cancelled on account of bad weather.

Blenheims today attacked shipping off the Dutch coast; one merchant vessel is believed to have been damaged off Ijmuiden.

A Beaufort of Coastal Command, on patrol along the west coast of France reports a hit with a 250 lb. bomb on a tanker of the ALTMARK class in La Pallice Roads.

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy F.N.470 called for assistance at 0944 16 miles S.S.E. of Harwich. There are no further details.

A single enemy aircraft dropped 4 bombs in Dover harbour at 0942 today. No damage or casualties resulted.

S.S. BIDASSOA was bombed and damaged this evening and was beached at St. Ives.

Mining.

Mines were detonated today in the Thames Estuary, off Milford Haven and Belfast.

War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.Libya
French
Tanker
Sunk.

APHIS is carrying out a special operation with the army in the Western Desert. At 1229 UPHOLDER attacked south bound convoy of 2 laden French ships, considered to be tankers, escorted by an Italian sloop; one tanker was hit and seen to be sinking.

Suez Canal.

The Canal is open to traffic.

Attack on Crete.

5th D.F. patrolled the Candia-Maleme area last night. KELLY and KASHMIR sank one large caique full of soldiers and munitions. The Heraklion area was patrolled last night by Capt. D.14 and 3 destroyers.

Forces
withdrawn
towards
Alexandria
0408.

At 0408 C. in C. Med. ordered all forces to withdraw towards Alexandria forthwith. In consultation with C. in C.M.E, C. in C. Med. at 1127C ordered GLENROY and escort to return to Alexandria. At 1559B the Admiralty sent orders that the force was to turn to the northward, pending further instructions. Believing that the Admiralty must be in possession of information which he had not received, C. in C. Med. ordered the force to comply; but at 2335 he ordered the force to return to Alexandria, owing to the danger of dive bombing attacks at daylight, and because disembarkation of troops during daylight hours under the present air conditions was out of the question.

→ KELLY
KASHMIR
sunk
KIPLING
damaged.

KELLY and KASHMIR were dive bombed and sunk about 0800 today in 020° 34' N. 24° E. 44 miles (about 20 miles south of west end of Crete) KIPLING, who was close by was damaged about the same time by collision with a wreck, and is making for Alexandria after picking up survivors.

DEFENDER and JAGUAR are taking military ammunition to Suda Bay to night.

/Situation.....

War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete. (contd).Situation
1000/23.

No seaborne enemy managed to land last night. At Retimo and Heraklion the situation is satisfactory. At Maleme the aerodrome is in enemy hands but is under fire; a useful bombardment was carried out last night by 5th D.F.

The King of Greece and ministers were taken off from the west end of Crete last night by HERO and DECOY.

Suda Bay
Area.

There were several further heavy air raids on Suda Bay today. A machine gun attack at 1230 was concentrated on M.T.B's who were all put out of action. The military were reported at 1937 to be holding a defensive position east of Maleme. Field guns have been lost.

Blenheims and South African Marylands today bombed and machine gunned about 150 JU 52's at Maleme, destroying 10 and damaging others. 2 Beaufighters also machine gunned enemy aircraft disembarking troops at Maleme, destroying 4 troop carriers. Seven Hurricanes were sent to Crete.

The enemy heavily bombed our troops west of Canea this morning, and Suda Bay this afternoon.

It is estimated that about 80 troop carriers landed at Maleme during today.

Enemy E boats were reported near Maleme this evening.

Candia
Area.

There were further enemy landings (presumably by air) at Heraklion during the day. From 20/5 to 1657/23. AA fire destroyed 16 troop carriers in this area.

The enemy heavily bombed our troops at Retimo and Heraklion this afternoon.

/The....

740

23.5.1941.
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

The enemy was still holding out at Heraklion this evening.

East Indies.

LEANDER.

Is to proceed to the Mediterranean at once.

U-Boat Campaign.

S.S. BERHALA is reported to have been torpedoed today in 9° 50' N. 17° 50' W.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.1st M.S.F.

Your 1257/22. 1st M.S.F. is at one weeks notice to return to M/3 duties. 1st M.S.F. will probably be required for escort duty about 27/5.

(C. in C. W.A. 1152B/23 to S.O. 1st M.S.F.)

Boundaries
of Portsmouth
and Plymouth
Commands.

A.L.M.05676/41 of 8/5/41.

1. Confirmed that no change is intended in boundaries of Portland sub-command, which will be partly in Portsmouth and partly in Plymouth Commands. C. in C. Portsmouth will remain administrative authority of F.O.I.C. Portland.

2. No difficulties are foreseen in this arrangement and both C. in C. Portsmouth and F.O.I.C. Portland have been consulted and agree.

3. Propose to bring new limits into force on 1/6.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 2218/23).

Defence of United Kingdom.

Forth,
Balloon
Barrage.

Request confirmation that H.Q.F.C. agree to anti-minelaying mobile balloon barrage being flown during dark hours to protect the Swept Channels near Inchkeith.

2. Request information whether any vessels have been allocated and if so when they may be expected. 8 are required.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 1230/23 to Admty).

Scapa.

N.T.M.W.D.

Your 1207/16. In view of security provided by Nevi Skerry Boom it is not ~~repeat not~~ approved to use INVERLANE as suggested. She may prove to be the only spare blockship available for next winter. Enquiries are being made whether DANMARK and barge are available. (V.C.N.S. 2345B/23 to A.C.O.S.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.AVON VALE

Admty 1548B/22. AVON VALE will require to boiler clean on arrival Belfast on 28/5. Proposed period 8 days. Is this acceptable. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 1010B/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

FARNDALE

Admty's 1548B/22. Subject to satisfactory completion of working up practices, it is anticipated FARNDALE will be ready to sail 26/5.

(R.A.D. 1030/23 to C. in C. W.A., Admty).

Admty's 1548B/22. When will FARNDALE be ready.

(C. in C. W.A. 1303B/23 to R.A.D. H.F.)

Escort for
H.X. 127

Can two ships of 4th D.F. be detailed to meet and escort H.X. 127 to U.K. arriving in North Channel about 31/5? This would enable redistribution of W.A. Escort Force to be commenced without delay.

(C. in C. W.A. 1147B/23 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Reply. Certainly.

(C. in C. Plymouth 1602/23).

Escorts.

Following alteration to programme for escorts as ordered by my 2254B/22 have become necessary.

(A) On being detached OTTAWA and RESTIGOUCHE are to proceed to St. Johns Newfoundland.

(B) Capt. D.4 is to detail two destroyers of 4th D.F. to proceed in company with PIORUN and meet H.X. 127 further meet signal will be made to Capt. D.4.

(C) My 0234B/22. Two destroyers only of 4th D.F. will now meet LONDON.

(D) OTTAWA to report E.T.A. St. Johns when well clear of convoy.

(C. in C. W.A. 1231B/23 to Capt. D.4. OTTAWA RESTIGOUCHE.)

OTTAWA and RESTIGOUCHE now on escort duty are to be based on St. Johns Newfoundland and have been ordered to proceed direct after being detached in approx 051° 00' N 024° 00' W. Estimated they will arrive 31/5.

(C. in C. W.A. 1237B/23 to C.N.S. Canada).

/D.6.....

743

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. (contd.)

D.6.

After leaving RODNEY Capt. D.6 and destroyers are to return to Scapa at best speed. (C. in C.W.A. 1311B/23 to Capt. D.6)

Operations.

Patrols by
MINERVE
and P.31.

277. A. MINERVE proceed through 62° N. 01° 30' E. to patrol near 64° 30' N. 01° E.

B.P.31 proceed to patrol near A 65° 30' N. 02° E.

C. Submarines proceed with despatch when north of 61° N.

D. Following T/B/R will be arranged. (F.O.S. 1204B/23 to MINERVE, P.31)

Search for
BISMARCK and
HIPPER.PRINZ
EUGEN.

Join B.C. One who is probably steering to N.W. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2005/23 to ANTELOPE, ANTHONY.)

1 Battleship, 1 cruiser bearing 330° 6 miles course 240° my position 66° 43' 25° 22' W. (NORFOLK 2032B/23) Informing A.I.G.62. Ships and Authorities Area A. H.Q.C.C. (D.D.I.C. 2155B/23).

Proceed when ready to locate enemy reported 066° 50' N. 025° 30' W. course 240° at 1836Z/?23. (N.O.I.C. Iceland, 2037/23 to MALCOLM).

My C. and S. on leaving Reykjavik 250° 28 knots as long as there is a chance of interception. Intend returning to oil (?forthwith) (ANTELOPE 2100Z/23 to F.O.C.1st B.C.S. N.O.I.C. Iceland).

No enemy in sight visibility 8 miles my position 66° 17' N. 25° 42' W. (NORFOLK 2145/23 to Scapa).

My 2129. Enemy is altering course to starboard (SUFFOLK 2152/23 to NORFOLK)

/My 2152

744
~~747~~

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. (contd.)

Search for
BISMARCK and
HIPPER. PRINZ
(contd.) EUGEN.

My 2152. Enemy is hidden in rain storm consider he has resumed course my position 066° 25' N. 026° 24' W. X 11. (SUFFOLK 2209B/23 to NORFOLK)

No enemy in sight in the area reading clockwise between 180° and 250° average visibility distance 8 miles and between 000° and 250°. My position 348° 66° N. 26° W. 27 miles. (SUFFOLK 2214B/23 to NORFOLK)

My P.C. and S. 66° 12' N. 26° 25' W. 250° 30 knots. (NORFOLK 2230B/23 to Scapa)

Enemy in sight bearing 232° distance 18 miles. My position 66° 12' N. 27° 5' W. (SUFFOLK 2258B/23 to NORFOLK)

My 2258B both Enemy ships in sight C. and S. 232° 28 knots. My position 066° 09' N. 027° 11' W. (SUFFOLK 2306B/23 to ?)

I bear from you 142° 10 miles steering 200° to cover move of enemy away from ice. (NORFOLK 2311/23 to SUFFOLK) Passed F.O.(S)

My 2306B. Enemy is altering course 20° to port. (SUFFOLK 2341B/23 to Scapa)

My 2341B. Enemy hidden in fog near Ice estimated course 200° my position 065° 56' N. 027° 50' W. (SUFFOLK 2349/23 to Scapa)

Enemy in sight bearing 210 degs. My position 163 66° N. 28° W. 9 (SUFFOLK 2359B/23)

/IRIS

War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. (contd.)IRIS.

Your 1902B/22. Subject to making up shortage of crew IRIS expects to sail 24/5. Operations will take from 8 to 10 days provided weather is suitable.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1131B/23 to C.in C. W.A.)

GIANNA M.

Italian prize GIANNA M. and cargo given into custody of Admiralty Marshal's substitute and prize crew.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1301B/23 to Adty.)

Enemy unit.

Adty. 0328/23. There is further D/F indication of enemy surface unit in approx. 042° 33' N. 011° 15' W. probably homeward bound. (F.O.(S) 1446B/23 to S/M's Area A)

Denmark
Straits.
Possible
passage
inside
Ice.

Study of recent air reconnaissance show that a well built ship could make passage through Denmark Straits about 50 miles inside ice edge. Another channel exists about 55 miles wide at 066° 25' N. 032° 05' W. 18 miles wide at 067° 15' N. 031° 50' W. and 15 miles wide at 068° 20' N. 028° 30' W. A.O.C. R.A.F. considers Air Reconnaissance would establish whether it is possible to reach open sea's latter position if another Catalina were available.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1817/23)

MARQUES DE
COMMILLAS.

1610. A/A on patrol MZCT 2518 cross over through VWEG 4540 VWCT 4520 MZEG 2040.
1717. Sighted 1 MV Spanish vessel MARQUES DE COMMILLAS 10,000 tons C/S 270° SP 12 KTS Spanish markings on sides.
1735. Sighted 1 MV*CASTILLO MON C/S 060 SP 10 KTS position VWCT 4308 Spanish markings.
(Plymouth A.C.Q.Q. 2305/23)* ? CASTILLO MONZON.

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Operations.

Patrols and
R/C's.

My 2338/22. (a) Cross over Patrol Two Sorties by Sunderland between 062° 32' N. 008° 47' W - 062° 52' N. 008° 23' W - 063° 38' N. 012° 30' W - 063° 59' N. 012° 00' W. (b) Arranged by C. in C.W.A. (c) Cross over Patrol by Hudson between 060° 41' N. 002° 24' W. - 061° 26' N. 006° 44' W. - 061° 46' N. 006° 10' W. - 060° 18' N. 002° 58' W. (d) R/C of Trondhjem and vicinity. R/C of Bergen and vicinity between Bergen and Stadlandet, and Bergen and Christiansand. ~~Patrol STABRAK - BERG - TROST - STAB - HOKSI.~~ All from First Light. (C. in C. Rosyth 0022/23 to C. in C.H.F) A. LV/G1/23/5. C. Cancel LV/G3/22/5. Following cross-over patrols are to be carried out forthwith by two Catalinas only with the object of locating and shadowing enemy warships which may be attempting to break out into North Atlantic. Depth charges are to be carried and enemy submarines are to be attacked on sight. No. 1 patrol between Z N B B 5503 and H V W M 1438. No. 2 patrol between H V W M 2812 and C F T Y 5632. Patrols are to be maintained to prudent limit of endurance. (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0055/23) My 2045/22. Request R/C also cover approaches to Iceland particularly Akreyri. (C. in C.H.F. 0146B/23 to Adty.) My 0022/23 Para.(D) R/C postponed owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 0630/23 to Adty. C. in C.H.F. A.C.O.S) C. in C. Rosyth's 2338/22 and 0022/23. Air R/C for 23/5 arranged as follows:-* Denmark Strait patrol ordered but not yet confirmed from 66° 25' N. 23° 07' W. on a line 320° for depth of 100 miles or to ice limit if closer. (C. in C.W.A. 0745B/23 to C. in C.H.F.)* As A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0055/23.

/A cross over

747

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Operations.

Patrols and
R/C's.
(contd.)

C. A cross over patrol between the following points, is to be carried out with the object of locating and shadowing an enemy surface raider which may be making for St. Nazaire or Bordeaux. MZEG 4330, WRCT 1130. Aircraft to be on patrol by 1500/23 and to remain until prudent limit of endurance. (H.Q.C.C. 0950/23)

C. in C. Rosyth's 0630/23 is passed to you for information. Begins (X - X 0630/23 attached) Ends. (H.W.R. 1032/23 to ARETHUSA, BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER, F.O.C.N.P. F.O.I.C/Iceland)

A.M. 0328 B/12. D/F Bearings of enemy unit, 19 Groups are flying a patrol from 45° 48' N. 006° 12' W. to 044° 04' N. 005° 48' W. to 044° 16' N. 005° 13' W. to 45° 37' N. 006° 48' W. between 1500 and 2230/23. (C. in C. Plymouth 1054/23 to S/M's on patrol, Plymouth Cmd.)

Onions reconnaissance of Denmark Strait and particularly Akureyri to be given priority over all other commitments. Acknowledge. (A.C.W.A. 1226B/23 to N.O.I.C. Iceland for 30 Wing)
My 0022/23 para. (C) - cross over discontinued after 2 sorties owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 1323/23 to C. in C.H.F.)
944 Special Wellington Aircraft proceeded on Met. R/C and if possible R/C of Norwegian Coast from Bergen to Stadlandet. (C. in C. Rosyth 1502/23 to C. in C. H.F. Adty. A.C.O.S.)
Hudson taking off 1515 for Denmark Straits via Staagbiereg Huk to carry out R/C between pack ice and Straumnes. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1520/23 to R.A. 1st. C.S.)

/My 0754B/23 ...

748

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Operations.

Patrols and 8746
R/C's.
(contd.)

My 0754B/23. Cross over patrol flown from 1330 until 1700 and then withdrawn on account of weather. Denmark Straits R/C was not flown on account of weather. (A.C.W.A. 1903B/23 to C. in C.H.F.) 1434 airborne on search area Lorient to St. Nazaire. Patrol ineffective owing to lack of cloud cover. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 1915/23)
One Hudson aircraft left 2118Z/23. to carrying out search of area Z.F.Z.P. 0000 J.B.E.U. 0000 K.B.Z.P. 0000 Z.F.E.U.0000 (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2120Z/23)

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy F.N.470.

"Help Agent" H.J.V.F - 4120 (?)
(SOUTHDOWN 0944/23)
Fighter A/C despatched to assist Convoy "Agent" (Rosyth W/T 0951/23)

Convoy F.S.

Fighter A/C despatched to assist Convoy "Booty". (Nore 1013/23)

Dover.

Single enemy aircraft dropped 4 bombs in Dover harbour at 0942/23. No damage or casualties. (V.A. Dover 2144B/23)

Mining.

Thames Estuary.

S.A. Mines detonated as follows.
(Capt.M/S Sheerness 0957/23 1740/23)

Special mine sweeping arrangements were made to safeguard S.S. MOOLTAN on passage northwards yesterday. Though the channel had been swept during the previous night one acoustic and two magnetic mines were swept in channel in Barrow Deep a short time before vessel passed. One of the latter was presumably a mine fitted with period delay mechanism. (C. in C. Nore 1026B/23 to Adty.)

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd.)

Operation
B.S.57.

If weather conditions are suitable intend to sail at 2000/23 to lay at 0250/24. (PLOVER 1150B/23)
B.S. 57 again postponed 24 hours owing to weather. (C. in C. Nore 1522B/23)

Belfast.

At 0814 M.S.X. Whaler SHUSA detonated one large red mine in 040° 15 cables Pile Light. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1330B/23)

Milford
Haven.

Ground mine detonated by TYNEDALE fitted S.A. Gear in 180° St. Anns Head Light 11 cables. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1740B/23)

Operation
B.S.62.

Details. Operation to be carried out on 27/5 or as soon after as practicable. (D.D.O.D.(M) 1903B/23)

Brighton.

Ref. -search for mines off Brighton.A/C sighted line of 23 buoys or mines P. apparently attached to each other between W.C.R.U. 4752 and W.C.L.J. 4500 (discription) Two marker buoys sighted in position W.C.R.U. 4259. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 2242/23)

Enemy Intelligence.

Trondheim.

Photographs taken at 1730/22 show three destroyers and catapult ship in Trondheim harbour. Dense fog on most coasts and pilot considers surface navigation would have been very difficult. (C. in C. Rosyth 0032/23 to C. in C.H.F.)

/? raider

750

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence. (contd.)

? Raider.

At 1937/22 G.M.T. D/F Bearings indicate enemy surface vessel in area 42° to 43° N. 11° to 13° W. probably homeward bound. (D.D.I.C. 0328B/23 to S/M's on patrol in Plymouth Command.) (H.Q.C.C.)

Brest.

1515/23. Photographic R/C shows both battlecruisers in usual positions. (D.D.I.C. 1839/23)

751

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

S.C. 30

26 ships have arrived under Rear Adm. K. Creighton, 8 allied, 1 neutral, cargoes. (D.S. 626, 23/5)

Ocean Convoys
for Methil
calling West
Coast.

A.M. 1638/8/5, C. in C. Rosyth's 1323/9 and my 2204/11. After discussion with C. in C. Rosyth, agreement has been reached that proposal (C) 8. A.M. 1638/8/5 could be implemented (Remarks re A/A ships) Thus, there are now insufficient A/A escorts to enable protection to be given other than by the present method of homeward convoys calling at west coast ports and proceeding in subsequent W.N. convoys. Regret, therefore, that it now appears necessary that existing system must continue.
(C. in C. W.A. 1259/23 to Admty.)

W.S.9.A.

My 1841/22. Request immediate confirmation that embarkation dates can be maintained and that vessels will be ready to sail on completion of embarkation programme. (D.S.T. 0314B/23 to P.S.T.O. W. of Scotland)
Your 1841/22. Confirm that dates can be maintained and that vessels should be ready to sail in accordance with programme. (D.S.T.O. Liverpool 1630B/23 to D. of S.T.)

D/G Defects.

Merchant Ships already at sea and bound overseas should not be ordered into a U.K. port on account of defective D.G. equipment, but should be instructed to proceed and effect necessary repairs abroad.
(D.T.D. 1810B/23 to C. in C's)

/Atlantic Convoy Escorts ...

War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys. (contd.)Atlantic
Convoy
Escorts.

Decided to extend A/S escort for all H.X. S.C. and corresponding O.B. Convoys as far as about 45° W. in the latitude of Newfoundland as soon as arrangements can be made. Escorts will be conveniently based in U.K., Iceland and St. John's N.F. C. in C. W.A. requested (a) to reorganise escorts accordingly, allowing for all Canadian destroyers and the corvettes now in Canada operating from St. John's, and (b) to make proposals for the detailed working of the scheme. (A.C.N.S.(H) 2027/23 to C. in C's. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa etc.)

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

LANCE.

Am broken down off West end of Hoy.
Request assistance. (LANCE 0050/23 to A.C.O.S.)

My 0050 expect to be able to steam by 0400.
Intend returning to Scapa. (LANCE 0123B/23)
LANCE returned to harbour a.m. today owing to shortage of water in boilers, should be ready to sail p.m. today /23 if tests are satisfactory. (R.A.D. H.F. 1025B/23 to C. in C.H.F.)

DUNKWA.

POLYDORUS. Arrived convoy anchorage p.m./23 has on board following rescued survivors Ex DUNKWA. (NEWMARKET 0820B/23 to N.C.S.O. Oban)

JOSEFINA
THORDEN.

My 2246B/22 ships helm jammed hard over. Cargo about 7000 tons of petrol. I hope to free rudder today Friday, after which ship could be towed bow first by Fleet tugs BRIGAND and MARAUDER at about eight knots. Request destination may be indicated and A/S escort provided so that ship may proceed without delay. It would be hazardous to take her into Skaale Fiord and nothing would be gained by keeping her in Faeroes in view of risk incurred thereby. (N.O.I.C.Faeroes 1415B/23 to A.C.O.S.)

DANOA.

S.O.S. Developed a list making St. Ives. Dangerous list. (DANOA 1547/23)

BOADICEA.

BOADICEA defects. Time required 3 days. (Cmd. (D) 4. 1830/23 to N.O.I.C. Greenock)

MENDIP.

Cancel my 1705/23. Sailing postponed pending completion of defect. (C. in C. Rosyth 1920/23 to MENDIP.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.LATONA

Return to Gibraltar. Further instructions follow. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0140B/23 to LATONA).

Enemy Unit.

My 0038 A. Further D/F Bearing indicates enemy surface ship in area 042° - 043° N 011° - 013° W probably homeward bound. (F.O.C.N.A. 0431A/23 to N.A. Stn. 0910A/23 to CLYDE, PANDORA).

My 0431A/23. Further bearings Simonstown 308/2. Indicating position within 150 miles 026° N 042° W, probable enemy surface ship. (F.O.C.N.A., 1059A/23 to N.A. Stn).

OLYMPUS

Pass through 038° 00' 003° 00' E and 036° 20' 002° 00' W. Proceed on the surface at your discretion West of 007° 00' E. Report E.T.A. on R/V 002° 00' W. C.3. reports German E. boat at Oran may be (?painted) French colours. (F.O.C.N.A., 1010A/23, to OLYMPUS).

B.D.V.'s

Your 1104B/21 B.D.V.'s JENNETX, BOWNET, PUNNET, arrived p.m./22, bunkering and expect to sail noon/23. JENNET, LUMINARY and FOREMOST 101 will then (2 corrupt groups) food and water. (V. Consul, Fayal, 1545/23 to Admty).

Force H.

Raise steam for full speed. (1st S.L. 2253B/23 to F.O. Force H).

South Atlantic.German Units.Your 1749/22. ^{P.706} Cruiser KÖLN only German warship unaccounted for but it is unlikely she is in this area. (D.O.D. (F) 0150B/23 to C. in C. S.A.)CAMERONIA

Has on board draft for U.K. of approx. 450 naval, 280 R. A.F. and 1004 army personnel, will be ready to leave Durban 26/5. Request instructions regarding escort. If escort not available by 26th intend sending ship to East London to wait ther as Durban must be cleared for W.S.8 A. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1010B/23 to C. in C. S.A.)

French Ships.....

23.5.1941.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

French Ships.

Take French ships to Durban N.O.I.C. Simonstown will supply any route instructions required.
(C. in C. S.A., 1347N/23 to PRETORIA CASTLE).

NELSON
S.L. 75

Your 1749N/22. Concur in route given in your 1617/22. Consider it undesirable for NELSON or EAGLE to operate in this area without destroyers. Request you will recall NELSON to Freetown and sail her to overtake and escort S.L. 75.
(V.C.N.S. 1430B/23 to C. in C. S.A.)

CALVO SOTELO
(Spanish G/B)
Visit to
Freetown.

Your 2031/19. Action through diplomatic channels to stop visit of CALVO SOTELO cannot be taken since to do so would attract undesirable attention to Freetown area at the date of ANSON's visit. Presence of CALVO SOTELO and ANSON in harbour at same time should be avoided if possible. If visits clash do the best you can by selective berthing and adjusting of times of arrival and departure to reduce the risk of identification.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1931B/23 to C. in C. S.A.)

TEBRO.
NEVADA.
WINDHUK.

N.C.S.O. Santos reports Italian ship TEBRO has fires alight and has nearly finished having bottom cleaned by divers. Danish ship NEVADA also had fires alight this week. German ship WINDHUK received 250 drums oil fuel yesterday and is now taking water.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2051Z/23 to R.A.S.A.D.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.ZEFFIRO
(Italian).

Report of 20/5 states ZEFFIRO, 5165 tons sunk in approx. 37° N., 11° 10' E, near Cape Bon, probably by mine. She carried 7600 tons of phosphates. URGE claims to have sunk a ship on 20/5 near the above position. (D.S., 626, 23/5).

Fulmar
Crash.

Italian news of 22/5 states a Hurricane was shot down south of Pantellaria by naval A.A. guns. V.A. Malta doubts shot down and it probably crashed near by, also possibly a Fulmar not a Hurricane. (S.O.(I) Malta, 0117B/23 to S.O. Force H).

LEANDER

First Lord requests that you will ask Mr. Fraser whether he is prepared to allow LEANDER to proceed to the Mediterranean at once. (1st S.L., 0125B/23 to C. in C. Med).

*Approved. Sep. 758.*Operation "Splice".
"SPICE"

25 Hurricanes arrived Egypt 22/5 escorted by 3 Wellingtons. A total of 42 Hurricanes of "SPICE" operation escorted by 2 Beaufighters and 3 Wellingtons have therefore arrived Egypt to date. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 0728/23).

HELKA,
SOUTHERN MAID.

Your 2115/22 and your 1920/20. Intend sailing HELKA to sea at 0300/25 to N.E. escorted by SOUTHERN MAID to Aden at 2130/26 finally sailing for Alexandria 0300/27. Estimate 600 tons can be pumped in tonight. Ship is safer at sea than in harbour and if sunk in pumping in ballast would seriously impede working of port. Can additional escort be provided from dawn to dusk on 25th? (S.O. Force I 0829C/23 to N.O.I.C. Alexandria).

/Malta Convoy.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General. (contd).Malta Convoy.

My 1758B/12. All cargoes except coal will be discharged by 25/5. Anticipate ships will be ready to sail 29/5. I hope it will be possible to get BRECONSHIRE away earlier to start loading for Convoy M.W.8. (V.A. Malta, 0905B/23 to C. in C. Med).

JIUL

Reported that Roumanian steamer JIUL, 3,000 tons, speed about 9 knots, passed Istanbul 1245 G.M.T. for Aegean. Description. (Beyoglu, No. T.O.O. /23 to Cairo).

→ UNIQUE

Leaves Malta p.m./25 through 035° 25' 013° 00' to operate in area M, 034° 40' 011° 50' - 342° - 40 - 70. (S.O.(S) Malta, 1335B/23 to UNION, UTMOST).

→ UNION,
UTMOST,
→ UNIQUE,
URSULA.

My 1128B/21. UNION in area L from p.m./25. UTMOST in (~~area M~~) until p.m./27 then to area (?). UNIQUE leaves Malta p.m./25 for area M. 034° 40' 011° 50' - 342° - 40 - 70. URSULA arrives 032° 30' 015° 00' p.m./26, off Khoms during 27, along 033° 20' between 0130 14' and 012° 50', off Zuara 1/6, arriving Turgeuness dawn/2nd, then patrol latitude 034° 14' to meridian 012° 00' until p.m./4 to arrive Malta a.m./6. (Cdr. S.1. 1407B/23 to Capt. S.1.)

CLYDE
SEVERN.

CLYDE arriving 24/5 and SEVERN ready for service 24/5, are at your disposal for operations in Western Mediterranean, based on Gibraltar. It is requested that SEVERN may be held for the present to provide escort for S.S. CITY OF DIEPPE from Gibraltar towards Halifax as far as the American zone. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1432B/23 to C. in C. Med).

/C.3.R.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General. (contd).

C.S.R. Malta up to 1600 hrs. 23/5. Enemy air activity. Nil.
Air activity today restricted by very bad visibility and intermittent rain and squalls.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1600/23).

Enemy Wreck,
UNION to
sink.

Derelict enemy ship, funnel aft, reported in position 1950. Pantellaria 18 miles.
Approach by day only and sink, using caution since salvage may be attempted and M.A.S. in the vicinity.
(Capt. S.I. 1605B/23 Cdr. S.I. 1705B/23 to UNION.)

SALZBURG
German.

1800 tons passed Istanbul for Aegean 1130 G.M.T. half loaded. Description. Speed 9 knots.
(S.O.(I) Istanbul, 1730/23 to Cairo).

Signals
Compromised.

Key Memorandum S.P. 02292J believed compromised as result of loss of aerodrome in Crete. It is intended to retain J Series of Key Memoranda in force but with a new scramble. It is not possible however to promulgate new scramble to all stations until 1/6. In meantime use any emergency recognition procedure you desire on Mediterranean Station.
(D.S.D. 1842B/23 to C. in C. Med).

LEANDER.

Your 0125/23. Mr. Fraser has approved the employment of LEANDER in Mediterranean and is cabling his Government accordingly.
(C. in C. Med., 1843C/23 to Admty).

A/C Reports of
Enemy Convoys.

Reply to Admty 1145B/22. Action taken.
(N.O.I.C. Malta, 2358B/23) See Lion Copy.

/Suez Canal.....

MOST SECRET

458A

MOST SECRET,

M E S S A G E

2358B/23rd May,

IN.

From N.O.I.C. Malta.

Date 24.5.41.

Time 0328

NAVAL CYPHER (D) By W/T.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated C. in C. Mediterranean 479.

13. Your 1145B/22/. The time of aircraft sighting given at G.M.T. not Malta time.

A. Report of southbound convoy on May 12 escorted by two cruisers six inch or eight inch and eight destroyers was received at 1800B after aircraft returned. Constant enemy aircraft patrols were then operating round Malta. Weather was clear with fresh westerly wind and maximum speed of destroyers was estimated at 24 knots. Only interception that might have been effected would have been close off Tripoli (Africa) at about 0400 or further West at or after dawn.

In view of difficulties of interception probable lack of surprise great disparity of surface force and heavy air attack likely near Tripoli (Syria) coast it was reluctantly decided not to despatch 5th Destroyer Flotilla consisting of 5 destroyers.

All available Swordfish were then despatched and carried out a successful torpedo attack at 2230. Later reconnaissance of Tripoli (Africa) on May 13 reported only 3 Merchant vessels with escort of four destroyers off the harbour at 1330. It therefore appears probable convoy proceeded southwestward during the night and coasted to Tripoli (Africa) proceeding day leaving two Merchant Vessels at Zuara and two Merchant vessels or one Merchant vessel and one destroyer sunk.

B. The convoy reported on 13th May was unladen northbound covered by cruisers and the 2 other convoys referred to were of very small vessels proceeding between Lampedusa and Tunis coast. The use of Malta destroyers for daylight operations off Tunisian coast in clear weather was considered inadvisable until cruiser support and greater Fighter protection was available.

2358B/23

Advance copies sent Ops. O.D. O.I.C.

1st Lord,
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.
D.N.A.D.
D. A/S N.

I.P.
W.D.
Duty Captain.
Hd. of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
N.I.D.10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.
D.P.S.

MOST SECRET.23.5.1941.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General. (contd).Suez Canal.

Situation report. Ships swept over suspected mines without incident. About six ships each way daily are being handled.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area 1901C/23).

German Attack On Crete.Policy

Following for Cs. in C, Med., and M.E. from Chiefs of Staff, No, 113. Our information of situation in Crete is presumably much less than yours. Will Cs. in C. send urgently an appreciation of situation in order that we may assess measures necessary to ensure its retention. For moral as well as purely military reasons it is of utmost importance that present German offensive should be repulsed.
(1st S.L. 0028B /23 to C. in C. Med).

Force A.

C. in C. Med's 1950C/22. Force A (? part company) and give cover to Westward of Kithera (C.S.15 0029C/23 to C.S.7).

Bombardment of Maleme.

Following has been read: (?M2305) GBC would like harassing fire on Maleme to be carried out in conjunction with this operation III. Bombardment area from coast to one mile inland between parallels 23.47 E to 2349.E. (Suda Bay., 0045/23 to Alexandria W/T and all British Warships.)

R.V. for D. 10.

Request R/V with you for the morning. Have not yet located FIJI. (Capt D.10 0048C/23 to F.O.7 C.S.)
Your 0048. Steer 090°. 15 knots for the present.
(F.O.7 C.S. 0148/23 to Capt. D.10).

/Force A.1.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).Force A.1.

Force A.1. may be encountered during the night. (F.O.7 C.S. 0135/23 to HERO, DECOY).

AJAX
ORION.E.T.A. with ORION 0600C/23.
(AJAX, 0223C/23 to R.A. Alexandria).KIPLING
defect.

Have detached KIPLING to Bassein with defective steering. Request R/V for her. (Capt. D.5., 0255/23 to F.O.7 C.S. F.O.15 C.S.)

KELVIN
sweep.

Ref. 2155C/22 from C.S.7 and ref. 2345/22 from S.B.N.O. Suda Bay. Kisamo and Canea Bay swept. Very's light and small flares observed in 035° 31' N 023° 50' E. No diversity of shipping. Am retiring to S.W. of Crete. (KELVIN, 0300C/23 to C. in C. Med).

D.5
Bombarding.Am bombarding myself now. !!
(Capt D.5. 0407/23 to JACKAL).Withdrawal to
Alexandria.

All forces withdraw towards Alexandria forthwith. (C. in C. Med., 0408/23 to F.O.7th C.S. Capt. (D) 5, Capt (D) 14.)

* My 0408 does not apply to GLENROY's Force. (C. in C. Med., 0428C/23 to GLENROY, COVENTRY).

My 0408. Join F.O.C.7th C.S.

(C. in C. Med., 0430/23 to Capt. (D) 10, JAGUAR, DEFENDER). * See p. 762

Milo Report.Military Y reports picking up wireless message Italian Armed Trawler crew at Milo to stand by.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0530/23, to C. in C. Med).

/KIPLING.....

MOST SECRET.23.5.1941.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).→ KIPLING

Steering defect made good P.C. & S 034° 50' N
023° 18' E 118° 30 knots.
(KIPLING, 0610/23 to F.O.7 C.S., F.O.15 C.S.).

JAGUAR.
DEFENDER.

Return to Alexandria.
(F.O.7 C.S. 0625/23 to JAGUAR, Capt D 10).
C.S.7 0625/23. JAGUAR and DEFENDER join C.S.7.
(C. in C. Med., 0710C/23 to JAGUAR, DEFENDER).
See previous

KELLY
KASHMIR
sunk.

KELLY and KASHMIR dive bombed in position
020° 34° N., 24° E. 44.
(KIPLING, 0802/23 to C.S.7).
My 0802. Both ships hit and sunk.
(KIPLING, 0806/23).

→ KIPLING
damaged.

Ship damaged by collision with wreck.
(KIPLING, 0816/23, to C.S.7).
Request immediate assistance my position
015° 34° N., 24° E.
(KIPLING 0831/23 to C.S.7).
KIPLING(position) picking up survivors. What
help is being sent?
(Capt. D.5. 0922/23 to C.S.7).
Following received 39 Sqdn., from a/c G-39
SQ. Crippled destroyer 20 miles south of
western end of Crete, send assistance against
further air attack. Suggest long-nosed
Blenheim. (R.A. Alexandria, 1000/23 to KIPLING)
One undamaged destroyer will make the whole
difference just now.
(D.5. 1015/23 to C.S.7).

Situation on
shore.

No seaborne enemy managed to land night 22/23.
At Retimo and Heraklion situation satisfactory.
At Maleme aerodrome is in enemy hands but
under fire. Bombardment by naval units last
night most useful. Regret your serious loss.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1001C/23 to C. in C. Med).

/Withdrawal to.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).→ Withdrawal
to Alexandria.

All forces return to Alexandria at best possible speed. GLENROY's force is to continue to Tymbaki for the present.
(C. in C. Med., 1015C/23 to Med, Fleet).

→ KIPLING

It is hoped to provide Blenheims for protection KIPLING shortly. (C. in C. Med., 1024C/23 to Med Fleet.)

KELVIN
JACKAL

Keep well to the southward.
(C. in C. Med., 1026C/23 to KELVIN, JACKAL).

Maleme
Recco.

Following received 39th Sqdn., from a/c G.39 Sq. Recco carried out. No shipping in Maleme 50 plus enemy aircraft Maleme.
(C. in C. Med., 1045/23).

→ D.5.
KIPLING.

My p.c. & s. 015° 34° N., 24° E., 43, 120° 18 knots. Request Destroyer may be sent to meet KIPLING after dark or search for survivors (D.5. 1049/23, to C. in C. Med).
Am leaving the matter of KIPLING in your hands except for asking Blenheim protection for him as I am unaware of situation.
(C. in C. Med., 1123C/23 to C.S.7).
Your 1123 to R.A. 7th C.S. Have decided not to send anyone back to KIPLING unless you order me to do so. Suggest KIPLING be ordered to R/V with (?GLENROY).
(R.A. 15 C.S. 1325C/23 to C. in C. Med., R.A. 7 C.S.)

→ GLENROY.

GLENROY and escort return to Alexandria.
(C. in C. Med., 1127C/23 to GLENROY, COVENTRY).

JAGUAR
-DEFENDER.

My 1324C/22 Detach JAGUAR and DEFENDER to arrive Suda Bay 2359/23 unload ammunition and sail for Alexandria at 0230/24 at latest, making passage between Suda Bay and Kaso Straits both ways at best possible speed.
(C. in C. Med., 1207C/23 to C.S.7).

/Air Attack.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack on Crete. (contd).Air Attack
on Suda
M.T.B.'sHeavy M/G attack at 1230 on dockyard by fighters was concentrated on M.T.B.'s who are now all out of action.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay., 1347Z/23 to C. in C. Med)KASHMIR
survivors
left.Following received. C. in C. Med from Capt. D.5. Feared a few isolated survivors from KASHMIR had to be left in position 014° 34° N., 24° E., 38 owing to persistent bombing. Request Flying Boat may search vicinity.
(Nore W/T, 1500/23 to Whitehall W/T).Capt. D.5.
KIPLING.Report situation are you making for Alexandria if so what speed? Is Capt. D.5. on board? Where are KELVIN and JAGUAR?
(C. in C. Med., 1508/23 to KIPLING).Air
Protection
for D.5.Your 1335/23 Blenheims are on their way.
(C. in C. Med., 1510/23 to Capt. D.5.)GLENROY
order from
Admty.GLENROY and escort turn to northwards pending further instructions.
(1st S.L. 1559B/23 to C. in C. Med).
Comply with Admty 1559B/23.
(C. in C. Med., 1852/23 to COVENTRY) See also 1837, 2146, and 2237/23.a/c from
7th C.S.Your aircraft arrived.
(R.A. Alexandria, 1649C/23 to F.O.7.C.S.)Benghazi
bombed.Ops. Sum No. 347 up to 1200 hrs. 23/5.
Night May 21/22. 2 Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour, bombs bursting on the Cathedral Mole near the seaplane station.
22/5. 1 South African Hurricane on patrol over APHIS intercepted 6 JU 87's off Sidi Barrani and destroyed 2.APHIS escort.

Crete.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack on Crete. (contd).Crete.

Ops. Summary No. 347 (contd).

22/5 Blenheim reconnaissance reported convoy of small craft making for Maleme and Heraklion convoy later attacked by H.M. Ships, which destroyed some and dispersed remainder. Estimated total 100 troop carrying aircraft landed Maleme Beach at 5 minute intervals bringing large reinforcements troops and equipment. Fighting continued at Maleme from dawn where our troops counter-attacked but were forced to withdraw by enemy ground fire and low-flying machine gun and bombing attacks. Enemy dropped supplies at Heraklion including guns and ammunition, which were seized by our troops. Situation at Retimo and Heraklion satisfactory. During day enemy dropped some bombs on Canea and Suda Bay. H.M. Ships bombarded enemy positions Maleme during night May 21/22. 12 Blenheims bombed same area at dawn 22/5. Since 20/5, 16 troopcarriers have been shot down by A.A. fire at Heraklion. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E. 1657/23).

Policy.

Your 1015C/23. T.L. entirely agree with your 1655C/22 to Mediterranean Fleet, and every endeavour must be made to implement this policy again tonight. Reply to your 1043C/23 follows.
(1st S.L., 1756B/23 to C. in C. Med).

KIPLING
R.V. with
PROTECTOR.

Capt. (D) 5. in KIPLING expected to arrive 1530 searched Channel 0900/24 with probably no fuel remaining. Sail to R/V with KIPLING in 031° 30' N 028° 56' E at 0600/24 to act under orders of Capt. (D) 5. (C. in C. Med., 1821C/23 to PROTECTOR).
Well done. PROTECTOR is sailing to R.V. you in 031° 30' N 028° 56' E at 0600/24 to act under your orders. Alter R.V. if you wish. (C. in C. Med., 1823C/23 to Capt. D.5).

Italian Convoy
JAGUAR.

My 1207C/23. It is possible you may meet an Italian convoy in Sitia area tomorrow morning /24.
(C. in C. Med., 1825C/23 to JAGUAR).

/Operation.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).Operation cancelled.Morgans party tonight is cancelled.
(N.O.I.C. Suda, 1827C/23 to Capt. Macdonald).GLENROY.My 1852 and Admty 1559/23. It is much too late for GLENROY to reach Tymbaki tonight 23rd as she was turned back at 1130 after consulting C. in C. Middle East. (1837C/23 to Admty) Your 1837C/23 understood. Presume you are taking necessary action to postpone arrival of GLENROY by 24 hours.
(V.C.N.S., 2146B/23 to C. in C. Med).FIJI,
KELLY,
KASHMIR.34°35'N
23°12'E
AC
B. & G. Summary
CB 3081(2)
par. 21FIJI sunk in 036 35° N., 23° E., 35 at 1920/22 by dive bomber. KELLY and KASHMIR sunk by dive bombers in 020/ 34°N 24° E., 44[at 0802. Survivors include Capt. (D) 5 in KIPLING who was damaged in collision with wreck and reduced to 20 knots now making for Alexandria.
(C. in C. Med., 1915C/23 to Admty).Raids on Suda,
LOGICIAN hit.Several further heavy raids on Suda Bay. LOGICIAN hit. Military holding defensive position east of Maleme. Field guns have been lost. Retimo no change. Heraklion further enemy landings. Blenheims gave great encouragement.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1937/23 to C. in C. Med).Capt. D.5.Your 1826. Are you all right?
(C. in C. Med., 1948/23 to Capt. D.5).
Your 1948/23 O.K. Thank you.
(Capt. D.5. 2015/23 to C. in C. Med).KOS 19
AETOS
CHERRYLEAF.Return to Alexandria with oiler CHERRYLEAF and AETOS. Inform AETOS accordingly.
(R.A. Alexandria, 2015C/23 to KOS. 19).

/Situation.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).Situation.

Summary of events since his 1810/22.
(C. in C. Med., 2123/23 to Admty) See Lion Copy.

Return to Alexandria.

WARSPITE, VALIANT and light force E.T.A.
Alexandria 0430C/24 from North West.
(Capt. S.I. 2135C/23 to TETRARCH).

JAGUAR
DEFENDER.

Providing disembarkation of ammunition and fuel situation allows you are at liberty to employ JAGUAR and DEFENDER to attack enemy convoy should (?patrol) be reported approaching the coast during night 23rd. If such action is taken they should lie up at Suda Bay during daylight rather than attempt withdrawal from Suda Bay through Kaso Strait in daylight hours.
(C. in C. Med., 2227C/23 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay).

GLENROY,
COVENTRY,
ABDIEL.

Your 1559B/23. I could only infer that you were in possession of information I had not received and accordingly directed COVENTRY to proceed to northward. Movements of GLENROY and escort had been most carefully considered and her operation orders enabled her to take the maximum advantage of dark hours. Her withdrawal was ordered in consultation with C. in C. M.E. after a further plan for reinforcement of Crete by ABDIEL and/or destroyers had been decided on. I propose if GLENROY continues to proceed to northwards in accordance with your directions she will be in worst possible position for dive bombing and high level bombing attacks at daylight and disembarkation of troops during daylight hours under present air conditions is out of the question. In view of this I am ordering her to proceed to Alexandria.
(C. in C. Med., 2237C/23 to Admty).

/Damage.....

766A

2121/23 May
IN

SECRET

MESSAGE

From C. in C. Mediterranean

Date 21.5.41
Recd. 0539

NAVAL CYPRUS (X) BY W/T

Addressed Admiralty repeated V.A. Malta, F.O. (H)
S.D.N.O. Suez Canal Area.

IMPORTANT.

494. My 1810/22/5/41. GLOUCESTER was sunk at 1730/22 in Kythera Channel near to islands. FIJI was unable to collect survivors owing to intensity of air attack and acute shortage of ammunition and withdrew to South Westward with KANDAHAR and KINGSTON after dropping all (?) life saving equipment as position and wind were favourable for survivors to reach land. FIJI was hit at 1900/22 when ammunition probably expended and was reported sinking at 1920/22 in position 0366 L L P L 35. KANDAHAR and KINGSTON collected survivors and reported her still floating bottom up at 2345'. They then joined C S 7.

(2) D.5 and 5th D F patrolled Candia Maleme area night 22nd/23rd KELLY and KASHMIR sank one large caique full of soldiers and munitions and carried out effective bombardment of enemy positions at Malene. KASHMIR and JACKAL may have done further execution. KIPLING withdrew due to steering trouble. At 0800 D 5 was attacked by dive bombers in position 020 H B W T C 41 and both KELLY and KASHMIR were sunk. KIPLING embarked survivors including Capt. (D) 5 but was damaged in collision with wreck and speed seriously reduced. Now in estimated position 32 degs. 42' N 26 degs. 41' E making for Alexandria.

(3) D 14 and 3 destroyers patrolled Heraklion area night 22/23 due Alexandria 1900/23. No report yet received.

(4) All forces ordered to withdraw to Alexandria at 0400/23. C S 15 joined C S 7. Due Alexandria tonight 23/24. JAGUAR and DEFENDER are running ammunition into Suda tonight 23/24.

(5) HERO, DECCY, evacuated King of Greece, British Minister and party expected Alexandria 2359/23.

(6) R.A.D. with ORION and DIDO and 4 destroyers now at Alexandria without serious damage. ORION was hit by pompon fire from DIDO in night engagement 21/22. Some damage and casualties to bridge. At least a dozen caiques and two small steamers were sunk as well as destroyer. Many casualties in other caiques.

(7) Survivors from ships sunk at present reported as follows GLOUCESTER nil. FIJI 463 including Captain and Commander. GREYHOUND 80. JUNO 73 including Captain, KELLY and KASHMIR 270. CARLISLE was not seriously damaged but Captain ~~(Hampton)~~ died of wounds. Damage to WARSPITE all above water and mainly to starboard 6" battery and 4" guns casualties 34 killed and 46 wounded. WILLIANT hits on quarter deck no serious damage 1 killed 4 wounded.

wounded (amended 2112 C/24)

(8) /

766B

-2-

(8) Submarine operation as in V.A. Malta's 1226/22.
AFHS executing special operation with army Western Desert
Suez Canal open to traffic SAINIA has got back to Alexandria
from Suda under own power.

2121/23

Advance Copy Ops. C.D. O.I.C. N. C.W.
1st Lord, C.S.O. to 1st S.L. A.C.N.S. (F)

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
Controller
Vice Controller
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.P.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.S.N.S. (I) (2)
Nav. Sec.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
P.A.S. (S)
Ops. (1)
C.D. (5)
O.I.C. (3)
D.N.L. (4)
D.S.D. 9
M (30)
D of P (3)
D.N.A.D
D.C.O
D.D.T.S.D. (C.O)
E.P.S
Hd of N
Hd of C.W
Press Divn.
W.D.
I.P. (5)
D.S.D. (2)

JT

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack On Crete. (contd).Damage.

Report as soon as possible any spare parts not available at Alexandria which are required as result of recent action damage. (D.D.T.S.D. 2305B/23 to C. in C. Med).

GLENROY.

Return to Alexandria forthwith. Acknowledge. (C. in C. Med., 2335/23 to GLENROY.)

East Indies.Shipping,
Persian
Gulf.

Re Navicerts etc. (C. in C. E.I. 0724Z/23).
See Lion Copy.

Suez
Mining.

For N.C.S.O.'s. Possibility of enemy magnetic mines being dropped in Gulf of Suez. Masters are to be reminded to energise their D.G. coils according to latitude and avoid shallow waters as far as possible.
(C. in C. E.I., 0734Z/23 to E.I. Stn.)
My 0734/23 is being passed to you. Request adjacent stations will conform.
(C. in C. E.I., 0736Z/23 to C. in C. China etc)

Guardafui
Light.

For N.C.S.O.'s. My 1126/18/3 para. 1, and Q.C.A. 208. Although Cape Guardafui Light has been taken over by British Crews it cannot yet be guaranteed reliable.
(C. in C. E.I. 0738Z/23 to E.I. Stn.)
My 0738/23 is being passed to you for information of N.C.S. Officers.
(C. in C. E.I. 0854Z/23 to C. in C. China etc.)

GLASGOW.

Will be at 12 hours' notice from 2000/23 until 2000/27 for engine room repairs.
(C. in C. E.I., 0918Z/23 to Admty).

/COLOMBO.....

767A

SECRET.

MESSAGE 0724B/23 May.

III.

From. C. in C. East Indies.

Date. 24.5.41.

Recd. 2054.

Naval Cypher "A 2" by M/T.

Addressed. East Indies Station. Repeated Admiralty.

801.

1. All ships sailing for Persian Gulf require ships navicerts. Cargoes of Empire or allied origin may be assumed to have been approved in countries of origin.

2. Cargo navicerts or certificates of origin covering individual items will not be necessary in all cases and all ships with ship navicerts may be allowed to proceed.

3. All British tankers entering or leaving Persian Gulf may be assumed to be in possession of ship's navicert.

4. Ships without ship navicerts intercepted outside Persian Gulf are to be sent to nearest convenient British port and a report is to be signalled to C. in C. East Indies and N.C.i/c. concerned.

5. Separate orders have been issued regarding ships in Persian Gulf.

6. The eastern limit of Persian Gulf is deemed to be a line drawn from Ras Musandan to a point immediately east of Bandar Abbas.

7. If a ship not carrying cargo of Empire or Allied origin is known to sail for Persian Gulf without ship navicert N.O. in charge concerned is to report fact to C. in C. East Indies and S.H.O. Persian Gulf.

8. Above order applies also to dhows but in initial stages these are to be (five groups omitted) - ~~cutly~~. Unless there is evidence that cargo is intended for enemy or enemy occupied territory, dhows without navicerts are to be warned and released.

0724Z/23

Advance copy sent Ops. C.I. Trade and D.E.W.D.

4th S.L

V.C.H.S.

A.C.H.S.(H)

A.C.H.S.(F)

A.C.H.S.(T)(2)

C.S.O. to 1st S.L

Ops.(4)

O.D.(5)

O.D.8

O.I.C.(2)

I.P.(3)

D.S.D.9

D.A/S.V

W.D

D.E.W.D.(3)

D.T.D.(4)

D.T.D.(1)

D of S.T

D.H.I.(4)

H(6)

D of P(2)

D. of S.2.1.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. (contd).COLOMBO.

My 1040/20 not to Admiralty and N.O.I.C. East Africa and Zanzibar. COLOMBO is to escort troop ship(s) to destination. (C. in C. E.I., 1224Z/23 to COLOMBO).

Protection of Shipping.

Gulf of Suez and Shatt-el-Arab. Proposals (C. in C. E.I., 1400Z/21 to Admty). See Lion Copy.

Convoy C.M.9.

My 0920/20. Destination Berbera. S. of A. 14½ knots. Sailing daylight/24. (Div. .S.T.O. Mombasa 1350Z/23 May).

KINGSTON. Saudi Arabia territory.

Request you will see Minister Jeddah's telegram to F.O. of 28 or 29/4 re violations of Sudia Arabia Territory on 3/4. KINGSTON did fire a torpedo as alleged, which was in accordance with a.m. 0135/2/3. So far as Fleet Air Arm is concerned there is no foundation for the other allegation. (C. in C. E.I., 1722Z/23 to Admty).

China.CHENON CEAUX (French).

Your 0757Z/22. Can you obtain description of raider and date and position of interception in order to determine whether she was No. 33. (D.D.I.C. 1823B/23 to C.O.I.S. Singapore).

Indo-China.

Rubber question. Decisions on 0381/8 and subsequent signals. (Head of M., 1932B/23 to C. in C. China) See Lion Copy.

468A

1932B/23rd May.

SECRET.

MESSAGE.

OUT.

To. Commander-in-Chief, China.4.

Late: 23.5.41.

Repeated. Govt. of India.

Governor (Hong Kong
(Burma
(Straits Settlement.

Interdepartmental Cypher.

From Admiralty.

IMPORTANT.

Your 0381/8 and subsequent signals.

Admiralty signal 2301/30/4 stated that rubber question was of primary importance and maintenance of agreement depended on outcome of representations about this matter. Egal's future was secondary but failing satisfaction on this point, we were prepared to take certain retaliatory action.

2. We welcome assurance regarding Egal, but it appears that in return for this French expect us to maintain agreement, acquiesce in serious breaches on their side (including commitment to supply 40,000 tons of rubber to Japan and Germany) and in addition to consent to grant concessions going beyond terms of agreement. This is not regarded as satisfactory especially as Tokyo telegram No.766 shows that Japan gets bulk of remaining Indo-China exports.

3. It is vital to prevent any further supplies of rubber going from Indo-China to Japan and if possible to persuade Indo-China authorities to delay deliveries of quantities already contracted for. You should make it plain to Admiral Decoux that our future attitude depends on our receiving definite assurance that 10,000 tons of rubber allocated to the United States and such part of the allocation to France as has not already been shipped will in fact go to the United States or to ourselves (we are assured that United States Government is prepared to take maximum amount available).

4. Once (a) an assurance in this sense has been given and (b) M. Egal has left Indo-China, we will consider requests made in regard to oil, food ship to Australia and cotton ship to India. We concur that materials for Lamotte Picquet should not be supplied at present. Most favoured nation point is dealt with in separate signal.

5. Admiralty signal 2301/30/4 did not authorise communication to Admiral Decoux of any undertaking in regard to enrolment at Shanghai of French service personnel and we cannot agree to prevent M. Egal from returning to Shanghai. But in consideration of assurance about Egal, we confirm undertaking that you gave that for our part we shall refrain from interference with members of French armed forces at Shanghai.

6. Following/.....

6. Following are decisions on other points raised, but not, repeat not, to be communicated to Governor-General until conditions (a) and (b) above have been fulfilled:-

Oil. We cannot make British or allied tankers available, as we need these for our own war purposes. Governor-General must fetch what he required up to limit laid down in February agreement. He might ask for return of Lot for this purpose.

Indian cotton. Subject to concurrence of Government of India, we see no objection to 1,500 tons of cotton going from India and would agree to ship proceeding to India to collect it provided that on outward journey she takes a cargo of rice to Singapore and then proceeds to Rangoon and loads a cargo of Burma rice for India. As second best we could agree to direct shipment of a cargo of Indo-Chinese rice to India.

Australian foodstuffs. Trust you have not yet made any further communication to Deccux. Subject to conditions (a) and (b) above. We would concur if Australian Government agree, but would ask that ship lifts a cargo of Indo-Chinese produce, preferably rubber, on outward journey.

1932B/23.
for Head of M.(86)

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
Nav. Sec.
P.A.S. (S)
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)
D. of P. (3)
D.N.I. (4)
D.E.W.D.
D.S.D. 9.
D.D.I.C.
D.T.D. (3)
M (40) (China distribution, P.A. Clutterbuck Esq. D.O., Major Norton, W.C.O.)
(M.O. 5879/41)
I.P. (3)
W.D.
AdI. Chalmers.
N.I.D. 10.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.St. John's
N.F. Resources.

Your 1840B/21 and ref. 2018Z/21 from N.S.H.Q. Ottawa. St. John's N.F. harbour cannot safely hold more than maximum of 10 ships moored in stream. (Berthing Details.) Space for more than the above would be most difficult to arrange with any security of tenure.
(N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F. 0203Z/23 to Admty).

Base Proposals.

Details of arrangements for use of St. John's as advanced base for convoy escort forces operating in North Atlantic.
(V.C.N.S., 1939B/23 1940B/23 to C. in C's C.N.S., Ottawa, etc). See Lion Copy.

SHEHERAZADE
(French).

Your 1001/21. SHEHEREZADE is special case and no decision as to seizure of requisition can be given pending consultation with U.S. To avoid risk of damage to this valuable ship the whole crew should be removed on arrival.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 0621B/23 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Axis Ships,
Black Sea.

Following from State Dept. From copy dated 15/5. A minimum of 12 large ocean-going ships are available to Axis in Black Sea; 8 German 2 Italian and 2 Roumanian. On 13/5 4 German ships left (Constantza?) for Salonica with petrol, munitions and small motor torpedo boats.

(N.A. Washington, 1120/23 to Admty).
Comment by N.I.D.

On 15/5 only one German ship SALZBURG was left in Black Sea out of 8 originally there, the other 7 having passed into the Aegean between 16/4 and 15/5, and SALZBURG has now passed to the Aegean (21/5). There were 8 Italains (including 3 tankers) then in Black Sea, but 3 of these (including 1 tanker) have since passed into the Aegean. There are 18 Roumanians trading in Black Sea totalling 70,600 tons.

/Italian.....

MOST SECRET

469A.

MOST SECRET.

1939B/23rd.May.

MESSAGE

OUT.

Date. 23.5.41.

To. C. in C. Western Approaches. 921.
C. in C. Home Fleet. 701.
C.N.S. Ottawa. 159.
N.A. Washington.
R.A. 3rd. B.S. 69.
N.O.I. C. St. John's Newfoundland.
B.A.T.M.
C. in C. America and West Indies. 220.
C.O.A.C.
Commodore Commanding Canadian Ships.

331

Inter Departmental Cypher (11)

From Admiralty. *(Amended, see 4401 B/3/6)*

Following message is being sent through
Dominions Office to Government of Newfoundland and Canada :-

Admiralty desire as a matter of greatest
urgency to use St. John's, Newfoundland, as advanced base for
convoy escort forces operating in North Atlantic.

2. Force contemplated to be based on St. Johns
is approximately as follows, of which about a quarter may
be expected to be in harbour at a time :-

15 Destroyers
15 Corvettes
3 Sloops
3 Cutters.

3. Following is outline of main requirements. As
far as Admiralty can judge these should not clash with
requirements of R.C.N. or with areas and facilities accorded
to U.S.A. in neighbourhood.

4. Control. Will be signalled later.

5. Local Defences.

Admiralty hope that Canadian Government
will continue to accept responsibility for provision and
manning of Local Defences.

6. Minesweeping.

It is hoped that a force of two LL and
four Oropesa sweepers could be provided locally and manned
by Local R.N.V.R. forces.

7. Berthing facilities.

Berthing will be required alongside and
berths in the harbour for one Depot Ship, one Store Ship and
one Oiler.

8. Repairs and Maintenance.

It is anticipated refits and large repairs
would be carried out at Halifax, in U.S.A. or in U.K. and
facilities for running repairs and maintenance only will be
required at St. Johns.

9. Oil.

The use of the 4,000 ton tank is contemplated.
Until this is available it is proposed that an Admiralty
oiler should be utilised.

10. Armament Naval and Victualling Stores.

Buildings ashore would be required.

11. Personnel.

Recreational facilities and canteen on shore would be required for about 65 officers and 1,000 men.

12. Medical.

It is proposed that the local hospital be utilised.

13. Shore Establishments.

Admiralty contemplate shore requirements arising should be met in existing buildings as far as practicable, and that any additional buildings and local services required shall be arranged by Newfoundland Government on agency basis in accordance with plans and estimates to be approved by Admiralty, for which arrangements would be made through Flag Officer to be appointed in Charge of Base.

14. In view of the great urgency and importance of these requirements Admiralty would be grateful to learn as early as possible that the project is acceptable to Governments of Newfoundland and Canada. If this is so, they would propose that matters of detail be pursued forthwith with them by Admiralty through N.O.I.C.St.Johns, and C.N.S. Canada, respectively, with a view to bringing the Base into operation immediately.

1939B/23.

Head of M.

Approved V.C.N.S.

1st Lord	D. of N.	
1st S.L.	D.T.M.	Dep. Contr.
2nd S.L.	E.P.S.	D. of D.
Controller	D.D.I.C.	E. in C.
Vice Controller	D.M.S.R.	D.N.E.
4th S.L.	Admiral Bailey	D.E.E.
5th S.L.	D.D.O.D. (F)	C.E. in C.
V.C.N.S.	D.D.O.D. (H)	D. of S.
A.C.N.S. (H)	I.P.	D. of V.
A.C.N.S. (F)	W.D.	D.A.S.
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	D.P.S.	Under Sect.
Civil Lord	N.A. 2.S.L.	Hd. of P.
Controller M.S.R.	E.A.P.	Hd. of M.F.
Secretary	M.D.G.	Hd. of P.
Naval Secretary	P.D.G.	Hd. of S.W.R.)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	Hd. of Air Branch	
P.A.S. (S)	Hd. of Naval Branch	
P.A.S. (F)	Hd. of C.W. Branch	
P.A.S. (N.P)	Hd. of P.M. Branch	
P.A.S. (P.R.)	Hds. of E. Branch	
D. of P. (2)	Hd. of N.A.S. Branch	
D.N.I. (4)	Hd. of M.F. Branch	
D. of L.D.	Hd. of M (36) - for D.O., C.O., W.C.O.	
D.O.D. (H)	W.O, A.M, H.C. for Canada, H.C.	
D.O.D. (F)	for Newfoundland. (12 for M.37)	
D.T.D. (2)	M. (M 07876/41)	
D.A/S.W.		
D.N.A.D.		
D.M.S.		
D.S.D.		
E. in C		
D. of S:		

MOST SECRET

769/12

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

1940B/23rd May OUT

To: N.O.I.C.St. Johns Newfoundland.
C.N.S. Ottawa 160
B.A.T.M.

Date 23.5.41.

Repeated C in C Western Approaches 929
C in C America and West Indies 221
R.A.3rd B.S. 70
N.A. Washington
C. O.A.C.

334

Interdepartmental Cypher II

From Admiralty.

My 1939B/23. Should proposals be accepted, the following detailed requirements are forwarded. Facilities may be lacking at first and this can be accepted in view of the urgent necessity to establish Base.

2. Staff.

Details of Base staff and accommodation required will be forwarded later, but it is contemplated that accommodation on shore for an initial staff of some 15 officers and 15 ratings will be required.

3. Local Defences.

The number of harbour defence patrol craft which could be made available locally and the date by which the A/T Baffles will be completed are required.

4. Moorings, etc.

Head and Stern Moorings will be required for the Depot Ship and moorings for the Oiler and for Store Ship. Can these be provided and laid locally or by R.C.N. A tug and a number of lighters will probably be required.

5. Repairs and Maintenance.

Transfer of H.M.S. FORTH temporarily from Halifax to St. Johns until Shore workshops become available is under consideration

It is requested that Engineer Rear Admiral Sheridan may visit St. Johns and forward early report through N.O.I.C. on existing facilities for maintaining this force, including ordnance and torpedo, and any additional requirements necessary on alternatives:-

- (a) that FORTH remains in St. Johns.
- (b) that FORTH is removed as soon as maintenance facilities can be provided on shore.

Report should cover buildings, equipment and maintenance personnel, and supply of distilled water.

6. Oil

- (a) When will tank be filled and what facilities exist for supply to Escort Vessels.
 - (i) Alongside
 - (ii) In the Harbour.
- (b) Can replenishments be supplied by Canadian Tankers from Halifax?

7. Armament/

MOST SECRET

769(D)

7. Armament Stores

Six buildings required each with approximate dimension 35 ft. by 20 ft. by 10 ft. spaced 75 yards apart if traversed, or 150 yards apart if not traversed.

8. Naval Stores.

- (a) Approximately 25,000 sq. ft. of accommodation preferably ground floor storage will be required. Can this be obtained? If so particulars of length, breadth and height of each compartment are required.
- (b) Fresh water of the rate of 100 tons a day will be required. Are water boats available. If so what is their capacity.

9. Victualling Stores.

- (a) It is intended to rely upon supplies from Halifax and to obtain fresh vegetables and meat locally.
- (b) A victualling store of area 12,000 sq. ft. plus 12,000 cubic ft. of refrigerator space is required.

10. Communications.

- (a) L/T communication preferably Teleprinter between St. Johns, Newfoundland and Halifax is most desirable and Admiralty hope this can be arranged.
- (b) Long distance W/T communication will be carried out via Halifax using Louisberg transmitter.
- (c) Local W/T communication will be provided by Depot ship until other arrangements can be made.
- (d) A D/F station would be essential and Admiralty hope to have full use of existing Station.
- (e) Necessary local L/T communication to connect the various offices would be required.

1940B/23.

Hd. of Military Branch

Approved by V.C.N.S.

First Lord.	D.M.S.	Deputy Controller	} Bath
First Sea Lord.	D.S.D.	D of D.	
Second Sea Lord.	E in C.	E in C	
Controller	D of S.	D.N.E.	
Vice Controller	D of N	D.E.E.	
Fourth Sea Lord	D.T.M.	C.E. in C.	
Fifth Sea Lord	E.P.S.	D of E.	
V.C.N.S.	D.D.I.C.	D of V.	
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.M.S.R.	D.A.S.	
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.D.O.D. (H)	Under Secretary	
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	D.D.O.D. (F)	Hd. of P	
Civil Lord.	Hd of M(36) - for D.O., C.O., W.C.O., A.M., W.O.	P.P.	
Controller M.S. R	H.C. for Canada H.C. for Newfoundland	W.D.	
Secretary	(12 for M37)	Hd of M.F.	

Naval Secretary	M 07876/41.	Hd of Sub War Reg.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	Admiral Bailey	
P.A.S. (S)	D.P.S.	
P.A.S. (F)	N.A.2.S.L.	
P.A.S. (N.P.)	E.A.P.	
P.A.S. (P.R.)	M.D.G.	
D of P (2)	P.D.G.	
D.N.I. (4)	Hd of Air Branch	
D of L.D.	Hd of N Branch	
D.O.D. (H)	Hd of CW Branch	
D.O.D. (F)	Hd of PM Branch	
D.T.D. (2)	Hd of E Branch	
D.A/S.W.	Hd of NA Section	
D.N.A.D.	Hd of MF Branch	

i.p.

W.D.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. (contd).Italian
ships at
Tampico.

Intercepted letter dated 12/5 from Master of Italian ship STELVIO states Italian Minister has ordered crews of Italian Ships at Tampico to be ready for immediate departure for Manzanillo.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1149Q/23 to R.O.?)

OTTAWA &
RESTIGOUCHE.

Now on escort duty are to be based St. John's N.F. and have been ordered to proceed after being detached in approx 051° 00' N 024° 00' W. Estimated they will arrive about 31/5.
(C. in C. W.A., 1237B/23 to C.N.S., Canada).

Convoy Code
Words.

Your 1417Q/16. In view of N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 1643Z/13 and your 1732Q/16 concur in H.S.H.Q.'s proposal as no private ship in the convoy would be keeping W/T watch.
(D.T.D. 2026B/23 to C. in C. A.W.I., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Convoy
Escorts.

Extension to 45° W. (A.C.N.S.(H) 2027/23)
See Shipping and Convoys.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.Unknown
Ship.

Received 0954 G.M.T. unknown source. SSSS heard once only on 600 metres STR 5 at 0950 No further pars.
(Burnham on Sea Radio. No T.O.O./23).

ELUSA
(torpedoed
20/5).

N.O.I.C. Iceland's 1014/22. Present position of ELUSA 058° 30' 738° 10' drifting S.E. 1/2 knot. Bad hole No. 3 tank still floating fires out. Consider she could be towed in if weather remains favourable. In bad weather she will probably break in half but fore part with 6000 tons Diesel Oil should float.
(BURNHAM, 0136Z/23 to C. in C. W.A.)
Your 1014/22 and BURNHAM 0136Z/23 request you will sail ZWARTE ZEE and BUTTERMERE to tow in ELUSA.
(C. in C. W.A., 1716B/23 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

LASSELL
(torpedoed
30/4.)

My 2157/16. Survivors from British Ship LASSELL state ship was torpedoed by U.22. Number was seen on port side of conning tower and all observers agreed U Boat was very small. If in fact U 22 consider must have either fuelled and probably supplied near the area either at sea which is most likely under a less unfrequented or in a Vich port. No evidence of latter except unconfirmed report last December. Survivors sailed in RUAHINE for U.K. 17/5 in S.L. 75 request further interrogation may be carried out on arrival.
(C. in C. S.A., 1057N/23 to Admty).

H.X. 126
(attacked
20/5).

U.S.C.G. Cutter NORTHLAND at 1100 G.C.T. 57.34 N.39.35 W. searching for convoy survivors Request information nearby ships. NORTHLAND. (Valentia, Radio, 1110/23 to Admty).

BRITISH SECURITY
~~SECURITY~~
(torpedoed 20/
5).

Following from Navy Dept. From C.G. Vessel (?NORTHLAND) Abandoned tanker BRITISH SECURITY sighted 23/5 in 57° 25' N 40° 06' W. Identified by name on stern. Decks awash and evidence of gun fire around bridge and elsewhere. Paint scorched by fire except fore-castle. Ship had been torpedoed forward of bridge on port side.
(N.A. Washington, 1327/23 to Admty).

/RODNEY STAR.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked. (contd).RODNEY STAR
(torpedoed
16/5).

N.C.S.I. 69. (A) RODNEY STAR (B) 16/5 0550 G.M.T. 050 8' N 19° 15' W (C and D) dumped (E) Yes 2000 fathoms (G) Master, ship sunk by three torpedoes and 78 rounds gunfire submarine probably of U 37 Class. All passengers and crew left ship safely in four boats. Master's boat with 22 survivors arrived Freetown 21/5 but remaining 65 in three boats including Capt. Fothergill R.N. and nine survivors from CLAN OLGIVIE and BENWYVIS not yet accounted for. (C. in C. S.A. 1612N/23 to Admty).

PIAKO
(torpedoed
18/5).

N.C.S.I. 69 PIAKO 18/5 2030 G.M.T. 07° 52' N 140 57' W Re C.B.'s. Ship sunk by two torpedoes, submarine not seen, ten killed. 53 crew plus one DBS arrived Freetown 20/5. Two injured in Hospital ship. (C. in C. S.A. 1614N/23 to Admty).

STARCROSS
(torpedoed
20/5).

Arrived ST. FRANCIS with 40 survivors from STARCROSS. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1628B/23 to Admty).

SAN FELIX
(torpedoed
20/5).

not identified.
S.S. SAINT SENTIGERN reports SAN FELIX badly holed. Attempting to reach St. John's N.F. 1255/23 (Ends). (N.O.I.C. St. John's 1911Z/23 to Admty).

PUTNEY HILL
(mined 9/5).

British ship PUTNEY HILL reports U Boat attacked 9/5 (0007°) N 022° 41' W 2 torpedoes passed 300 feet ahead. Ship zigzagged on table 20 at time of attack. 5 hours later intercepted message as follows no addressee (beings) EKIS BOKOS AJYSS AJROU GUYG IPEF (ends). (S.O.(I) Capetown, 2130/23 to Admty etc).

Submarines Reported.

1028

1028/23 German U Boat bearing 327° 2nd Class 11125 kcs. (F.O.C.N.A. 1057/23 to PANDORA).

1057

F.O.C.N.A.'s 1057/23. Estimated position of German U/Boat was approx 54° N. 30° - 40° W. (D.D.I.C. 2140B/23 to PANDORA.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.23.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked.By VERBENA
BURNHAM,
21/5.

Your 0827Z/22 (a) 14600 (b) 8200 (c) last round near miss (d) 145° 6700 (e) Two by BURNHAM, four by VERBENA, air and oil claimed by VERBENA. (f) BURNHAM, 18 VERBENA 1, S/M was of BATIRORY class.

(BURNHAM 1130Z/23 to S.O. 12 Escort Group). If no further contact intend abandoning hunt at 1600/23 and returning to Reykjavik with VERBENA both ships getting (?short) of oil. (BURNHAM, 1146Z/23 to C. in C. W.A. etc).

By a/c

Aircraft of No, 19 EFTS Duty K. Following message has been read: Have attacked enemy with 3 bombs level in position 46° 8' N 10 15' W. Am returning to base, engine trouble may be force to land without further signal.
(? 1428/23).

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdaySITUATION REPORTHome CommandsBISMARCK and PRINZ EUGENOrders for
18th & 2nd C.S.

*not Galatea & Hermione
vide p 783.
Galatea Ansona Kenya & Hermione
were with Victorious.
see report RA 2CS 6.6.41
encl no 2 to C.C. H.F. 15.7.41.*

About midnight orders were sent to MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA (on patrol S.E. of Iceland) and [GALATEA and HERMIONE] (in the Faroes-Orkneys passage) to R/V 30 miles E. of Langanaes, in readiness to form a patrol line in the event of the enemy breaking back. The orders for MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA were cancelled at 2101B and they were instructed to proceed to Hval Fiord and fuel.

Enemy sighted

At 0543B today HOOD in position $13^{\circ} 63' N$ $32^{\circ} W$, 21 miles ($63^{\circ} 21' N$, $31^{\circ} 45' W$) sighted an enemy battleship and a cruiser bearing 337° 17 miles.

PRINCE OF WALES had sighted an unknown vessel at 0537B, and at 0544B she reported a battleship and a cruiser bearing 325° distance 14 miles course 230° .

HOOD Sunk

HOOD opened fire on BISMARCK at 0553 23000 yards and PRINCE OF WALES at 0553 $\frac{1}{2}$ BISMARCK engaged HOOD and PRINCE EUGEN the PRINCE OF WALES.

At 0615 F.O. 1.C.S. reported that HOOD had blown up and sunk in $63^{\circ} 20' N$, $31^{\circ} 50' W$ PRINCE OF WALES at 0725B had her bridge and guns out of action and about 400 tons of water in the ship; her speed was reduced to 27 knots. Half an hour later SUFFOLK reported that the enemy battleship's speed was reduced and she appeared to be damaged and on fire.

It is reported that BISMARCK's secondary armament was effective at 20000 yards.

Situation
0630.

At 0630 C. in C. H.F. in KING GEORGE V with REPULSE, VICTORIOUS, AURORA, KENYA and 9 destroyers was believed to be about 200 miles South of Iceland (c) and about 230 miles to Eastward of the enemy.

/RODNEY.....

775

24.5.1941.
Saturday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGEN-Contd.

RODNEY, escorting BRITANNIC with personnel for Canada was about 520 miles W. of Bloody Foreland. At 1022B she was ordered to steer the best course to close the enemy.

RAMILLIES at 1144 was ordered to proceed to make contact with the enemy from the westward (RAMILLIES at 1100B was in 45° 45' N., 35° 40' W.) She was to endeavour to avoid action unless BISMARCK was already engaged.

1st C.S.
Shadowing.

F.O.1.C.S. in NORFOLK with SUFFOLK, PRINCE OF WALES close astern continued to shadow the enemy throughout the day. Course was south-westerly until 1330, when the enemy altered course to southward. BISMARCK reduced speed progressively from 28 to 22 knots.

VICTORIOUS'
Aircraft
attack.

At 1455B C. in C. H.F. reported that VICTORIOUS, escorted by F.O.C. 2nd C.S. in GALATEA, with HERMIONE, KENYA and AURORA were being detached to launch a torpedo aircraft attack about 2200B within 100 miles range of the enemy (See 25/5)

Second
short
engagement.

At 1830 when PRINCE OF WALES engaged again the BISMARCK turned to the westward and the engagement was broken off in order to avoid forcing the BISMARCK further away from the C. in C. H.F. who was some 200 miles to the Eastward.

/Situation.....

24.5.1941.
Saturday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGEN-Contd.

Situation at
1800/24.

Position of enemy 59° 10' N., 36° 00' W.
Course 180° speed 24 knots.
NORFOLK, SUFFOLK and PRINCE OF WALES still
in touch.
C. in C's estimated position at 1800 58°
00' N., 30° 00' W.
KING GEORGE V, REPULSE, VICTORIOUS and
2 Cruisers.
C.S. 2. is in company with C. in C. H.F.
LONDON now in 42° 50' N., 20° 10' W., is
proceeding at economical speed to close
the enemy.
RODNEY 56° N., 29° W. with three or four
destroyers has been ordered to steer best
closing course.
RAMILLIES in estimated position 45° 45' N.,
35° 40' W., has been ordered to place
herself to the westward of the enemy.
MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA re-
turning from North East of Iceland to
Hval Fiord to fuel.
REVENGE left Halifax at 1505Z to overtake
H.X. 128 and S.C. 32.
EDINBURGH in approx. position 45° 15' N.,
25° 10' W has been ordered to close and take
over stand by shadower.

Force H.

F.O. Force H in RENOWN with ARK ROYAL,
SHEFFIELD and 6 destroyers left Gibraltar
at 0200 A today to join W.S. 8 B after
daylight 26/5. At 2331B the Admiralty
sent orders to Force H. to steer so as
to intercept BISMARCK from the southward
as the enemy must be short of fuel and
will have to make for an oiler.

Oilers

The following arrangements were made in case
ships engaged in operations against BIS-
MARCK have to oil at sea:-(a) CAIRNDALE,
escorted by SEVERN to patrol on a line 60
miles 225° from 43° N 35° W. (b) oiler is
being sent to St. Johns N.F. (c) There are
tankers in H.X. 127 and 128 with oil fuel.
(d) SAN ADOLFO to patrol on a line 60 miles
225° from 39° N., 49° W.

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT ,

Home Commands

Coastal
Convoys.

F.N. (M) and F.S. (M) convoys are to be reintroduced, for ships of not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ knots.

British Air Activity

Aircraft of Bomber Command today attacked shipping off the Dutch Coast and claim to have sunk a 2000 ton ship and hit a 2500 ton ship off Borkum and hit a 1500 ton ship off the Hague.

Enemy Air Activity

Trawler THOMAS STEPHEN was bombed and machine gunned at 2359 today east of Wick and had casualties but no damage to ship.

Convoy W.S. 8 B was attacked by a F.W. at 0825B today in $55^{\circ} 37' N.$, $15^{\circ} 6' W.$, ~~and~~ may have been damaged by ships' fire. ABOSSO dropped astern with slight engine room damage but rejoined the convoy by noon.

SS SARNIA was damaged during air attack on the convoy anchorage at Milford Haven early this morning. Greek SS MATRONNA was sunk.

Mining.

Tanker OCTANE, in Southampton to Avonmouth convoy, was mined outside Falmouth this morning and was beached in St. Mawes harbour.

778

24.5.1941.
Saturday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Enemy Convoy
attacked by
UPHOLDER.
CONTE ~~FRANCO~~ ROSSO.
Believed sunk.

At 2042B UPHOLDER reported 3 very large troop transports and an unknown number of destroyers in 36° 45' N., 15° 42' E., steering south at 18 knots. UPHOLDER secured 2 hits on a liner and has expended all her torpedoes. The ship which was hit is ^{admitted by Italians} considered to be CONTE ~~FRANCO~~ ROSSO (23,684 tons) and ~~it~~ is thought she sunk.¹⁷⁸⁷⁹ UPHOLDER was counter attacked with 90 depth charges, but received no damage.

Attack on Crete.

Destroyers
leave
Suda Bay.

At 0225 today S.B.N.O. Suda Bay reported that he had sailed the destroyers for Alexandria, as the scale of air attack on the harbour yesterday was such that their retention during daylight was not justified. There were no recent indications of enemy convoys and weather is deteriorating.

Bombardment
of Maleme.

H.M. Ships bombarded enemy positions at Maleme last night; 9 Wellingtons bombed enemy aircraft on the beach and aerodrome in co-operation with the ships.

Heraklion

The Greeks were reported this morning to be holding Heraklion, but are very short of ammunition.

Enemy
Operations

Enemy aircraft maintained heavy bombing and machine gun attacks on our troops in Maleme and Heraklion areas throughout the day. Troop carriers arrived in Crete throughout the day, bringing enemy reinforcements and stores. Stores were also dropped by parachute.

Reinforcements
leave
Alexandria.

DECOY, NIZAM, ISIS and HERO left Alexandria this morning with 600 special service troops to be landed at ~~Spartan~~ ^{St. Nestori} on the S.W. coast of Crete during the night.

/Air.....

War Diary

24.5.41.
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete-Contd.

Air
Operations.

7 Hurricanes flew to Crete today. One was shot down by an M.E. 109, two are missing, and the remainder flew back. 9 Wellingtons bombed Maleme aerodrome; 3 of them are missing.

C. in C. M.E.
reports Navy
unable to
prevent enemy
landings.

C. in C. M.E. reported this evening that the scale of air attack has made it no longer possible for the Navy to operate in the Aegean or near Crete by day and to guarantee to prevent seaborne landings, without suffering losses which, added to those already sustained would very seriously prejudice our command of the Eastern Mediterranean. Crete can only be reinforced or supplied at night, by fast warships. There is little prospect of the R.A.F. stopping the movement of enemy shipping.

C. in C. Med's
Signal to Fleet

At 1457, however, the C. in C. Med. had made a signal to the Mediterranean Fleet stating "AT whatever cost to ourselves we must keep the enemy from using the sea. We can and must outlast."

PERSEUS
to patrol
off Milo.

PERSEUS was ordered this evening to establish a patrol off Milo. The enemy are reported to be using the port as a port of assembly for troop carrying caiques bound for Crete.

Naval Sweep
during night.

AJAX and DIDO with destroyers were ordered to pass through Kaso Straits as soon as possible after 2100 and sweep the north coast of Crete with the object of destroying any enemy embarkations.

/Military.....

780

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete-Contd.

Military
Situation
this evening.

C. in C. M.E. this evening estimated that the enemy may have upwards of 10,000 men in contact with our troops holding Canea and Suda.

Efforts to open the road Heraklion-Suda for passage of reinforcements to Suda have so far failed.

Our forces at Canea and Suda are approximately equal to the enemy, though the latter has air supremacy. Our troops are tired. The food situation is giving anxiety and troops are on $\frac{3}{4}$ rations: 3 successive ships containing supplies have been sunk in Cretan waters.

It is considered that if the enemy can be prevented from recovering the use of Suda Bay his position may become critical.

Suez Canal

Enemy aircraft dropped mines and bombs in the Suez Canal Zone last night. The Canal is closed.

U-Boat Campaign

SS VULCAN¹ in O.G. 59 was torpedoed and sunk at 0001 today about 160 miles N.W. of Freetown.

781

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Policy

Fitting of
H/F. D/F
in Convoys.

It has been decided that in order to fix a U-Boat making an E-sign relative to a convoy H/F W/T it is essential to fit H/F D/F at least one ship in each convoy, and preferably two.

It is not desired to interfere with the fitting of A.S.V. which is considered essential in every escorting vessel. To implement the above the following are my proposals. (Details)
(C. in C. W.A. 1155B/24 to Admty.)

Catapult
Ships in
Convoys.

9 Group's 1230/22. Naval catapult ships are being instructed that when in company with merchant ships fitted with aircraft the Naval catapult ship will control all aircraft in the convoy and will issue instructions as to the state of readiness at which the merchant ship aircraft is to be held. (A.C.N.S.T. 1252B/24)

A.A. Gun
Defences.

Admty. 1737B/19. Following from Captain Ullring. Mentioned guns cannot be manned by present force. Landing doubtful. Propose as (?) more convenient 3 half inch Colt guns with W piecing tracer ammunition or 20 millimetre Hispano Suisse. N.N.L.O. has recently requested these from C. in C. R.N.N.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1509/23)

Movements

IRIS

Admiralty's 0036B/21. Intend to sail Cable Ship IRIS at 2030 today, to lay cable between Benbecula and Loch Scalpin. On completion about 2/6 IRIS proceed to Port Z.A. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1522B/24)

REVENGE

REVENGE is to proceed to overtake H.X. 128 at 14 knots. (V.C.N.S. 1917B/24)

/BEN MY CHREE.....

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Movements-Contd.

BEN MY CHREE

Your 1037B/24. BEN MY CHREE is to remain in Faeroes until escort is available in accordance with A.M. 1956B/22 para 4. Workmen should not be embarked until escort arrangements have been made. (D.O.D. H. 2045B/24 to N.O.I.C. Faeroes)

ARGUS

It is not now possible to provide cruiser escort for ARGUS to Gibraltar after she parts company with you. She must proceed without escort. (1st S.L. 2321B/24 to EXETER)

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK
and HIPPER.
PRINZ EUGEN.

My 2359B. Enemy hidden in snow storm. My C. and S. 180° 29 knots. My position 065° 47' N., 027° 57' W. (SUFFOLK 0009/24) 2/
No enemy in sight visibility 3 miles my position 65° 31' N., 27° 45' W., X.11. (NORFOLK 0017B/24)
Correct my 0009B to read my C. and S. is 180° 30 knots. (NORFOLK 0019B/24)
My 0009B. My course is 200° visibility 1 mile. My position 065° 39' N., 028° 01' W. (SUFFOLK 0028B/24)
My P. C. and S. 065° 24' N., 028° 10' W. 200° 29 knots. (SUFFOLK 0101B/24 to NORFOLK)
If still complying with C. in C's 2042B/22 and in absence of other orders from him MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA should R/V in position 090° Langanæs 30 miles in readiness to form a patrol line in event of enemy breaking back. (1st S.L. 0120B/24)
My 0101. My P. C. and S. 220° 29 knots Visibility 2 miles. My position is 065° 12' N., 028° 33' W. X. 11. (SUFFOLK 0131B/24 to NORFOLK)
My P.C. and S. 64°49' N., 28° 16' W., 200° 29 knots. Estimated position by plot of enemy 269° 18 miles from me, vis 3 miles. (NORFOLK 0145B/23)

/If still.....

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK
and HEPPER PRINZ EUGEN
-Contd.

If still complying with C. in C. H.F. 2045B/22 and in the absence of other orders from him GALATEA and HERMIONE should proceed with all convenient despatch towards position 090° Langanaes 30 miles. (1st S.L. 0148B/24)
My course is 220° (NORFOLK 0220B/24)
My 0225B. Two ships bearing 192° 209 and 255 yards. More distant ship probably is Battleship. Enemys C. and S. 160° 20 knots. My position is 056° 44' N., 036° 5' W. Based on reference Position at -2000 (SUFFOLK 0229/25)
1 large vessel unknown bearing 298° distance 8 miles course unknown my position 64° 28' N 28° 36' W.X. 11. (NORFOLK 0229B/24)
My 0131B C. and S. 220° 29 knots vis 1 mile My position 064° 47' N., 029° 02' W., X11. (SUFFOLK 0230B/24)
Position German Battleship BISMARCK Class 0200B was 056° 40' N., 036° 18' W., course 160 speed 21 knots. (NORFOLK 0238B/25)
Surface craft detected by R.D./F bearing 180° 10 miles my position 064° 41' N., 029° 13' W., X 11 Based on fix at 11 O'clock. (SUFFOLK 0247B/24)
My 0229B. Vessel possibly SUFFOLK. Lost touch immediately in mist. (NORFOLK 0255B/24)
Two enemy ships detected by R.D/F, bearing 192° 9 miles, C. and S. 240° 28 knots. My position 064° 39' N., 029° 22' W. (SUFFOLK 0256B/24)
My 0229B No change. (SUFFOLK 0306B/25)
My 0256B/ Enemy ship bears 188° 11 and? 12 miles. Course and Speed 240° 28 knots. My position 064° 35' N., 029° 39' W.X. 11. (SUFFOLK 0319B/24)
1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing 185° 12 miles Course 240°. My position 166° 65° N 30° W., 26 X 11. (SUFFOLK 0321B/24)
2 unknown ships bearing 240° 12 miles course 240° Position 63° 10' N., 32° 10' W. A/C report. (Iceland W/T 0410Z/24)

/My 0410.....

784

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

My 0410. Enemy previously reported are,
1 Battleship, 1 Battle Cruiser, P. C. and
S. of enemy Battle Fleet 63° 6' N., 32°
33' W. course 222° speed 30 knots.
(Iceland W/T 0420Z/24)

My 0321B. Enemy bears 184° 15 miles,
course 220° My position 064° 10' N., 030°
40' W.X.11 From a fix at 11 O'clock.
(SUFFOLK, 0447B/24)

Have you lost touch with enemy?
(NORFOLK 0450/24 to SUFFOLK)

My 0447B. Enemy centre bears 196° 15
miles Enemy C. and S. 220° 28 knots. My
position 058° 64° N., 31° W., 9 from a
fix at 11 O'clock. (SUFFOLK 0456B/24)
Intend proceeding Westward on completion
of oiling 0700. (LANCE 0515B/24 to C.
in C. H. F.)

My 0456B. No change. My position 063° 55'
N. 030° 55' W. X 11 From a fix at 110/C
(SUFFOLK 0522B/24)

Enemy has altered course to port 30°
(SUFFOLK 0533B/24)

1 large vessel (uncertain whether battle-
ship or battle cruiser) bearing 334°
distance 17 miles course unknown. My
position 63° 20' N., 4° 28' W. based on
Ref. position of the S.O. of a detached
force. (PRINCE OF WALES 0537B/24)

My 0533B. Enemy altered course to starboard
30°. (SUFFOLK 0538B/24)

1 battleship bearing 280° distance 16 miles
220° my position 63° 39' N., 31° 10' W.X.
11 from a fix at 11 O'clock. (NORFOLK
0541B/24)

1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing 337° 17
miles course unknown. My position 013°
63° N., 32° W. 21 based on reference
position from S.O. of detached Force at
0000 (HOOD 0543B/24)

My 0537B. 1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing
325° distance 14 miles course 230°.
(PRINCE OF WALES 0544B/24)

My 0541B. Enemy altered course to port
(NORFOLK 0550B/24)

/HOOD.....

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

HOOD has blown up in 063° 20' N., 031° 50' W. (F.O. 1st C.S. 0615/24) *

STAB - ?? rejoining 062° 52' N., 035° 20' W. 225° 12½ knots F.G. 63. (CHESHIRE 0615Z/24)

Enemy bears 207° 18 miles course 240°.

My position 063° 36' N., 031° 33' W., (SUFFOLK 0629B/24 to NORFOLK)

My 0541B. One Battleship bearing 265° 17 miles. Course 240°. My position 63° 22' N., 31° 46' W. based on a fix at 1100. (NORFOLK 0629B/24 Read by Iceland W.T.)

HOOD sunk in 063° 21' N., 031° 47' W.

Proceed search survivors. (C.S.1. 0637B/24 to destroyers in Company)

S.O. 1st C.S. 0637. My P. C. and S. 062° 46' N., 029° 52' W., 330° 28 knots.

ANTHONY in company. (ANTELOPE 0655B/24 Read by Iceland W/T)

1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing 284° distance 17 miles course 240°. My position 63° 14' N., 32° 5' W. X 11 from a fix at 11 O'clock (NORFOLK 0656B/24)

Alter course to westward and wait until situation clear. (F.O.I.C. Iceland 0659Z/24 to CHESHIRE)

C.S.I. 0637B. My P. C. and S. 063° 47' N., 031° 11' W., 217° 32 knots at 0700B.

ECHO in company. (ELECTRA 0701B/24)

My position at 0712 was 063° 08' N., 032° 12' W. PRINCE OF WALES in company.

PRINCE OF WALES has bridge out of action and Y Turret temporarily out of action.

Enemy bears from me 286° 18 miles her course 215° speed 28 knots. (F.O. 1st C.S. 0720B/24)

Following received from PRINCE OF WALES Begins. A. and B. turrets in action. Y. turret, 2 guns in action. About 400 tons water in ship mainly abaft after armoured bulkhead. Compartment above steering compartment flooded but steering gear in action. Estimated best speed 27 knots. T.O.O. 0720/24 ends. (C.S. 1. 0725B/24 to Admty.)

Weather
Forecast 0900/24
for 12 hours.

Duty Met. Officer 0736B/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

/My 0541B.....

* W.D. Note - HOOD blew up at 0559 vide

C.S. 1's 1921/24/5, page 963 B.

786

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK, PRINZ
and HIPPER, EUGEN.
-Contd.

My 0541B. Battleships C. and S. 210°
26 knots. She bears 290° 17 miles from
me. Cruiser appears to be opening out,
to starboard. My position 062° 56' N.
032° 28' W. (NORFOLK 0745B/24)
1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing 182° 18
miles course 200° My position 048°
63° N., 33° W., 15 miles based on a fix
at 1100. (SUFFOLK 0756/24)
My 0756B. Enemy battleship reduced speed
appears to be damaged on fire. My position
is 063° 10' N., 032° 34' W., X 11 from
a fix at 11 O'clock. (SUFFOLK 0757B/24)
Steer to the South Eastward. (D.O.D. H.
0814B/24 to CHESHIRE, ARABIS)
My 0757B. Enemy has altered course to
starboard. (SUFFOLK 0814B/24)
My position 0800B. 061° (? 09' 45' 17')N.
022° 08' W., closing you at 27 knots. 2nd
C.S. in company. (C. in C. H.F. 0825/24
to C.S.1. PRINCE OF WALES)
My 0814B. Enemy course is 200°.
(SUFFOLK 0826B/24)
1 Battleship bearing 193° 18 miles.
1 Cruiser bearing 195° 19 miles
Course 200°. My position 63° 3' N., 32°
37' W., from a fix at 11 O'clock.
(SUFFOLK 0837B/24)
Proceed with all despatch to form a patrol
line North of Langanes. MANCHESTER is
to take charge. (D.O.D. H. 0839B/24
to MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, ARETHUSA)
AMARAPOORA keep steam at 2 hours notice
(A.C.O.S. 0851/24)
My 0745B. Enemy is making large alterations
of course. (NORFOLK 0900B/24)
Am proceeding to refuel at Hvalfiord
ICARUS, ECHO, ACHATES, ANTELOPE and
ANTHONY in company. Only 3 survivors
found. (? ELECTRA 0901B/24 to C.S.1.)
Proceed with BRITANNIC and screen at best
speed on a course 290° (1st S.L. 0903B/24
to RODNEY)

/Intend.....

787

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd. *like search*

Intend landing the following sole survivors from HOOD at Reykjavik. Midshipman W.J.Dundas (corrupt group) Robert Tilburn, O/Signalman Briggs. (ELECTRA 0906B/24 to C. in C. H.F.) My 0541B. 1 Battleship bearing 290° distance 20 miles approx. true course 240° my position 62° 32' N., 33° 6' W., based on Admiral ref. pos. at 0800. (NORFOLK 0906B/24)
My 0826B. Enemy's Centre bears 202, distant 20. Enemy's C. and S. 205, 28 knots. Position 108° 63' N., 34° W. 11 R. 08. (SUFFOLK 0909B/24)
My 0909B. enemy speed is 26 knots. (SUFFOLK 0932B/24)
Sunderland reports survivors 062° 58' N., 032° 10' W., (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0943/24 to MALCOLM, ANTHONY)
Assume complete readiness for action against aircraft. (NORFOLK 0954B/24 to SUFFOLK)
1 Battleship bearing 285° distance 20 miles approx. course 230° My position 62° 16' N., 33° 41' W. Based on Admirals 0800 ref. pos. (NORFOLK 1001B/24)
Main Armament Control undamaged. 9 main Armament guns in action, Secondary Armament guns in action. Considerable damage to bridge. Both forward H.A. directors out of action. About 600 tons water in ship mainly aft from 2 or more hits about water line. Estimated max. speed 26 knots. Oil fuel made readily available 1600 tons. (PRINCE OF WALES 1007B/24)
My 0932B. Enemy's Course is 215° (SUFFOLK 1016B/24)
Enemy's estimated P.C. and S. at 0900B/24 62° 25' N., 33° W., 210° 26 knots. Steer best closing course. (1st S.L. 1022B/24 to RODNEY)
My 1016B. Enemy is altering course to starboard 30° Enemy Battleship. (SUFFOLK 1029B/24)

/if BRITANNIC....

788

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperationsSearch for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER. EUGEN.

If BRITANNIC cannot keep up leave her behind with one destroyer. (1st S.L. 1036B/24 to RODNEY)

My 1029B. Enemy Battleship has altered 30° to Port. (SUFFOLK 1037/24)

My 1037B. One enemy battleship, one enemy cruiser bearing 214 17 miles course 215 My position 62° 26' N., 34° 23' W., based on Ref. position Admiral 0800. (SUFFOLK 1044B/24)

My 1044B. Enemy's speed 24 knots. (SUFFOLK 1045B/24)

My 0541B. Enemy battleship and cruiser bear 273° 18 miles. Enemy zigzagging. His mean course and speed 220° 24 knots My position 62° 2' N., 34° 21' W. R.08. C.N. 978. (NORFOLK 1057B/24)

Continue to shadow BISMARCK even if you run out of fuel in order that C. in C. may catch up in time. (1st S.L. 1126B/24 to C.S. 1.)

Estimated P.C. and S. of BISMARCK at 1100B/24. 62° 17' N., 35° W. 215° 24 knots Proceed so as to make contact with enemy from the westward, thereby placing enemy between RAMILLIES and C. in C. H.F. (1st S.L. 1144B/24 to RAMILLIES)

My 0541/B. 1 Battleship bearing 275° distance 18 miles approx true course 220° 61° 41' N., 34° 52' W., R08. (NORFOLK 1205B/24)

Unless otherwise ordered by C. in C. H.F. GALATEA and HERMIONE are to proceed to Faeroes and Fuel. (V.C.N.S. 1206B/24)

Visibility decreasing. (NORFOLK 1210B/24) Negative enemy up to a distance of 12 miles. My position 265 62° N., 35° W.10 based on Admiral's 0800 ref. position. (SUFFOLK 1213B/24)

If visibility decreased try to maintain R/D.F. touch and inform me of enemies' movements. (C.S. 1. 1216B/24 to SUFFOLK)

Plot of Sunderland on return appears to indicate NORFOLK's position accurate.

German Battleship BISMARCK leaving considerable wake of fuel oil.

(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1235/24 to C. in C. H.F)

/Situation....

789

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

Situation at 1100B/24.
BISMARCK and PRINZ EUGEN 62° 17' N.,
35° 00' W. course 215° speed 24 knots.
BISMARCK has received some damage.
C.S.1. in NORFOLK with PRINCE OF WALES
and SUFFOLK are in touch with the enemy.
PRINCE OF WALES has two guns out of action.
HOOD blown up by unlucky hit.
2. C. in C. H.F. in KING GEORGE V with
REPULSE, VICTORIOUS, KENYA and AURORA may
be about 230 miles to eastward of enemy's
position.
3. RODNEY estimated 55° N., 24° 30' W.,
with three or four destroyers has been
ordered to steer best closing course.
4. RAMILLIES in 45° 45' N., 35° 40' W.,
has been ordered to place herself to the
westward of the enemy.
5. MANCHESTER is taking BIRMINGHAM and
ARETHUSA under his orders and establishing
a patrol line north of Langanaes, north
east of Iceland (C).
6. C.S. 2. in GALATEA with HERMIONE is
being ordered to fuel at Faeroes.
7. Force H. left Gibraltar 0200B/24 and
is proceeding to the westward.
8. REVENGE is about to leave Halifax with
orders to close enemy.
9. EDINBURGH in approx. 45° N., 21° W.,
has been ordered to close and take over
stand by shadower.
10. Enemy battlecruisers were in Brest
yesterday. (V.C.N.S. 1238B/24)
Close enemy last reported position 62°
02' 34" 58' mean course at 1124B/24 220°
speed 24 knots, so as to take on relief
shadower if necessary.
2. Fuel should be conserved reasonably
while closing, and speed of 25 knots is
suggested, but after contact no consideration
of fuel must allow you to lose contact.
3. Report fuel remaining now if on contact
it will be less than 30%.
(V.C.N.S. 1250B/24 to Commodore 18th C.S.)

EDINBURGH

/CHURCHILL...

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

CHURCHILL is to return to Iceland forthwith at best speed. CHURCHILL, BURNHAM are to await orders after fuelling.

(C. in C. W.A. 1259B/24)
One Battleship one Cruiser bearing 223° distance 8 miles Course 180° position 61° 17' N., 35° 36' W. based on Admirals reference position at 0800.
(NORFOLK 1323B/24)

My 1323B. 1 Battleship, 1 Cruiser bearing 225° distance 15 miles course 180° position 61° 12' N., 35° 26" W. based on reference Fix of Admiral at 0800.
(NORFOLK 1349B/24)

At 0500 1 BS and 1 BC in 62° 48' N., 33° 2' W. course 206° spd 30 knots, BS losing oil
0520 A/C signalled to NORFOLK "Can direct you to survivors" "NORFOLK replied "No" what is bearing of enemy? Bearing given as 216° T. NORFOLK replied "Thank you - DR will pick up HOOD survivors". 0530 signalled to base that BS and BC were BISMARCK and SCHEER in position 62° 36' N., 33° 14' W. CO 226° speed 30 knots. 0600 still in touch with enemy. 0625 visual signal from NORFOLK stating SUFFOLK reports enemy BS on fire. 0650 told NORFOLK that enemy CO 220° T speed 30 knots. No fire visible but BISMARCK losing oil 0705 signalled to NORFOLK "Am returning to base". (A/C of 30 Wing 1410/24) *PRINZ EUGEN 1412/24.
Your 1250B/24. My position 044° 17' N., 023° 56' W., 320° 25 knots. Assuming enemy steers 180°. Fuel remaining now 57% and on contact at 1900 to-morrow 38%.
(F.O.C. 18 C.S. 1430B/24 to Admty.)

A. Report as follows regarding BISMARCK:-
1. Percentage fighting efficiency remaining.
2. Ammunition expended.
3. Reason for frequent alterations of course.

B. Request your intentions as regards PRINCE OF WALES re-engaging.

C. Ref. A.T. 1412B/23, keep a good lookout for U-Boats.

(1st S.L. 1445B/24 to C.S.1.) [Reply: 1619B/24]

p. 791

/Look out....

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

Look out for U-Boats. (C. in C. H.F. 1453B/24 to C.S. 1., PRINCE OF WALES, SUFFOLK)

F.O.C. 2nd C.S. with 4 cruisers escorting VICTORIOUS within 100 miles of BISMARCK to launch torpedo aircraft attack about 2200B, my P. C. and S. are at 1500B/24 060° 3' N., 027° 56' W., 212° Speed 26 knots. (C. in C. H.F. 1455B/24 to F.O.C. 1st C.S.)

Sweeping 2 miles lanes to cover Area within 10 miles of 062° 58' N., 032° 10' W Sunderland reports HOOD Survivors. (MALCOLM 1512Z/24 to N.O.I.C. Iceland)

My 1323B/ 1 Battleship bearing 217 distance 17 miles course 180° position 60° 37' N., 35° 33' W., based on reference position on Admiral at 0800. (NORFOLK 1514B/24)

Reference position of Admiral at 1531. Position 602 9 position 35 45 Your reference position 1531 based on the Admiral was position 60 25 position 36 38. (C.S. 1. 1545B/24 to SUFFOLK)

Your 1300/24. Resume southerly route order to near Greenland coast. (N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1558/24 to CHESHIRE)

Surface craft detected by R.A.F. bearing 140° 10 miles. My position 60° 9' N., 36° 5' W., reference position at 0800. (SUFFOLK 1609B/24)

My 1609B. 2 ships detected. (SUFFOLK 1616B/24)

Your 1445B.

- (a) (i) Uncertain but high.
(ii) Engagement 20 minutes also some rounds at cruisers, about 150 expended.
(iii) Unaccountable except as effort to shake us off.

(b) Consider PRINCE OF WALES should not re-engage until other heavy ships are in contact unless interception fails. Doubtful if she has speed to force action. (C.S. 1. 1619B/24 to Admty.)

/My 1616B.....

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER. EUGEN.
-Contd.

My 1616B. Enemy course 180°. Speed 24 knots. (SUFFOLK 1642B/24)

My 1323B. Have lost touch with enemy Battle Fleet, visibility 8 miles. My position 59° 56' N., 35° 44' W., R.16 180° 23 knots., (NORFOLK 1652B/24)

1721/24. 1 Battleship 1 Cruiser bearing 160° distance 16 miles course 180° position 59° 50' N., 36° 15' W., based on a bearing obtained from Admiral at 1600. (SUFFOLK 1712B/24)

My position 256° NORFOLK 12 miles. (SUFFOLK 1716B/24 to NORFOLK)

My 1712B. Enemy centre bears 152° distance 16 miles from me. Enemies C. and S. 180° 24 knots Position 59° 43' N., 36° 15' W., based on bearing from Admiral at 1600. (SUFFOLK 1734B/24)

1. Part company with ARUNDEL CASTLE and destroyers.
2. Order them to proceed in execution of previous orders.
3. LONDON proceed at economical speed towards 55° N., 35° W. Your movements should be adjusted to close enemy and you should be prepared to take over shadowing duties. (A.C.N.S. H. 1756B/24 to LONDON) Move over to within about 5 miles of me maintaining touch. (C.S. 1. 1823B/24 to SUFFOLK)

My 1734B. Enemy Centre bears 190 distance 10 from Battleship. Enemy Course 240° Position 342° 59' N., 36° W., 20 based on bearing from Admiral at 1600. (SUFFOLK 1839B/24)

One Battleship bearing 230 distance 18 miles course 180 my position 59° 11' N., 35° 32' W., based on bearing 16 miles from S.O. of Detached Force. (PRINCE OF WALES 1840B/24)

Decypher my 1238B/24. (D.S.O. 1853B/24 to LONDON)

1 Cruiser bearing 217 distance 12 miles course 180° my position 356 59° N., 36° W
2 OR 16. (SUFFOLK 1858B/24)

/Shadowing.....

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER, EUGEN.
-Contd.

Shadowing by NORFOLK and SUFFOLK has been admirable. Keep it up and Good Luck.

(1st S.L. 1916B/24)

One cruiser bearing 215 distance 14 miles course unknown position 339 59° N., 36° W., 12 based on bearing from Admiral 1600 (SUFFOLK 1923B/24)

Enemy turned away when (engaged at 18 32 B) engagement was broken off to avoid forcing him further away from you. Am shadowing enemy from 232° distance 18 miles Enemy course 180°. My position 58° 54' N., 36° 10' W., R. 16. (C.S. 1. 1934B/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

One unknown bearing 215 distance 14 miles course 200° position 320 NORFOLK 6. (SUFFOLK 1937B/24)

No enemy in sight in area 220 and 300° distance 10 miles my position 320 59° N., 36° W., 8 reference Admirals fix 1600. (SUFFOLK 1939B/24)

One enemy Battleship bearing 241° distance 18 miles course 180 my position 58° 45' N., 36° 15' W., based on Admiral's reference position 1600. (NORFOLK 1957B/24)

Unless other orders have been received from C. in C. H.F. MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA are not to establish patrol ordered A.M. 0839B/24 but are to proceed to Hval Fiord and fuel. (1st S.L. 2010B/24)

U.S.A. Patrol Squadron No 52 (P.B.Y.) from Argantia, Newfoundland has been directed search area 500 miles S.E. Cape Farewell. (A.C.N.S. (H) 2012B/24)

A.M. 1238/24. Situation report at 1800/24.

(a) Position of enemy 59° 10' N., 36° 00' W Course 180° speed 24 knots. NORFOLK, SUFFOLK and PRINCE OF WALES still in touch.

(b) C. in C estimated at 1800 58° 00' N., 30° 00' W. KING GEORGE V, REPULSE, VICTORIOUS and 2 Cruisers.

(c) C.S. 2 is in company with C. in C. H.F.

(d) LONDON now in position 42° 50' N., 20° 10' W., is proceeding at economical speed to close the enemy.

(e) RODNEY estimated 56° N., 29° W., with three or four destroyers has been ordered to steer best closing course.

(f) RAMILLIES estimated 45° 45' N., 35° 40' W has been ordered to place herself to the westward of the enemy.

/(g).....

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDSOperations

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER. EUGEN.
-Contd.

? 2023/24

(g) MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA returning from N.E. of Iceland to Hval Fjord to fuel.

(h) Force H left Gibraltar 0200B/24 and is proceeding to westward.

(i) REVENGE having just left Halifax is joining H.X. 128.

(j) EDINBURGH in approx. 45° 15' N., 25° 10' W. has been ordered to close and take over stand-by shadower.

(V.C.N.S. 7023B/24)

My 1957B one Battleship bearing 241 distance 17 miles course 180. My position 2439 based on fix of Admiral at 1600.

(NORFOLK 2054B/24)

My 1455B/24. Enemy's speed appears to be 22 knots now. Enemy cruiser is probably to the Westward of enemy Battleship.

PRINCE OF WALES close astern of me, SUFFOLK on my starboard beam. (C.S. 1. 2106B/24)

At 0800B/25 P. C. and S. of VICTORIOUS for benefit of catapult aircraft. (C. in C.

H.F. 2108B/24, 2208/24. to R.A. 2 C.S.)

ELECTRA, ACHATES, ANTONY, ECHO, ICARUS, SAGUENAY, WINDSOR, Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2142Z/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

My 1957B. Am still in touch with enemy.

No change in situation since my 1957B.

Position 58° 07' 36° 31. (NORFOLK 2151B/24)

Hope to engage from the eastward about 0900B/25. (C. in C. H.F. 2136/24)

Found oil and wreckage but no survivors.

Returning for water and oil. E.T.A. 1230/25

(ANTELOPE 2200Z/24 to N.O.I.C. Iceland)

My 1957B. One enemy Battleship bearing

216° distance 16 miles course 180. My

position 57° 53' N., 36° 34' W. based on

a fix of Admiral's reference position at

1600 (NORFOLK 2231B/24)

My 2231. Enemy's speed 22 knots. (NORFOLK 2238B/24)

My 1939B One Enemy Battleship bearing

211 distance 15 miles one cruiser bearing

216 distance 16 miles course 180 my position

57° 55' N., 36° 27' W., based on fix of

Admirals Reference position at 2000.

(SUFFOLK 2234B/24)

/You should....

795

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK 7 PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
-Contd.

You should endeavour to avoid action with BISMARCK unless the latter is engaged with other forces at the time. (1st S.L. 2320B/24 to RAMILLIES)

Your 1455B/24. Well done. Good luck.

(1st S.L. 2326B/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Enemy C. and S. are 160° 22 knots.

(NORFOLK 2329B/24)

Steer so as to intercept BISMARCK from the southward. Enemy must be short of fuel and will have to make for an oiler. Her future movements may guide you to this oiler.

(1st S.L. 2331B/24 to F.O. Force H.)

A.M. 0814B/24. Using your judgement, proceed in execution of previous orders.

(1st S.L. 2338B/24 to CHESHIRE, ARABIS)

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Following air patrols being flown today.

~~TROST, STAB, BERT~~ and R/C of Trondheim.

(C. in C. Rosyth 0110/24).

Second Hudson left 0150 to locate and shadow.

(N.O.I.C. Iceland 0201Z/24 to F.O. 1st C.S)

The following air patrols have been arranged for 24/5.

(1) (A) Patrol due north from Langanes 200 miles or to limit of ice if latter is closer. Patrol has been ordered to commence at 1100 but commencement at this time cannot be confirmed.

(B) Cross over patrol between Faroes and Iceland (c) from coast to coast on a line 320° from the Faroes. Patrol commences at 1300 from Iceland (c) coast.

(C) Cross over patrol between Shetlands and Faroes from coast to coast. Patrol commences at 1400.

(2) All patrols will be flown as long as aircraft are available.

(3) Additional long range aircraft are being concentrated at Sollum Voe and in Iceland.

(D.O.D(H) 0235B/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Air Patrols today. ~~TROST, STAB, BERT, STAND,~~

~~HORLI~~, also special R/C's of Trondheim, Bergen and Stavanger. (C. in C. Rosyth 0240/25).

Keep C. in C. H.F. and other authorities at sea informed of any special air R/C or searches you may arrange for present operations. (D.O.D.(H) 0300B/24 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

2 Hudsons left to locate and shadow 0505.

Catalina left now. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0625/24 to C.S.1)

My 0110/24. Following additional patrols, being flown today. A.M. ~~HORLI~~, A.M. ~~STAND~~

also 3 Whitley a/c A/S Sweeps from Datum 5818 N. 0646 W. 5857 N. 0518 W. 318° to depth 260 miles. (C. in C. Rosyth 0952/24)

My 0952/24. A/S Sweep cancelled.

(C. in C. Rosyth 1428/24).

One Catalina Aircraft left 1411Z to locate and shadow. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1416Z/24 to C.S.1).

/2 M/V's....

797

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd).

2 M/V's
attacked
off
Ijmuiden.

Day 23/5. Aircraft attacked two Merchant Vessels of 6-8,000 tons each escorted by six E-Boats, about 4 miles West of Ijmuiden. Results not observed but one of M/V's was seen to be lower in the water with considerable smoke issuing from amidships after the attack. (H.Q.B.C. 0750/24).

EMPIRE MOON.
Embarkation
of A/C.

NTmWD.
My 1120B/20/5. Aircraft will be embarked A.M/29 at Greenock. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1030B/24).

OPS 564 24/5. In the event of enemy breaking back to the east the following patrols have been ordered. N.W. from North Cape to Ice limit. 360° from Revsnaes to 200 miles or Ice limit. Faroes to Iceland. Faroes to Shetland. STAB, STAB, BERT, Bert, TROOP and HORBY. P.R.U. Norge Ports and Kiel. (H.Q.C.C. 1615/24).

Barrage
Balloons.
Flying
Heights.

A.258 24/5. C. in C. Portsmouth reports:- Owing to loss due to Air currents V.L.A. Balloons cannot be hauled close down in Portland Harbour during certain weather conditions and it will be necessary to fly Balloons at times up to 900 feet. Request that Pilots of Aircraft may be informed. Ends. This conflicts with Your X.904 19 May. Such unexpected uncontrollable and unnotifiable obstructions menace flying safety and may affect local operations. This is serious as same difficulty is liable to arise at all the many ports and anchorages round our coastline at which ships with Balloons may call. Appreciate difficulty of controlling these Balloons at 300 feet in adverse weather conditions but in flying interests recommend consideration be given to organising alternatives of removing them from ships in such weather conditions. Request urgent action. (H.Q.F.C. 1920/24 to Air Ministry).

798

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

MATRONNA
(Greek. 2846
Tons) sunk.
SARNIA (British
711 tons)
damaged.

One enemy aircraft attacked ships in convoy anchorage at 0500 this morning S.S. MATRONNA hit and sunk. S.S. SARNIA near miss and suffered considerable internal damage. No casualties except one man from MATRONNA slightly injured. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1002B/24).

Position of wreck of S.S. MATRONNA.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1528B/24).

A/C over
Orkneys.

At 1429 enemy aircraft approached Hoy from S.W, flew over Flotta, and out over Deerness in N.E.ly. direction. Height 7000 feet. Fighters up but failed to intercept. Unlikely enemy aircraft saw into Flow.
(A.C.O.S. 1530/24).

Convoy.

Fighter assistance required by Convoy "Mission" in 52° 59' N. 1° 53' E. (WALLACE 2154/24).

Lowestoft
bombed.

Reference CAFO 587/40 Lowestoft. Bombed by single A/C at 2024B. A.B.C. Nil D. Brookes Shipyard and Oulton Oil Depot hit 15% damage.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 2345B/24).

Mining.

Milford
Haven.
Gear in
TYNEDALE.

S.A. gear fitted in TYNEDALE successfully exploded mine off Milford Haven yesterday. Details. (TYNEDALE 0941/24).

Operation
B.S. 62.

Intend to sail from Spurn Point at 0500/27 and take departure from Flamborough Head at 1000 for initial position. Laying will begin at 1400. Return to Flamborough and thence to Humber. (TEVIOT BANK 1343B/24).

/Aberdeen.....

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd).

Aberdeen
Channel.

Your 1755B/22 and My 0103/17. Dredging for electric cable ends is continuing but so far without satisfactory result except that a considerable amount of silt is being removed. Intend continuing this operation -with a view to reducing amount of silt now covering obstructions and countermining them when located. Do not anticipate requiring further assistance. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1532/24 to Adty.).

B.S. 57.

Owing to increase in rate of tidal streams as springs approach making navigation more difficult am postponing operation until approx 1/6. (C. in C. Nore 1838B/24).

OCTANE.

(British Tanker, 2034 Tons) Mined in 50° 7' 57" N. 5° 1' 30" W. at 1924/24 Probably Acoustic. Ship beached in St. Mawes Harbour. Casualties. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 2121/24).

Enemy Intelligence.

Bay of
Biscay.
Enemy
A/S Patrol.

SOKOL reports constant A/S Patrol by fishing trawlers, CHASSEURS, and E Boats near 046° 45' N. 004° 46' W. (F.O.S. 1449B/24 to Admty. 1520B to SEAWOLF, STURGEON).

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

W.S. 8X.
NEPTUNE.

Your 2236B/19 para. IV.B. A/A Escort can be provided in Irish Sea. In view of your 1548B/22 no onward A/A escort is available. Propose NEPTUNE be accepted as A/A Escort. (C. in C. W.A. 1123B/24 to Admty.)
Your 1123B/24. Concur (D.O.D. H., 1815B/25) R.V. and Secret Positions. (N.C.S.O. Mersey 1310B/24) See Lion Copy.
A.M. 2236B/19. Para. 1. It is confirmed that convoy W.S. 8X will leave U.K. 27/5. DUCHESS OF BEDFORD from Clyde will join convoy. Para. 3 ESPERANCE BAY from Clyde will also proceed with convoy until A/S escort leaves. Thence she is to proceed independently to Freetown unless she can maintain speed of convoy. (D.O.D.(H) 1728B/24 to C. in C. W.A. C. in C. H.F. etc).

B.H.X. 129.

Due to leave Bermuda today 24/5. Is not being sailed pending further instructions. (C. in C. W.A. 1222Q/24 to Admty., N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, etc).

F.N. (M) and
F.S. (M) Convoys
Revived.

As result of experience F.N. (M) and F.S.(M) convoys are to be re-introduced but will be for ships of a speed of not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ knots instead of 8 knots. The E.C. (M) convoy is from the same date as the F.N. (M) and F.S. (M) convoys are recommended, to be for ships of not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ knots from Southend to Methil and for ships of not less than 8 knots from Methil onwards. A.M. 1936B/14 is cancelled. (A.C.N.S.(T) 1621B/24 to C. in C's Nore, Rosyth).

/W.S. 9A.....

MOST SECRET

800A

MOST SECRET. MESSAGE 1310B/24th May IN

From: N.C.S.O. Mersey.

Date 25.5.41
Recd. 0035

Naval Cypher C. by T/P

Addressed: Admiralty, C. in C.Western Approaches,
N.O.i/c Cardiff, R.A.D. Home Fleet,
N.O.i/c Belfast, C. in C.Portsmouth,
N.O.i/c Londonderry, S.O.Force H, F.O.C.N.P.
H.M.S. NEPTUNE, C. in C.Home Fleet.

W S 8 X.

Reference 2236B/ 19th May from Admiralty and
reference from Admiralty 1341 B 23rd May.

Rendezvous for Bristol Channel ships in 053 degs
45' North 004 degs 49' West at 1830 May 27th rendezvous
for Ocean and Destroyer escort 270 degs Oversay
10 miles at 0500 May 28th.

Secret positions

(i)	054 degs	20' North	010 degs	00' West	ROSE.
(ii)	52	30	12	50	COW
(iii)	48	10	17	10	ROBIN
(iv)	42	50	25	10	TIGER.
(v)	37	40	20	40	DAISY.
(vi)	30	20	25	30	LUPIN
(vii)	25	15	20	00	LARK
(viii)	17	30	19	10	HORSE.
(ix)	10	30	17	30	SWIFT.

All times are G.M.T.

1310B/24

Advance copy Duty Captain, D.O.D.(H) D.T.D.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(H)
A.C.N.S.(F)
A.C.N.S.(T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P.(2)
D.O.D.(F)
D.D.O.D.(F)
D.O.D.(H)
D.D.O.D.(H)
D.N.I.(4)
D.S.D.
D.N.A.D.
D. of L.D.
D.A/S W.
D.M.S.
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Captain
Head of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D.(2)
D.T.D.(M)
H.I.D.10 (Pay Cdr.Wilson)

Smallfast convoy W S 8 (X)

War Diary.24.5.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys. (cont).

W.S. 9A.

A.M. 1235B/19 and A.M. 2134B/23. Date of sailing of W.S. 9A. is now 3/6. In view of the above ESPERANCE BAY will not accompany W.S. 9A. BULOLO will proceed in company with AUSONIA and S.S. MENDOZA vide para 8 of A.M. 1235B/19. LONDON and S.S. WINDSOR CASTLE from Clyde will proceed with W.S. 9A until A/S escort leave, ~~whence they will proceed with W.S. 9A until A/S escort leaves~~ whence they will proceed independently to Halifax by route which R.A. 3 is requested to issue. (D.O.D. (H) 1735/24 to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. H.F. etc).

S.C. 30.

Fine weather passage. Route altered. All ships arrived except SOMERSBY, Straggler, torpedoed and sunk. (D.T.D. 1924B/24 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa). 26 ships arrived under Rear-Adm. K. Beighton. 8 Allied, 1 neutral, included. Cargoes. (D.S. 626, 23/5).

H.X. 124.

Route altered. Fine weather passage all ships arrived. (D.T.D. 1932B/24 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa) 36 ships including 7 Allied, 1 Neutral. Cargoes. (D.S. 626, 23/5).

War Diary.24.5.1941.
Saturday.CASUALTIES AND DEFECTS.LEOVILLE.

Cancel my 1506/22. LEOVILLE is still very short of crew and has E.R. Defects which I am informed may take up to 4 weeks to make good. There are also outstanding Armament defects and deficiencies. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1105/24).

NEWMARKET.

In view of defects in NEWMARKET, SHERWOOD will be required to escort to present limit of endurance in accordance with Adty. 1341B/23. (C. in C. W.A. 1128B/24).

N.T. & W.D.

M.L. 102.
CLYDE.

Your 1858/30/3. As ML 102 requires about ten days refit before proceeding South suggest the stiffening be done on CLYDE concurrently with this refit. (R.A.C.F. 1225/24 to Admty).

NAUTILUS.
(Collision 22/5)

Position of Wreck. (F.O. Humber 1452B/24).

EDOUARD
VAN
VLAENDEREN.

Your 1901/22/2. What is situation in regard to trawler EDOUARD VAN VLAENDEREN re salvage. (D.S.V.P. 1824B/23 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

JAAK.

Departure Tug GOLIATH to assist s.s. JAAK engines broken down in QZS 192. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 2210/24).

803

War Diary.24.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Force H.

My 2253B/23. Proceed as soon as ready to join W.S.8B after daylight 26/5. Should R/C today indicate that one or both of the German Battle Cruisers have left Brest it will be necessary to alter these instructions. It is at your discretion to keep destroyers with you or send them back to Gibraltar if they need the time in harbour before "Rocket". (1st. S.L. 0050B/24 to F.O. Force H.)
Departures RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, FORESIGHT, FURY, FOXHOUND, FORESTER, FAULKNER, HESPERUS.
(S.O.I. Gib., 0200A/24, to Admty., etc, F.O.C.N.A. 0220/24 to N.A. Stn.)

*See also p. 805.*DUNEDIN.

A.M. 1657/22. Intend sailing DUNEDIN Freetown p.m./25.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1120/24, to Admty.)

BRILLIANT.

Sails at 1600/24 Freetown through 33.30 N., 09.30 W., speed 15 knots.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1308B/24, to LATONA, WISHART.)

CAIRNDALE.

Oiler CAIRNDALE is to be brought to immediate notice for proceeding to sea. Aviation fuel carried should be reduced as much as possible without delaying ship.
(V.C.N.S. 1334B/24, to F.O.C.N.A.)
Admty., 1334B/24 and 1719B/24 (N.T. in W.D.)
CITY OF DIEPPE, SEVERN and CAIRNDALE should be sailed in company if this will not delay CAIRNDALE more than about 12 hours.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1729/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)
My 1729B/24. Sail CAIRNDALE and SEVERN to patrol on a line 60 miles 225° from 43° N., 35° W. (V.C.N.S. 1918B/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)
My 1918B/24. Same arrangements are required as in my 2227/24/3 but for Callsign MNXA read VVID. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1925B/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

See also next page

/S/M's, Patrols...

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

804

North Atlantic. Contd.

S/M's
Patrols.

Admty. 1432B/23. As these large submarines are unsuitable for close inshore work in shallow water suggest patrols off Genoa or south eastward of Sardinia. (F.O.C.N.A., 1524/24, to C. in C. Med.)

LONDON.

My 2140/22. 2 destroyers only of 4th D.F., will now meet you at R/V, 26/5. (F.O.C.N.A. 1618B/24 to LONDON.)

LATONA
Oerlikons
guns.

Will remain at Gibraltar and will probably proceed through Mediterranean with two cruisers reinforcing Med., Fleet. 34 Oerlikons at Gibraltar are all to be mounted, if possible, in these three ships. Any that cannot be mounted are to be distributed among ships making passage and carried as freight. F.O.C.N.A. requested to inform S.O. Force H shortly before his return to Gibraltar. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1730B/24 to F.O.C.N.A.) Cancelled, see 1954/25.

French
Destroyer
& M.V.

2000. French Destroyer one funnel escorting LILLOIS partly loaded 330⁰ Cape Roca 31 miles steering 225⁰ 8 knots. (IMPERIALIST, 2005/24, to F.O.C.N.A.) (S.O.I. Gib., 2343/24 to Admty., Force H etc.)

Oilers,
Dispositions.

1 (a) Oiler CAIRNDALE fitted for oiling at sea, and with scuttling charges has been sailed from Gibraltar to patrol on a line 60 miles 225⁰ from 43⁰ 35⁰.
1 (b) SEVERN will escort CAIRNDALE who is expected to reach the patrol line about 31/5. *See previous page.*
2. Oiler is being sent to St. Johns, N.F. Capital ships can be fuelled in emergency from oiler in Concepcion Bay.

/3. There are...

War Diary.

24. 5. 41.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. Contd.

Oilers,
Dispositions.

- 3. There are tankers in convoys H X 127 and 128 with fuel oil.
- 4. Enquiries are being made whether any U.S. oiler facilities can be made available.
- 5. Oiler SAN ADOLFO has been ordered to patrol a line 60 miles 225° from position 39° 49°. She should reach this position about 28/5. *page 819*
- 6. Attention is drawn to Chart of Sea Surface Conditions for May Y 185 recently issued.
(V.C.N.S., 2030B/24, to C. in C. H.F., S.O. Force H., etc., etc.)

Enemy
Units.

D.F. Bearings from Gibraltar 312° second class at 1754 G.M.T. 310° first class at 1759 G.M.T. German surface unit and U. Boat respectively. (F.O.C.N.A., 2113/24, to N.A. Stn.)
At 1930 G.M.T. German surface Unit bearing 322° 2nd class. (F.O.C.N.A. 2116/24, to PANDORA.)

Force H.

Admty. 0050B/24. In case your Force is required for extended operations, destroyers should be sent back to Gibraltar before it is necessary to give them any fuel. (V.C.N.S. 2138B/24 to S.O. Force H.)

See p. 803

South Atlantic.

INTREPIDO.

My 1516/21 (Overdue Shipping) Panamanian INTREPIDO arrived.
(S.O.I. Capetown, 0845B/24.)

/LIEUT.....

806

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic Contd.

LIEUT. ST.
LOUBERT BIE.

Admty., 0126/22. Union Authorities require LIEUT. ST. LOUBERT BIE to proceed to Durban. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0952B/24, to Admty.)

Shipping
Reports.

Your 1212/20/5 and my 1608/15/5. Request ships may be reported when crossing lat. 25° N. (C. in C. S.A., 1029N/24, to Admty.)

W.S.8A.

Your 0390/22. Convoy W.S.8.A. less DOMINION MONARCH, HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN will probably sail from Durban 2/6 escorted by CORNWALL. Group B ships (?) DUNERA, DILWARA, ELISABETHVILLE now at Durban will embark Union troops and sail for Suez with convoy W.S.8A. JOHAN DE WITT may also be included. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1044B/24, to D. of S.T.)

BRITISH
GRENADIER
(torpedoed
22/5.)

Portuguese steamship GANDA from Lobito to St. Vincent reports picking up 23 survivors from BRITISH GRENADIER on 24/5. (S.O.I, Freetown, 1415N/24, to Admty.)

S.L.75.
Spanish
Vessel.

When corvettes part company 26/5 report to C. in C. S.A., repeated NELSON through S.O. corvettes when well clear of convoy position convoy and speed being made good of S.L.75. Also names of corvettes detailed in accordance with my 1937/23 and my 1657/24. Instruct corvettes to look out for Spanish Auxiliary engined sailing vessel thought to run petrol supplies between Villa Cisneros and Sal. If encountered such a vessel should be visited and searched and if any grounds should be sent in under armed guard for further search. (C. in C. S.A. 1915N/25 to CATHAY.)

/AUCTORITAS.....

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic Contd.

AUCTORITAS
Italian.

N.C.S.O. Rio de Janeiro reports has berthed alongside and is receiving large quantity of bunker coal.

HERMES
German.

Loading proceeding rapidly and appears will be ready to sail at end of month. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2144z/24, to R.A.S.A.D.)

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

→ Cruisers.

Proposals to replace cruiser losses
(1st. S.L. 0021B/24 to C. in C. Med.)
See Mediterranean Volume.

TETRARCH.

My 0527/22. Arrival of TETRARCH postponed 24 hours. (R.A. Alexandria, 0115/24 to Med. Fleet.)

UNIQUE.
UPHOLDER.

Malta Sanctuary for UNIQUE and UPHOLDER.
(N.O.I.C. Malta, 1049B/24 to Admty.)

CAVARNA.
(Roumanian)

My 0958/22, whole cargo 3700 cases, of which 1837 are declared munitions. Bulk of "machinery" consists of steel "rods". Unloading into trucks commenced. Agents give route as via ERZCRUM, but this is open to doubt. (S.O.1 Istanbul, 1114/24, to C. in C. Med.)

Operation "Rocket"
"ROCKET"

A.O.C. Med. would like to have early information of exact number of mark (ii) Hurricanes which will be included in operation "ROCKET". (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1220B/24 to S.O. Force H.) Reply 25 (S.O. Force H. 0805/B/25)

TRIUMPH.

Will leave Alexandria 2000/24 and proceed through 0310° 46' 029° 04' thence a course 290°. (Capt. S.1. 1241C/24 to TETRARCH)

See also p 810.

→ Cruisers.

Your 0021/24. Big cruisers out here are too vulnerable. Need smaller handier cruisers with good A/A armament but proper R/D/F equipment is first essential. I should welcome GALATEA and would much prefer a second small cruiser with good radio D/F rather than EDINBURGH or SHEFFIELD.

/Would there

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Cruisers
Cont.-

Would there be any prospect of fitting NEPTUNE accordingly as a rush job and providing her with a good ~~Merlikon~~ armament? Failing NEPTUNE could any other similar cruiser fitted with R/D/F be provided within reasonable time? Cruiser without R/D/F will not long survive for which reason I do not think AURORA suitable as at present fitted. (C. in C. Med. 1358C/24 to Admty.)

Oil
Supplies.

1st S.L. 1506B/24 to C. in C. Med. see Mediterranean volume.

Relations with
Vichy French.

Your 2007B/22. Necessary plans are being prepared. (C. in C. Med. 1554C/24 to Admty.)

Malta Air
Report.

Up to 1600 hours 24/5. All times G.M.T. Patrol of probably 12 aircraft came within 10 miles of north coast and turned back north.

Lampedusa
M/G attack.

1310 hours. Lampedusa harbour 4 destroyers and a DO.18 which Maryland machine gunned from 50 feet. No opposition. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1620/24)

Suez Canal.
Air Mining.

Situation report. Mining air raid by about 8 aircraft on Suez Canal 0235 to 0430/24. New non-parachute unexploded mines in canal at KM.27, 34.55, and 94.5. One parachute unexploded mine 50 yards from channel at KM.118 and probably another in or near channel about KM.120. Nine exploded mines in canal or nearby, two unexploded mines ashore. No damage or casualties. Following are now considered dangerous sections, KM.24 to 37, 52 to 62, 91 to 97, 115 to 123, navigation permitted elsewhere. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1901C/24 to Admty.)

/TRIUMPH

810

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

TRIUMPH.

My 2240/22 Sanctuary for TRIUMPH is extended to 0200 G.M.T/25. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1928/24, to Med. Fleet, Force I.) See p. 608.

Suez Canal.

Your 1931C/20. Is traffic now being swept through Canal? If so, when was procedure started and how many vessels have passed safely? (D.M.S., 2008B/24 to S.B.N.C. Suez Canal) Reply 0310C/25

UPHOLDER
Attack on
enemy convoy.

3 very large troopers unknown number of destroyers, P.C. and S. of enemy are 036° 45' 015° 42' 180° 18 knots. 2 hits on (?liner) counted. Torpedoes expended. Whole area dangerous. I will avoid UPRIGHT. (UPHOLDER, 2042B/24 to V.A. Malta)

Syrian
Blockade.

I am not entirely clear about H.M.G.'s policy as regards Syrian blockade in view of recent developments. Is it intention that I should enforce blockade and bring all ships into Haifa for Contraband Control and is this country to be regarded as enemy occupied? It will be appreciated that in present circumstances I can do little to implement a blockade policy, on the other hand it is undesirable to allow War supplies and aviation spirit into country. (C. in C. Med. 2340C/24 to Admty.)

Enemy
Convoy.

Troop transports escorted by destroyers in position to 036° 45' W. 015° 42' E at 2042 course 180° speed 18 knots. Attempt to intercept. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 2358B/24 to UPRIGHT)

811

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

JAGUAR.
DEFENDER.

Your 2227/23. Have sailed destroyers for Alexandria. Scale of air attack on harbour 23/5 does not justify retention here during daylight. No recent indication of convoy, and weather deteriorating. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0225/24 to C. in C. Med.)

GLENROY.
troops.

Your 2146B/23. Arrangements are being made to send troops by other means. (C. in C. Med. 0438C/24 to Admty.)

Troops.
DECOY, NIZAM,
ISIS, HERO.

Take NIZAM, ISIS, HERO under your orders and sail at 0900 after embarking troops to arrive Selino Kastelli 035° 13' N. 023° 40' E. at 0001/25 or as soon after as possible. Disembark troops and sail by 0300/25 at latest, keeping well to Southward and return to Alexandria with all despatch. Fighter protection will be arranged A.M./25. Details of landing place follow. (C. in C. Med. 0751C/24 to DECOY)

ISIS, HERO, DECOY, NIZAM, E.T.A. Selino Kastelli about 0100/25 with approx. 600 SS Troops. If possible arrange 3 white vertical lights on end of pier and at suitable boat landings on east and west sides of Peninsula. Send any landing craft available. Inform ISIS of arrangements made. (C. in C. Med. 1140C/24 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay)

Landing facilities at Selino Kastelli. S.B.N.O. Suda Bay has been requested to mark pier and landing place with 3 white vertical lights but enemy at present holds north end of road. Additional landing craft also asked for. (C. in C. Med. 1200C/24 to ISIS)

/C. in C. Med.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.24.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete.Troops
DECOY, NIZAM,
ISIS, HERO.
(contd.)

C. in C. Med. 1140(C) Am endeavouring to get one M.L.C. to Selino Castelli tonight. Arrival very doubtful. No other boat transport likely to be available. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1720/24 to ISIS)

Heraklion
LOGICIAN
sunk.

A Lighter delivered 3 tanks from Heraklion this morning. Situation Heraklion, Greeks hold town, very short ammunition. Town heavily bombed yesterday. Germans reinforcing by dropping troops and supplies well to Eastward. Troops and tanks landed at Kassara not yet joined up. No change reported Maleme or Retimo. LOGICIAN sunk. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0911/24 to C.in C. Med)

Benghazi
bombed.

Operational Summary No.348 up to 1200 hours 24/5. Night 22/23. 3 Wellingtons bombed Benghazi. Day 23/5. R/C Benghazi reported 3 ships of 10,000 tons, 5,000 tons and 1,000 tons respectively in harbour. 2. Night 22/23. 3 Wellingtons dropped food and medical stores for our forces at Heraklion and Retimo. Supplies landed in sea at latter. Day 23/5. 3 Hurricanes and Blenheims proceeding Crete fired on by H.M. ships and returned to base. Enemy heavily bombed our troops West Canea in morning, and Retimo, Heraklion and Suda Bay in afternoon. No shipping within 30 miles N. and W. of Crete and within 40 miles N. and W. of Melos. 1 JU.52 towing 6 gliders seen approaching Maleme with 32 JU.52's and fighter escort in evening. Estimated about 80 troop carriers landed Maleme during day. Fighting continued 23/5 at Maleme. At Heraklion enemy was still holding out in evening 23/5 in area one and a half miles S.W. of town. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1028/24)

Crete.

/Air Recco

MOST SECRET.War Diary.24.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete. (contd.)Air Recco.

Request you will repeat the morning and evening R/C in Aegean on 25th.
(C. in C. Med. 1202C/24 to 204 Group)

AJAX.DIDO

Move up towards ^{Kaso.} Kase. (C. in C. Med. 1402C/24 to AJAX)
Pass through Kaso Straits as soon as possible after 2100. Sweep North coast of Crete with object of destroying enemy embarkation. Pass through Anti Kithera Straits as soon after 0400 as possible then proceed on D/F network till well clear of land. My 0752C/24. ISIS intended passing through 034° 10' N. (?023°) 45' E. thence on course 120° 28 knots probably about 0600/25, follow them. (C. in C. Med. 1438C/24 to AJAX)
My 1438/24. You will appreciate importance of doing as much damage as possible to A/C on aerodrome at Maleme. If you have no luck with convoy and provided you are satisfied weather conditions will not prevent your withdrawal at high speed and that you are at least 30 miles south of Crete by 0700, carry out bombardment. DIDO should severely restrict expenditure of ammunition. (C. in C. Med., 1641C/24 to AJAX)
My 1641/24. Inform AJAX and DIDO of exact position of Maleme aerodrome and position of own troops. (C. in C. Med., 1700C/24 to S.B.N.O. Suda Bay)
C. in C. Med. 1700/C/24.
Area 1 to be bombarded is as follows:-
South Boundary 035° 31' 30" N.
East Boundary 023° 50' E.
North Boundary, Coast.
West Boundary 023° 49' 12" E.
Chart 2536 - A. Own front line, 1 mile E. of Eastern Boundary. Endeavour to bombard between 2200 and 0230. R.A.F. bombing commences 0300. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1901C/24 to AJAX, DIDO.)

/PERSEUS

814

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

PERSEUS.

Leave patrol forthwith and establish patrol off Port Melos, Island Milo. Further orders follows. (Capt. S.1. 1931C/24 to PERSEUS)

My 1931C/24. It is known that enemy is using Port Melos, as assembly port for troop carrying ~~CAIRO~~ bound for Crete. Transport destroyers and light A/S craft may also be present. Reconnoitre (?anchorage) with view to firing torpedoes into harbour or attacking by gunfire. In any event establish patrol off island with object to attack any enemy ship including ~~CAIRO~~. Attention is called to memo. S.O. 14 para. 5 (a) and (b). (Capt.S.1. 1951C/24 to PERSEUS).

My 1641/24. There are reported to be good number of E. boats in vicinity of Maleme. (C. in C. Med. 2025/24 to ABDIEL, AJAX).

Policy.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.115 to C. in C. Med. and M.E. Our difficulties in Crete are great but from all the information we have so are those of the enemy. If we stick it out, enemy's effort may peter out. It seems to us imperative that reinforcements in greatest strength possible should be sent as soon as possible to the island to ensure destruction of enemy already landed before they can be seriously reinforced. The vital importance of this battle is well known to you and great risks must be accepted to ensure our success.(Ends). (1st S.L. 1425B/24 to C. in C. Med.)

ABDIEL.

My 1831C/23. My 1438C/24. On leaving Suda Bay proceed through anti Kalonehera Strait depth of water 10 miles off Cape Tripiti - Cape Spada - Cape Agria Grabusa - Elaphonisi light thence 034° 10' N. 023° 45' E. thence 120°. Report time leaving Suda Bay to AJAX. Join AJAX after daylight if possible. (C. in C. Med., 1442C/24 to ABDIEL.)

/Fleet Message

815

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Fleet Message
from C.in C.

During the past few days the Fleet has been having a hard battle against a high proportion of the German Air Force and has kept its end up by dint of determination. We have sustained some hard knocks in the process of preventing any considerable enemy seaborne landing in Crete, but we have also given some. Some thousands of enemy troops have been trapped and sunk at sea. The Battle for Crete is still in progress, to win is essential. The army is just holding its own against constant reinforcements of air borne enemy troops. We must not let them down. At whatever cost to ourselves we must send reinforcements for them and keep the enemy from using the sea. There are indications that the enemy resources are stretched to the limit. We can and must outlast defiantly. Stick it out. (C. in C. Med. 1457/24 to Med. Fleet.)

Air Recco.

Aircraft R/C 0900/24 reported no shipping seen between Crete and Melos. No observation of Heraklion due to bad weather. Over 40 aircraft on Maleme landing ground and on adjacent field and beaches. (C. in C. Med., 1808C/24 to AJAX, DIDO)

Crete
Situation.

Appreciation of situation in reply to Chiefs of Staff No.113 (C. in C.M.E., 2035/24 to W.O.) Section Copy. Further appreciation (C. in C.M.E. 2150/24 to W.O.) see Lion Copy. No.35 (C. in C. Med., 2112C/24 to Admty.) See Lion Copy.

Situation
Report.

ISIS
landing.

Land your troops at Lutro. (C. in C. Med., 2044/24 to ISIS)
For Col. Laycock from Mid East. On landing port Lutro proceed Nubros where (?hope) truck(s) will meet. (C. in C.Med., 2142C/24 to ISIS.)

/My 2044C/24

MOST SECRET

815A

MOST SECRET. MESSAGE. 2035/24th May. IN.

From C. in C. Middle East. Date. 25. 5. 41.

CYPIER. Recd. 0045.

Addressed The War Office, repeated C. in C. Mediterranean.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

15400. 0/67119. cipher. 24/5.

From the C. in C. in reply to Chiefs of Staff No. 113
begins. Obscure situation makes accurate combined appreciation
difficult.

Naval part. Scale of air attack has now made it no longer possible for Navy to operate in the Aegean or vicinity Crete by day and to guarantee prevent seaborne landings without suffering losses which added to those already sustained would very seriously prejudice our command of the Eastern Mediterranean. We are therefore unable to reinforce or supply Crete except by fast warships at night which will seriously curtail the support we can afford to the garrison, particularly if enemy are able to operate from airdromes in Crete. Little prospect of R.A.F. stopping movement enemy shipping which can now take place piecemeal and under strong air protection.

For situation from Army angle see Mideast 0/67118 of 24 May.

Air part. For amplification air aspects referred above and additional points see personal Signals from A.O.C. in C. to C.A.S. Nos. A.416 and A.417 of 23 May.

Conclusion. As yet enemy has only established himself in strength in one area and his supply problem is acute. Information that is calling up aircraft from other theatres suggests that he is stretched to limit. Provided we can prevent enemy from exploiting his one success by further large sea and airborne landings and can reinforce and maintain our forces we should be able to hold him, and eventually defeat him. We appreciate vital importance of holding Crete and consider that we are justified in diverting forces available from other fronts including Western Desert.

2035/24

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F).
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D.O.D. (F).
D.D.O.D. (F).
D.N.I. (4).
D. of P. (2).
Duty Capt.
E.P.S.
Hd. of M.
I.P.
W.D.
N.I.D.10. Pay. Cdr. Wilson.

Advance copy sent Duty Capt., D.O.D.(F)
and D.D.I.C.

Received by hand from War Office .

00357

00357

Reply of Chief of Staff: 2132B/25, page 853.

SECRET.

MESSAGE.

2150/24th May.

IN.

From C. in C. Middle East.

Date 25.5.41.

815B

CYPHER.

Recd. 0400.

Addressed The War Office, Repeated C. in C. Mediterranean.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

15447, 0/67118 Cipher 24/5.

Situation in Crete.

(1) Suda Bay is our main base. It is also essential to the enemy. Our immediate object is to prevent the enemy from securing Suda Bay. It is estimated that taking casualties into account the enemy now have in the area Maleme Alkianous the bulk of the airborne Div, and some 3000 parachutists. He may therefore have upwards of 10000 men in contact with our troops holding Canea and Suda.

(2) At Retimo and Heraklion parachutists having failed to clear the way for air transports have cut the northern coast road but it is hoped to open the road Heraklion Suda for passage of reinforcements to Suda though our efforts have so far failed. Although the enemy is making his main effort between Maleme and Suda there is still a danger of sea or airborne landings at Retimo and Heraklion which cannot therefore be altogether denuded of garrison even were the road open to reinforce Suda.

(3) Our Forces at Canea and Suda are approx. equal in numbers to the enemy but he has the very considerable advantage of air supremacy and can support his attacks by continuous and heavy bombardments. Undoubtedly our troops have been subjected to great strain and are tired. It is hoped to reinforce Suda by some 500 S.S. Troops who will land on South Coast without transport on night 24/25 May.

(? Para. 4 omitted or paras misnumbered by originator).

(5) The administrative situation is becoming difficult. When troops were evacuated from Greece rations for 30000 for 60 days had been accumulated in Crete. Owing to (A) 45000 troops being fed, (B) 15000 prisoners (C) loss of three successive ships containing supplies in Cretan waters (d) necessity for assisting Greeks with quantities of flour, balanced rations are now reduced to approx. 10 days but preserved meat and certain items equal 35 days. Trying now to put in biscuits margarine and tea to balance those latter items. Garrison in Crete and troops have been placed on three quarter rations. Retimo is down to four days supplies. Shortages are also appearing among medical stores due to hospital being bombed, and also ammunition and entrenching tools. We are trying to make up these deficiencies but replenishment depends on the slackening of the enemy's air effort for at present only fast warships which can offload in darkness and be well away in daylight have any hope of survival near Crete.

(6) The enemy's situation must be equally unpleasant. Undoubtedly he has not attained the success he expected and is having to fight hard with no hope of withdrawal if he fails. His administrative difficulties must be considerable and he has little or no land transport. It seems vital that he should be able to use Suda Bay for his shipping particularly as he has

/lost.....

815c

lost heavily in transport aircraft. It therefore appears that provided we can prevent him from securing the use of Suda Bay his position may become critical.

(7) If we are forced to give up Suda it will still be possible to withdraw on Retimo and Heraklion but since Suda is our main base it would only be a matter of time before shortage of supplies and ammunition would compel us to evacuate the Island a difficult and dangerous operation.

2150/24

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (F).
- A.C.N.S. (H).
- A.C.N.S. (T). (2).
- Naval Sec.
- C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- P.A.S. (3).
- Ops. (4).
- O.D. (5).
- O.I.C. (3).
- D.N.I. (4).
- D.S.D.9.
- M. (30).
- D. of P. (3).
- D.N.A.D.
- D.C.O.
- D.D.T.S.D. (C.O).
- E.P.S.
- Press Divn.
- D.
- I.P. (3).
- D.S.D. (2).
- D.A/S.W.
- D.M.S.
- D.M.S. Basement.

(Advance copy sent 1st Lord, A.C.N.S. C.S.O. to 1st S.L. Ops. O.D. O.I.C.)

Received from War Office at 0930/25.

GP

MOST SECRET

IN

MOST SECRET. MESSAGE

2112C/24th May.

Date 25.4.41

From: C. in C. Mediterranean.

Recd. 1945

8183

Naval Cypher X by W/T

Addressed: Admiralty, repeated V...Malta, F.O. (H)
S.B.N.O. Canal Area.

IMPORTANT!

504. Situation report number 35. KIPLING arrived 0900/24 under own power with D.Five and survivors of KELLY and KASHIER. Commanding Officer JUNO reports that in engagement with E boats in Keso Strait night 20/21 JUNO alone sank two E Boats and damaged two more. Total number of aircraft shot down not yet ascertained but nine down and four damaged already accounted for. Fire was severely handicapped by need to conserve ammunition. Both GLOUCESTER and FIJI had expended whole outfit when sunk.

2. King of Greece H.M. Minister British Naval Attache and party arrived Alexandria 2300/23 in DECOY and HERO. King requested his presence should not be announced until release by him.

3. JAGULR and DEFENDER landed ammunition at Suda Bay during night 23/24 were dive bombed 0630 arrived Alex. 1908. ANDIEL taking stores and personnel Suda tonight. LOGICLIN sunk by bombs at Suda and all five MED's put out of action by machine gun fire from attacking aircraft. "I" lighters brought three tanks from Heraklion to Suda a.m. 24th. Air reconnaissance a.m. 24th reports no shipping Crete to Melos.

4. J.J.X, DIDO and four destroyers sweeping North coast of Crete from eastward tonight 24/25. Four destroyers landing 600 SS troops on south coast of Crete.

5. RORQUILL reports sinking by gunfire two Caiques full of German soldiers while returning from patrol of Northern Aegean. No other suitable targets found.

6. Western Desert. APHIS attacked by dive bombers 22nd two shot down by fighter and two damaged. No change in general situation. Sandstorm in progress. AURORA two II aground off Tobruk. W. FERREIN took stores into Tobruk night 23/24 and has returned with wounded.

7. Suez Canal closed to traffic.

8. By 2121/23 para. seven for forty six missing read forty six wounded.

2112C/24.

NOTE.

Paragraph 8 of this message has been circulated separately with the same distribution as message 2121/23.

Advance copy P.O. C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
A.C.N.S. (F) D.O.D. (F) Duty Captain.
D.D.I.C. Press Division.

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

1st Lord.

D. of F. (2)

D.M.S.

D.C.O.

1st S.L.

D.O.D. (F)

I.P.

D.P.D.

2nd S.L.

D.D.O.D. (F)

V.D.

D.A/S W.

3rd S.L.

D.O.D. (H)

Duty Captain

D.T.D. (2)

4th S.L.

D.D.O.D. (H)

Hd. of M.

N.I.D. 10 Payr.

5th S.L.

D.N.I. (4)

D.T.S.D.

Cdr. Wilson

V.C.N.S.

D.S.D.

D.D.I.C.

A.C.N.S. (H)

D. of L.D.

E.P.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

D.N.S.D.

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

JR.

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

ISIS
landing
(contd.)

My 2044C/24. If Port Lutro unsuitable land at Sphakia. (C. in C. Med., 2228C/24 to ISIS.)

My 1448/24. Destroyers will disembark troops at level Lutro Knoll or Sphakia. (C. in C. Med. 2250C/24 to Group 201, Group 204.)

(Group missed) C. in C. Med. 2044/24. You are to land as many troops as possible at Sphakia. ?Landing point is to eastward of "? landing" marked in Sphakia anchorage chart 2536 A. Orders for O.C. troops as follows:-

Take careful cover and avoid all movements by day. Be ready to move night of 25/26th. Guides will be sent. If you are unable to land all troops by 0400/25 you are to take remainder back. One L.M.C. should be in Sphakia, but my communications have failed. It is most important that troops landed should remain under cover until guide arrives. C.in C. Med. 2228/24 refers. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2300C/24 to ISIS.)

Two Beau fighters will be in position about 45 miles S.W. of Selino Kastelli at 0700/25. (C. in C. Med. 2301C/24 to AJAX, ABDIEL, ISIS.)

My 2228/24 Have ordered ISIS to land troops at Sphaki in accordance with G.O.C's wish. Those not landed by 0400/25 will be retained on board. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2315C/24 to C. in C. Med.)

My 2044, my 1438 and my 2250/24. Steer southward after leaving port Lutro to 033° 50' N 024° 20' E thence for Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 2338C/24 to ISIS.)

Destroyers
to R.V.AJAX.

Request you will detail 3 destroyers capable of high speed to sail 0800/25 to R/V with AJAX in 034° 40' N. 027° 00' E. at 1600/25 unless otherwise ordered by AJAX. AJAX to detach KIMBERLEY IMPERIAL, HOTSPUR on relief to Alexandria. (?) (C. in C. Med., 2324C/24 to R.A.(D) Med) Position amended, see 0906C/25.

817

War Diary

24.5.1941.
Saturday

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

PANAMANIAN

Re suspected sabotage (C. in C. E.I.
0524Z/24 to Admty.)

AQUITANIA
U.S.11.
STAGPOOL

C. in C. Med. 1255/17 and my 1228/14
S.W. Monsoon now developing strongly and
it appears certain AQUITANIA on arrival
with U.S. 11 early July will have to berth
at Trincomalee.
Without assistance of STAGPOOL the
watering of 3 large liners with troops
on board at Trincomalee presents a very
formidable problem.
If STAGPOOL is not available a water
carrier is essential. Request that suitable
tanker which normally carries petrol or white
oil may be sent to Colombo by mid June at
latest for cleaning out and filling with
fresh water. (C. in C. E.I., 0558Z/24 to
Admty.)

A/A guns

Your 1457/17. Concur in your proposals.
Arrangements. (A.C.N.S. (T) 1242B/24
to C. in C. E.I.)

Kites

A.M. 992A of 22/4. Should H.M. Ships
including A.M.C's be equipped with kites
and lethal devices? Can find no definite
instructions to this effect, but work can
be undertaken if required.
(C. in C. E.I., 1536Z/24 to Admty.)

Suez and
Shatt el Arab

Re Minesweeping. (A.C.N.S. (F) 2009B/24
to C. in C. E.I.) See Lion Copy. P.817A

Contraband

Re stopping U.S.A. shipments of trucks
direct to Iran. (C. in C. India, 2226/24
to W.O.)

MOST SECRET

~~MOST SECRET~~

2009B/24

May

OUT

917A

To C. in C. East Indies 357
Repeated C. in C. Mediterranean 287
S.B.N.C. Suez Canal 691
F.O. C.R.I.W. 350
S.N.C. R.S.
N.C. i/c Alexandria 161

DATE 24.5.41.

Naval Cypher (D)

~~From Admiralty~~

*Shatt-
Al-Arab,
minesweeping.*

Repl.

Your 1400Z/21. paragraph 21 due to depth of water and ability to divert ~~traffic threat of magnetic or acoustic mining may be ignored except in~~ approaches to Suez. Watching patrol in Jubal Strait is therefore considered unnecessary as also is provision of FD/F in Gulf of Suez.

- Your paragraph 4 it is presumed that S.B.N.C. Suez Canal is responsible for approaches to Suez. Searched channel is not required beyond latitude 29 Degrees 50' North. South of this latitude reliance can be placed on diverting traffic.
- Your main minesweeping effort must be centred on the Shatt-Al-Arab though assistance should be given to S.B.N.C. Suez Canal if this can be done without prejudice to main effort.
- Your paragraph 5. Towed skids are designed to produce a magnetic field comparable to that of a 12,000 ton undegaussed ship and will be effective in depth of water where such a ship would be endangered. Full particulars are contained in O.U. 6348/40 held by you.
- Your paragraph 8. Mines recovered show following settings now in use @ ~~Mines M Mark II and M Mark IV 20 - 30 milligrams, mine type G, 50 milligrams.~~ All mines are compensated for latitude.

2009B/24 6 C.C.A.!

~~for D.M.S. (Tel. 260)~~

Approved by (A.C.N.S. (F))

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.
D. of L.D.
D.A/S.W.
D.M.S.
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Captain

Head of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
N.I.D. 10 (Paymaster Cdr. Wilson)

War Diary24.5.1941.
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica & West IndiesH.X. 133

Regret no A.M.C's available for H.X. 133 which will have RAMILLIES (? as escort) (F.O.C. 3 B.S. 0056P/24)

→ REVENGE

To raise steam with all despatch and proceed to sea. (V.C.N.S. 1110B/24 to R.A.3) See 1505/24

B.H.X.
129

Due to leave Bermuda today 24th/5. Is not being sailed pending further instructions. (C. in C. A.W.I.1222Q/24 to Admty.)

R/C for
BISMARCK and
PRINZ EUGEN

Ref. a.m. 1238/24. (see Home Commands: Operations) I shall be grateful if you could hold long distance aircraft available for R/C from Newfoundland. (1st Sea Lord 1350B/24 to C.N.S. Ottawa) Your 1350B/24. Ten Digby aircraft standing Newfoundland. Maximum range 600 miles. (C.N.S. Canada, 2045Z/24) My 2045Z/24. 1 B.24 and 2 B.17 Aircraft are being made available now at Newfoundland. (C.N.S. Canada 2236Z/24 to Admty.)

St. John's
N.F.

Re use as convoy escort base. (Govt. N.F. 1600/24) See Lion Copy.

→ REVENGE

Left Halifax. (S.O.I. Halifax 1505Z/24 to Admty. etc.)

Convoy Escorts
to 45° W.

In view of A.M. 2027/23 it is suggested that procedure laid down in A.M. 0001/1 Sec. II para 9 should shortly be abandoned.

If you see no objection Masters for St. Lawrence Ports will be instructed to send a W/T signal giving E.T.A. in harbour on entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence or Straits of Belle Isle. (D.T.D. 1555B/24 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa)

/THUNDERBOLT,...

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

1600/24th May

IN

818(A)

From The Government of Newfoundland.

Date 24.5.41.

Recd 2333.

Cipher

Addressed Sec of S. for Dominion Affairs, repeated High Commissioner for the United Kingdom Ottawa No.12.

No.265 Secret.

IMMEDIATE W.G.483/1/1

Your telegram of 23rd May, No. 441.

The project is acceptable to the Newfoundland Government and we will make every endeavour to meet your requirements. We assume that the numbers quoted in paragraph 2 include Canadian corvettes (see message No.2108-Z of 21st May from the Naval Service Headquarters, Ottawa) some of which are now on their way to this port. If, on the other hand, the Canadian corvettes are additional, the port of St. John's would be so congested as to prevent its effective use as a Naval Base. See telegram 0203-Z of 23rd May from the Naval Officer in Charge, St. John's to the Admiralty. These conditions will also apply during the winter months when experience has shown that the harbour will be full of ships which have left convoys due to damage or breakdown and have come to the nearest port for repairs. The Ministry of War Transport can confirm this.

The following are observations on certain other paragraphs:-

Paragraph 6, Minesweepers. We presume that these will be provided and manned by Canada.

Paragraph 8, Repairs and Maintenance. All facilities at the dock and repair shops at St. John's will so far as possible be made available.

Paragraph 10, Stores and other Buildings. The existing buildings seem likely to be insufficient and are, generally speaking, built of wood and in bad repair. Some additional accommodation will have to be erected.

Paragraph 11, Recreational Facilities. The existing limited facilities are already fully occupied by troops and additional buildings will have to be erected.

Paragraph 12, Medical. As you know the local hospital facilities are extremely limited and additional accommodation and personnel will have to be provided by the Admiralty.

Paragraph 13.....

Paragraph 13, Shore Establishments. The procedure proposed will be acceptable to us

1600/24.

Note:- Received from Dominions Office.

1st Lord
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 Vice Controller
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
 Civil Lord
 Controller M.S.R.
 Secretary
 Naval Secretary
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 P.A.S. (S)
 P.A.S. (F)
 P.A.S. (N.P.)
 P.A.S. (P.R.)
 D. of P. (2)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D. of L.D.
 D.O.D. (H)
 D.O.D. (F)
 D.T.D. (2)
 D. S.W.
 D.N.D.
 D.M.S.
 D.S.D.
 E. in C.
 D. of S.
 D.T.S.D.
 D. of N.
 D.T.M.
 E.P.S.
 D.D.I.C.
 D.M.S.R.
 Admiral Bailey.
 D. of S.T.
 D.D.O.D. (F)
 D.D.O.D. (H)
 I.P.
 W.D.
 D.P.S.
 N... 2nd S.L.
 E...P.
 M.D.G.
 P.D.G.
 Hd. of Air Branch
 Hd. of Naval Branch.
 Hd. of C.W.

Hd. of P.M.
 Hd. of E.
 Hd. of N.C.S.
 Hd. of M.F.
 Hd. of M. (36) for D.O., C.O., W.C.O.,
 W.O., A.M., H.C. for
 Canada, H.C. for Newfoundland
 (12 for M37(M.07876/4.1))

Dep. Cont. }
 D. of D. }
 E. in C. }
 D.N.E. }
 D.E.E. }
 C.E. in C. } Bath
 D. of S. }
 D. of V. }
 D...S. }
 Under Sec. }
 Hd. of P. }
 Hd. of M.F. }
 Hd. of S.W.R. }

~~00391~~

819

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.(contd.)

THUNDERBOLT.

THUNDERBOLT leaves Halifax at 1830P/24 and in absence of other instructions or enemy information is proceeding to establish patrol within radius of 50 miles of 043° 00' N. 050° 00' W. (R.A.3, 1653P/24 to Admty.)

SAN ADOLFO.

Proceed forthwith to patrol on line 60 miles 225° from a position 039° N. 049° W. Acknowledge forthwith. (C. in C.A.W.I. 1732Q/24 to SAN ADOLFO)
Sail Oiler SAN ADOLFO to patrol on a line 60 miles 225° from 39° N. 49° W. (V.C.N.S. 1942B/24 to C. in C.A.W.I.)

U.S. Guns
for M.V.'s.

C. in C. A. and W.I. 0953Q/16. U.S. Gov. should be approached for permission to mount guns purchased in U.S.A. or supplied under the Lease and Lend Bill in British and Allied merchant ships. (D.T.D. 1940B/24 to B.A.R.M.)

Destroyers
St. John's.

Request immediate information earliest date R.C.N. destroyers to be sent to St. John's will be ready to operate from that port, also what training these destroyers and the corvettes now being sent will have received. (A.C.N.S.(T) 2011B/24 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

Searches.

A.M.2012B/24. Request you will consult U.S. Authorities and co-ordinate any searches you may be arranging with them. (A.C.N.S. (H) 2025B/24 to C.N.S. Ottawa.)

LONDON.
SURCOUF.

For information. LONDON proceeding to search area in vicinity of 025° 30' N. 042° 00' W. for enemy tanker. S/M SURCOUF proceeding to patrol within 150 miles of 025° N. 040° W. approaching from Northward. (C. in C. A.W.I., 2232Q/24 to LONDON, SURCOUF)

Trinidad

Re Shipping telegrams & coding staff (A.C.N.S. (T) 2348B/24 to C. in C. A.W.I. etc.)

/ U.S. Air Patrol

820

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.(contd.)

U.S. Air
Patrol.

Record of telephone conversation.
Adm. Ghormley stated that he had received following from Washington:-
"Patrol Squadron No.52 (9 or 12P.B.Y.) from Argentia (Newfoundland) directed search area 500 miles S.E. Cape Farewell. Please keep us informed latest positions Axis units".

V.C.N.S. stated that if it were a choice between a R/C tonight and tomorrow morning, he would prefer tomorrow morning as by then we should have a considerable number of our units in the area and R/C at daylight would be of vital importance. Adm.Ghormley further stated that he had asked Washington whether there were any U.S. tankers in Newfoundland area. (Adm.Ghormley, U.S. Naval Mission, No.T.O.O/24 to V.C.N.S.)

Australia & New Zealand.

U.S.11

Your 0727/3/4 . Request confirmation that Free French personnel will be included in U.S.11. (D.S.T. 1457B/24 to A.C.N.B.)

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

U. BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

H.X.126
(attacked
20/5)

Following received addressed Admiral Plymouth. 0121 G.M.T. To all ships, U.S. C.G. Cutter NORTHLAND at 0100 G.C.T. 57. 30 N. 38. 18 W searching for convoy survivors. Request information nearby ships. NORTHLAND (Ends) (Lands End Radio, 0122/24 to Admty.) Intercept 0211 G.M.T. To all ships U.S. Coast Guard Cutter MODOC at 0200 G.C.T. 57.17 N. 37.30 W. searching for convoy survivors. Request information nearest ship. (Lands End Radio, 0211/24 to Admty.)

RODNEY STAR
(torpedoed
16/5)

47 survivors from S.S. RODNEY STAR arrived Takoradi in S.S. BATNA on 23/5. (S.O.1 Freetown, 1011N/24 to Admty.) G/104 addressed C. in C. S.A. S.S. BATNA landed yesterday evening at Tadoradi 47 survivors from RODNEY STAR torpedoed by submarine 16/5 05.05 N. 19.00 W. One of the survivors is Capt. Gough of S.S. CLAN OGILVY who was on the way home from Santos, Brazil, after his own ship had been torpedoed on 20/3. He states that all of the crew got away from the RODNEY STAR in four boats but that in heavy storm shortly afterwards two boats containing respectively Captain and Chief Officer of the RODNEY STAR became separated from his boat and remaining boat. All boats had agreed to steer N.E. He was picked up by BATNA on 18/5 in 06.10 N. 17.45 W. (Governor (Sir A. Hodson) No.T.O.O./24)

CITY OF
SHANGHAI
(torpedoed
11/5)

My 0207N/22/5. N.C.S.O. Pernambuco reports CITY OF SHANGHAI attacked by two submarines which, after vessel had been abandoned, approached and shelled vessel until sunk. Fourth engineer and five or six Lascars probably killed by explosion. (S.O.1 Freetown, 1147N/24 to Admty.)

LASSELL
(torpedoed
30/4)

Your 1057/N/23. It is most improbable that U/B was U.22. If it was displaying this number U/B was probably U.38 the second boat of the second U/B flotilla a 740 ton boat. (D.D.I.C.1652B/24 to C. in C.S.A.)

822

War Diary.

24.5.1941.
Saturday.

U. BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

0225. ^{r middle Hill-} From ~~MIDDLE HILL~~ at 0225 G.M.T. German submarine bearing 090° 3rd class. (F.O.C.N.A. 0545A/24 to N.A. Stn.)
1123. German U-boat bearing 319° second class from Gibraltar at 1123 G.M.T. (F.O.C.N.A. 1252/24 to PANDORA)
1241. Am chasing U-boat in 041° 12' N. 011° 00' W. course 90°. (PANDORA 1241/24 to F.O.C.N.A.) My 1241. U-Boat probably Italian and southbound dived after being attacked by gunfire at extreme range. (PANDORA, 1324/24 to F.O.C.N.A.) Your 1241 and 1324. IMPERIALIST on Y.1 patrol has been ordered to proceed Northward. Add appropriate zone time ~~SURFIX~~ to your time of origin in future messages. (F.O.C.N.A. 1458A/24 to PANDORA)
1115. By D/F at 1115Z/24 position of enemy S/M was 51° 30' N. 28° 30' W. Unit may be within 150 miles of this position. (D.D.I.C. 1356B/24)
1515. By D/F at 1515Z/24 position of enemy U-boat was within 60 miles of 51° 00' N. 26° 30' W. U-boat possibly damaged and proceeding to Lorient at 8 knots or less. (D.D.I.C. 1805B/24)
1700. By D/F at 1700Z/24 Italian U-boat estimated 37° N. 12° 30' W. (D.D.I.C. 1952B/24)

MOST SECRET.25.5.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGENF.A.A.
attack.

Shortly after midnight 24/25 May F.A.A. aircraft from VICTORIOUS attacked BISMARCK with torpedoes and one hit was reported.

PRINCE OF WALES was still in touch with the enemy at 0130. She had 9 main armament guns in action, maximum speed estimated 26 knots.

Touch with
Enemy lost.

1st C.S. lost touch with the BISMARCK at 0306 in 56° 23' N 36° 5' W. PRINZ EUGEN was last seen at 0200B.

Situation at
0600B/25

NORFOLK and SUFFOLK searching to the Westward and C.S.2 with 4 cruisers and VICTORIOUS carrying out a surface and air search to the northwestward of last known position of enemy. C. in C. H.F. estimated to be near 55° 00' N. 35° 00' W. PRINCE OF WALES has been detached by C.S.1 to join C. in C. RODNEY estimated 55° 30' N. 33° 00' W. RAMILLIES estimated 51° 30' N. 38° 00' W. EDINBURGH estimated 49° 40' N 30° 30' W. LONDON estimated 38° 40' N. 21° 00' W. proceeding to southwestward to search for enemy tanker. Force H estimated 39° 00' N. 18° 30' W proceeding to intercept enemy from the southward. REVENGE estimated 43° 30' N. 58° 00' W. MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA refuelling Hvalfiord.

At 0836B the Admiralty directed C. in C. H.F. to take all forces of the Home Fleet, and RAMILLIES and RODNEY under his orders.

It was assumed that the enemy were making for a Biscay port.

C. in C. H.F.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands. (contd)BISMARCK 7 PRINZ EUGEN.

C. in C. H.F. continued to steer eastward during the day.

S/Ms
orders to
St. Nazaire.

At 1919 6 submarines were ordered to take up patrol positions in case the enemy were making for St. Nazaire.

At 2000 PRINCE OF WALES was proceeding to Hvalfiord. VICTORIOUS screened by KENYA is to endeavour to locate and attack the enemy tomorrow if he is making for the Iceland Faeroes Channel.

Air Searches.

Air searches are being carried out from Scotland and Iceland (C); 3 Catalinas at 1800 commenced a search intended to intercept any movement of the enemy to the northward or southward; and U.S.A. Patrol Squadron has been directed to search an area 500 miles S.E. of Cape Farewell.

Convoys held
up.

Convoys OB 327 and 328 were each held up for 24 hours.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command carried out no operations last night, owing to bad weather.

A strong force of Blenheims operated today against enemy shipping between the mouth of the Scheldt and the Skaw. Four ships were considered to have been hit and damaged, and two of these may have sunk.

2 Blenheims.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

825

SITUATION REPORT.

British Air Operations (contd).

2 Blenheims this afternoon attacked a 4000-5000 ton merchant vessel which had been previously reported by a Maryland in the Bay of Biscay, both aircraft claim 2 hits.

Coastal Command believe that a merchant vessel of 1,000 tons was hit off Lister Light.

Enemy Air Operations.

Two trawlers were attacked off Berry Head today: GEORGES GEORGETTE was damaged and beached, IRENE ROBERTS was damaged by machine gunfire and taken to Brixham.

Mining.

Mines were detonated today off Liverpool and Milford Haven.

South Atlantic.

CORNWALL arrived at Durban today.

Interception of French vessels may now be effected anywhere outside neutral territorial waters.

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Malta.

Some Hurricanes were burnt out and damaged at Ta Kali aerodrome by enemy air attack this forenoon.

Air
Operations
Sicily -
Tripoli
route.

2 Blenheims from Malta today obtained 2 hits on a merchant vessel of 4000 to 5000 tons escorted by a destroyer in 34° 48' N 10° 50' E.

Swordfish tonight laid mines off Lampedusa harbour which is used as a refuge for small merchant vessels on the Sicily - Tripoli route.

Western
Desert.

At 1600 today GRIMSBY was sunk by air attack in 32° 15' N 24° 35' E., 40 miles N.E. of Tobruk, together with S.S. HELKA whom she was escorting. No fighter protection was available.

Attack on Crete.

Policy.

C. in C. Med and C. in C. M.E. have been informed that they are to concert measures for clearing up the situation without delay. In so doing, the Fleet and the R.A.F. must accept whatever risk is intailed in preventing any considerable reinforcement of men and material from reaching Crete by night or by day. Should air R/C show any movement by sea or any collection of craft at Milo it will be essential for the Fleet to operate north of Crete by day, in spite of losses. "Time" is the dominating factor".

Naval
Operations

AJAX, DIDO and destroyers swept the north coast of Crete last night, but sighted nothing. The force was unable to reach Maleme in time to bombard and get clear by daylight.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete.Reinforcements.

Weather conditions prevented destroyers from landing troop reinforcements on the south coast of Crete last night.

ABDIEL who returned to Alexandria today from landing stores and ammunition at Suda Bay, reembarked S.S. troops who could not be landed from the destroyers and is to sail again tonight with 2 destroyers carrying the remainder of the personnel.

GLENROY, COVENTRY and 2 destroyers sailed at 2000 today to land troops and stores on Tybaki beach during the night 26/27 May. Convoy AN 31 of 3 ships (only 2 sailed however) to sail at 0500/26 for Suda Bay with stores. There is no fighter protection for these operations.

Enemy shipping.

Air R/C of the Aegean at 1330 today showed no ships at sea anywhere north of Crete to Stampalia - Milo - Cape Malea. There were 6 small vessels and 15 caiques at Milo.

Air operations.

A Wellington bombed enemy positions in Crete last night.

Suda Bay area.

The Canea area was heavily bombed and machine gunned today.

During this morning 3 squadrons of Blenheims, one of Marylands and a number of Hurricanes heavily bombed and machine gunned enemy aircraft, on Maleme aerodrome and neighbouring fields, destroying an estimated total of 24, including JU 52's and fighters. A further 6 Blenheims bombed Maleme this evening.

A Strong.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25. 5. 1941.
Sunday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete.

A strong enemy attack in the Maleme - Canea area commenced just before dark, backed up by heavy bombing of our forward area and of Canea town. (See 26/5).

Supply and
Medical problem
ashore.

The supply situation ashore is disquieting and an attempt to alleviate it will be made by sending small quantities to Suda Bay in destroyers and a convoy of 3 ships to sail on 27/5. It is expected that the latter, if they arrive at all will have to be beached and become a total loss.

The medical problem is also disquieting. It seems useless to send hospital ships to Crete, in view of the deliberate attacks on them. C. in C. Med. on 26 April and again on 18 May asked to be allowed to seize Italian hospital ships but has had no reply.

U-Boat Campaign

Egyptian SS RADAMES was torpedoed at 1400 N. today in approx 6° N., 12° W., All crew except one were saved and taken on board VELOX.

828A.

SECRET MESSAGE 1555B/25 May OUT.

To B.A.R.M.
repeated R.A.(M).
C.O. SOUTHERN PRINCE
C.O. RODNEY

Date 25.5.41.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CYPHER II.

From Admiralty.

NITE

UKARM 298.

Now that it is the policy of H.M.G. to collaborate fully with the U.S. the following observations are to be brought to the notice of all Commanding Officers of H.M. Ships refitting in America, now or in future:-

1. U.S. Naval Officers, paying official visits and making enquiries on behalf of U.S. Naval authorities, may be given any information they require except that concerning forthcoming operations and information of a most secret nature not of immediate value to the U.S. Navy. The sources of any Most Secret reports which may be given must never be divulged.
2. Whilst United States' Officers should not be made to feel information is being withheld from them, it must be remembered that U.S.A. internal security arrangements are probably less reliable than ours and for that reason officers must take care to assure themselves of the bona fides of those who seek information.
3. Information must not be given concerning
 - (a) Grade 1 Cyphers and Codes.
 - (b) Official publications that are liable to contain political comment on American affairs.
4. Officers who have contact with U.S. Officers should also be warned that personal opinions which they may express casually are liable to be reported to Washington.
5. Discussion of secret matters with U.S. Naval Officers paying courtesy visits, is to be avoided.

1555B/25.
for Hd. of M. (853).

Approved by A.C.N.S.(F).

89.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1st Lord. | M. 54(6). | I.P.(3). |
| 1st S.L. | (M.07893/41). | W.D. — |
| 2nd S.L. | M. 34(2). | Admiral Bellairs. |
| Controller. | D.N.I.(4). | |
| V.C.N.S. | D. of P. (3). | |
| A.C.N.S.(F). | Ops. (4). | |
| A.C.N.S.(H). | D.N.A.D. | |
| Nav. Sec. | D.S.D.(2). | |
| C.S.O. to 1st S.L. | Admiral Bailey. | |
| P.A.S.(S). | O.D.(5). | |

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.DUKE OF
YORK.Deputy Controller will visit Glasgow on
258/5 to discuss acceleration. (Controller
1725B/25 to F.O.I.C. Glasgow).Delayed
Signals.N.O.I.C. Oban's 1000/16. Request you will
obtain full written report in explanation
of these delays and forward proposals for
preventing their recurrence. (A.C.N.S. (T)
1955B/25 to C. in C. W.A).Movements.LANCE.Proceed to Reykjavik and await further
orders. (R.A.D. 1001B/25 to LANCE).BEDOUIIN.
IMPULSIVE.2. Unless otherwise ordered BEDOUIIN and
IMPULSIVE after leaving SOUTHERN PRINCE in
position "X" proceed to Reykjavik complete
with fuel and await further orders. (R.A.D.
1013B/25).MALCOLM.Return to Reykjavik. (F.O.I.C. Iceland
1043/25 to MALCOLM).JUPITER.Proceed to Skaale Fiord Faeroes and complete
with fuel. Thence provide escort for BEN -
MY - CHREE from Faeroes to Reykjavik as
ordered by N.O.I.C. Faeroes.
Para. 2. On arrival unless otherwise ordered
proceed to Hvalfiord complete with fuel and
await further orders. (R.A.D. 1045B/25 to
JUPITER).
Your 1045B/25. E.T.A. 1330B/26. (JUPITER
2046B/25 to N.O.I.C. Faeroes).RAMILLIES.
BRITANNIC.RAMILLIES is to join BRITANNIC and escort
her to Halifax.
2. ESKIMO now believed with BRITANNIC is to
report P.C. and S. of BRITANNIC. (V.C.N.S.
1424B/25).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK, PRINZ
and HIPPER, EUGEN.

Have lost touch with enemy battleship last seen in 57 08 N 36 34 W course 165 21 knots. (NORFOLK 0055B/25).

One enemy cruiser bearing 204 distance 8 miles my position 57° 2' N. 36° 21' W. R.16 (NORFOLK 0122B/25).

Enemy surface craft detected by R/DF bearing 215 distance 11 miles my position 57° 6' N. 36° 5' W. (SUFFOLK 0124B/25).

One enemy battleship bearing 200° 12 miles course 180 my position 56° 57' N. 35° 36' W. based on ref. position SO detached forces 0800. (PRINCE OF WALES 0130/25)

Attack completed 0020. 1 hit observed. Further report will be made. (F.O. 2nd C.S. 0159B/25 to C. in C.H.F)

Surface craft detected by R/DF bearing 195° distance 11 miles my position 56° 49' N 36° 8' W. (SUFFOLK 0213B/25)

My 0213B. Enemy course 160° speed 20 knots. (SUFFOLK 0225B/25).

Enemy either worked round to Eastward under stern of shadowing force or has turned Westward. Acting on latter alternative. (SUFFOLK 0401B/25).

Have lost touch with Enemy. Am resuming his original course and speed. My position 56° 2' N. 36° 1' W. (SUFFOLK 0441/25)

Lost touch with enemy 0306. (SUFFOLK 0505/25).

NORFOLK with PRINCE OF WALES astern was in position 55° 52' N. 36° W. at 0500 B. close on port quarter of SUFFOLK. If visibility is good intend to work round to the northward of P at dawn so that PRINCE OF WALES can join you. If visibility is low shall keep PRINCE OF WALES to support me in maintaining contact at short range. (C.S.1 0511B/25 to Scapa)

Organize air and surface search N.W. of last reported position. (C. in C. H.F. 0600B/25 to F.O. 2nd C.S).

/Enemy.....

*ED 7me H says at 0330
inches across to 100 ft
Downward from southward*

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for BISMARCK, PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
- Contd.

Enemy lost at ^{0306 B.} ~~06~~ ~~48~~B. SUFFOLK is being sent to search to westward. At daylight NORFOLK follows SUFFOLK, and PRINCE OF WALES will be sent to join you. (NORFOLK 0605B/25) Probability appears that enemy made a 090° alteration west or turned back then and cut away to eastward under our stern. (C.S.1 0616B/25 to C. in C. H.F).

Correct 0605B Word after Enemy lost at to read 0306B. (NORFOLK: Recd. 0636/25)

At 0630B Am proceeding to search on course 285° at 25 knots my ref. Posn. at 0600B 055° 30' N. 036° W. (C.S.1. 0630B/25 to SUFFOLK).

PRINCE OF WALES has been ordered to proceed at 06207 to join you. Your estimated P.C. and S. at 0630 have been given as 54° N. 34° 55' W. 216° 26 knots. (C.S.1. 0651B/25) My position at 0630B 055° 20' N. 035° 54' W. (C.S.1 0704B/25).

My P.C. and S. at 0700B/25 are 055° 12' N. 035° 56' W. 205° 25½ knots. (PRINCE OF WALES 0707B/25).

Our forces lost visual touch with enemy at 0306 in approx. 56° 30' N. 36° 00 W.

Enemy must be within 150 miles of last mentioned position at 0600Z. (1st S.L. 0741B/25).

F.O. 2nd C.S. 0159B/25. Have you any evidence to confirm that T/B attack was successful?

-(A.C.N.S.H. 0829B/25 to C.S.1, SUFFOLK, PRINCE OF WALES). [Reply from P. of W. "No." 0926B/25] p. 832

Weather forecast 0900/25 for 12 hours. (Duty Met. Officer 0832B/25).

Take all forces of Home Fleet also RODNEY and RAMILLIES under your orders. (D.O.D(H) 0836B/25 and 1048B/25 to C. in C.H.F.)

During the period from shortly after the time of the T.B. attack until 0258B/25 BISMARCK made a series of signals some very long, and a fair inference is that owing to damage received enemy has recast his plan. (1st S.L. 0855B/25 to C. in C.H.F)

My position 052° 34' N. 029° 23' W. SOMALI, TARTAR, MASHONA in company. Intend to remain in this vicinity to intercept enemy break to South Eastwards. Visibility 10 miles. (RODNEY 0900B/25);

/A.M. 2023B/24....

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
- Contd.

1. A.M. 2023B/24. Situation at 0600B/25.
1. 1st C.S. lost touch with enemy at 0306 in 56° 23' N. 36° 05' W.
2. NORFOLK and SUFFOLK are searching to the Westward and C.S. 2 with 4 cruisers and VICTORIOUS is carrying out a surface and air search to the northwestward of last known position of enemy.
3. C. in C. H.F. is estimated to be near 55° N. 35° W. PRINCE OF WALES had been detached by C.S.1 to join C. in C.
4. RODNEY estimated 55° 30' N. 33° 00' W.
5. RAMILLIES estimated 51° 30' N. 38° 00' W.
6. EDINBURGH estimated 49° 40' N. 30° 30' W.
7. LONDON estimated 38° 40' N. 21° 00' W proceeding to the southwestward to search for enemy tanker.
8. Force H estimated 39° 00' N. 18° 30' W. proceeding to intercept enemy from the southward.
9. REVENGE estimated 43° 30' N. 58° 00' W.
- 10 MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA refuelling Hvalfjord - Iceland. (V.C.N.S. 0919B/25).
- Your 0829B/25. No. (PRINCE OF WALES 0926B/25 to Admty.)
- Your 0829/25. Only available evidence in NORFOLK is report from aircraft to VICTORIOUS as follows begins: Have attacked enemy with torpedoes and only one hit observed. T.O.O. 0015B ends. (C.S.1. 0943B/25 to Adty.)
- Estimated position of enemy by D/F at 0852B/25 was 057° N. 033° W. All Home Fleet forces search accordingly. (C. in C. H.F. 1047/25).
- Radio finger prints indicate that the ship which transmitted at 0854B/25 in a position to the Eastward of the last known position of BISMARCK is the same ship that transmitted a number of messages after the T/B attack last night. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1057B/25).
- Your 0900B/25. Act on assumption that enemy is proceeding towards a Bay of Biscay port. (V.C.N.S. 1158B/25 to RODNEY).

8
M01122/41 C in C. dispatch 1/18
state this position
was from Admty
signals. AB

see A 5833

/My 0919B.....

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK, PRINZ
and HIPPER, EUGEN.
- Contd.

My 0919B is being repeated to you for information. (H.W.R. 1202B/25 to F.O.S. and H.Q.C.C.)

BISMARCK and HIPPER class cruisers may arrive Brest A.M./27. *Flag Officer (S)*

B. Submarines take up following patrol positions proceeding with despatch when practicable.

<u>C. Name.</u>	<u>Lat. North.</u>		<u>Long. West.</u>	
H.44	48	56	06	48
SEALION	48	44	07	38
SEAWOLF	48	15	07	06
PANDORA	48	01	07	52
STURGEON	47	32	07	22
TIGRIS.	47	17	08	10

(F.O.S. 1244B/25). *Cancelled - See next page*

My 1158B/25. Comply with C. in C. H.F. 1047/25 acting on the assumption that enemy is proceeding to Norway via passage between Scotland and Iceland. (C.N.S. 1428B/25 to RODNEY). *[Cancelled 1805B/25, see next page]*

Whenever you break W/T silence it would be helpful if you will include your P.C. and S. (V.C.N.S. 1443B/25 to C. in C.H.F)

BISMARCK opened fire range 23000 yards just after HOOD. Fire immediately effective on HOOD. No results obtained on type 284 or 281 due to interference probably enemy.

BISMARCK'S secondary armaments effective at 20000 yards. (PRINCE OF WALES 1545B/25)

My position 054° 50' N. 033° 20' W. at 1600B, course 80°, speed 25 knots. Your 1428, do you consider enemy making for Faeroes?

(C. in C. H.F. 1621/25 to Adty.)

My 1621B/25. My P.C. and S. are at 1815B 054° 57' N. 031° 53' W. 117° 24 knots.

(C. in C. H.F. 1817/25 to Adty.)

/My P.C.....

see p832

(A)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER & EUGEN.
- Contd.

My P.C. and S. are at 1700B 057° 42' N. 035° 40' W. 070° 27 knots. VICTORIOUS, KENYA, AURORA in company. HERMIONE detached Hvalfiord fuel. Intend GALATEA, AURORA part company to Hvalfiord to fuel at 0100B/26 VICTORIOUS screened by KENYA to endeavour to locate and attack enemy A.M. tomorrow if he is making for Iceland Faroes Channel. (C.S. 2 1655B/25 to C. in C.H.F). MANCHESTER, ARETHUSA and BIRMINGHAM will be fuelled and ready for sea 2200B/25. (MANCHESTER 1746B/25 to C. in C. H.F) Cancel my 1428B/25. Proceed on the assumption -that destination of the enemy is a French Port. (V.C.N.S. 1805B/25 to RODNEY). Admiralty appreciation is that BISMARCK is making for West coast of France. (V.C.N.S. 1824B/25).

Weather Forecast from 1900 G.M.T/25 to 0900 G.M.T. /26. (Duty Met. Officer 1903B/25) Send destroyers to screen PRINCE OF WALES and VICTORIOUS as soon as possible. (C. in C H.F. 1912/25 to Capt. D.3).

(A) Enemy more likely to proceed to St. Nazaire.

(B) Cancel Para. C. of my 1244B/25 and substitute:-

H.44	48	16	06	28
SEALION	47	48	06	10
PANDORA	47	32	06	48
SEAWOLF	47	08	06	20
STURGEON	46	46	06	48
TIGRIS.	46	28	06	12

(F.O.S. 1919B/25 to S/M's Area A)

Proceed at best speed, when complete with fuel to screen PRINCE OF WALES estimated P.C. and S. 2000B/25 055° 40' N. 031° 50' W. zigzagging S. of A. 18 knots. Carry out sweep at visibility distance on passage.

(D.3. 1957B/25 to ELECTRA, ANTELOPE, ACHATES, ANTEBONY). *See next page*

/T.B.R.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
- Contd.

T.B.R. have been arranged 10 miles either side of your track to cover your passage to patrol position. (Capt. S.5 2017B/25 to SEALION).

My P.C. and S. are at 2100 55° 50' N. 31° 28' W. 120° 26. Fuel remaining 50% at 2000. (C.S.1. 2040B/25).

My P.C. and S. are 054° 07' N. 029° 18' W. X 20, 117°, 26 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 2200/25 to Adty.)

→ Sail four destroyers forthwith to screen PRINCE OF WALES to Hvalfiord. PRINCE OF WALES was in 55° 40' N. 31° 50' W. at 2000 today proceeding for Hvalfiord at 18 knots zigzagging. (V.C.N.S. 2201B/25 to ELECTRA).

Signal intercepted strength 6 on 390 kc/s contain ~~FELIX~~ = ~~FELIX~~ at 1500/24th bearing 062°, position 057° 53' N. 26° 10' W. 1900/24th bearing 083°, position 57° 2' N. 25° 47' W.

1700/25th bearing 110° position 54° 36' N. 27° W. singly. Might be German Oiler going southward parallel to BISMARCK, keeping contact. (MANSFIELD 2205Z/25 to C. in C. W.A).

F.O.S. 1919B/25. Proceed on surface through 048° 46' N. 005° 46' W. to new patrol position 047° 48' N. 006° 10' W. T.B.R. will be arranged to cover passage. (Capt. S.5. 2225B/25 to SEALION).

Request Destroyer Screen be available to R/V with KING GEORGE V. Lack of fuel may necessitate lowering speed A.M./27. Also for RODNEY. (C. in C.H.F. 2238/25 to Adty.) Request you will signal on arrival in harbour

(a) A brief account of the action.

(b) Summary of damage.

(c) Any other remarks of interest.

(A.C.N.S.H. 2317B/25 to C.S.1).

→ ELECTRA, ACHATES, ANTHONY, ECHO sailed.

(N.O.I.C. Iceland 2340/25) *See previous page*

Concur that VICTORIOUS and KENYA should operate as proposed in C.S.2's 1655B/25 in spite of A.M. 1824B/25. (V.C.N.S. 2342/25 to C.S. 2 and C. in C. H.F).

/After.....

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK & PRINZ
and HIPPER EUGEN.
- Contd.

After arrival in patrolling position object is to attack enemy cruisers and above. (F.O.S. 2346B/25 to S/M's)
My 1244B/25. Submarines are not to be attacked unless their hostile identity is certain. (F.O.S. 2348B/25 to S/M's Area A)

East
Coast
Patrol.

In view of reductions in Brightlingsea A/P drifters, request Sheerness vessels maintain positions between B.3 and B. 5 buoys. Day patrol need be maintained only when conditions require. (C. in C. Nore 0949B/25).

Dover
Patrols.

For night 25th/26th. No patrols owing to weather forecast. (V.A. Dover 1709B/25).

837

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

→ BISMARCK ?
PRINZ EUGEN.

In the event of enemy breaking back to the East, following patrols have been ordered. N.W. from North Cape to Ice Limit. 360° from Revosnaes to 200 miles or Ice Limit Faeroes to Iceland. Faeroes to Shetlands. Lc/ "STAB," "STAND," "BERT," "TROST," and "HORNLI" on the Norwegian Coast. P.R.U. Norwegian Ports and Kiel. (A.C.N.S. H. 0225B/25).

M/V's
attacked.

Day 24/5. 4 Aircraft attacked three out of four stationary M/Vs of 2,000 tons 10 miles north of Borkum with incendiaries. A direct hit with one 250 lb was obtained on the prow of one of these M/Vs. Ship is claimed as total loss. Two aircraft attacked a stationary flak ship 20 miles north of Borkum with incendiaries. Bombs from one aircraft were observed to be very near misses. 4 aircraft attacked one of two M/Vs of 2500 tons 15 miles west of Borkum with incendiaries. Crews were certain that direct hits were obtained. Night 24/25. No operations owing to bad weather. (H.Q.B.C. 0310/25).

Ten Digby aircraft one Boeing 24 and two Boeing 17 aircraft are standing by at Newfoundland. (D.O.D(H) 0422B/25 to C. in C. H.F).

→ BISMARCK ?
PRINZ EUGEN.

In view of SUFFOLK'S 0441B request air search at dawn. Enemy speed has not exceeded 22 knots for some time. (C.S.1. 0522B/25 to C. in C.H.F).

Bombing
Restriction.

Request T.B.R. between 50° N. and 44° N. and 009° W. and West Coast of France and lines joining Brest and Land's End. (F.O.S. 1509B/25 to SEVERN).

/Patrols.....

838

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd).

Patrols.

A/S sweep by three Whitleys will be flown from 1400 to 1930/25 covering following area. (C. in C. Rosyth 1328/25).

1. 3 Long Range Catalina A/C fitted with A.S.V. will arrive in 52° N. 21° 10' W. at about 2100B.
2. From this position they will fly a parallel track sweep out to 30° W. on a course 298° on a front of 90 miles.
3. The aircraft will then fly due North for 50 miles.
4. They will then return on a parallel track sweep on a course of 060° as far as 16° W. (V.C.N.S. 1620B/25).

Enemy Air Activity.

THOMAS
STEPHEN
attacked.

(Trawler) Attacked at 2359/24 by single unidentified A/C. Position 58° 28' N. 2° 42' W. L.L.B. and M.G. Six bombs fell wide. Two wounded by M.G. fire, 1 seriously. No damage to ship. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1115/25).

Convoy.

Fighters have been sent to convoy ^{"Muster"}~~MUSTER~~ (Lyness W/T 2330B/25).

Mining.

Iceland.

1 Mine MK X X rendered safe 10/5, 1 9/5 both in 063° 40' N. 020° 15' W. 1 Mine marked XX sunk 4/5 in 063° 33' N. 017° 30' W. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1031/25).

/Liverpool.....

War Diary:

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd).

Liverpool.

At 0657/25 one Ground Mine detonated by S.A. Details. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1235B/25)
One mine detonated by S.A. trawler. Details. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2058B/25).

Milford Haven.

4 Mines detonated today by Sweeper. Details. (P.M.S.O. Milford Haven 1818/25).

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy Unit.

Following bearings obtained at 0654Z/25. -(D.D.I.C. 0927B/25).
Following bearings intercepted at 0748Z/25. (D.D.I.C. 1030B/25).
My 1030/B. Following bearings received at 0854Z/25. Signal was repetition of that made at 0748Z/25. (D.D.I.C. 1139B/25).
From D/F bearings the position of the enemy unit transmitting was in approx. 55° 30' N: and between 31° & 32° W. at 1054B/25. Longitude is unreliable. (D.D.I.C. 1228B/25)
Good D/F fix at 1320 puts enemy vessel within 50 miles of 55° 15' N. 32° W. Transmission was on submarine frequency but strength of signals indicates that ship transmitting was surface ship. Further signal will follow as to whether fingerprints give any information and giving list of bearings. (V.C.N.S. 1419B/25 to C. in C.H.F);
My 1419B/25. By D/F at 1120 G.M.T. following bearings obtained. Fingerprint indicates that unit transmitting was not the same as that using ~~KOOTWIK~~ Kootwik frequency in the same vicinity. Probably U/B. (D.D.I.C. 1507B/25).

/Brest.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence. (contd).Brest.

Air R/C at 1950B/25 show battlecruisers still at Brest in usual positions. (D.D.I.C. 2108B/25).

Enemy
Escort
Craft.

My 1919/25. Analysis of recent R/C of French ports show that 5 German destroyers and a number of M. class minesweepers may be available for escort duty. (F.O.S. 2347B/25 to S/M's Area A).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys.S.L. Convoys.

It is intended to send one Commodore only for future S.L. convoys, instead of one for the fast portion and one for the slow portion as heretofore, (reasons).
(D.T.D. 1328B/95 to C. in C.S.A).
2

H.X. 128 and
S.C. 32.

To reverse course for 12 hours and then to proceed on route ordered in A.M. 2028B/23.
(V.C.N.S. 1414B/25 to LACONIA, CALIFORNIA etc)

O.B. 327.
O.B. 328.

Sailing of convoy O.B. 327 and O.B. 328 is to be delayed 24 hours each respectively.
(C. in C.W.A. 1509B/25 to all F.O.I.C's)

H.X. 128 and
S.C. 32.

My 1410B/18. As H.X. 128 and S.C. 32 have been re-routed, 3rd and 12th escort groups are not to meet these convoys. (C. in C. W.A 1628B/25 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

W.S.8X.
NEPTUNE.

Your 1123B/24. Concur. (D.O.D.(H) 1815B/25 to C. in C.W.A).

Positions.

Estimated position of Convoys at 1200B/25 as follows:-

W.S.8B.	51° 20' N,	23° 30' W.
S.L. 74.	40° 20' N,	24° 58' W.
H.G. 62.	50° 33' N,	21° 50' W.
O.G. 62.	38° 10' N,	19° 00' W.
ARUNDEL		
CASTLE	43° 05' N,	21° 03' W.

HAVELOCK has been ordered to reverse course of ARUNDEL CASTLE for twelve hours. Anticipate she will do this about midnight tonight.
(A.C.N. S. (F) 2204B/25 to S.O. Force H).

842

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

CASUALTIES AND DEFECTS.

HARRY.

(Faeroes fishing trawler) Found on fire
37 miles N. Rattray Head. No crew on board.
Taken in tow by H.M.T. EBOR ABBEY. Eventually
sank at 0900/25. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1116/25)

LOTTIER. LOTTIE.R.

Your 1015B/25. Sailing delayed 24 hours due
to engine defects in LOTTIER. (F.O.I.C.
Greenock 1459B/25 to C. in C. W.A).

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Enemy
Unit.

D/F bearings of enemy surface unit from Gibraltar at 0148 and 0159 GMT 320 third class and 327 second class respectively. (F.O.C.N.A. 0240/25 to PANDORA, 0245/25 to S.O. Force H and LONDON).

Operation
"Rocket".

Your 1220B/24. 25. (Number of Mark II Hurricanes to be included) (S.O. Force H 0805B/25 to V.A. Malta)

Force H.
(Flag & RENOWN.)

My P.C. and S. at 0730B/25. Position 40.45 - 15.50, 310° 22 knots. ARK ROYAL and SHEFFIELD in company. Destroyer (s) detached. (S.O. Force H., 0840B/25, to Admty.) Please keep me fully informed Brest R/C. (S.O. Force H., 0901B/25 to C. in C. Plymouth) Proceed on assumption that enemy turned towards Brest at 0300B/25. (1st S.L. 1023B/25 to S.O. Force H).

PANDORA.
Ferrol.

Suggest PANDORA patrol off Ferrol in case BISMARCK proceeds there. (F.O.C.N.A. 1034/25 to Admty.)

IMPERIALIST.

Return to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1127A/25 to IMPERIALIST). IMPERIALIST returning to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1128A/25 to PANDORA).

U.S. Force.

U.S. Force may be encountered at sea to west of 027° 15' W. between 025° N. and 037° N. (F.O.C.N.A. 1658/25 to LONDON, CATHAY)

Oerlikon
Guns.

Cancel Admty. 1730/24 and 0140/23. Your 1324/22. Report number of complete Oerlikon equipments and amount of Oerlikon ammunition remaining at Gibraltar. (D.O.D. (F) 1954B/25 to F.O.C.N.A) Reply: see 2346A/26.

SURCOUF.
LONDON.

Presume Admiralty will inform SURCOUF of movements of LONDON if considered necessary. (F.O.C.N.A. 2332/25 to Admty.)

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

LATONA.

LATONA's 2247/24 (N.T. in W.R.) giving T.of A. Freetown 1100Z/25 indicated your 0140B/23/ not received by her. Should she be sailed for Gibraltar as soon as fuelled ? (C. in C. S.A., 0951N/25, to Admty.)

Your 0951N/25. No. She should continue to Suez via the Cape at best possible speed. (D.O.D. (F) 1553B/25 to C. in C. S.A.)

Cancelled - See 27/5 - p. 926

ANGLO
INDIAN,
CORDILLERA
and GASCONY.

Admty., 0001/1 request instructions whether to be routed to Bermuda for convoy via Caribbean.

(St. Vincent, C.V., 1045/25, to Admty.)

Your 1045/25, all homeward-bound ships of convoy speed in Cape Verde Islands should be sailed to join next S.L. convoy.

(D.T.D. 1914B/25 to Consul, St. Vincent, C.V.)

BUTTERFLY
XXIV MAGGIO
(Italian).

My 1745/20. (N.T. in W.R.) BUTTERFLY has returned to anchorage having loaded about 850 tons cotton rubber and hides. 24 MAGGIO has come alongside to load.

(N.C.S.O. Pernambuco, 1142/25, to N.A.Rio; S.O.I. Montevideo 1753Z/25 to R.A.S.A.D.)

MONTE
TEIDE.

Your 1315/22nd all crew Spanish MONTE TEIDE are Spaniards and Captain has always been known to be friendly and is a personal friend of British Ambassador Buenos Aires.

(N.S.O. (I) Montevideo 1146/25, to N.S.O. (I) Freetown.)

PHILOMEL.

Your 1737/18/2. N.O.I.C. Falkland Islands reports earliest date departure PHILOMEL is 22/6 and this subject to weather conditions. (C. in C. S.A., 1343N/25, to Admty.)

/NEWCASTLE.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. Contd.NEWCASTLE
CUMBERLAND.

R.V. at F. 27/5, both fuel from ABBEYDALE.
R.A. - S.A.D. transfers to NEWCASTLE.
CUMBERLAND then proceed direct Freetown
speed of advance 18 knots. I hope to
visit Rio de Janeiro in NEWCASTLE 3/6.
(R.A.S.A.D, 1347Z/25, to S.A.D.)

U/B Area.

My 0030 B/22 and my 1436 B/25. It would
appear better to avoid area between 5° and
10° N., and 20° and 30° W., through which
Greek PARTHENON and AGIOI VICTORES are at
present routed. (A.C.N.S. (T) 1837B/25 to
C. in C. S.A.)

Interception
of French
Vessels.

Interception of French vessels may now be
effected anywhere outside neutral
territorial waters. (C. in C. S.A. 1943N/25
to S.A. Station.)

KING EDWARD.

Overdue shipping, due Durban 20/5 not
arrived. (Capetown, 2000B/25 to Admty., etc).

ANSON.

Ref. CROCUS 1420/25 Report P.C. and S.
(C. in C. S.A., 2036N/25, to ANSON.)

Shipping.

Diversions, (C. in C. S.A., 2214N/25,
2216N/25, 2218N/25, 2220N/25,
2226N/25, 2228N/25.)

846

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.ARNO.

Italian hospital ship, has been ordered to pick up 850 men off Cape Muro di Porco, Sicily. (D.S., 25/5, No. 628.)

URSULA.

Make your best speed during darkness tonight. Two or three escorted transports may be encountered approaching from N.E., at dawn. (Cdr. S.1. 0055B/25, to URSULA.)

Suez Canal.
Minesweeping.

Your 2008B/24. General policy is to carry out intensive sweeping and searching for mines for 3 full days and then sweep ships over dangerous area (s) remaining. 40 ships were swept safely over dangerous area(s) 17 to 23/5 inclusive, Diesel vessels in tow. Movements of shipping now temporarily suspended because of mines laid 24/5.

(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 0317C/25, to Admty.)

A/C attack
on Italian
M/V.

At 1720/ 24/5 2 Blenheim 130 Sadr attacked one M.V. 4 to 5 thousand tons escorted by destroyer in position 34.48 N., 10.50 E., course 270° reported previously by Maryland Recco. Both attacked M.V. scoring two direct hits. Huge column of smoke amidships. Some A.A. from destroyer after attack. M.V. heavily laden with timber stacked on decks. Both aircraft returned safely.

(H.Q. R.A.F., Malta 0515/25.)

TRIUMPH S... p. 651
NEREUS.

Alexandria S/M Sanctuary will be in force 1700 to 2100/25 for TRIUMPH leaving and from 1500 to 1900/26 for Greek S/M NEREUS leaving. All times G.M.T.
(R.A. Alexandria, 0745c/25.)

/UPRIGHT.....

847

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

UPRIGHT.

General (contd).
Add to my 2358/24. Do not enter area M until further orders.
(V.A. Malta, 0750/25, to UPRIGHT.)

CAVALLO.

British 2269 tons. Your 1839/21. S.S.CAVALLO sunk at Nauplia on 24/4(?) by enemy action, all crew saved. (P.S.T.O., Egypt, 1021C/25, to Admty.)

Suez Canal
Air Mining.

Operational Summary No. 349 up to 1200 hours 25/5/41 in 5 parts. Part 1 begins. Egypt, night 23/5 - 24/5. Enemy aircraft dropped 14 mines and 9 bombs in the Suez Canal Zone of which 9 mines and 6 bombs exploded on impact. Remainder unexploded are in Great Bitter Lake area. Enemy departed North from Port Said.

Maleme
bombed.

Night May 23/24. In co-operation with bombardment of enemy positions by H.M. Ships 9 Wellingtons bombed enemy aircraft on beach and aerodrome at Maleme destroying 1 large aircraft and starting large fire on aerodrome. 4 large 1 small fire started on beach 3 Wellingtons missing. Day 24/5. R/C. reported no shipping at sea between Crete Meloj and Ydra Islands.
(H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1116/25.)

Enemy
Cruisers.

One 6" cruiser and two 8" cruisers in 035° 04' N., 015° 33' E., at 1040 B, course 010° 25 knots, alter course to 020° at 1048B. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1144B/25, 1156B/25, to Med. Fleet.)

TRIUMPH.

Estimated position TRIUMPH noon C/26 032° 16' 027° 30' course 290° proceeding submerged.
(Capt. S.1, 1551C/25, to Med. Fleet at Sea.)

/Enemy.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.MediterraneanGeneral.(contd).Enemy Destroyers.

Some Italian destroyers in $037^{\circ} 07' N.$, $023^{\circ} 25' E.$, at 1435 G.M.T./25.
(C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1820C/25, to R.A. 1 B.S., R.A. (A) Med., AJAX.-)

Suez Canal.

Situation report. Mine at 94.5 exploded by L.L. Sweeper. Dangerous area between Kms, 91 and 97 is cancelled.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 2001C/25.)

Enemy Units.

My 1156B/25. 2 8" Cruisers and 3 Destroyers in position 090° Augusta 25 miles course 010° zigzagging at 20 knots at 1625B/25. 2 Destroyers in $037^{\circ} 38' N.$, $015^{\circ} 18' E.$, course 30° 15 knots and 4 Destroyers East of Syracuse 15 miles course 355° 20 knots at 1640 B/25. T.O.O. 2154B/25.
(V.A.Malta, 2157B/25, to S/M's on Patrol.)

UNION.

My 1521 B/22. Cancel reference area L which is heavily compromised by previous action. Proceed through $036^{\circ} 00' 013^{\circ} 00'$ and $035^{\circ} 20' 015^{\circ} 00'$ to operate in area $0,035^{\circ} 00' 015^{\circ} 20'$ (etc.) Indications are fast convoy proceeding South down approx., $015^{\circ} 45'$ and altering course for Tripoli about latitude 035° . Aircraft reconnaissance shows Schooners and A/S ships based Lampedusa.(Cdr. S.1, 2240B/25, to UNION.)

Lampedusa.
"Cucumbers"
laid.

Special Ops. Summary. Since now apparent Lampedusa Harbour used as refuge small M/V's on Sicily Tripoli route 4 Swordfish 830 Sqn., despatched to lay "cucumbers" there night 25/26. A 5th Swordfish carried flares but owing electrical failure no flares dropped. Illuminating cartridges lit Harbour short periods enabling 2 "cucumbers" to be laid near entrance. Exact positions not plotted. All aircraft returned safely.
(H.Q., R.A.F. Malta, 2300/25.)

849

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete.

→ AJAX.

Your 1438C/24 and your 1642C/24. No convoy sighted. Cannot reach positions given. Am withdrawing through (? Kaso). (AJAX, 0227C/25, to C. in C. Med.)

ABDIEL.

Proceeding speed 34 knots. (ABDIEL, 0230/25, to AJAX.) Sailed 0245 with (?60) Walking wounded etc., and four Greek (ministers) on board. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0257Z/25, to C. in C. Med.)

ISIS.

When well clear or opportunity offers signal number landed night 24/25th at Sphakia and whether M.L. 1011 was there. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 0730/25, to ISIS.) W.D. Note:- No Landing, see 0800 etc.

ISIS
landing
postponed.

Weather conditions prevented landing troops. We would like to try again tonight if weather and oil fuel situation permit. My P. C. and S. are at 0700 023° 41' N., 024° 51' E., 120° 22 knots, (?oil fuel) remaining 240. Three borrowed whalers stove in. (ISIS, 0800C/25, to C. in C. Med.) Your 0800/25. Approved to try again tonight if possible. Report intention later. (C. in C. Med., 1156C/25, to ISIS.) In view of adverse weather conditions and very small margin of oil fuel reluctantly consider attempt should be postponed. Col. Laycock concurs. E.T.A. Alexandria 1900. (ISIS, 1410C/25, to C. in C. Med.)

→ Destroyers
to R.V.
AJAX.

My 2324C/24, amend position to read 033° 30' N., 027° 00' E. (C. in C. Med., 0906C/25, to R.A.(D) Med.)

/F.A.A.....

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd).

→ Destroyers to
R.V. AJAX.
(contd).

My 2324/24. Sweep into Aegean again tonight and conditions allowing bombard Maleme provided that you can get well clear to Southward by daylight otherwise withdraw by Kaso Strait and fall back on R.A. (D) Med., at R.V. appointed by him. F.A.A. from FORMIDABLE will be attacking Scarpanto aerodrome about dawn /26. (C. in C. Med., 1043C/25, to AJAX.)
See also p. 854

F.A.A. attack
Scarpanto.

NAPIER
KELVIN
JACKAL.

P.C. and S., at 1100 013° 16' N., 029° 27' E., 317° 30 knots.
(Capt. D.7. 1053/25, to AJAX.)

→ AJAX R.V.

C. in C. Med.'s 2324C/24. R.V. at (? 1600 or 0200) 033° 20' N., 027° 42' E., course 333° 25 knots.
(AJAX, 1107C/25, to R.A.D. Med.)

Bombing
of Canea.

Enemy made a very heavy bombing attack West of Canea and on Western end of Canea itself accompanied by intense machine gunning 24/5. Numerous fires burning last night and refugees leaving town. Situation at Heraklion, Retimo, believed unchanged. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1111c/25, to C. in C. Med.)

JAGUAR.

Your 1234 (N.T. in W.R.) JAGUAR should return Alexandria when VOYAGER and KANDAHAR join. (R.A.D. Med., 1306C/25, to Capt.D.14.)

V.A.L.F.

C. in C. Med., 1043/25. V.A.L.F. will be in 034° 10' N., 025° 50' E., at 0700/26 steering 160° speed 17 knots.
(V.A.L.F., 1324/25, to AJAX.)

/FIJI.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack on Crete. (contd).FIJI.
GREYHOUND.
JUNO.
KELLY.
KASHMIR.

GLOUCESTER.Following is summary of survivors ^(numbers) who have arrived Alexandria:-

2. Regret no news of any survivors from GLOUCESTER but I hope number may have reached either Kithera Island or Crete. They were left with ample boats and rafts dropped by other ship as well as their own, but as survivors in GREYHOUND's boats were heavily machine gunned, it is likely GLOUCESTER's boats were similarly treated. (C. in C. Med. 1517/25, to Admty.)

PARTHIAN.

Left Alexandria 2000C/23 to Patrol off Dardanelles routed through 034° 10' 029° 30' at noon C/24 thence through Scarpanto to P.M./25 and east of Stampalia and Skyros. Will leave Alexandria 2000C/25 to patrol in Gulf of Sirte routed through 031° 46' 029° 04' and 033° 03' 025° 00' Port Castries 2300C/27 to arrive off Benghazi P.M/29. (Capt. S.I. 1555C/25 to C. in C. Med.)

TRIUMPH.Aegean.
Recco.

Request you will repeat morning and evening reconnaissances in Aegean on 26/5. (C. in C. Med., 1743C/25 to 204 Group).

Enemy A/Cs
Maleme.

Reconnaissance of Maleme p.m. and indicates tendency to move enemy aircraft concentrations westward and southward from Maleme. Aircraft and Gliders in field approx., 1 mile west of Maleme also in same neighbourhood 15 JU 52 and ME 109 on mouth of White Point immediately west of landing ground. (C. in C. Med., 1857C/25, to AJAX).

/Sweep.....

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean

German Attack on Crete. (contd).

Sweep by
AJAX'S
force.
Supply
situation
ashore.
Medical
problem.

Melos?

My 2112C/24 weather prevented landing troops on South Coast of Crete on night 24/25th and is again unsuitable tonight. Enemy has apparently not attempted landing by seaborne troops since breaking up of his convoys on 22nd.

(2) AJAX's force swept North Coast of Crete but sighted nothing. Force was unable to reach Macome in time to bombard and get clear by daylight.

(3) PERSEUS has been ordered to examine Melos and take such offensive action as possible against any shipping there.

Supply situation in Crete is causing much anxiety.

(4) Endeavouring to alleviate it by sending small quantities to Suda Bay in destroyers and convoy of three ships sails for Suda on 27th but even if this latter arrives safely ships will have to be beached and may become total loss from air attack.

(5) The medical problem is also disquieting. In view of deliberate (word omitted - probably "attacks") on hospital ships it seems useless to send them to Crete despite the fact that they are most urgently needed yet my hands still remain tied as regards the enemy hospital ships owing to failure to answer my 1254/26/4 or 1150/18/5. (C. in C. Med. 1913/25 to Admty.)

Enemy A/C's.

Following received:-

14 Aircraft bearing 270° height unknown
course 315° my position 056 32° N., 24° E.,
22. (GNAT, 1916/25, to Alexandria W/T.)

/Air Protection...

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

German Attack on Crete. (contd).

Air Protection.
Kaso Strait.

My 1801C/25. Request fighter protection P.M./26, and from daylight 27/5 in vicinity of Kaso Strait. My 1043 C/25. Request fighter protection as required by AJAX at daylight 26/5.
(C. in C. Med., 2011C/25, to H.Q., M.E.)

Crete,
Need for
Avoiding
Delay.

Chiefs of Staff No. 116 to C. in C. Med., and Cs. in C. Middle East. Ref. C. in C. M.E., telegram O/67119 cypher 24/5. If situation is allowed to drag on, the enemy will have the advantage, because he will be able to reinforce the island to a considerable extent with men and stores. Essential therefore that Cs. in C. should concert measures for clearing up situation without delay. In so doing Fleet and R.A.F. must accept whatever risk is entailed in preventing any considerable reinforcement of men and material.
Should air R/C show any movement by sea or any collection of craft at Melo, it will be essential for the Fleet to operate North of the island by day. Probable that losses incurred in so doing will be considerable and only experience will show for how many days this situation can be maintained. This confirms that time is the dominating factor.
(1st. S.L., 2132B/25 to C. in C. Med.,)
W.O., 2335/25 to C. in C. M.E.)

Canea and
Suda Bay
bombed.

Heavy bombing of Canea and just westward continues. Suda Bay area machine gunned during afternoon. P.W. S.S. hit by bomb this evening. Cdr. Salisbury, E.D.O. and 1 Yeoman killed. P.W.S.S. has been re established topographically. Strong enemy attack in Maleme - Canea area commenced just before dark backed up by heavy bombing of our forward area.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 2301C/25, to C. in C. Med.)

/Situation.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.German Attack on Crete. (contd).Situation Report.

My 1913/25. ABDIEL has returned from landing stores and ammunition at Suda Bay and is re-embarking S.S. Troops who could not be landed from destroyers due to weather. ABDIEL sails again tonight 25/26 with two destroyers carrying remainder of personnel. AJAX, DIDO, and 3 destroyers are repeating sweep north of Crete tonight 25/26. QUEEN ELIZABETH, BARHAM, FORMIDABLE have sailed to attack Scarpanto early a.m./26 with aircraft from FORMIDABLE. GLENROY, CONENTRY, and two destroyers sailed 2000/25 to land troops and stores on Tymbaki beach night 26/27. Convoy A.N. 31 of 3 ships sails 0500/26 for Suda with stores. There is no fighter protection for any of these operations. PERSEUS should be off Melos. Reconnaissance reports no shipping north of Crete to Stamfalia Melos Cape Malia today 25th.

GRIMSBY feared sunk.

2. Western Desert. Feared GRIMSBY has been sunk by air attack 40 miles N.E. of Tobruk and also HELKA whom she was escorting no details yet. No fighter protection available.

3. Submarines. In addition to V.A. Malta's 1226/23 UNBEATEN probably sunk merchant vessel 5000 tons in 38°47' N., 14°00' E., at 1240/19. URGE sank one 7,000 ton tanker and one 9,000 ton transport steering south in 45°46' N., 11°54' E., at 1015/20. 1300/21, URGE also sank one destroyer escorting two cruisers in 35.30 N., 12.25 E. (C. in C. Med., 2305C/25 to Admty). My 2305C/25. These sinkings were already reported in V.A. Malta's 1226/22. (C. in C. Med., 1644C/26 to Admty).

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

W.S.8.A.
HAWKINS,
SHROPSHIRE,
CORNWALL.

N.O.i/c Simonstown 1044/24 not to Admiralty and D of S.T. 0300/8. Group B ships available at Durban will sail about 2/6 from Durban in company W.S.8A escorted by HAWKINS. Intend SHROPSHIRE to escort group A. Request SHROPSHIRE be sailed for Durban accordingly on completion of trials. Cancel my 1222/21, CORNWALL is to complete repairs at Durban.
(C. in C. E.I., 0808Z/25, to C. in C. S.A.)

U.S.11
tankers.

Further to Admty., 1459B/17, two tankers can be provided for fuelling. In view of C. in C. Med.'s 1255/17 and as no other distilling ship, can be provided, a third tanker will be provided cleaned and filled with water in time for U.S.11. Will special arrangements also be necessary for watering and fuelling these three ships on their return voyage from U.S.11. to Australia? From security view point ship may anchor outside the boom under conditions given in your 1228/4.
(D.O.D. (H) 1034B/25, to C. in C. E.I.)

China.

Japanese
Seizure of
Chinese
Cargoes
Haiphong:

Following received from Vice-Consul Haiphong: Yesterday after warning French Authorities Japanese demanded keys of all godowns containing Chinese goods. Today they are loading the goods on to their transports. Cargo ship? SUMAHARU about 10,000 tons arrived this morning empty, presumably loading seized goods.

? SUWA-MARU.

/DELIMARU.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Japanese
Seizure of
Chinese
Cargoes,
Haiphong.
Contd.

DELIMARU also arrived. French Authorities ordered owners to give up goods to Japanese. French ship CHENONCEAUX sailing for Manila today. (Ends.)
(C.O.I.S. Singapore, 1212Z/25, to Admty.)

America and West Indies.LONDON.

Is to proceed at 23 knots towards 25° 30' N., 42° 00' W., where it is thought enemy Tanker may be waiting, and to search the surrounding area. It may prove possible to arrange R/C by U.S. Forces. The possibility of a U-Boat accompanying the Tanker should be borne in mind.
(1st. Sea Lord. 0006/25, to LONDON.)
Cancelled, see 0053B/26.

Canadian
Units,
Base at
St. John's.

Your 2011B/24. My 2108Z/21 refers to all R.C.N. destroyers, 8 of which are under Admiralty control. SKEENA, ST. LAURENT, and GEORGETOWN complete refit mid June and will be available shortly afterwards. ST CROIX and ANAPOLIS are being retained at Halifax for local escorts. The seven corvettes have had a normal working up period and are in an efficient state.
(N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, 0345Z/25, to Admty.)

THUNDERBOLT.

My 1653 P/24. THUNDERBOLT sailed 0630 P/25. (B.S.3., 0645P/25, to Admty.)

B.H.X. 129.

Admty., 1312B/25. B.H.X. 129 is being sailed to arrive at junction position D.D. at 1200Z/30. All orders issued to convoy postponed 24 hours.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 0942Q/25, to C.O.A.C. Halifax.)
C. in C. A.W.I., 1222Q/24. BHX 129 is to be sailed as soon as possible. Time of sailing of HX 129 is to be adjusted to conform.
(A.C.N.S.(T) 1312B/25, to C. in C. A.W.I., C.O.A.C. Halifax.)

/KING GEORGE V...

857

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. (contd)KING GEORGE V.
class. docking.

An urgent requirement for docking a 'KING GEORGE' Class may arise. Request American Authorities be asked to prepare special blocks and a dock for this purpose. Report should be forwarded where docking could be arranged and date when dock could be ready. (D. of D. 1256B/25, to B.A.R.M.)

U.S. Naval
Officers.

Policy re supply of information (A.C.N.S.(F) to B.A.R.M., 1555B/25) See Lion Copy.

REPULSE.

Is proceeding to Concepcion Bay to refuel and may arrive there by p.m./26. Oiler should be sailed to R.V. with her there. Request you will communicate best anchorage to REPULSE and arrange all possible A/S protection (V.C.N.S. 1712B/25, to N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F., N.S.H.Q., Ottawa.)
Divert ROYALITE and comply with Admty. 1712B/25. (N.S.H.Q., Ottawa, 1935Z/25 to N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F.)

SHEHERAZADE
(French).

Your 0621B/23 and D. of S.T. 1623B/23. Crew of French SHEHERAZADE disembarked 24/5. Every effort made to induce them to join Free French cause. No volunteers so far obtained and whole crew now interned. (Chief reasons for lack of success) Cargo. Intend to attempt to recruit crew for SHEHERAZADE by all available means. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1751Q/25, to Admty.)

Australia.U.S. 11.
U.S. 11½.

Composition etc. Request anticipated date of sailing. (D. of S.T. 1035B/25 to A.C.N.B)

858

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.ELUSA
(torpedoed
21/5.)

Your 1716B/23. In view of situation ZWARTE ZEE and BUTTERMERE were not sent. Propose to send ZWARTE ZEE to U.K. with S.D.4. TENACITY could be sent if salvage still considered possible. (F.O.I.C. Iceland, 1010/25. to C. in C.W.A.)

RODNEY
STAR.
BERHALA.

N.C.S.O. Takoradi's 1900/23. Only Chief Officers Boat of RODNEY STAR unaccounted for with 18 Survivors including Capt. Fothergill. BOREAS has on board 60 Survivors of BERHALA reported torpedoed 23rd May in 09° 50' N., 17° 50' N., (? W) 23 survivors from BRITISH GRENADIER picked up by Portuguese GANDA landed Freetown 24th May. (S.O. (I) Freetown 1122N/25.)

PIAKO.
(torpedoed
18/5.)

British, 8286 tons, now appears was torpedoed and sunk in 7.52 N., 14.57 W. (D.S. 628, 25/5.)

MARISA.
(torpedoed
16/5.)

Dutch tanker, 8029 tons, is now reported to have sunk. 4 officers and 9 Chinese arrived Freetown 21/5. (D.S. 628, 25/5.)

BENVENUE.
(torpedoed
15/5.)

British, 5920 tons, is now reported to have sunk. (D.S. 628, 25/5.)

ALFRED OLSEN.
(torpedoed
10/5.)

Ship FEURENT MEEUS (Belgian) arrived Curacao 25/5 having picked up 16 members of crew of Norwegian ship ALFRED OLSEN on 14/5 in 004° 55' N., 017° 15'. Ship torpedoed by Submarine. Norwegian Consul informed of names of survivors which include two British Officers who joined Ship at Capetown. (S.N.O. Curacao, 1731/25, to C. in C.A.W.I.) Ship presumed to have sunk. (D.S. 629, 26/5.)

/BENVRACKIE.....

War Diary.25.5.1941.
Sunday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.BENVRACKIE.Ship's Attacked. Contd.

My 2114/23. BENVRACKIE sunk by one torpedo at 0630 ships time/13. Chinese survivors stated 4 days before being torpedoed BENVRACKIE picked up 25 survivors from another ship name unknown four being passengers including one woman, Ship sank in 10 minutes.
(C. in C. S.A. 2042N/25, to Adty.)

S/M's Reported.

0710. By D/F at 0710 z/25. An Italian S/M within 50 miles of 45° N., - 2° W. Possibly outward bound.
(D.D.I.C. 1026B/25, to S/M's on Patrol.)
0955. A/C reports S/M in $055^{\circ} 53'$ N., $012^{\circ} 45'$ W., at 0955B.
(C. in C. W.A., 1107B/25, to SALISBURY.)
1123. At 1123 G.M.T. German U-Boat bearing 319° 2nd class from Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1247B/25 to N.A. Stn.)
1018. By D/F at 1018 G.M.T. Italian U/B in 46° N., $11^{\circ} 30'$ W. Unreliable fix. Homeward bound. (D.D.I.C. 1313B/25.)
1153. Southbound U-boat in $044^{\circ} 38'N.009^{\circ} 14'W$ at 1153A. Not seen or detected after PANDORA dived. (PANDORA, 1346A/25 to Admty.)
Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1436B/25.) (F.O.S., 1701B/25.)
1645. By D/F at 1645 G.M.T. Italian U/Boat in Bay of Biscay between $5^{\circ} 30'$ and $6^{\circ} 30'$ W., latitude uncertain, probably outward bound.
(D.D.I.C. 1930B/25.)

War Diary.

25.5.1941.
Sunday.

U BOAT CAMPAIGN.

S/M's Attacked.

By A/C
1350/23.

A/C on Search No. 2. Area Biscay on 23/5/41.
1350 Message received Base "Have attacked
enemy S/M with Bombs 'level' 46.08 N.,
01.15 W. Returning to base engine trouble
may be forced to land without further
notice." 1715. (Approx.) Crashed Penzance.
All members of crew injured. Crew not in
fit state to be interrogated, but it
appears they made a series of attacks on a
surfaced S/M in La Rochelle area, one bomb
said to have fallen within ten feet of U/B.
A/C also machine gunned U Boat and it was
apparently during this part of the engage-
ment that A/C was hit by gun on U/Boat.
(A.C.H.Q., Plymouth, 1030/25, to Admty.)
Details of attack, see 2205/29.

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS | - | Policy |
| (Classification | - | Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects) | - | Movements |
| | - | Operations |
| | - | Allied Air Activity |
| | - | Enemy Air Activity |
| | - | Mining |
| | - | Enemy Intelligence |
| | - | U-Boats |
| | - | Navigational |
| | - | Technical |
| | - | Casualties and Defects |
| | - | Shipping and Convoys |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - | North Atlantic |
| (Classification | - | South Atlantic |
| by stations) | - | Mediterranean |
| | - | East Indies |
| | - | America and West Indies |
| | - | Australia and New Zealand |
| | - | U-Boat Campaign |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

BISMARCK AND PRINZ EUGEN.

The enemy remained unlocated since touch was lost early yesterday morning. At 0011B the Admiralty ordered MANCHESTER who had been fuelling at Hvalfjord, with ARETHUSA and BIRMINGHAM, to send one cruiser to watch the Denmark Straits and the remaining two the Iceland-Faeroes passage; they left at 0238B. VICTORIOUS and KENYA were in 57° 27' N. 30° 44' W. at 0100B, endeavouring to locate and attack the enemy if he were making for the Faeroes-Iceland passage. The weather became unsuitable for flying and at 0955B VICTORIOUS reported that she was proceeding with KENYA to Hvalfjord. At 1328B the Adty. ordered VICTORIOUS to the Clyde to fuel. SUFFOLK at 1015B was ordered to proceed to search an area 58° N. to 57° N. between 50° W. and 44° W. for supply ships.

BISMARCK
sighted.

At 1030 a Catalina aircraft reported BISMARCK in 49° 33' N. 21° 47' W. steering 150° at 20 knots. At 1114B ARK ROYAL's aircraft reported BISMARCK in 49° 32' N. 20° 55' W, course 110° speed 20 knots. Visibility was very patchy and shadowing intermittent. C. in C. H.F. was in 51° 33' N 20° 43' W., closing the enemy at 26 knots. Shadowing aircraft and also C. in C. H.F. in chase were attacked by enemy aircraft and a Catalina was damaged. S.O. Force H reported his position at 1248 49° 30' N 19° 10' E, steering 350°. SHEFFIELD was detached to shadow; she made contact at 1740 and continued to shadow so throughout the day. RENOWN had orders not to become engaged with BISMARCK unless the latter was already heavily engaged by either KING GEORGE V or RODNEY.

/Straits.....

862

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

BISMARCK AND PRINZ EUGEN. (contd).

Straits of Gibraltar to be patrolled.

At 1228B the Admiralty ordered air and submarine patrols to prevent the possible passage of the enemy into the Mediterranean. Certain orders regarding Spanish territorial waters were given. SEVERN was ordered at 1122 to return to Gibraltar at maximum speed to establish an offensive patrol in the Straits. NELSON had been ordered to proceed to Gibraltar at 0036B from Freetown where she arrived yesterday.

C. in C.H.F. reduces speed.

At 1705 KING GEORGE V had to reduce speed to 22 knots in order to economize fuel. Her position at 1800 was 49° (748') N, 17° 35' W, steering 110°, with RODNEY in company. Unless the enemy's speed was reduced C. in C.H.F. in KING GEORGE V intended to return to refuel at 2400B, leaving RODNEY to continue the pursuit, but without destroyer escort.

SHEFFIELD in contact.

SHEFFIELD, detached from Force H was in touch with the enemy at 1747. At 2140 the enemy fired 6 accurate salvos at her and caused some casualties and slight damage. SHEFFIELD lost touch but put a destroyer on to the enemy and then kept clear 14 miles to the westward.

F.A.A. attacks.

A striking force from ARK ROYAL left at 1500/B. It failed to make direct contact and was forced to search. A ship was eventually located in poor visibility and was unsuccessfully attacked by 11 aircraft. This was apparently SHEFFIELD, who avoided all torpedoes. A second force left at 1900 and at 2225B S.O. Force H reported that one hit had been scored amidships and a possible second hit on the starboard quarter, after which the BISMARCK reduced speed and turned two complete circles. The senior surviving officer of BISMARCK afterwards stated that it was this latter hit which reduced BISMARCK'S speed and so ensured her subsequent destruction.

/Further.....

863

War Diary

26.5.1941.
Monday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

BISMARCK and PRINZ EUGEN

F.A.A.
attacks
-contd.

Further air attack was not possible tonight but dawn attack would be carried out tomorrow. The estimated position of the enemy at 2130B was 47° 45' N., 15° 25' E., steering 330° at 22 knots. RENOWN was in 48° 17' N., 15° 50' E., steering 20° at 20 knots at 2100B SEALION was patrolling on a line 260° from position, 48° 20' N., 5° 15' W; the remaining 5 submarines were ordered to move their patrol 30 miles 162°.

Capt. (D) 4
in touch.

At 2300B COSSACK in 242° 48° N., 15° W., 19 miles was in touch with BISMARCK bearing 115° 7 miles, course 60°. By 2320 the enemy had altered course to 340°.

British Air Operations

Owing to the operations against BISMARCK H.M. Ships may be forced to use Plymouth and Milford Haven for fuelling or repairing during 27/5 to 30/5 inclusive. The Air Ministry have ordered special measures to be taken for protection of Plymouth and Milford Haven, the operational aerodromes in the S.W. and fighter protection for H.M. Ships to as great a depth to seaward as practicable.

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Enemy Air Operations.

S.S. DIANA was attacked by machine gun fire 5 times between 0500 and 0545 in 61° 35' N. 11° 6' W. She was undamaged and had one slight casualty.

Steam Trawler H.E. STROUD was bombed at 1830B and was abandoned off Lamb Head, Stronsay.

S.S. GROS PIERRE has been damaged off Sunderland and has been beached.

Mining.

Mines were detonated today off the Humber, Milford Haven and Liverpool.

Liverpool is to be closed at night until further notice.

Mediterranean.

Libyan operations.

Operation
against
Derna.

Unexpectedly heavy scale of air attack against shipping along the coast has interfered temporarily with the combined operation arranged against Derna by APHIS and S.S. troops. It is hoped to carry out a modified form of the operation tonight.

/Air.....

War Diary

26.5.1941.
Monday

865

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Libyan Operations-Contd

Air
Operations

The merchant vessel which was reported to have been hit 8 times on 22/5 in position 15 miles 20° Pantellaria was seen anchored today in 34° 50' N., 11° 26' E., and was attacked twice by Blenheims. 3 further hits are reported, all of which bounced off the deck.

Tobruk

Air raids were carried out on Tobruk last night and today. APHIS and GRIMSBY were heavily attacked: APHIS was slightly damaged; she shot down 2 of the enemy.

Zuara

It is reported that the port of Tripoli has been severely damaged and that the Axis powers are now using the port of Zura (? Zuara) and that shipping is proceeding there by Tunisian territorial waters.

Attack on Crete

Situation

C. in C. Med. this evening in an important signal reported on the strategical situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, tactical considerations in the battle for Crete, morale and state of officers and men and machinery in the light forces.

Naval
Operations
FORMIDABLE
NUBIAN,
4 destroyers
damaged.

AJAX, DIDO and 3 destroyers repeated last night their sweep north of Crete, but sighted no enemy. They were unable to bombard Maleme as arranged, owing to bad weather.

/FORMIDABLE.....

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

Naval
Operations.
FORMIDABLE
NUBIAN,
4 destroyers
damaged.
(contd).

FORMIDABLE, operated with her aircraft against Scarpanto early this morning, accompanied by QUEEN ELIZABETH and BARHAM. FORMIDABLE was bombed and damaged at 1312 today in 32° 55' N. 26° 25' E. NUBIAN in company with the battle fleet was also hit and had her stern blown off, but was able to steam at considerable speed. This necessitated cancelling the attack on Milo by destroyers arranged for tonight, owing to the necessity of escorting NUBIAN to Alexandria. At least one aircraft was set on fire and a considerable number were shot up on Scarpanto aerodrome by the F.A.A. attack. FORMIDABLE'S aircraft shot down 6 enemy aircraft today.

C. in C. Med. reports this evening that in 3 days, in addition to casualties already reported (2 cruisers and 4 destroyers sunk, 1 battleship and 2 cruisers damaged) 4 more destroyers have suffered considerable damage.

Reinforcements.

The weather again prevented the landing of troops on the south coast of Crete last night.

S.S. VASCO and ^{MARIT}~~MARIE~~ MAERSK escorted by CALCUTTA and AUCKLAND left Alexandria at 0500 today, with military stores and ammunition due at Suda Bay shortly after daylight on 28th. S.S. ALFIOS left at 1000C escorted by DEFENDER, with foodstuffs due at Heraklion 1200C/28.

At 2128C IMPERIAL, KIMBERLEY and HOTSPUR were ordered to embark troops and sail by -Kaso Strait to arrive at Suda Bay 2359/27 and leave for Alexandria after disembarking troops. Fighter protection was asked for.

Cancelled later S.S. p. 901-

ABDIEL and destroyers are continuing to Suda tonight with S.S. troops.

/GLENROY.....

War Diary

26.5.1941.
Monday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete

Reinforcements
-Contd.

GLENROY, who left Alexandria yesterday evening with COVENTRY and 2 destroyers to land troops and stores on Tymbaki beach tonight was heavily bombed and was hit and damaged at 1826 in 195° 35' N., 25° E., 40 miles. She is unable to continue the operation tonight: a third of her landing craft are out of action, all army petrol burnt or overboard, and she had to lose much time turning down wind etc. At 0017C C. in C. Med. ordered her to return to Alexandria. GLENROY herself was not seriously damaged and is fit for service.

Air
Operations

Four Wellingtons last night bombed the aerodrome and beach at Maleme. Two Wellingtons bombed Scarpanto aerodrome. Hurricanes this afternoon shot down 5 or more JU 52's filled with troops at Maleme, and damaged many on Maleme aerodrome and the neighbouring fields, by machine gun fire. Two squadrons of Blenheims and one of Marylands bombed Maleme at dusk, setting fire to many aircraft on the ground.

All R.A.F. personnel (19 officer, 180 airmen) except a small signal staff are being despatched to Sphakia for evacuation.

Enemy
shipping

Air R/C today reported 6 merchant ships 200 ft. long at Heraklion, 6 small coastal ships at Retimo, with numerous caiques at both places, one destroyer or merchant ship and one small merchant ship at Milo Island.

Military
Operations

During the day the enemy forced our troops from positions west of Canea.

MOST SECRET.

868

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

America & West Indies.

C. in C. A.W.I. reported this morning that VAN KINSBERGEN had intercepted the French S.S. WINNIPEG in $14^{\circ} 52' N.$ $60^{\circ} 38' W.$ and was escorting her to Trinidad.

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

A.C.O.S.

A.C.O.S. has disembarked Reykjavik to complete visit and inspection and awaiting next convenient opportunity for passage Scapa. (A.C.O.S. 0238/26)

JACOB VAN
HEEMSKERK.

JACOB VAN

Request date ⁶HEEMSKERK should be ready for foreign service. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1311B/26)

DAGMAR
intercepted.

Intercepted Finnish DAGMAR 062° 35' N. 013° 42' W. Evaded Faeroes. Too rough for boarding Am escorting to Faeroes. Request instructions (CAPE PORTLAND 2145B/26).

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN.

Unless otherwise ordered by C. in C. H.F. one cruiser is to proceed to watch the Denmark Straits and the remaining two the Iceland-Faeroes passage. (C.N.S. 0011B/26 to MANCHESTER).

Admy 1419/25. Have searched area 080° to 180° from position 058° N. 032° 45' W. to depth of 100 mls. Nothing sighted. P.C. and S. of VICTORIOUS and KENYA at 0100B/26 057° 27' N. 030° 44' W. 060°, 27 knots, intending to endeavour to locate and attack enemy ship fixed at 1320/25 if making Faeroes Iceland passage subsequently proceeding Hvalfjord to replenish KENYA with oil. VICTORIOUS's fuel 67% and able therefore to remain atsea if escort can be provided. Intend GALATEA and AURORA to part company from VICTORIOUS at 0100 and screen PRINCE OF WALES from dawn 26th if destroyers have not arrived. (C.S.2 0021B/26 to C. in C.H.F)

/S/M H....

War Diary26.5.1941.
Monday

870

HOME COMMANDSOperationsSearch for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

S/M H. 44 sailed from Holyhead 1700/25 escorted vicinity Bishop Rock thence proceeding unescorted on surface to patrol position. (F.O.S. 0121B/26 to SEALION). COSSACK, SIKH, ZULU joining C. in C. H.F. forthwith position 2200B/25 054° 07' N. 029° 18' W. course 117° 26 knots.

(2) MAORI, PIORUN joining RODNEY forthwith. Estimated position 0001B/26 052° 40' N., 025° 45' W., course 113° 20 knots. (C. in C. W.A. 0159B/26 to Capt. D.4.)

RODNEY estimated position 0001B/26 052° 40' N., 025° 45' W., Course 113. Speed 20 knots. (C. in C. W.A. 0202/26 to R.A.D.H.F.) Cancel my 1049B/25. Proceed Londonderry. Complete with fuel. Orders follow.

(R.A.D. H.F. 0216B/26 to JUPITER) Your 2238/25. A screen of three destroyers each for KING GEORGE V and RODNEY will be provided. (D.O.D. H. 0220B/26 to C. in C. H.F.) MANCHESTER and BIRMINGHAM proceeding to take up Iceland Faeroes patrol making 25 knots. ARETHUSA Eastward of Q.Z.X. 241 (MANCHESTER 0238B/26 to C. in C. H.F.) Admiralty 0011B/26. Intend to patrol to Eastward of Q.Z.X. 366 and 241 reaching patrol 1400B/today. (ARETHUSA 0300B/26 to MANCHESTER)

Unless otherwise ordered proceed forthwith to screen VICTORIOUS estimated position 1700B/25 57° 42' N., 35° 40' W., course 070° 27 knots. (R.A.D. H.F. 0310B/26 to ICARUS, ECHO, WINDSOR)

My 0216B/26. When completed with fuel join RODNEY in estimated position 0001B/26 52° 40' N., 25° 45' W. course 113° 20 knots. (R.A.D. H.F. 0315B/26 to JUPITER)

Your 0310B/26. ECHO proceeded with ELECTRA. Am taking ANTELOPE with me. (?ICARUS 0515Z/26 to R.A.D. H.F.)

My P.C. and S. are at 0500B/26 057° 51' N., 025° 23' W. 060° 27 knots. (SUFFOLK 0517B/26) Sailing SAGUENAY, ASSINIBOINE, ACTIVE from Hvalfjord to screen VICTORIOUS at 0830B/26 (Capt. D.3. 0553B/26) *See next page*

/Sailed.....

MOST SECRETWar Diary26.5.1941.
MondayHOME COMMANDSOperationsSearch for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN -Contd.Sailed MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, ARETHUSA
0300. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0927/26)
My P.C. and S. are at 0900B/ 052° 13' N.,
020° 40' W., 087° 21 knots altering to 120°
at 1400B. If no contact by 2000B intend to
proceed to Londonderry arriving with 13%
fuel remaining. (C.S. 18 0940B/26)Weather unsuitable for flying. Am pro-
ceeding with KENYA to Hval Flord. Destroyers
wait me at R/V 063° N., 028° W. till further
signal. My position 0930B/26 039° 05' N.,
026° 05' W. (VICTORIOUS 0955B/26)D.3.S. 0553B/26. Screen has already pro-
ceeded to VICTORIOUS. SAGUENAY, ASSINIBOINE
ACTIVE proceed Londonderry with despatch
and await further orders. (R.A.D. H.F. 1010B/
26) Proceed to search area 58° N., to 57° N.
between meridians of 50° W., and 44° W., for
supply ships, subsequently fuelling
Newfoundland on relief by REPULSE about 29/5
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1015B/26 to SUFFOLK)Admiralty 1015/26 has been repeated also to
REPULSE. (War Registry)One battleship bearing 240° distance 5 miles
position 49° 33' N., 21° 47' W., (A/C Duty Z
1030/26.)My 1030. Enemy course and speed 150° 20
knots position 49° 28' N., 21° 50' W.
(A/C Duty Z 1035/26)My 1010B/26. Screen for VICTORIOUS and
PRINCE OF WALES arranged and sailed.
BEDOUIN, IMPULSIVE ordered to Reykjavik.
Leave one more destroyer to complete screen
for REPULSE if required. Proceed with
remainder to Londonderry with despatch.
(R.A.D. H.F. 1045B/26 to Capt. D.3.)Aircraft of 15 Group's 1030. Request check
not RODNEY. My position 051° 37' N., 020°
42' W., closing ship reported at 26 knots.
(C. in C. H.F. 1051/26) *Ship hostile (1225B/26) see p 872*RENOWN is not to become engaged with
BISMARCK unless BISMARCK is already heavily
engaged by either KING GEORGE V or RODNEY.
(1st S.L. 1052B/26 to F.O. Force H.)*Sighting by*
*Catalina.**BISMARCK found*RENOWN
and BISMARCK

/Cut....

DORSETSHIREAt 0930 GMT. on 26.5.41, DORSETSHIRE left Convoy
S.L. 74 with BULOLO in 44° N, 24° 51' W. to make
for BISMARCK. (CB. 04164, p. 74)

War Diary.

26.5.1941.

Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN. (contd)

Cut corner and proceed via Wolf Rock and not Bishop Rock. Every minute saved is important.
H.44 pass to P;C. 74. (F.O.S. 1059B/26 to H.44).

My ? 1030. Have lost touch with enemy. Enemy's last observed position was 49° 22' N. 21° 44' W. at 1045. (A/C Duty Z, 1100/26) BISMARCK has received some damage and probable torpedo hit. She reduced speed progressively from 28 knots and when last seen at 0200B/25 in 056° 40' N. 036° 18' W. was doing 22 knots. This may not however be the maximum speed of which she is now capable. (F.O.S. 1101B/26 to S/M's Area A) 1 Battleship bearing 150 distance 8 miles course 127 position 292° 49' N. 19° W. 83 based on Admirals Reference position at 0700. Enemy speed 20 knots. (A/C from ARK ROYAL 1114/26) (S.O. Force H. 1114/26 to Whitehall W/T)

49° 32' N
in C. in C.H.F. log. 348

ARK ROYAL aircraft report enemy battleship in 049° 32' N. 020° 55' W. at 1114B/26. Course 110° 20 knots. Aircraft using 210 KC/S.

My P.C. and S. are at 1100/26 051° 33' N. 020° 43' W. course 150° altering to 130° at 1155. 26 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 1210/26 to Adty).

Return to Gibraltar at maximum speed to establish offensive patrol in Straits of Gibraltar in case BISMARCK or PRINZ EUGEN endeavour to pass into Mediterranean and CAIRNDALE and CITY OF DIEPPE are to continue in accordance with previous orders. (V.C.N.S. 1220B/26 to SEVERN).

Your 1051/26. Enemy ship reported by aircraft at 1030 is hostile. (A.C.N.S. H. 1225B/26 to C. in C.H.F).

Amty. 895A/28/3/41. Cruisers and above at sea on Home Stations are to be prepared to display following identification marks. Executive signal will follow. (D.S.D. 1227B/26).

/BISMARCK.....

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN (contd)

BISMARCK reported by Catalina aircraft in 49° 33 N. 21° 47 W. course 150° speed 20 knots. Establish air and submarine patrols to prevent possible passage into Mediterranean. Patrols are to take preference over convoy escort duties. Spanish territorial waters need not be respected for this operation. - (V.C.N.S. 1228B/26 to F.O.C.N.A) Cancelled. See North Atlantic. 1721B/27.

My 1200. Vessels reported are not objective. (A/C Duty M. 1240/26 to 15 (R) Group HQ) Estimated P.C. and S. enemy Battleship at 1215B - 049° 10', 020° 10' 110° 20. ARK ROYAL aircraft in touch. My P.C. and S 1248B 049° 30' 019° 10' 350° 15 Torpedo Bomber striking at about 1500. (S.O Force H. 1301B/26).

Proceed to Clyde to fuel. Instruct your screen to R/V as necessary. (1st S.L. 1328B/26 to VICTORIOUS).

From evidence of independent witnesses now accumulated it seems fairly certain 3 ships were present when NORFOLK first made contact at 2031/23. Rear ship smaller and thought to be destroyer turned North East to NORFOLK. SUFFOLK may have confirmatory evidence from RD/F. Definitely only 2 ships present during action with C.S.1. (C.S.1. 1345B/26 to Admty.)

My 1301. Estimated P.C. and S. of enemy battleship at 1315B 049° 10' 019° 45' 130°. 21 knots my P.C. and S. are at 1345B 049° 40' 018° 53' 120° 18 knots. SHEFFIELD detached to shadow. (S.O. Force H. 1345B/26).

Am carrying out observation duty shadowing Battleship. (A/C Duty M. 1405/26 to 15 (R) Group H.Q).

My 1301. Estimated P.C. and S. of enemy at 1500 048° 24' 018° 46' 110° 25 knots. My P.C. and S. at 1515B 049° 14' 018° 19' 110° 26 knots. Striking force left 1500B. (S.O. Force H. 1520B/26).

/Have.....

874

26.5.1941.
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN -Contd.

Have lost touch with enemy battleship last observed position $47^{\circ} 30' N.$, $19^{\circ} W.$ 1500. A/C Duty M. 1525/26)
Engaged one aircraft my P.C. and S. are $050^{\circ} 18' N.$, $018^{\circ} 45' W.$, 128° 26 knots. RODNEY bears $100^{\circ} 11$ miles from me. (C. in C H.F. 1551/26)
My 1520B. Position based on fix at 1500. (S.O. Force H. 1605B/26)
Enemy's C. and S $140^{\circ} 20$ knots. (A/C Duty H 1605/26)
Estimated position at 1610. $47^{\circ} 28' N.$, $18^{\circ} 57' W.$ U. (A/C Duty M. 1630/26)
Have regained contact. (A/C Duty M. 1600/26)
Am being attacked by type unknown. (A/C Duty M. 1632/26)
Enemy has altered course to 125; approx. (A/C Duty M. 1655/26)
My 1520B Estimated P.C. and S. 1630B $048^{\circ} 12' N.$, $017^{\circ} 34' W.$, 110° 25 knots my P.C. and S. at 1700B $049^{\circ} 00' 017^{\circ} 25' X 15 140^{\circ} 26$ knots. Striking force searching for enemy. (S.O. Force H. 1700B/26)
My 1605. My 1655. Course was 140 true not 125 true. (A/C Duty M. 1700/26)
Your 1545B/25. Asking for report on interference experienced. (D.S.D. 1702B/26 to PRINCE OF WALES)
Your 1702B/26. Detailed reply. (PRINCE OF WALES 2256/26) See Lion Copy. *(no trace)*
P.C. and S. of 4th D.F. and *NERISSA at 1730 $048^{\circ} 43' N.$ $017^{\circ} 47' W.$ based on fix 1515 $115^{\circ} 27$ knots. SIKH reported periscope 5 miles back. No enemy in sight. Visibility 8 miles. Oil fuel remaining 4th Destroyer Flotilla 50%. *NERISSA 42%. (Capt. D.4. 1730/26)
My. P. C. and S. are at 1700B/26 $059^{\circ} 39' N.$, $026^{\circ} 04' W.$, 345° 13 knots passing through $063^{\circ} N.$, $028^{\circ} W.$ thence to Hval Fiord. KENYA in company. (VICTORIOUS 1730B/26)

*NERISSA *was* PIORUN. (Polish)

/Request.....

War Diary26.5.1941.
MondayHOME COMMANDSOperationsSearch for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN -Contd.

Request you P.C. and S. Shall I leave carrier and join you. If no reply shall remain with carrier. (S.O. Force H. 1740B/26 to C. in C. H.F.)

One large vessel (Battleship or battle cruiser) bearing 068° 10 miles 120° my position 156° 49' N., 18° W. 39. R.13 (SHEFFIELD 1740B/26)

My 1700B. Estimated P.C. and S. enemy battle fleet 1800B 048° 06' 017° 02' 110° 22 knots. My P.C. and S. at 1800B 048° 55' 017° 18' 140° 29 knots. Striking force scored no hits and leaves again at 1830B. Above position based on fix at 1800B. (S.O. Force H. 1800B/26)

Have lost touch with enemy battle fleet
Enemy's last observed position was 47° 15' N
18° 23' W. U. (A/C Duty M. 1800/26)

KING GEORGE V had to reduce to 22 knots at 1705 to economize fuel. P. and C. at 1800 049° (748') N., 017° 33' W. 110° RODNEY bears 132° 4 miles on same course speed 22 knots.

Unless enemy speed is reduced intend KING GEORGE V return to refuel at 2400B/26. RODNEY can continue pursuit without destroyer escort. Recommend you remain with carrier. (C. in C. H.F. 1821/26 to S.O. Force H)

Approx. P.C. and S. of BISMARCK at 1500/26 48. 24' N., 18° 46' W. 110° 25 knots.

It is not my intention to order submarine to alter their patrol position for the time being. (F.O.S. 1824B/26 to S/M's Area A Reports by SHEFFIELD and ARK ROYAL's aircraft are based on reference position 20 miles north of position in my 1520B and 1700B and 1800B which are based on fix at 1500B. (S.O. Force H. 1825B/26)

-Enemy may be able to interfere effectively with our R.D/F in an endeavour to escape when being shadowed. (A.C.N.S.H. 1841B/26)

/Weather....

War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN (contd)

Weather Forecast 1900Z/26 to 0700Z/27.
(Duty Met. Officer 1856B/26).
WIVERN, VANSITTART and WILD SWAN are to proceed to Plymouth with all despatch.
(A.C.N.S.H. 1858B/26 to C. in C. Portsmouth)
My 1740B. One large vessel bearing 105° 12 miles course 110° my position 179 49° N. 17° W. 39.R.13. (SHEFFIELD 1859B/26)
My 1800B estimated P.C. and S. of enemy at 1900B 048° 00' 016° 28' 110° 22 knots. My P.C. and S. 048° 36' 016° 54' 110° 29 knots. Striking force on their way. Above position based on fix at 1500B. (F.O. Force H. 1930B/26).
My 1740B. One Battleship bearing 115° 9 miles course 115° my position 158° 49° N. 17° W. 46. D.M. (SHEFFIELD 1937B/26). Request aircraft may give Captain D.4 visual link with enemy. (C. in C.H.F. 2054B/26 to S.O. Force H).
Assume you are organising destroyer night attacks if this is possible. No answer required. (1st S.L. 2056B/26 to C. in C.H.F)
Your 1730B/26. My P.C. and S. are at 2100 063° 45' N. 022° 58' W. 251° 12 knots to make R/V 1100/27. (ICARUS 2110B/26 to VICTORIOUS).
My 1740B. One battleship bearing 140° distant 8 miles course 340°; My position 068° 12 miles from 48° N. 16° W. based on the reference position of the Admiral at 1300. (SHEFFIELD 2113B/26).
My P.C. and S. are at 2100B/26 060° 00' N. 026° 32° W. 345° 20 knots passing through R/V 063° N. 028° W. at 0500B/27. E.T.A. Hvalfiord 1330B/27. (VICTORIOUS 2130B/26).
Estimated P.C. and S. of enemy were at 2130B 047° 45' 015° 25' 330° 22 knots. My. P.C. and S. 2100B 048° 17' 015° 50' 020° 20 knots. (S.O. Force H. 2140B/26).
My 1740B. One battleship bearing 130° distance 9 miles course 000°. My position 038° 12 miles from 48° N. 16° W. based on reference position of the Admiral at 1300. (SHEFFIELD 2140B/26).
After one more small torpedo bomber attack tonight all torpedoes will be expended. (S.O. Force H. 2205B/26 to C. in C.H.F).

/Report.....

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN (contd)

Report enemy's speed. (S.O. Force H. 2214/26 to SHEFFIELD).
My P.C. and S. are 049° 10' N. 015° 29' W 170° 21 knots. RODNEY in company. (C. in C. H.F. 2215/26).
Request you will retain separate screen of three destroyers each for VICTORIOUS and PRINCE OF WALES and sail remaining destroyers working with Home Fleet for Londonderry with despatch as they become available. (R.A.D H.F. 2215B/26 to N.O.I.C. Iceland).
Admtys. 2056B. Destroyers bore 212° 10 miles at 1900B closing enemy. (S.O. Force H. 2218B/26 to C. in C.H.F).
My 1919B/25. SEALION patrol on line 260° from position 048° 20' N. 005° 15' W. keeping as close to this position as circumstances permit. Remaining submarines addressed move patrol position 30 miles 162°. (F.O.S. 2219B/26).
Torpedo Bomber (corrupt group) scored one hit amidships. (S.O. Force H. 2225B/26 to C. in C.H.F).
My P.C. and S. are (? 049° or 054°) 48'N. 016° 25' W. 130° 30 knots. Fuel remaining 30%. Can operate (? with) RODNEY or Force 'H' (C.S.1. 2230B/26).
My 2225B. Possible second hit starboard quarter. (S.O. Force H. 2240B/26).
Your 0310B/26th. WINDSOR sailed 1830. ANTELOPE ready to proceed. No other H.F. destroyers remain. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2244/26 to R.A.D).
Lost touch at 2200B. (S.O. Force H. 2250B/26)
My 2240 1 Battleship bearing 115 7 miles course 060 my position 242 48° N. 15° W. 19. (COSSACK 2300B/26).
My 2250B. ZULU and Capt. (D) 4 now in touch. Enemy's course 060°. (S.O. Force H. 2310B/26)
My 2300. 1 Battleship bearing 070 7 miles course 340 my position 233 48° N 15° W. 21. (COSSACK 2322B/26).
WAR HINDOO is to stand by to proceed to sea at short notice. Oiling outfit is to be placed on board forthwith. C. in C. W.A. is requested to detail escort. (V.C.N.S. 2325B/26).
Fire star shells. (C. in C.H.F. 2337/26 to ZULU).
1 large vessel bearing 270° 2 miles course 110° My position 4745 N 1448 W. (A/C Duty 0, 2344/26).

/Cancel.....

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN (contd)

Cancel my 2205. Attack not possible tonight. Dawn attack tomorrow by 12 torpedo spotter reconnaissance aircraft. Am turning west for short distance to keep clear of you. My position is $048^{\circ} 42' N.$ $015^{\circ} 17' W.$ based on fix at 2000. (S.O. Force H. 2345/26 to C. in C.H.F).
My P.C. and S. $048^{\circ} 46' N.$ $015^{\circ} 20' W.$ $030^{\circ} 21$ knots. (C. in C.H.F. 2347/26 to S.O. Force H).
My 1656B/26. No fuel remaining for shadowing My P. C. and S. are $048^{\circ} 32' N.$ $015^{\circ} 22' W.$ $025^{\circ} 13$ knots. Proceeding Londonderry. (R.A. 18th C.S. 2350B/26).
My 2322 1 Battleship bearing $335^{\circ} 6$ miles course unknown my position $215 48^{\circ} N.$ $15^{\circ} W.$ 18. (COSSACK 2400B/26).

War Diary26.5.1941.
MondayHOME COMMANDSBritish Air ActivityPatrols 2a
BISMARCK 7
PRINZ EUGEN.

49° 50' N 21° 10' W

48° 10' N 23° 30' W

52° 20' N 19° 25' W

50° 16' N 21° W

Found Bismarck?
AD

Two cross over patrols between the following points to be carried out by two Catalinas, with the object of locating and shadowing Force R.E. KRGP 5050 - PHEN 1030 No.1. RNYE 2035 - WCTY 1000 No.2.

Aircraft to be on patrol at 0900/26/5 and to remain until prudent limit of endurance.

(H.Q.C.C. 0040 to Admty.) (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0155/26)

The following air searches have been arranged for today commencing 1000B.

Two cross-over patrols by Catalina aircraft (a) From 50° 10' N., 21° 0' W to 52° 20' N., 19° 25' W.

(b) From 48° 10' N., 23° 30' W., to 49° 50' N., 21° 10' W.

(1st S.L. 0109B/26)

A.M. 0225B/25. These patrols have been ordered to be flown today, commencing 0600. (D.O.D. H. 0123B/26)

Six Wellingtons to proceed to St. Eval on 26/5 in sufficient time to enable the aircraft to refuel in readiness to take off on a sweep at 1200/26 if required.

(H.Q. 15 Group, 0210/26)

Sweeps by three Whitleys to be flown today in following area:-

59.20 N., 05.26 W., 58.28 N., 06.23 W.,

61.48 N., 14.05 W., 60.56 N., 15.12 W.

A/C leave Eastern limit at 0500 and again at 1400. (C. in C. Rosyth, 0302/26)

Cancel my 0123/B/26. (D.O.D. H. 0318B/26)

A.M. 2012/B/24. Patrol was flown but was unproductive.

A further unit is being ordered to search today a 400 mile square area the centre of which is 26° N., 43° W. (D.O.D. H. 0340B/26)

(LV/G3/26/5. Onions if enemy doubled back from last known position 056° 40' N., 036° 18' W., at 2330/24 G.M.T. it can be in 068° 00' N., 020° 00' W., at 0800/26 G.M.T.

assuming speed 25 knots. Patrol of Denmark Straits as soon as possible, covering area of probability, while maintaining search laid down in my LV/G6/25/5 (15 Group 0700/26 to 30 Wing) My 0123/26. Patrols are being flown as follows:-

(a) Patrol of Four aircraft from Iceland

/Datum line.....

26.5.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Patrols (contd)
Y. BISMARCK 9
PRINZ EUGEN.

Datum line 62° 38' N.
16° 50' W.
60° 30' N.
14° 15' W.

Track 240° for 300 miles.
(b) North Cape to the Ice.
(c) Parallel track.

Sweep with 2 Whitley Aircraft from Cape Wrath to 61° 20' N. 14° 50' W. (D.O.D.H. 0918B/26).
(c) Three long range Hudsons of 206 Squadron to proceed to St. Eval forthwith. (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0938/26).

A cross-over patrol between the following points is to be carried out forthwith by one Sunderland with the object of locating and shadowing force re. JZAF 4558. NPDU 5408 Patrol to be continued until prudent limit of endurance. (H.Q.C.C. 1019/26).

Sunderland A/C carrying out two circuits of cross-over between 62° 45' N and 08° 02' W. and 64° 54' N 10° 52' W. commencing about 1230/26. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1054/26).

Two long range Hudsons to do the following sweep KRPS 4832 to KRKT 0452 on track 298 degrees for 170 miles and then from Datum line joining WCAG 1813 and KRWM 3842 on track 118 degrees for 270 miles on Datum 1500 to 1530 hours at latest. If unable to get there at this time move sweep forward 118° at 25 M.P.H. (H.Q. 15, 1154/26).

In order to intercept Hipper if making French ports following sweep to be carried by two long range Hudsons:-

From Datum Line joining KRPS 4832 and KRKT 0452 on tracks of 298 degs. for 170 miles thence from Datum Line joining WCAG 1813 and KRWM 3842 on tracks 118 degs. for 270 miles. Aircraft to be at first Datum 1500/26. If late, Patrol to be moved in direction 118° 25 miles for every hour late. (H.Q.C.C. 1200/26).

Z/209 reported enemy force in KRGP 2216 at 1045/26 and then lost touch.

One long range Catalina to take off as soon as possible to search and shadow enemy force further instructions when airborne. (C. in C. W.A. 1220/26).

/My 0302.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols (contd),
Ye BISMARCK &
PRINZ EUGEN.

My 0302 sortie at 1400 cancelled owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 1356B/26).
(c) With object of intercepting Hipper class cruiser if making for Brest cross-over patrol through following points to be flown, by one A.S.V. aircraft. W C T E 0030 P H D U 2625. Commence patrol at 1900/26 and complete two circuits. (H.Q.C.C. 1700/26 to 19 Group).

C. With object of intercepting, reporting, and shadowing enemy naval forces thought to be making towards Brest, one Hudson is to carry out crossover patrol through following points:

KRXL 4402 KRAF 5619 PHAF 1103 PHT E 2421.
Aircraft to be on patrol by 1930/26. If patrol cannot be started by 1930 hours, it is to be moved bodily at 25 knots towards Brest. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 1710/26).

Following air sweeps are being flown by 2 Hudson long range aircraft in order to intercept *HIPPER if approaching French ports to the northward of BISMARCK:-

From datum line joining KRPS 4832 and KRKT 0452 on tracks of 298 degs. for 170 miles, thence from datum line joining WCAG 1813 and KRWM 3842 on tracks 118° for 270 miles. Aircraft are to be at first datum 1500/26. If late patrol to be moved in direction 118° 25 miles for every hour late. (A.C.N.S. H. 1936B/26).

It is considered likely that enemy Naval Forces will attempt to make for a French West Coast port on 27/5. In order to intercept report and shadow, 2 Sunderlands are to carry out cross-over patrols about the following lines:-

P H T E 2430 to D P T E 2816 and D P T E 2002 to W R R A 3536. Each aircraft is to be on patrol at 0600 and is to remain to P.L.E. (H.Q. 19 Group 2250/26).

Six Whitleys to proceed to St. Eval as soon as weather conditions permit. S.A.P. bombs to be carried. (H.Q. 15 Group 2315/26 to Limavady).

/Following air.....

*PRINZ EUGEN

War Diary

26.5.1941.
Monday

HOME COMMANDS

British Air Activity

Patrols-Contd.

Y. BISMARCK
PRINZ EUGEN.

Following air patrols arranged for tomorrow
1. Two crossover patrols commencing at dawn:

(a) From 48° 18' N., 09° 58' W., to 46° 28' N
09° 44' W.

(b) From 46° 28' N., 09° 58' W., to 44° 35' N
11° 24' W.

Duration of patrol four hours.

2. Further patrols will be arranged to the Eastward as circumstances require.

(A.C.N.S. H. 2321B/26)

Five Whitleys to stand by to proceed to St. Eval at 1 hours notice from dawn 27/5. A/C to be armed with S.A.P. bombs. If sufficient number not available for all A/C arming will be completed at St. Eval for which arrangements have been made.

(H.Q. 15 Group. 2340/26 to Limavady)

Two Sunderland aircraft will carry out a patrol in following position commence patrol at 0600 27 (i) through position 048° 24' N., 009° 30' W., and 046° 28' 009° 44' (ii) through position 046° 28' N., 009° 58' W., and 044° 35' 011° 24'.

(C. in C. Plymouth 2352/26)

M/V's
attacked off
Ameland.

Day 25th May. Three miles North of Ameland one of our aircraft attacked an M/V of 6,000 tons. Bursts not seen but it is considered to have received at least one direct hit. The vessel was also machine gunned and must be considered as severely damaged. The second Blenheim attacked a second 6,000 tons M/V and several direct hits were obtained and debris was thrown into the air from behind the funnel. This ship was also machine gunned and is claimed as severely damaged and possibly sunk. A further Blenheim attacked a 4,000 ton M/V from 50 ft. but the bursts were not observed although shortly afterwards thick black smoke 50 feet high was seen coming from the vessel and this must also be considered as severely damaged and possibly sunk. (H.Q.B.C. 1247/26)

/Plymouth.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity. (contd).Plymouth and
Milford Haven.
Protection
Measures
proposed.

Operations against BISMARCK leading to concentration of H.M. ships to S.W. of British Isles. Shortage of fuel and possibility of damage sustained in action likely to result in our ships being forced to use Plymouth and Milford Haven during period 27th - 30th May inclusive. Heavy scale air attack on Plymouth and Milford Haven and aerodromes in South-west to be expected. Request special measures to be taken for:-

- (a) Protection of Plymouth and Milford Haven.
- (b) Protection of operational aerodromes in South-West.
- (c) Provision of fighter protection for H.M. ships moving to and from Plymouth and Milford Haven to as great a depth to seaward as practicable.

Importance of operation justifies temporary reduction of A.A. defences at other vital points including West coast ports.

(Air Ministry, 1345/26 to Fighter Command).

Balloon
Flying
Height.

A.322 26/5. Following received by Fighter Command from F.O.I.C. Milford Haven begins: "One Destroyer acting as U.A. Guard will be flying balloon at maximum height of 2,000 feet inside harbour entrance Milford Haven between 2300/24 May and 0600/25 May". Ends.

Although period of flying now ended request that in future all comply with the terms of Air ministry signals X173 10th March and X 904 19th May so as not to prejudice the safety of friendly aircraft.

(Air Ministry, 1900/26 to Admty).

War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity. (Contd.) (from page 885)Two Condor
A/C.Two F.W. Condors were last reported in
47° 50' N., 15° 45' W., at 1508 and 51°
20' N., 14° 40' W., at 1548.
(D.D.I.C. 1620B/26.)GEORGES
GEORGETTE.(Belgian Trawler, 70 tons). Attacked by
A/C at 1800/25 about 2 miles S.E. of Berry
Head. Damaged by near miss and beached at
Dartmouth. No casualties. (D.S.629.)IRENE ROBERTS.(Belgian Trawler, 44 tons) Attacked by A/C
at 1800/25 about 2 miles S.E. of Berry Head.
Damaged by M.G. fire and taken to Brixham.
No casualties. (D.S.629.)Mining.9th M/S.
Flotilla.It is anticipated that 3 more days sweeping
by 9th M/S will complete work in Portland
Area. Request instructions.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 1125B/26.)
9th M.S.F. is to be recalled and brought to
one hours notice for steam. Refuel if
necessary. (D.M.S. 1715B/26.)Liverpool.Until further notice Port of Liverpool
including Q.Z.S. 211 and 215 will be closed
half an hour after sunset and opened at
0630 each day. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1149B/26.)Operation
B.S.62.My 1343/24/5. Amend return route as
follows. (TEVIOT BANK, 1350/26.)Milford
Haven.Ground Magnetic Mine detonated by Baby LL
Drifters 111° Great Castle Head Low Light
14 cables. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven,
1629/26.)

A/C Minelaying.

(hp. 886)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity. (cont: on previous page)TOORAKAircraft circling around dropping flares
latitude 53 30 longitude 28 13.
(TOORAK, 0200 G.M.T./26).MARMION.
(Bombed 9/4).My 0110/21. Sailing of MARMION postponed
further twenty four hours owing to weather.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0355B/26).DIANA.(British, 942 tons). Attacked by A/C in
61° 35' N 11° 6' W. (DIANA, 0512/26).
Intercepted De GMH DIANA still attacked by
aircraft. 0542/26. (Port Patrick Radio 0546/26)Convoy C.E.
Odd.1 A/C shadowing convoy ^{"Totem"} ~~POPEM~~ who bears 090°
My position 51° 24' N 1° 30' E.
(Convoy, 0532/26).A/C from
Bordeaux.At least one F.W. Condor is proceeding west-
wards from Bordeaux. Position at 1046 -
46° 30' N 6° 50' W. (D.D.I.C. 1159B/26).GROS PIERRE.(British 297 tons). Attacked enemy aircraft
and damaged by near miss off Sunderland. Has
been beached on Potato Garth in Sunderland
Harbour. No casualties. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1501/
26).
My 1501/26. Ship is now beached west slipway
Sunderland.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 2018/26).A/C attacked
at Newhaven.Following received from N.O.I.C. Newhaven
which has been corroborated begins:-
ADVENTURESS in harbour report Ord. Sea.Hill
fired one pan from Lewis gun at Heinkel 111
which passed over at low altitude at 1750/24/5
heading south. Smoke came from aircraft and
one engine stopped. Aircraft carried on into
the mist ends.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 1619B/26).

/Two Condor.....

h.p. 884

26.5.1941.

Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

A/C
Minelaying.

Request whole gardening effort tonight on ~~July 21st~~ ~~July 21st~~ including if possible the Rade Abri. (V.C.N.S. 1725B/26 to Air Ministry).

Spurn Point.

At 0811 to-day LL Trawlers detonated a mine in 846° SPP 2.1. miles. (F.O. Humber, 1745B/26).

Enemy Intelligence.

Four Unknown
Vessels.

4 Unknown Vessels bearing 050° distance 10 miles. Course 140° Position 49° 47' N. 21° 29' W. U. (A/C Duty M. 1200/26).

PRINZ EUGEN.
ADMIRAL HIPPER.

Following received from Navy Dept. From N.A. Berlin: reliably reported that PRINZ EUGEN and ADMIRAL HIPPER at Cherbourg. May 24th. (N.A. Washington, 1814/26 to Admty).

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

2256/26th May.

T
886A

MOST SECRET

IN

From H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES.

Date 27.5.41.

Recd. 0901.

NAVAL CYPHER A.L. by W/T

PRINCE OF WALES - radar interference.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated C. in C. Home Fleet.

IMMEDIATE

Your 1702 B 26.

(a) Type 281 Scan distorted in all tubes being displaced up and down at no regular frequency. Continuity of Scan broken by jagged saw teeth at varying range.

Type 284 both Scans became enlarged horizontally at same time moving up, down, backwards and forwards. Large variation of brilliancy.

(b) See (e)

(c) Interference present on both sets during same period but not known whether it started and stopped simultaneously on both sets.

(d) More violently on Type 281.

(e) Sets not switched on until enemy sighted. Type 284 on target when switched on. Interference appeared immediately and continued until sets went (dead?) through shock. Interference occurred on Type 281 immediately after operator trained on target and cleared during the action.

(f) Cruiser dead ahead half a mile German B/S BISMARCK who bore (Westabout?) 3028 thousand yards at inclination 130 left.

2. Heavy and deliberate jamming of W/T during same period believed caused by spark transmitter affecting 210 and 4740 kc/s but not 78 and 138.

No interference experienced on type 284 during two minor subsequent actions with enemy. Type 281 at this time out of order.

2256/26.

Note by W.R.

As instructions have been given that this should be treated as Most Secret, technical Depts. and Depts. at Bath have not been included in the circulation.

Will D.S.D. please authorise W.R. to extend the marking if necessary.

Advance copy D.S.D.

Report characteristics of interference.

1st Lord.

D.O.D. (F)

W.D.

1st S.L.

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.S.D. (2)

V.C.N.S.

D.N.I. (4)

Head of M.

C.N.S. (H)

D.D.I.C.

E.P.S.

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

D.S.D. 9

Duty Captain

D. of F. (2)

D.C.D. (H)

D./S.W.

D.D.O.D. (H)

I.P.

MG

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

WOLVERINE.

WOLVERINE has urgent defects beyond capacity of ships staff. Has sufficient feed water to reach Iceland.
(MANSFIELD 0215Z/26.)

Shipping and Convoys.

East Coast
Convoys.

Time tables to supersede those in his 1145/24/3. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1130/26 to Admty., etc.) See Lion Copy.

Trans-Ocean
Escorts.

Intend to operate escort for north route convoys as follows. (C. in C. W.A. 2241B/26 to Admty., etc.) See Lion Copy.

H.X. 125.

Congratulations on bringing the whole of Convoy H.X. 125 safely to U.K.
(C. in C. W.A., 1708/26 to Cdre. A.S. Mackay R.N.R., Vice Admiral N.A. Wodehouse.)

55 British and 10 Allied ships first part under Cdre Mackay, second under Vice-Adm., Wodehouse 22 tankers and 19 general cargoes. Details (D.S. 629, 26/5.)

W.S.8 A.

Sailing of convoy W.S.8 A. may have to be postponed. WAIWERA and PORT WYNDHAM are to be sailed for Clyde there to await further orders. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1906/26 to C. in C. W.A.)

Return Routes.

My 1618/17/12 and N.C.S.I. 160. In future only ships routed independently for overseas need be given a return route to the Clyde. Ships in outward-bound convoys should be provided with return routes to Loch Ewe and Oban as laid down in A.M. 1621/5/2. and N.C.S.I. 193.
(D.T.D. 1907B/26 to N.C.S.O.'s.)

SECRET.

M E S S A G E

1130/26 May.
IN.

887A

From C. in C. Rosyth.

Date 26.5.41.

P/L by T/P.

Recd. 1341.

Addressed Admiralty, C. in C. Nore, Ships employed on East
Coast Convoy Duty, Fighter Command, Coastal Command,

NOTWT.

Convoy Message.

977. Starting with FS 3 and FN 73 on Friday 30th May the following time
tables for East Coast Convoys are to supersede those in my 1145/24/3.
EC and FN Convoys will use Q.Z.S. 40 and FS Convoys will use Q.Z.S. 172.
9 knot ships $7\frac{1}{2}$ knot ships, 7 knot ships.
(F) $8\frac{1}{2}$ knots (M) 7 knots (S) $6\frac{1}{2}$ knots.

Southbound.

Methil	300 VL	1330	0900
20 C Buoy	1100	0415	0045
Hartlepool	1300	0645	0330
Whitby	1600	1015	0700
Flamborough	1915	1400	1130
62 D buoy	2230	1800	1545
Outer Dowsing	0100	2100	1845
Sheringham	0430	0130	2345
No. 5 buoy	1015	0815	0700
Aldeburgh	1300	1130	1030
Southend	2000	2000	1945

Northbound.

Southend	0600	0600	0600
Aldeburgh	1300	1430	1515
No. 5 Buoy	1545	1745	1845
Sheringham	2230	0215	0345
Outer Dowsing	0215	0630	0830
62 D Buoy	0445	0930	1145
Flamborough	0800	1330	1545
Whitby	1115	1730	2000
Hartlepool	1400	2045	2345
20 C Buoy	1000	2315	0230
+ Eastern extremity, of Q.Z.S. 175	0245	1215	1645
Methil	0415	1400	1830

+ rendezvous for ships from Methil joining E C Convoys.
E C (Medium) convoys will run at $7\frac{1}{2}$ knots (8 knot ships) after passing
May Island.

1130/26.

Advance Copy Sent Ops. & Trade.

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
A.C.N.S. (H)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)
O.I.C. (2)
D.S.D. 9.
D.T.D. (4)
D.T.D. (M)
D.A/S.V.
I.P. (3)
W.B.
D. of S.T.

SECRET

MESSAGE.

2241B/26th May IN

Date 27 .5.41.

From C in C Western Approaches.

Recd. 0208

887B

P/L by T/P.

Addressed, Admiralty F.O's I/C. Iceland Greenock, Belfast
Liverpool. D. Liverpool D. Londonderry, D. Greenock. S.O. 1M S.F.

632. I intend to operate trans-Ocean escort for
North route convoys as follows:-

- (A) Escort between Butt of Lewis and Iceland R/V to be provided by 3 escort groups based on Londonderry and 2 escort groups based on Greenock; trawlers of these groups to escort Liverpool and Clyde portions, minesweepers to escort Oban portion.
- (B) Escort between Iceland and Newfoundland escort force based at St Johns.
- (2) Escort for South-route convoys to be provided by three escort groups based on Liverpool, and by Liverpool sloop division.
- (3) New organisation of Western Approaches escort forces will be issued shortly.

2241B/26

Advance Copy Ops. O.D. Trade.

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

Sec.

Nav. Sev.

C.S.O. to 1st S.L.

P.A.S. (S)

D.N.I. (4)

O.D. (5)

Ops (4)

M (2)

D of P (3)

O.I.C.

D.S.D. 9.

I.P. (3)

W.D.

D.T.D. (4)

D.T.D. (M)

D.M.S.

D.H.S. Basement,

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

LONDON.

Cancel A.T.0006/25. Proceed to join S.L.75 during daylight 28/5 whose estimated position at 1200B/26 is 22° 00' N. 21° 30' W. (route) Anticipated that U.S. ships WASP, QUINCY, LIVERMORE and KEARNY will be in (E) 25° 00' N. 27° 15' W. on 27/5, (F) 26° 40' N. 26° 15' W. on 29/5. (1st S.L., 0053B/26 to LONDON).

SCOTTISH operation.

Your 1930/24 (N.T. in W.R.) Operation successful. E.T.A. 0600 zone minus 1/27. Request berth in dockyard for fitting of donkey pump. (SCOTTISH, 0130A/26 to F.O.C.NA)

Italian Cable.

Acting on suggestion of C.O. Cable ship MIRROR intend diverting Italian cable Malaga Las Palmas into Gibraltar then putting through at previous cut west of Spartel. Cable will be left unconnected at office here available for use if required. (F.O.C.N.A. 1046A/26 to Admty.).

SEVERN.

Estimated position 1300B/26 035° 20' N. 011° 20' W. returning to Gibraltar, speed 18 knots. (F.O.C.N.A., 1410A/26 to N.A. Stn.)

Oerlikon Guns.

Your 1954B/25. 12 equipments and 339 boxes ammunition excluding 12 boxes ammunition normal stock. (F.O.C.N.A., 2346A/26, to Admty.)

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

→ NELSON.

To proceed as soon as possible to Gibraltar at best speed. (1st S.L. 0036B/26 to C.in C.S.A.) My 2359N/25. NELSON E.T.A. Gibraltar 1600Z/31. (C.in C.S.A., 0445N/26, to CATHAY).

REINA DEL PACIFICO.

Most desirable to release REINA DEL PACIFICO from W.S.8A at Durban in order that she may return for urgent trooping if transfer can be carried out without undue inconvenience. (D.of S.T. 0230B/26 to P.S.T.O.Simonstown).

BERGENSFJORD.

My 0203/15/4. To be used for movement from West Africa to M.E. 161 Brigade. Arrangements. (D. of S.T. 0231B/26 to C.in C.S.A.)

→ NELSON.

Sailed 0600 for Gibraltar in accordance with C.in C, South Atlantic's 2359/25. (S.O.I. Sierre Leone, 1019N/26, to Admty.).

EMPIRE MIST.
"Q" Report.

Following has been used. Armed Merchant Raider 4.36 S. - 27.29 W. - EMPIRE MIST, suspicious. (Freetown W/T, 1100/26). Following has been read. Please cancel my QQQQ 1100 - 1155/26 EMPIRE MIST T.O.R.1105N. (Freetown, 1420/26).

CORDILLERA.
TEWKESBURY.
x? SANTOS.

Overdue shipping Freetown, all 3 diverted to St. Vincent on 17/5 have not arrived at either port under own steam. (S.O.I Freetown, 1105N/26 to Admty.)

CAMERONIA.

F.O.I.C. Simonstown's 1010B/26. CAMERONIA will have to fuel and water on passage to U.K. Should this be done at Freetown, CILICIA can escort to Freetown. If ship comes to Freetown for decision whether proceeds independently from there or in S.L. Convoy. (C. in C.S.A., 1231N/26 to Admty.)

X GASCONY intended see page 977.

/U/B. Report

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

890

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd.)

U-B. Reports

Admiralty Message A.F. Position 6° 30' N. 11° 52' W. (C.in C.S.A. 1304N/26 to G.B.M.S. 6 A.) (See also U-Boat Campaign). On several occasions in Admiralty signal of estimated U-Boat positions numbers of U-Boats have been reported in the Freetown Area which are not justified by any facts or particular indications within my knowledge. (Details) (C.in C.S.A. 1313N/26 to Admty.)

CARNARVON
CASTLE.
EMPRESS OF
ASIA.

26/5. CARNARVON CASTLE left Simonstown and arrived Capetown. Transport EMPRESS OF ASIA from Convoy W.8.8A. arrived unexpectedly Table Bay for bunkers. Ship lost port anchor on arrival and is putting to sea for night. Weather very bad. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1603Z/26 to Admty.)

WINDHUK.
(German)

Santos reports as follows A.2. Customs officials have received from Rio de Janeiro permission to grant German ship WINDHUK clearance if she asks for it. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 1851Z/26 to R.A.S.A.D) (Santos 1801Z/26).

S.L.75.

Your 0053B/26 estimated convoy S.L.75 was in 020° 25' N. 021° 25' W. at 1200B/26 speed 6.5 based on known position 1200N/25. (C.in C.S.A., 2115N/26 to Admty.)

Reports from
Ships Torpedoed.

In many cases recently no distress signal from ships torpedoed in vicinity has been received at Freetown. Propose attention of Merchant ships be called to importance of ships in this area observing D. (2) article 84. (C.in C.S.A. 2249N/26 to Admty.)

MONBALDO.
(Italian)

Para reports Italian MONBALDO anchored nine miles down river and A.1 source states ship sailing 27/5. (N.C.S.O. Para. 2030Z/26 to S.O.I's) (S.O.I. Montevideo 2257Z/26 to R.A.S.A.D.)

/French ERIDAN

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd.)

French
ERIDAN,
PIERRE L.D.

Vichy ship ERIDAN passed Sunda Strait 29/4 bound for Madagascar, Dakar and France. Desirable to intercept if possible as cargo reported to include 1500 tons of rubber. Vichy ship PIERRE L.D. passed Sunda Strait 25/4 destination unknown, may also be on S.A. Station now. (C.in C.S.A. 2355N/26 to S.A. Station).

War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.NEREUS.

Greek submarine NEREUS leaves Alexandria 1800C/26 for area 035° 30' 029° 30' - 000° - 50 - 50 routed through 033° 00' 030° 00' at 1000C/27 thence on course 360°. (Capt.S.1. 1141C/26 to C.in C. Med.)

CLYDE
SEVERN
Patrols.

Admty. 1432B/23. Request you arrange for CLYDE and SEVERN to carry out the following (?cruises) as soon as ready. Submarines follow each other (?at) 12 day intervals. V.A. Malta pass any late intelligence of traffic routes and co-ordinate with F.O.C.N.A. any intending U. Class movements in this srea. Assumed submarines can (?proceed) on the surface by day westwards of 005° E. (C.in C.Med., 1244C/26 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Malta Convoys.

^{M.F.W.D.}
D. of S.T.'s 1459B/24. Strongly urge that loading of three CLAN ships may be permitted to continue and also that CALIFORNIA STAR may be allocated for M.W.8. as well. Need for M.W.8 and subsequent convoy(s) is imperative if Malta is to carry out function ordered in Chief of Staffs No.77 of 16/4. Need for BRECONSHIRE with more aviation spirit is very great. (V.A. Malta 1304B/26 to C.in C.Med.)

URSULA
Operation
"Creep".

Reference operation "Creep" para 12, spend one day only off Khoms and Zuara and adjust patrol to arrive Malta 5/6. (Cm. S.I. 1443B/26 to URSULA.)

UPHOLDER.
Attacks on
M/V's.

UPHOLDER reports at 0900/19 in 037° 55' 015° 38' sighted Westbound convoy 3 small merchant vessels out of range. At 1844/20 in 037° 58' 015° 40' fired 3 torpedoes at Eastbound escorted convoy, 2 tankers and one merchant vessel. Estimated one hit on 4000 ton laden tanker. At 0630/21 in 037° 14' 015° 48' sighted SICILY class hospital ship Northbound. At 1229/23 in 037° 56' 015° 36' fired 3 torpedoes at Southbound convoy, 2 laden French ships considered tankers escorted by one (? Italian) sloop, one hit on 5000 ton ship observed sinking.

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

UPHOLDER.
Attacks on
M/V's.
(contd.)

My 2043/24 in 036° 48' 015° 42' fired remaining two torpedoes at largest of three heavily escorted Southbound liners, range 1600 yards, one mark (iv) and one mark (viii) torpedoes both hit. Target considered 25,700 tons CONTE GRANDE, thought ship sank. Counter attack in these three attacks comprised 90 depth charges, no damage. (Cdr. S.1. 1620B/26 to Capt. S.1.) CONTE GRANDE is known to have been at Santos, Brazil. UPHOLDER target may have been either AUGUSTUS, 30,418 tons. DUILIO 23,636 tons or GIULIO CESARE 21,900 tons, all of which were engaged in trooping earlier in the war. (D.S.630. 27/5.)

CANADA
(French).

French Hospital ship CANADA has been given a safe conduct to Beirut providing she calls first at Haifa. Ship's approx. position was 34° N. (?26°) E. at 1200 G.M.T. Ship should be allowed to proceed unless there is any indication she is not steering for Haifa. (C.in C. Med. 1636C/26 to Med. Fleet.)

Suez Canal
Mines.

Your 2001C/25, the fullest possible information is required about sweeping of Type "G" Mines. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1722B/26 to S.B.N.O. Suez Canal.) Your 1901C/24 gives a clear picture of situation after raid of May 23/24 and indicates that Minewatching organisation is now reliable. With what degree of accuracy are the Lookouts able to mark mines? Your 0310C/25. Essential to reduce period of holding up traffic for intensive sweeping. A delay of three days does not appear to give an appreciable increase of security over one day provided dangerous areas can be intensively swept during the day. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1730B/26 to S.B.N.O. Suez Canal) Reply: 1801C/27.

/UNIQUE

War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General. (contd.)UNIQUE.

Do not approach within one mile of Lampedusa Harbour. Exact position of 2 "Cucumbers" not known but are within 1 and 3 cables respectively of following position in cables from Eastern Light at entrance (a) 224° 1 (b) 272° 6. (Cdr.S.1. 1841B/26 to UNIQUE.)

Suez Canal Mines.

Situation report. Magnetic mine exploded near channel at kilo 118 by D.W.I Wellington A/C. Mine at kilo 27 found by diver and destroyed. 6 ships passed from Bitter Lake to Suez. Intend to resume route 27/5 sweeping over dangerous area. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1913C/26 to Admty. etc.)

Enemy M/V's bombed.

Following Maryland recco. today, 2 Blenheims 139 Sqdn. dropped 8 250 lb. G.P. bombs on MV. of 4,000 tons anchored 34° 50' N. 11° 26' E. MV. identified as same attacked by Blenheims reported in my 1.326 22/5. Bomb hole observed in forepart of ship and damage to funnel. Today's attack 3 direct hits but all bounced off deck and damage not observed. No opposition. Two other Blenheims of 39 Sqdn. detailed in afternoon to attack damaged MV. and DR. reported due to leave Sfax. Ships seen stationary outside harbour and did not attack. On way back 8 270 lbs. G.P. bombs on damaged and abandoned MV. 34° 59' N. 11° 19' E. Some near misses but no damage observed. No opposition. All A/C returned safely. (H.Q., R.A.F. Malta, 2115/26 to H.Q., R.A.F., M.E.)

/UTMOST

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

895

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

UTMOST.

In view of recent enemy losses it seems probable he may take coast. You have complete liberty of action N.W. of line 60° from Kuriat. (S.O.(S) Malta, 2139B/26 to UTMOST.)

SULLBERG.
(German)

Arrived and will leave Valencia tonight. (ALICANTE, T.H.I. 2345/26.)

Flying Boats
for Freetown.

Suggest that on arrival of ten G.R. Blenheims in M.E. No.228 F/B Sqn. should be sent to Freetown. Also that No. 230 F/B Sqn. should be reduced to an I.E. of two plus one I.R. Sunderlands, all remaining aircraft of No. 230 Sqn. being handed over to No.228 Sqn. (Air Min., No T.O.O./26 to A.O.C.in C. M.E.)

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

Aegean
Reconnaissance.

Following received from 204 Group. R/C 1330/25 Aegean, negative ships at sea anywhere ?north of Crete to Stampalia to Melos to Cape Malea. At Melos 6 vessels 200 tons 15 caiques. One of 300 tons ashore. T.O.O. 1455/25. (Ends) (N.O.I.C. Alexandria 0046C/26 to V.A.(A) Med.)

Maleme
Reconnaissance.

H.Q.
204 Group reports 25/5 enemy concentrating on landing aircraft and gliders in field approx. one mile west of Maleme. Also on beach same neighbourhood. (?Tendency) of enemy to move enemy concentrations westward and southward from Maleme. T.O.O. 1750/25. (R.A. Alexandria, 0106C/26 to R.A.(A).)

→ Melos
Reconnaissance.

Following received from 204 Group, photographic analysis of Melos on 25th Adastis (? Corrupt Group) in inlet at inner bay has four 500-ton schooners, one T/S 500 ton, 12 caiques. In a harbour (two groups) at Ios (where breakwater to and beyond islet with causeway to shore exists) two schooners and 21 caiques or small barges. T.O.O. 1932/25. (R.A. Alexandria, 0701/26 to R.A.(A) Med.)

DIDO.
AJAX.

(Corrupt group) in position 320° Alexandria 100 miles at 0840C/27. (R.A. Alexandria, 0912/27 to DIDO, AJAX.)

→ Melos
Reconnaissance.

204 Group reports evening R/C on 25/5 ^{Melos} MELOS, 4 M.V'S 1500 tons, 6 schooners 500 tons, 12 Caiques. T.O.O. 2050/25. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 0915/26 to R.A.(A) Med.)

/Cover for GLENROY ...

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

897

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Cover for GLENROY.

Cover GLENROY during today 26/5.
(C. in C. Med., 1012C/26 to F.O.C.1 B.S.)

AJAX.

Join B.S.1 as soon as you can.
(C. in C. Med., 1016C/26 to AJAX.)

Enemy Shipping, Melos, Ios.

Operational Summary No.350 up to 1200/26
Reconnaissances reported no shipping at sea between Crete, Cape Malea, Melos and Astropalia. 6 Schooners, 12 Caiques at Melos. 2 Schooners, 21 Caiques or small barges at Ios. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E.1058/26)

Raid on Melos Harbour.

Request you carry out following operation.
(C.in C. Med., 1106C/26 to F.O.C.1 B.S.)
See Lion Copy.

AUCKLAND.
DEFENDER.
CALCUTTA.
Convoy A.N.31.

My 1249/25 (N.T. in W.R.) VASCO, ^{MART}~~MARIE~~ MAERSK, escorted by AUCKLAND, are to press on to arrive Suda Bay shortly after daylight 28th. AUCKLAND is to remain at Suda Bay under weigh during 28th and is to be sailed for Alexandria after dark via Antikithera Channel. DEFENDER is to escort ALFIOS to vicinity of Candia and return to pass Kaso about 0630/28. CALCUTTA is to provide A/A protection during daylight 27th preference being given to Suda Bay (? territory) if ALFIOS has not joined up. CALCUTTA is to R/V with DEFENDER about 0900/28 and return to -Alexandria. Fighter protection from -FORMIDABLE will be provided by V.A. Light Force (? if possible). S.B.N.O. Suda Bay to arrange Pilot Boat to meet ALFIOS off Candia. (C. in C. Med., 1122C/26 to CALCUTTA, S.B.N.O. Suda Bay.)

/Enemy Units

MOST SECRET

897A

1106C/26 May.

M O S T S E C R E T M E S S A G E I N

From: C. in C. Mediterranean Date: 26.5.41.
Reed. 1253

NAVAL CODE L (2) by W/T

Addressed: F.O.C. 1st B.C.S., repeated H.M.S. AJAX,
S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, (P) H.M.S. ABDIEL, 201
Group, 204 Group, H.M.S. INDOMITABLE, Captain
(D) 7, H.M.S. DECOY, H.Q.R.A.F. Middle East,
R.N. G.H.Q., Captain (S) †, ? N.O. in Charge
Alexandria.

EMERGENCY

Request ?you will carry out following operation.

(a) When H.M.S. AJAX force joins, Captain (D) 7
H.M.S. KELVIN H.M.S. JACKAL joins your screen.

(b) Detach Captain (D) 14 ?H.M.S. NUBIAN H.M.S.
KANDAHAR H.M.S. JANUS to raid Melos Harbour, Island ~~(Melos)~~ *Melos*
during night 26th/27th. Destroyers should pass anti
Kithera Channel as late as possible consistent with
allowing one hour for destruction of enemy and repassing
anti Kithera by 0500/27th at latest. Afford them as much
fighter protection as you can. Latest reconnaissance report
Melos will be sent to Captain (D) 14.

(c) Detach H.M.S. AJAX and H.M.S. DIDO to make
a feint as though attacking to pass Kaso Straits at
2200/26 returning to Alexandria after dark.

(d) Cover for retirement Captain (D) 14 and
GLENROY.

(e) H.M.S. DECOY is being sent to join your
screen to rendezvous with you in (? position) 033 degs.
50' North 024 degs. 00' East at 0700/27th unless otherwise
ordered by you.

1106C/26

Advance copy sent Duty Captain, D.O.D. (F)
& D.D.I.C.

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.L.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)
- Duty Capt.
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.D.I.C.
- D.S.D. 9
- D. of P. (2)
- E.P.S.
- D.N.A.D.
- Hd. of M. (30)
- I.F.

- D.T.S.D.
- D.A./S.W.
- D. of L.D.
- D.M.S.

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Enemy
Units.

A/C R/C 25th reports enemy ships at following Islands (1) Melos. Off Adamas Village 6 500 ton schooners, 4 merchant ships 1500 tons, 12 caiques (2) Ios, In port Nio Sunday 2 Bly (?schooners 21) Caiques. (Capt.S.1, 1151C/26 to PERSEUS)

PERSEUS.

Retire to northward of 037° 00' N. tonight 26/27. British Light Force will be operating at Melos Knoll about 0001/27 approach from South Westwards. (C.in C. Med. 1236/26 to PERSEUS)
Cancel my 1236C/26. (C.in C. Med.1724C/26 to PERSEUS)

Convoy A.N. 31.

British VASCO Greek MARIT MAERSK escorted by CALCUTTA and AUCKLAND left Alexandria 0500C/26 due Suda Bay 1030C/28. Cargo military stores and ammunition. Greek ALFIOS left 1000C escorted by DEFENDER Due Heraklion 1200C/28. Cargo foodstuffs. (N.C.S.O. Alexandria, 1253C/26 to Admty.etc.)

B.S.1 bombed
FORMIDABLE hit?

One enemy aircraft bombing. FORMIDABLE hit ? Request fighter assistance. 106 degs. 33° N. 26° E. 21. (B.S.1, 1312/26 to C. in C. Med.)

Suda Bay
Landing.
ABDIEL.

C. in C. Med. 1801/25. Following are disembarkation arrangements. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1349C/26 to ABDIEL)

Tymbaki.

C.in C. Med. 1627/25 (N.T. in W.R.)
Communication with Tymbaki cut off light on beach cannot (?therefore) be arranged. Two M.L.C's are at Erempholi with instructions to look for an emergency operation any night. COVENTRY pass to GLENGYLE. (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay, 1351C/26 to GLENROY)

/DECOY

War Diary

26.5.1941.
Monday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Attack on Crete- Contd.

DECOY

C. in C. Med. 118/26. Intend to slip at 1530 passing gate at 1545 (DECOY 1402C/26 to R.A. Alexandria)

KIPLING
KELVIN
JACKAL

Intended KIPLING, KELVIN, and JACKAL shall join 7th D.F. Capt. Lord Louis Mountbatten is being sent to U.K. by air. (C. in C. Med. 1438C/26 to Admty. etc.)

B.S.1.
Aircraft.

2 Hurricanes will arrive 1500 and one Blenheim 1600. Keep me informed of P.C. and S. (C. in C. Med., 1453C/26 to B.S.1.) 3 Hurricanes will relieve every 40 minutes till 1700 then every hour till sunset. They will approach from S.W. and fire cartridges of day on sighting. (C. in C. Med. 1511/26 to B.S.1.) My P.C. and S. 234° 33° N., 27° E., 28 110° 16 knots at 1500. (B.S.1. 1525/26 to C. in C. Med.)

GLENROY

Following from Mid. East (Begins-) - Not impossible for enemy to land by air (Tymbaki) or near road Tymbaki - Heraklion. Therefore most important beach Tymbaki and road Heraklion should be protected. Also essential permanent W/T communication established Tymbaki to Canea and Heraklion. HQ 16 Infantry Brigade with 2 ships of enemy due Tymbaki night night 26/27 has wireless set T.O.O. 1015/26 (ends) (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1616C/26 to GLENROY)

/Air Recco....

War Diary.26.5.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete. (Contd.)Air Recco.

Following received (begins) 39 reconnaissance 0600 to 0800/26. Stampalia to Melos negative shipping. In Melos one tanker and one postulated destroyer with steam up. Melos-Cape Melia negative shipping. Retimo - Candia small boat in harbour A.M. Heraklion landing ground large number of small aircraft reported on main runway but confirmation of this awaited from analysis of photograph. 5 fishing boats in Spiralonga. H.M. Ships observed on return flight escorted by Beau fighters. T.O.O. 1020C/26. (ends) (R.A. Alexandria, 1631C/26 to R.A. (A) Med.)

Cruisers'
A/A
Ammunition.

Your 2112C/24 stating GLOUCESTER and FIJI had expended whole outfit of A.A. ammunition, have you considered landing part of main armament outfits in order to stow more A.A. ammunition? (V.C.N.S. 1657B/26 to C. in C. Med.) Reply: 1744/28.

AJAX
ABDIEL.

It is reported that heavy attack by JU.87 and Italian torpedo aircraft is intended on you late this afternoon. (C. in C. Med. 1802C/26 to ABDIEL, AJAX.)

Aegean
Recco.

Request you will repeat morning and evening R/C in Aegean on 27/5. (C. in C. Med., 1816C/26 to 204 Group.)

GLENROY
hit.

Very heavy air attack GLENROY hit, my position now is $195^{\circ} 035^{\circ}$ N., 025° E., 40 miles. (Capt. D. 10, 1826C/26 to F.O.1 B.S.) See later signals.

Crete.

Appreciation. Reply to Chiefs of Staff 116. (C. in C. Med. 1834C/26 to Admty.) See Lion Copy.

/ALFIOS.....

900A

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

1834C/26th May.

MOST SECRET

IN

From C. in C. Mediterranean.

Date 27.5.41.

Recd. 0829.

NAVAL CYPHER ONE TIME TABLE by W/T

Addressed Admiralty.

IMPORTANT

525. Chief of Staff 116. Their Lordships may rest assured that determining factor in operating in Aegean is not fear of sustaining losses but need to avoid loss which, without commensurate advantage to our selves, will cripple Fleet out here. So far as I am aware enemy has not yet succeeded in getting any considerable reinforcements to Crete by sea if indeed he has sent any at all though I agree this may soon be appreciable.

Sunk,

(ii) As regards paragraph three of message under reply surely we have already sufficient experience of what losses are likely to be. In three days two cruisers and four destroyers were ~~(?especially detailed)~~ one battleship is out of action for several months and two other cruisers and four destroyers sustained considerable damage. We cannot afford another such experience and retain sea control in Eastern Mediterranean

(iii) In point of fact supply by sea has not yet come much into picture as despite loss and turning back of his convoys enemy is so prolific in air that for the moment he is able to reinforce and keep his forces supplied by air at will. This process is quite unchecked by air action on our part and sight of constant unhindered procession of JU 52 flying into Crete is among factors likely to affect morale of our forces.

(iv) I feel that Their Lordships should know that effect of recent operations on personnel is cumulative. Our light craft officers, men and (machinery?) alike are nearing exhaustion. Since LUSTRE started at end of February they have been kept running almost to limit of endurance and now when work is redoubled they are faced (corrupt group) and air concentration beside which I am assured that in Norway was child's play. It is inadvisable to drive men beyond a certain point.

(v) I have been able to do rather more than was foreshadowed in our appreciation. Each night destroyers and cruisers sweep North Coast of Crete, we have bombarded Maleme and this morning attacked Scarpanto. Melos is also receiving attention from a submarine. Once more however I must emphasize that air reconnaissance is one hope of stopping bomber transport aircraft borne reinforcements since it should allow us to keep our forces far enough away by day to avoid serious loss pending moment when enemy commits his convey to sea voyage and we go after it. I have not however yet received reinforcements of reconnaissance aircraft which I so earnestly requested.

900B

-2-

6. Since writing above I learn H.M.S. FORMIDABLE and H.M.S. NUBIAN have been hit by bombs and are returning to harbour. I have no details.

1834c/26.

✓ as received.

Advance copy C.N.S.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
B.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.N.I. (4)
D. of P. (2)
Duty Captain
E.P.S.
Head of M. (8)
I.P.
N.I.D. 10 (Pay. Cdr. Wilson)
W.D.

MG

901

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

ALFIOS.

Your 1615 (N.T. in W.R.) order ALFIOS back to Alexandria. Proceed to join CALCUTTA. (C. in C. Med., 1917/26 to DEFENDER)

B.S.1
FORMIDABLE.
ABDIEL.

(? It is understood) when 25 miles from Alexandria you will detach FORMIDABLE and 4 destroyers to Alexandria. Proceed northward with remainder of your force to support ABDIEL's return. It is assumed Capt. D.14 and DECOY will have joined you before detaching FORMIDABLE. (C. in C. Med., 1922C/26 to B.S.1)

Parachutists.

It is possible German parachutists may be dropped in neighbourhood of Tymbaki. (C. in C. Med., 1928C/26 to GLENROY)

GLENROY
damage.

My 1826. Fires out in GLENROY. Partly flooded forward, one main derrick and some boats gone. Will be late. My position now is 29° 34' N. 25° E. 12, 16 knots. (Capt. D.10, 1950C/26 to C. in C. Med. B.S.1) GLENROY reports unable to continue operation tonight. One third of landing craft out of action part may be repaired tomorrow. All army petrol burnt or overboard. Much time lost turning down wind etc. Request instructions for tomorrow. My P.C. and S. are 033° 51' N. 025° 05' E. 121, 14.5 knots. Heavy torpedo aircraft attack at dusk. (Capt. D. 10, 2101C/26 to C. in C. Med.)

IMPERIAL.
KIMBERLEY.
HOTSPUR.

Take KIMBERLEY and HOTSPUR under your orders. Sail after embarking troops by Kaso Strait to arrive Suda Bay at 2359/27, disembark troops, and sail again at 0230/28 for Alexandria. Passage between Kaso Strait and Suda Bay to be made at highest possible speed in both directions. Fighter protection is being requested. (C. in C. Med. 2128C/26 to IMPERIAL) Cancel my 2128C/26. C. in C. Med. 2354C/26.)

/Air Recco ...

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Air Recco.

Following from H.Q. 204 Group.
Photographic reconnaissance 26/5. Melos,
one destroyer 255 feet long. One M/V
230 feet, one M/V 85 feet, 6 small Coastal
ships. Retimo Harbour. 22 Caiques
Heraklion Harbour 36 Caiques both harbours.
T.O.O. 1722/26 (Ends) (R.A. Alexandria,
2316/26 to R.A. (A) Med).

903

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

CARTHAGE.

Sailed in accordance with C. in C. E.I. 1226Z/23. (N.L.O. Durban, 0836Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

EMERALD.
B.P.4

After Convoy B.P.4 has passed up river on 30/5 sail for Colombo calling at Bombay to embark condenser tubes and Ferrules. Report E.T.A. Bombay to Cdre. R.I.N. (S.N.O. Persian G., 0921Z/26 to EMERALD.)

BOTLEA.
KING GRUFFYDD.

Have not the speed, armament or complement required for A.M.C., nor the necessary speed for patrol craft required to intercept shipping in areas such as entrances to Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Unsuitable for service in Tropics. Considered they would be of more value to the war effort as Merchant ships. Recommended they be paid off and revert to Merchant Service. (C. in C.E.I., 1404Z/26 to Admty.)

China.

Indo-China.
Thailand.

Your 1932B/23 and Bangkok 330. Remarks on relation between economic warfare aspect and general political and strategic situation. Our only hope of exercising any control over rubber exports of these two countries is by friendly negotiation and by offering them something in exchange they can only get with difficulty elsewhere, e.g., oil. (C. in C. China, 0510Z/26 to Admty.)

War Diary.

26.5.1941. 904
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

REPULSE.

Ref. Admty. 1712B/25 pass to REPULSE.
Suggest best anchorage (details)
Oiler ROYALITE will be diverted to await
REPULSE. 7 R.C.N. corvettes will provide
A/S protection. (N.O.I.C. St. Johns, N.F.
0015Z/26, to B.S.3.)
A.M. 1712B/25. E.T.A. Conception Bay
1030Z/27. Swordfish with depth charges
will assist with A/S protection.
(REPULSE, 1400Z/26 to N.O.I.C. St. John's
N.F. etc.)
REPULSE is to fuel as rapidly as possible,
and is then to reinforce SUFFOLK in
operation ordered in my 1015B/26. PRINCE
EUGEN may be fuelling in this area.
Report probable time of leaving Newfoundland.
(D.O.D.(H) 1424B/26 to REPULSE)

Air Search.

One Liberator 4 engined aircraft left
Newfoundland 1600Z/25 to search area S.
and W. of 056° N. 036° W. (C.O.A.C.
Halifax, 0235Z/26 to Admty. etc.)
My 0235Z/26. Aircraft reached area 56° N.
36° W. and returned Halifax, nothing
sighted, visibility poor. (C.O.A.C.
Halifax, 1212Z/26 to Admty.)

WINNIPEG.
(French)
intercepted.

VAN KINSBERGEN intercepted French Ship
WINNIPEG in 14.52 N. 60.38 W. Ship being
escorted into Trinidad. (C.in C.A.W.I.
0438Q/26 to Admty.)
WINNIPEG. Most important that every
precaution be taken to prevent sabotage.
Instructions for treatment of crew and
passengers. Decision as to seizure or
requisition of ship will be communicated
later. (C. in C. A.W.I., 0941Q/26 to
N.O.I.C. Trinidad)
My 0438Q/26 and my 0941/26. VAN KINSBERGEN
reports 750 passengers on board including
210 German and 100 unarmed French soldiers
and sailors. Request early decision as
to seizure or requisition of ship and
confirmation that instructions in my 0941/26
as regards passengers and crew are correct.
(C. in C.A.W.I. 0942Q/26 to Admty.)

/Esquimalt Harbour ..

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

Esquimalt
Harbour.

The following obstructions are being laid.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1521Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

CHITRAL.
H.X. 129

In absence of REVENGE intend sailing
CHITRAL as ocean escort for H.X.129.
Intend embarking about 150 Naval Personnel
for passage to U.K. via Iceland.
CHITRAL to proceed to Reykjavik with
Iceland local escort and to return to
Halifax without proceeding on patrol if
this can be arranged by F.O.C.N.P.
(R.A.3 B.S., 1659P/26 to Admty. etc.)

Tunis
Intelligence.

Following from Navy Dep. from Tunis 23/5.
Port of Tripoli seriously damaged. Axis
powers now using Port of Zura. Shipping
proceeding there by Tunisian Territorial
Waters. (N.A. Washington 1825/26 to
Admty.) N.I.D. Comment. This information has
been passed to C. in C. Med.N.O.i/c Malta.)

St. Lawrence
Ports.

Your 1555B/26. Agree to proposal re St.
Lawrence ports. It would also be helpful
if other ships bound to Canadian and U.S.
Atlantic Ports West of Halifax could make
similar signal on crossing 65° West.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1912Z/26 to Admty.)

WARSPITE
repairs.

Desired arrangements be made for WARSPITE
to be taken in hand in U.S.A. for repairs
as indicated in the following summary.
WARSPITE should arrive shortly after MALAYA
completes. Repair Yard should be reported
by wire. (Controller 2347B/26 to B.A.R.M.)

906

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

HARPAGUS.
NORMAN MONARCH.
JOHN P.
PEDERSEN.

In Convoy H.X. 126, torpedoed 20-21/5, all now presumed to have sunk. (D.S. 629, 26/5.)

RAMILLIES
(torpedoed
8/5)

12 survivors landed at a Canadian port. Master and 24 of crew reported in another boat not yet accounted for. (D.S.629, 26/5)

DUNKWA.
(torpedoed
6/5)

British, 4,752 tons, overdue at Freetown since 10/5. Now known sunk by S/M on 6/5.

BRITISH
GRENADIER.
(torpedoed
22/5)

Spanish gunboat CALVO ^{SATELO} taking 24 survivors tanker BRITISH GRENADIER torpedoed 2000/22 to Freetown. (Madrid, 1117/26 to Admty.) My 1122/25. Further 24 survivors ex BRITISH GRENADIER landed Freetown 5/5 (?) Crew all safe. (S.O.(1) Freetown 1204N/26)

GLARONA.

Norwegian tanker, 9912 tons. Following has been read S.S.SS 6.30 N. 11.52 W. GLARONA sighted. (Freetown W/T, T.O.R. 1150N/26)

MARISA
(torpedoed
16/5)

My 1610/23 Further 14 survivors ex MARISA picked up by SURPRISE and arrived Freetown 26/5. (C.in C.S.A. 1200N/26 to Admty.)

WANGI WANGI.

WANGI WANGI probably torpedoed in 05° 24' N. 14° 04' W. at 1920/2. Incomplete message only received. (C. in C.S.A. 1354N/26.)

SAN FELIX.
(torpedoed
20/5)

My 1911Z/23. British ship SAN FELIX arrived safely. Badly holed. (N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F. 1805Z/26 to Admty.)

COLONIAL.

Following has been read. SSSS 9.16 N. 15.15 W. COLONIAL sighted Submarine 2202 G.M.T. (Freetown W/T, T.O.R. 2107N/26)

/CITY OF WINCHESTER

907

War Diary.

26.5.1941.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (contd.)

CITY OF
WINCHESTER.
(Torpedoed 9/5)

91 survivors arrived on Norwegian HERMA
ex CITY OF WINCHESTER which was torpedoed
9/5 in 8 20 N. 26 14 W. S/M did not
surface crew picked up 19/5.
(N.C.S.O. Takoradi, 2346/26.)

Submarines Reported.

1843.

At 1843/26 G.M.T. a U-Boat made a sighting
report in vicinity of 48° N. 17° 30' W.
unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 2140B/26)

Estimated U/B dispositions. (D.D.I.C.
1410B/26).

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Greek Shipping.

The Greek Govt. has sent a message to all Greek vessels outside the Mediterranean, requisitioning them.

Home Commands.

BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGEN.

4th D.F. attack.

ZULU, MAORI and COSSACK attacked BISMARCK with torpedoes about 0122 to 0146. MAORI and COSSACK each claimed a hit, though the senior surviving officer of the BISMARCK states that no torpedoes fired by destroyers hit the ship. Nevertheless, the BISMARCK made good 8 miles between 0240 and 0340 and at 0353 B Capt. (D) 4 reported that she was still capable of heavy and accurate fire. At 0604B MAORI reported her course and speed 160° 7 knots.

Situation at 0600.

The enemy was altering course widely, speed 7 knots. Destroyers shadowing.

RENOWN, ARK ROYAL about 30 miles to the southward.

C. in C. H.F. in KING GEORGE V with RODNEY working round to engage from the westward.

NORFOLK from N.W., DORSETSHIRE from S.E. and SHEFFIELD seeking to make contact and shadow.

S.O. Force H., intended to fly off a striking force to attack at 0715, but the attack was cancelled owing to the difficulty of identifying our own ships in low visibility.

At 0701 BISMARCK opened fire on 4th D.F. SIKH reported her course at 0739 as 80°, at 0744 the enemy had altered course to 240° after which she made several alterations of course.

/NORFOLK.....

MOST SECRET.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

909

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGEN. (contd).

NORFOLK made contact at about 0630 and engaged at 0758 whilst shadowing. Force H made contact at 0830 and flew off a striking force at 0922.

Enemy
Aircraft
Attacks.

Enemy shore based aircraft attacked our ships from 1000 onwards. There were indications that more than one enemy S/M was in the neighbourhood.

Sinking of
BISMARCK.

KING GEORGE V and RODNEY engaged BISMARCK from 0848 to 1020 at ranges down to 3300. (Ammunition requirements on return to base:- KING GEORGE V 336 rounds 14 inch, 724 - 5.25 inch. RODNEY 380 rounds 16 inch, 716 - 6 inch, 12 torpedoes, NORFOLK full outfit of torpedoes).

C. in C. H.F. had to discontinue action on account of fuel shortage at 1028B. At 1042 he informed F.O. Force H that he could not get BISMARCK to sink by gunfire. Accordingly DORSETSHIRE torpedoed the immobilised BISMARCK on both sides and sank her at 1101B in 48° 9' N 16° 7' W. BISMARCK had ceased firing, but her colours were still flying. Whilst rescuing survivors a suspicious object was sighted to leeward, which might have been a S/M. DORSETSHIRE therefore proceeded with MAORI to rejoin C. in C. H.F., over 100 survivors were rescued by DORSETSHIRE and MAORI. Our forces proceeded under air attack to bases for fuel, ships in company with KING GEORGE V:- RODNEY, DORSETSHIRE, COSSACK, ZULU, MAORI, SIKH, JUPITER, C.S.1 proceeded independently to Scapa.

/There were.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

BISMARCK & PRINZ EUGEN. (contd).

There were no casualties or damage to the capital ships or cruisers. Slight damage and a few casualties in COSSACK and ZULU; one man lost overboard in SIKH.

PRINZ
EUGEN.

Bomber Command sent a striking force to position 48° 8' N 8° 11' W by 1000, to meet the possibility of PRINZ EUGEN endeavouring to make the French Coast.

At 1820 an enemy cruiser, probably PRINZ EUGEN was in 47° 0' N 14° 30' W.

Orders for intercepting were sent to SEALION PANDORA, SEAWOLF, STURGEON and TIGRIS.

PRINCE OF
WALES.

PRINCE OF WALES arrived at Reykjavik at 0530 today with AURORA, GALATEA and 4 destroyers.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands. Contd.Enemy
T.B.'s in
Channel.

KONDOR (S.O.) JAGUAR and WOLF were reported to have been seen passing Cape Gris Nez at 0815 on a south-westerly course, speed about 30 knots.

Reinforcements
for
Mediterranean.

GALATEA is to be sent to the Mediterranean, C.S.2 is transferring his flag to AURORA.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command carried out no operations last night except minelaying by 29 Hampdens.

Blenheims operated today against shipping off the Dutch Coast and claim to have hit a cargo boat in a convoy.

Special searches were made today for the BISMARCK and PRINZ EUGEN by Catalinas and Sunderlands and by long range Hudsons. Wellingtons and Blenheims maintained cross over patrols at Strategic points. Patrols were flown in Denmark Straits by aircraft from Iceland. (C) A patrol was flown at dusk from Ushant to Brest and from Brest coastwise, and the cross over patrol off Brest was maintained.

A Hudson on the search for BISMARCK bombed and hit a coasting vessel off the Bay of Biscay.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.Enemy Air Operations.

A/P vessel EVESHAM on F.L. patrol was bombed and sunk at 2215 off Yarmouth.

PIORUN was attacked at 2000 B in 49° 47' N 11° 20' W by torpedo aircraft.

A group of merchant vessels from Plymouth/Falmouth to Helwick L.V. escorted by CLEVELAND was attacked at 2307. Two ships are reported to have been sunk (ROYK-SUND and ?).

REGISTAN Ocean boarding vessel was bombed and abandoned on fire at 2300 in position 270° Cape Cornwall 8 miles. REGISTAN was taken in tow for Falmouth, the Captain and 5 men remaining on board.

Mining.Operation
B.S.62.

TEVIOT BANK with COTSWOLD, laid mines in the East Coast Barrage today.

38 aircraft laid mines off Brest last night and 4 off Le Havre.

Mines were detonated today off Flamouth and Milford Haven.

Certain reaches of the Medway were closed in the early hours of today. Blyth was closed at 1907B.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.North Atlantic.

SEVERN was ordered at 1322B to rejoin CAIRNDALE.

Force H was ordered at 1259 to proceed to Gibraltar.

A tanker was sighted today by TRUANT. Last seen at 1445 in 40° 13' N 38° 19' W. steering 12°.

South Atlantic.

NELSON (proceeding to rejoin Convoy S.L.76) was ordered to return to Freetown at 2213N.

CILICIA and CARNARVON CASTLE are to leave Capetown on 28/5 and 29/5 respectively to patrol the Cape-North America and Cape - U.K. trade routes, as it appears that one or more raiders, supply ships or prizes are likely to have met and it is possible that an attack on these trade routes may result.

Mediterranean.Air attack
on convoy.

Following a report by a Maryland, 6 Blenheims at 1350 attacked a large convoy, escorted by 2 cruisers and 6 destroyers steering 210° in 33° 48' N 14° 44' E. One ship of 10,000 tons carrying M.T. was hit several times and was last seen down by the stern. Two Blenheims were destroyed. URSULA was ordered to try to intercept the convoy and UNION to investigate.

Enemy Libyan convoys now pass both East and West of Malta.

/Western Desert.....

War Diary

27.5.1941.
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean-Contd.

Western
Desert.

Supplies are being sent to Tobruk by lighter owing to the scale of air attack on coastal shipping. It is reported that SKUDD3 and SINDONIS shot down an aircraft at Tobruk on 25/5. *See also next page.*

2 Wellingtons bombed Benghazi last night.

Suez Canal

Movement of shipping recommenced today.

Attack on Crete.

Policy

At 0015B the Prime Minister sent a message to the Cs. in C. Med., and M.E., that victory in Crete was essential at this turning point in the war. They were to keep hurling in all aid they could.

Enemy air
attacks.
BARHAM
damaged.

The scale of enemy air attack at sea was again heavy today, and no fighter protection was available. QUEEN ELIZABETH, BARHAM and destroyers covered the retirement of ABDIEL, HERO and NIZAM after unloading troops and supplies at Suda Bay last night. At 0900 in 32° 45' N., 28° 20' E., BARHAM was hit by a bomb which put Y turret out of action.

See also next page

AUCKLAND escorting SS VASCO and MARIT MAERSK with CALCUTTA, taking military stores and ammunition to Suda Bay reported being bombed at 0900.

DEFENDER escorting SS ALFIOS with foodstuffs for Heraklion reported being bombed constantly from 1305 to 1430. JANUS and HASTY were sent to join her.

FORMIDABLE and NUBIAN returned to Alexandria today.

/Reinforcements....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

Reinforcements.

ABDIEL, HERO and NIZAM successfully transported troops and stores into Suda Bay last night and brought back 700 personnel and 17 prisoners for interrogation.

See previous page.

Convoy A.N.31 was turned back at 0809.

Air Operations.

Fighter Blenheims and 2 Hurricanes were sent to intercept troop carriers proceeding from Greece to Maleme and destroyed 3 of the escort.

Two squadrons of Blenheims sent to bomb enemy troop concentrations near Canea were unable to locate these and bombed a concentration of 100 enemy aircraft at Maleme, destroying many.

Our aircraft suffered some losses in these operations.

Enemy air Losses.

The estimated minimum number of aircraft casualties inflicted by the Navy in Cretan operations between 19/5 and 27/5 is as follows:- By gun fire: 14 destroyed, 11 probably destroyed, 12 damaged. By fighters: 4 destroyed, 1 probably destroyed, 3 damaged.

In addition, SKUDD 3, SINDONIS and Tug C 307 each shot down one a/c at Tobruk, and APHIS 2 JU. 87's operating off the Libyan coast.

See previous page.

Enemy shipping.

Air R/C early this morning reported no coastal shipping at sea between Suda Bay and Sitia Bay in an area 30 miles north of Crete. 5 medium size ships were outside the breakwater at Heraklion.

Enemy Reinforcements.

Enemy seaplanes landed troops at Suda Bay this morning. 16 troop carriers dropped stores 6 miles S.E. of Heraklion.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.U-Boat Campaign.South
Atlantic.

S.S. COLONIAL, dispersed from O.B. 318 is reported to have been torpedoed at 0100 today about 200 miles to N.W. of Freetown.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.Action to be
taken if
Germans occupy
All France.

On learning of aggression against France following action should be taken. Details. (Head of M. 1332B/27) See Lion Copy.

GALATEA.
For
Mediterranean.

Your Flagship is urgently required for service in the Mediterranean. Request you will arrange to transfer your Flag to such other ship of your Squadron as you may select, informing Admty, and order GALATEA to sail for the Clyde as soon as practicable. (V.C.N.S. 2307B/27 to C.S.2).

→ RODNEY.

Their Lordships congratulate RODNEY on the magnificent work of her engine room department which enabled the ship to steam many hundreds of miles at very high speed although her machinery was urgently in need of refit. (V.C.N.S. 2308B/27).

Movements.REGISTAN

Your 0306. Cancel my 0956/26 proceed in execution of previous orders. (C. in C. Plymouth, 0656/27).

→ RODNEY.

If fuel and your condition admits proceed to Halifax following a southern route which should be reported. R.A. (3) will give routing instructions beyond 40° W. (V.C.N.S. 1238B/27 to RODNEY.)

NORFOLK.

Your 1436/27. NORFOLK is required to provide escort for an important convoy leaving Clyde as soon as possible. Request therefore you will order her to Clyde. (V.C.N.S. 1908B/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

To ~~Ca. in C. Ho.~~ 26.5.41

Med. 350.

A. & W. I. 287

East Indies. 380

Western Approaches. 76.

South Atlantic. 502.

Repeated C. in C. China. 22.

Commonwealth Naval Board. 228

New Zealand Naval Board. 200

N.S.H.Q. Ottawa. 213.

Naval Cypher D. and Naval Cypher XR.

From Admiralty.

NITE.

Action to be taken if German forces occupy the whole of France with or without concurrence of some French leaders is being considered. It may be hoped that some or all of the French Colonies will decide to resume the fight by our side. It will be important to secure as many Vichy French ships as possible for allied service and to prevent their falling into Germany's hands. On learning of German aggression against France following action should be taken.

1. Messages will be broadcast to all French ships at sea, and in French Metropolitan ports, to proceed to the nearest or allied port including ports in the Free French Colonies. French ships in neutral ports will be urged to follow same course.
2. Any French ships met at sea should be advised to proceed to the nearest British port. If it appears possible that they will not obey they should be sent in under armed guard. On arrival at British or allied ports they should be detained pending instructions and their cargoes reported.
3. Pending clarification of the position of North African Colonies no French ships should be allowed to pass into the Mediterranean.
4. Following points should be made to crews of French ships:-
- (a) To obey any orders from France would be placing ships under control of common enemy now that Germans have occupied whole of France.
 - (b) In a British port arrangements will be made to employ ships under an independent Sovereign French Government if formed, otherwise under British requestion to enable them to trade safely.
 - (c) If ships are requisitioned owners will be compensated and ships returned to France after the war.
 - (d) While requisitioned French flag would be flown at owners mast and vessels manned by French crews if willing to serve.
 - (e) His Majesty's Government would hold the ship covered against war and marine risks for the voyage to the nearest British port.
 - (f) Terms for service will be as for British merchant service and an immediate advance of £5 to masters and officers and £3 to men may be made and debited to the Ministry of War Transport. Arrears of wages due under current French articles will be paid at rate of 176.50 francs to the pound, and in case of ships laid up since

917^B

Armistice and now brought into British port, arrears due for last six months will be paid, Increase in wages of £2 a month in British Merchant Navy as from 1/1/41. British income tax not payable on wages. British state schemes providing for insurance for sickness, invalidity and pensions, and for accidents occurring in course of employment apply as to British personnel. Compensation will be paid for death, disablement or loss of effects from war injury or detention by the enemy as it is to British personnel.

(g) Compensation for arrears due of Vichy daily war bonus will be paid at rate £7.10.0 to officers £5.0.0. to men for each month of service on the ship.

(h) Each volunteer will be asked to sign following declaration giving name, last ship, and rank:-

"Je declare que je suis pret a continuer a servir a bord d'un bateau francais, et a servir jusqu'a la victoire la cause des Allies contre l'Allemagne et l'Italie". "

Request any remarks on the above instructions.

1332B/27

for Head of M.

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

V.C.N.S. (F)

V.C.N.S. (T) (2)

D.T.D.

D. of P. (2)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

Head of M. (M.05724/41) (and for MWT, M.E.W. and French Distribution.) (30)

D.E.W.D.

JR.

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Destruction of BISMARCK.

List of Principal Officers Engaged.

(From Admiralty Narrative issued to Press for publication 28/5/41).

C. in C. H.F.	Adm. J.C. Tovey.	KING GEORGE V
V.A.C.B.C.S.	Vice-Adm. L.E. Holland	HOOD
V.A.C. Force H.	Vice-Adm. Sir J.F. Somerville	RENOWN.
R.A. 1 C.S.	Rear-Adm. W.F. Wake-Walker	NORFOLK.

Battleships:-

KING GEORGE V (H.F) Capt. W.R. Patterson.
PRINCE OF WALES " Capt. J.C. Leach.
RODNEY " Capt. F.H.G. Dalrymple Hamilton
RAMILLIES (3 B.S.) Capt. A.D. Read.

Battle Cruisers:-

HOOD (H.F) Capt. R. Kerr.
RENOWN. (H) Capt. R.R. McGrigor.

Cruisers:-

NORFOLK, 1.C.S. Capt. A.J.L. Phillips.
SUFFOLK, 1.C.S. Capt. R.M. Ellis.
SHEFFIELD (H) Capt. C.A.A. Larcom.
DORSETSHIRE
(South Atlantic) Capt. B.C.S. Martin.

/Aircraft.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Destruction of BISMARCK.

List of Principal Officers Engaged. (contd)

(From Admiralty Narrative issued to Press
for publication 28/5/41).

Aircraft-Carriers:-

VICTORIOUS	(H.F)	Capt. H.C. Bovell.
ARK ROYAL	(H)	Capt. L.E.H. Maund.

Destroyers:-

COSSACK,	4 D.F.	Capt. P.L. Vian.
ZULU,	4 D.F.	Com. H.R. Graham.
MAORI,	4 D.F.	Com. H.T. Armstrong.

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN.

At 0300B/25. in 057° 43' N. 030° 40' W. and at 0345B/25 in 057° 26' 031° 00' during recent operation when in company C. in C.H.F. lights as from boats including pyrotechnic signals were sighted. Survivors believed to be in vicinity. (REPULSE 0005Z/27)
Admty's 1328B (?26) and my 2130B/26. Intend to proceed Clyde with destroyer screen as soon as they join. KENYA to proceed Hval Fiord independently from R/V at 0500B/27 in 063° N. 028° W. (VICTORIOUS 0006B/27). Enemy appears badly damaged. Intend engaging from westward at dawn. (C. in C. H.F. 0009/27 to S.O. Force H). Request you go not less than 20 miles to Southward of enemy. I am working round to be Westward of him at dawn. (C. in C. H.F. 0022/27 to S.O. Force H). My 1824B/25. Admiralty appreciation is that BISMARCK intends to make for Brest. (D.D.I.C. 0037B/27). Report estimated bearing and distance of enemy from you at 2345. Force H. proceed Southwards of enemy. (C. in C.H.F. 0045/27 to S.O. Force H). After being torpedoed German B/S BISMARCK class made two complete circles and speed reduced. (S.O. Force H 0046B/27 to C. in C H.F). Arrived 0040 WIVERN, VANSITTART, WILD SWAN. (C. in C. Plymouth 0046/27). Your 2347 gave your course as 030°. Assume you are still chasing. (1st S.L. 0050B/27 to C. in C.H.F). My.P.C. and S. at 0100B 048° 54' 015° 19' 150° 27 knots. (C.S.l. 0108/27). Your 0045. 165° 41 miles. (S.O. Force H. 0112B/27 to C. in C.H.F). Still in touch position 47° 40' N. 13° 30' W. (Aldergrove 0115/27 to 15 Group) Have delivered (?torpedo attack) (ZULU 0122/27). Have delivered attack. Enemy making smoke. (MAORI 0138/27) Estimate one hit. (MAORI 0140/27). One hit confirmed. Fire on forecastle. (MAORI 0145/27).

/COSSACK.....

921

War Diary:

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

Weather Forecast

COSSACK attack completed. Claimed one hit.
(Capt. D.4 0146/27).

1 Battleship bearing 235° distance 3 miles
course 345°. My position 264 48° N. 15° W.
13. (COSSACK 0146/27).

Your 0009. Intend to keep to northward to
flank mark for you. What frequency. (C.S.1.
0210B/27 to C. in C.H.F).

A.C.N.S.H, 0213B/27 to C. in C. H.F.

Enemy appears to be stopped. (SIKH 0234/27
to Capt. D.4).

In touch by R D/F. (SIKH 0235/27 to Capt. D4)

When all attacks are completed fire star-
shells every half an hour to indicate position
and report by W/T fleet wave. My P.C. and
S. are 049° 09' N. 015° 21' W. 220° 19 knots.
(C. in C.H.F. 0236/27 to Capt. D.4).

Come in by R D/F (SIKH 0245/27 to Capt. D.4)

My 2219B/27. Enemy battleship has been
seriously damaged and was in about 47° 57'
N. 15° 22' W. at 0146. SEALION proceed to
vicinity of 48° 13' N. 6° 26' W. until
further orders. (F.O.S. 0253B/27).

WIVERN, WILD SWAN, and VANSITTART have fuelled
and are at one hours' notice. (C. in C.
Plymouth 0256/27).

C. and S. unobtainable. Position checked
by gunfire. (A/C Duty O. 0300/27 to 15 R
Group)

My P.C. and S. are at 0300B 046° 05' N.
015° 58' W. 020° (125) knots. Fuel
remaining at 0800 27 46%. (DORSETSHIRE
0301B/27).

My position 047° 48' 016° 29' starshell
bearing 100°. Spotting Aircraft for KING
GEORGE V will take off at 0500. (S.O.
Force H. 0335B/27).

About to fire starshell. My position
047° 47' N. 015° 25' W. doubtful. (SIKH
0340/27 to Capt. D.4).

My 0146 one Battleship bearing 160 distance
3 miles course 320. My position 284 48°
N. 15° W. 24. (COSSACK 0340B/27).

/Reports.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

Reports from Catalina aircraft at 1525/26, 2344/26 and 0115/27 indicate possibility of two enemy ships being in battle area. If so estimated P.C. and S. of second ship at 0115/27 is 47° 40' N. 13° 30' W. 100° 30 knots. (A.C.N.S.H. 0349B/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

Enemy made good 8 miles 310° between 0240 and 0340 and is still capable of heavy and accurate fire. (Capt. D.4 0353B/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

Am going to fire a round of H.E. this time in the approximate position. The other G.M.E. is not good enough. (Capt. D.4 0415B/27).

Any destroyer in touch with enemy send call sign on fleet wave full power for HOMING. (C. in C. H.F. 0459B/27 to 4th D.F.)

My position at 0500B 048° 24' 015° 19' working circles. (C.S.1. 0502B/27).

Message 0300/27 from Aircraft Duty 0 appears to cancel the indication suggested in Adty. 0349B/27. (A.C.N.S. H. 0512B/27).

R D/F detects possible (? submarine) in 048° 26' (?015 degrees) 18' at 0508B. (C.S.1. 0515B/27).

One enemy unknown bearing 350° distance 5 miles course unknown. My position 110 48° N. 16° W. 24. (MAORI 0550B/27).

My 0550. Enemy course and speed 160 7 knots. (MAORI 0604B/27).

Request you will sail available destroyers from the Clyde and Londonderry for position 55° N. 15° W. (A.C.N.S. H. 0609B/27 to C. in C. W.A.).

-Report D/F bearing of H.M.S., MAORI. (S.O. Force H. 0610/27 to SHEFFIELD).

My 0550. Enemy has altered course to starboard. (MAORI 0618B/27)

E.T.A. of striking force 0715. (S.O. Force H. 0620/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

At (? 0621) B. MAORI (2 corrupt groups) from me 187°. My position at that time was 048° 38' 015° 37' by observation. (C.S.1. 0632B/27)

/My 0620.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN -contd.

My 0620. Attack postponed low visibility.
(S.O. Force H. 0633/27).

One enemy battleship bearing 002° distance
8 miles course 330. My position 286 48° N
15° W. 32. (Capt. D.4. 0655B/27).

D/F bearing of MAORI at 0650 was 002°
First class. My position at that time 047°
10'. 015° 43'. (S.O. Force H 0700/27).
Enemy has opened fire. (Capt. D.4 0701/27).
Enemy altered course to 340. (Capt. D.4
0702/27).

My 0633. Have cancelled attack owing to
difficulty in identifying own ships in
low visibility. (S.O. Force H. 0707/27)
Enemy C. and S. 000 12 knots my position
345. 48° N. 16° W. 26. (MAORI 0708/27).
One enemy battleship bearing 120° 10 miles C.
340 my position 48° 13' N. 16° 14' W.
(ZULU 0715/27).

Weather Forecast.

(Duty Met. Officer 0717B/27).

Cruisers and above at sea on Home Station
North of Lat. 43° N. and West of Long.
5° W. are to display identification marks
indicated in Adty. 325 AZ/26, as from 0600
G.M.T/27. (D.S.D. 0722B/27).

Enemy course 080. (SIKH 0739/27).

Enemy is altering course to Port.
(ZULU 0741/27).

Enemy has altered course to 240. (SIKH
0744/27).

One Enemy, Type unknown, bearing 145 distance
9 miles Course 320 Position 48° 9' N. 16° W.
based on fix at 0600. (NORFOLK 0753B/27).

(? Engaging) one Battleship. (NORFOLK
0758^p/27).

Enemy's centre bears 353° 17 miles distant
position 008 47° N. 16° W. 33 fix 1800.

(S.O. Force H. 0825B/27 to C. in C.H. F).
Enemy's centre bears 345° 18 NRWE 008 VCRC 32
Fix 18. (S.O. Force H. 0830/27 to C. in C.
H.F). My 0825B. Bearing and distance are
from RENOWN in V/S touch with MAORI.
(S.O. Force H. 0835B/27).

1 battleship bearing 266° distance 10 miles
course 305° position PHBB 36. (Capt. D.4.
0843/27 to NORFOLK).

Proceed with all despatch towards 48° 20' N.
15° 40' W. (F.O.S. 0844B/27 to TIGRIS).

/Enemy's.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

Enemy's course 290° (NORFOLK 0845B/27-).
Enemy's centre bears 155°. 13 miles from
Nuts King. (NORFOLK 0844B/27).
Enemy bears 037° from me. (SIKH 0852/27).
Enemy's course 340°. (C.S.I. 0855/27).
Enemy's course 240°. (NORFOLK 0856B/27).
Enemy is altering course to Starboard.
(NORFOLK 0902B/27).
Enemy is altering course to Port.
(NORFOLK 0907B/27).
Heavy German air attack is to be anticipated.
(V.C.N.S. 0909B/27 to C. in C. H.F).
Enemy is altering course to starboard.
(NORFOLK 0915B/27).
Cancel previous orders. Act in accordance
with Adty. 0609B/27. Sail for 055° N. 15° W
(Capt. D. Londonderry 0915B/27 to VANQUISHER,
SHERWOOD).
TIGRIS is now in 47° 15' N. 8° 00' W.
Would you like her to close BISMARCK. If so
it would be necessary for you to send surface
ship to meet her and guide her to the scene
of action. (1st S.L. 0915B/27 to C. in C.H.F)
Sail COLUMBIA, ST. CLAIR, in company from
Greenock when ready. SHERWOOD from London-
derry when ready. All to proceed to 55° N.
15° W. (C. in C.W.A. 0919B/27 to N.O.I.C.
Greenock).
Striking force leaving now. (S.O. Force H
0922B/27).
Roofs of BISMARCK's turrets and gunshield are
painted bright yellow. (D.D.I.C. 0929B/27).
1 Aircraft bearing 020° distance 5 miles,
course 013°. My position 47° N. 16° W. 21.
(S.O. Force H. 0940B/27).
Vessels suspicious markings approaching
from the Southward. (NORFOLK 0940/27).
Close. (C. in C. H.F. 0945/27 to 4th D.F).
Have detached (? ARK ROYAL) and (? SHEFFIELD)
Am closing towards enemy units. Request
your P.C. and S. My P.C. and S. are 047°
20' 015° 53' 350° 17 knots. (S.O. Force H.
0947/27 to C. in C.H.F).

/Enemy.....

COPY

Enclosure 'A' Enclosure to Record Office Minute dated
8th February, 1955. - Copy Signal. M.10/15/55.

To: C. in C. H.F.

From: Dorsetshire.

MOST IMMEDIATE

German Battleship BISMARCK is sinking.

(1034B/27)

IMMEDIATE:-

Enemy is sunk.

(1039/27)

IMMEDIATE:-

Am trying to pick up survivors.

(1042B/27)

War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.Enemy are bombing in position 205°. PHBB 51.
(COSSACK 1004/27).Enemy are bombing in position 305°. PHBB 51.
(NORFOLK 1004/27 to COSSACK).Course 027° 19 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 1011/27
to RODNEY).Torpedo BISMARCK close range. (C.S.1.
1022B/27 to DORSETSHIRE).PRINZ EUGEN was last seen in company with
BISMARCK at 0200B/25 and may now possibly
be making for Biscay Port. (F.O.S. 1024B/27
to S/M's Area A).My 0922. Have you disposed of enemy.
(S.O. Force H. 1025/27 to C. in C.H.F).~~My 0922. Have you disposed of enemy?
(C. in C.H.F. 1025/27 to S.O. Force H).~~Have had to discontinue action for fuel.
(C. in C.H.F. 1028B/27 to F.O. Force H).Your 2317B/25. Following is a brief account
of action. (PRINCE OF WALES 1029/27 to
Adty) See Lion Copy, p. 925A.Sail RIPLEY with despatch to Merville to
fuel thence to 55° N. 15° W. (C. in C. W.A.
1040B/27 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool).Your 1025. She still (? extreme range).
(C. in C. H.F. 1042/27 to S.O. Force H).My 1042. Cannot get her to sink with guns.
(C. in C. H.F. 1045/27 to F.O. Force H).Adty's 0909B. Have rejoined ARK ROYAL.
(S.O. Force H. 1053/27 to C. in C. H.F).BISMARCK sunk in 048° 09' N. 016° 07' W.My P.C. and S. 048° 23' N. 015° 58' W. 027°
17 knots. No destroyers in company.(C. in C. H.F. 1101B/27 to Adty. and S.O.
Force H).My P.C. and S. are 051° 17' N. 013° 22' W.
215° 25 knots. Your position unknown.

(JUPITER 1102B/27 to C. in C.H.F).

I torpedoed BISMARCK both sides before she
sank. She had ceased firing but her colours
were still flying. (DORSETSHIRE 1107/27 to
C. in C. H.F).

/we.....

(24.5.41)

925A.

M E S S A G E 1029/27th May.

SECRET

IN

From H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES.

Date 27.5.41.

Recd. 1937.

NAVAL CYPHER (A) BY W/T.

Addressed Admiralty, C. in C. Home Fleet, C.S. One,

Action on 24.5.1941.

IMMEDIATE.

Your 2317B 25. Following brief account has been compiled from preliminary examination of records. Further scrutiny may disclose some minor inaccuracies.

At 0535 24 H.M.S. HOOD and H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES in close order course 240 degs. 28 knots sighted enemy hull down on similar course bearing 335 degs., BISMARCK astern lighter ship. Within gun range turns brought enemy vessels (?241 degs.)

and indicated left hand ship make 70.0.B.I

H.M.S. HOOD ordered G I C just before opening fire at 0553. Range approximately 25,000 yards.

H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES opened fire at 0553½. German battleship BISMARCK replied with extreme accuracy on H.M.S. HOOD, second or third salvo straddled and fire broke out in H.M.S. HOOD in the vicinity of Port after 4 inch gunmounting. Lighter ship engaged H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES. H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES's opening salvo at BISMARCK observed over, sixth seen to straddle. At this time H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES had 3 14 inch guns in action. Y turret would not bear.

Fire in H.M.S. HOOD spread rapidly to main mast. A turn of two blue opened an arc at H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES's 9th salvo and H.M.S. HOOD had a further two blue flying when she was straddled again and at 0600 a huge explosion occurred between after funnel and main mast. She sank in 3 to four minutes. C.O. H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES saw whole incident. H.M.S. HOOD had fired 5 or 6 salvos but fall of shots was not seen possibly because of progress coinciding with firing of H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES' guns.

H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES' starboard 5.25 inch battery was now in action. Course had to be altered to starboard to avoid remains of H.M.S. HOOD; mean while BISMARCK shifted main and secondary armament fire quickly and accurately to H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES. A heavy hit was felt almost immediately and at 0602 compass platform was (?hit) and majority of personnel killed. Navigation officer was wounded; C.O. unhurt.

Same salvo put both forward 5.25 directors out of action. Considered expedient to break off action and consolidate position and ship, after being manoeuvred round remains of H.M.S. HOOD, turned away behind a smoke screen. Y turret fired in local during turn as smoke blanked after director. Enemy followed but turned away after a few salvos. H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES fired 18 main armament salvos and 3 from secondary armament. Target was crossed and recrossed and three straddles observed. No hits seen.

1029/27.

Advance Copy Sent P.O., C.S.O., M. for P.M.,

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 1st Lord. | | | |
| 1st S.L. | A.C.N.S. (F) | D.T.D. (H) | D.S.D. (2) |
| 2nd. S.L. | A.C.N.S. (T) (2) | O.I.C. (3) | Captain Pim, Admiralty House. |
| 3rd. S.L. | Naval Sec. | D. of P. (3) | D.N.A.D. |
| 4th S.L. | C.S.O. to 1st S.L. | D.S.D. 9. | D.T.S.D. |
| 5th S.L. | Ops. (4) | D.A/S.W. | M. (6) for Prime Minister. |
| Vice Controller. | O.D. (5) | I.P. (3) | |
| V.C.N.S. | D.N.I. (4) | W.D. | |
| A.C.N.S. (H) | D.T.D. (4) | D.P.D. | |

925(B)

From: War Registry,

CORRECTION T.O.O. 2048/27.

IMPORTANT.

Reference PRINCE OF WALES 1029/27 re loss of H.M.S. HOOD.

Third para should read :

" H.M.S. HOOD ordered G I C and indicated left hand ship, make 70 O.B.I. just before opening fire at 0553. Range approximately 25,000 yards."

1st Lord.
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 Vice Controller
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
 Nav. Sec.
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 Ops. (4)

O.D. (5)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D.T.D. (4)
 D.T.D. (M)
 O.I.C. (3)
 D of P. (3)
 D.S.D.9.
 D T/S W
 I.P. (3)
 W.D.
 D.P.D.
 D.S.D (2)
 Capt. Pim
 D.N.A.D.

D.T.S.D.
 M (6) for
 Prime Minister

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

We cannot visualise situation from your signals. BISMARCK must be sunk at all costs, and if to do this it is necessary for KING GEORGE V to remain on the scene then she must do so even if it subsequently means towing KING GEORGE V. (1st S.L. 1137B/27 to C. in C. H.F).

My 1107. While rescuing survivors suspicious object sighted to leeward which might have been submarine. I therefore proceeded with MAORI to rejoin you. (DORSETSHIRE 1146/27 to C. in C. H.F).

VANQUISHER, SHERWOOD, ST. CLAIR, RIPLEY and COLUMBIA have been ordered to be at your disposal and are proceeding to 55° N. 15° W. 2. By proceeding at 20 knots ships can arrive in that position as follows:-

VANQUISHER and SHERWOOD	2130/27
ST. CLAIR.	0700/28
COLUMBIA and RIPLEY	1100/28

(A.C.N.S.H. 1151B/27 to C. in C. H.F).
Continuing my 1457B/26. Account of Events. (1st S.L. 1206B/27 and 2353/27 to Naval Mission, Washington) See Lion Copy. (n 926)
Join C. in C. H.F. whose P. C. and S. were 48° 23' N. 15° 58' W. 027° 17 knots. at 1101B/26. (D.O.D.(H) 1258B/27 to JUPITER).
Subject to other orders from C. in C. proceed to Clyde. (D.O.D. (H) 1257B/27 to C.S.1).

Proceed to Gibraltar. F.O.C.N.A. is requested to sail A/S escort keeping S.O. Force H informed. (V.C.N.S. 1259B/27 to Force H.)
Subject to orders from C. in C. proceed to Scapa and thence in accordance with A.M. 1831/14. (D.O.D.(H) 1301B/27 to DORSETSHIRE).
Cancel message AZ 326 time of origin 0722B/27 (D.C. 1304B/27)

/A.M. 1151.....

MOST SECRET

926A

MESSAGE

1206E/27th May.

MOST SECRET

OUT.

To: Naval Mission Washington.

Date 27.5.41.

I.D. (V).

From 1st Sea Lord.

IMMEDIATE

In continuation of my 1457B/26.

*(no trace)**HUSH see**Vol 48 7**D.O.D.H.**Signals*

2. Aircraft from ARK ROYAL made contact at 1114/26. but visibility was very patchy and shadowing intermittent. Shadowing aircraft and also C. in C. Home Fleet in chase were attacked by enemy aircraft. A Catalina was damaged.
3. An air striking force from ARK ROYAL was flown off at 1500. It failed to make direct contact and was forced to search. The enemy was eventually located by some aircraft but no hits were obtained.
4. Surface contact was made by SHEFFIELD at 1740/26.
5. Striking force was again flown off by ARK ROYAL at 1900/26 and scored one certain and one doubtful hit. The enemy made two complete circles and transmitted two W/T messages, then altering course at about 2100 first to the North West and then to the North.
ARVDF (CASSIN)
6. Contact was lost at 2200 but the enemy's alteration of course allowed five destroyers in pursuit to re-establish contact at 2240. Enemy was then steering 060 degrees. By 2320 enemy had altered course to 340 degrees.
7. Destroyers attacked at about 0120/27 probably obtained two hits. Immediate effect fire on fore-castle. Later enemy course 310 degrees slow speed but still capable of heavy and accurate fire.
8. Dawn air torpedo attack by ARK ROYAL cancelled by bad visibility.
9. Situation at 0600/27 :-
 - (a) Enemy altering course widely speed 7 knots.
 - (b) Destroyers shadowing
 - (c) RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, to the southward about 30 miles.
 - (d) C. in C. Home Fleet with KING GEORGE V and RODNEY, who had made good 22 knots, working round to engage from the westward.
 - (e) NORFOLK from the N.W. DORSETSHIRE from the S.E. , and SHEFFIELD, seeking to make contact and shadow.
10. It appeared possible from Catalina report that a second vessel might be some 80 miles to the Eastward making for Brest. A shore based bomber striking force despatched to attack this vessel at 1000/27.

926 B

402P

11. NORFOLK made contact about 0630 and engaged at 0758/27, while shadowing. Force H. made contact at 0830/27 and flew off striking force.

12. Further signal follows. [see page 928 B]

1206B/27.

1st S.L.

1st Lord.
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 D. of P. (2)
 D.O.D. (H)
 D.D.O.D. (H)
 D.O.D. (F)
 D.D.O.D. (F)

D.N.I. (4)
 D.S.D.
 D.N...D.
 D. of L.D.
 D. 1/S W.
 D.M.S.
 I.P.
 W.D.
 Duty Captain.
 Hd. of M.
 D.T.S.D.
 D.D.I.C.
 E.P.S.
 D.T.D. (2)
 N.I.D. 10 Paym. Cdr. Wilson.

MG

MOST SECRET.War Diary:27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

A.M. 1151/27. Subject to other orders from C. in C. H.F. proceed with all despatch to join K.G.V. who left 48° 23' N. 15° 58' W. course 027° speed 17 knots at 1101B/27. (D.O.D.H. 1307B/27 to VANQUISHER, SHERWOOD, ST. CLAIR, COLUMBIA, RIPLEY). BISMARCK sunk 1101B/27. (1st S.L. 1316B/27). My 1101/B/27. My P.C. and S. at 1400B 048° 48' N. 015° 22' W. 040° 17 knots, passing through 051° 30' 011° 45', 054° 10' 010° 50' thence to Scapa via Minches if fuel permits.

(ii) RODNEY, DORSETSHIRE, COSSACK, ZULU, MAORI, SIKH, and JUPITER in company.

(iii) Intend to detach RODNEY to Clyde and DORSETSHIRE in accordance with A.M. 1851B/14 May.

(iv) C.S. 1 is proceeding independently to Scapa. (C. in C.H.F. 1436/27). My 1436B/27. Delete JUPITER. Admiralty pass my 1436B/27 to JUPITER. (C. in C. H.F. 1536/27).

Ammunition for K.G. V. is being made available at the Clyde. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1524B/27 to C. in C.H.F.).

MINERVE and P.51 are to be withdrawn from patrol. (F.O.S. 1614B/27).

C. in C.H.F. requests frequency used by aircraft referred to in A.M. 2012/24 0225/25, 0422/25 may be promulgated. Admiralty please pass to C. in C. H.F. on arrival harbour. (REPULSE 1725Z/27 to Adty.) My 1307B. Your 1436B has been passed to VANQUISHER, RIPLEY, ST. CLAIR, COLUMBIA, SHERWOOD. (D.S.O. 1735B/27 to C. in C. H.F). Cancel my 2325B/26 (re WAR HINDOO, Oiler) (D.O.D. H. 1835B/27 to C. in C. W.A).

PRINCE OF WALES is to be sailed as soon as possible for Rosyth for repairs.

2. Destroyer escort should remain in company. (Controller 1910B/27).

/Ammunition.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary:27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN - Contd.

Ammunition requirements at Scapa for KING GEORGE V 14 inch 336 rounds 5.25 inch 660 S.A.P. 64 H.E. At Greenock for RODNEY 16 inch 380 6 inch 716 torpedoes 12 if embarking gantry is repaired. At Scapa for NORFOLK torpedoes full outfit ammunition unknown.

My 1536B. JUPITER now in company.

(C. in C. H.F. 1946/27).

Concluding stage of BISMARCK action.

Description. (C. in C. H.F. 1957/27 to Adty).

See Lion Copy.

Reported by aircraft at 2015B. My P. C. and

S. at 2100B 050° 25' N. 015° 22' W. 039°

18 knots altering course to 011° at 0200B.

(C. in C.H.F. 2159/27).

You were reported by enemy aircraft at

2040B. (D.D.I.C. 2210B/27 to C. in C. H.F.);

(a) Cancel my 1216B/27th to TIGRIS and

Para. B. and C. of my 1303B/27.

(b) Enemy Cruiser probably PRINZ EUGEN in

047° N. 014° 30' W. at 1820 today.

(c) SEALION to patrol on line 260° from

048° 20' N. 005° 15' W. keeping as near

latter position as circumstances permit.

PANDORA to 047° 55' N. 006° 18' W. SEAWOLF

046° 55' N. 005° 48' W. STURGEON 046° 40' N.

005° 23' W. TIGRIS 046° 25' N. 005°

48' W.

(d) Submarine H.44 proceed as in my 1303B/27.

(F.O.S. 2223B/27). → NTLFW3

My 1624B/27. Cancel paras. A.B.C.D.

and E. Add STURGEON, SEALION, TIGRIS,

SEAWOLF and PANDORA in Bay of Biscay between

46° N. and 48° 40' N. and east of 07° W.

(F.O.S. 2319B/27).

928(A)

SECRET.

M E S S A G E .

1957 27 May.

From C. in C. Home Fleet.

Date 27.5.41. III.

Recd. 2125.

NAVAL CYMBEL (F) BY W/T.

Addressed Admiralty.

INCIDENT.

627. After most successful T/B attacks by aircraft from H.M.S. ARK ROYAL in evening of May 26th, which evidently put BISMARCK's steering gear out of action, she was shadowed most effectively and attacked with torpedo by 4th D.F. during the night.

H.M.S. KING GEORGE V and H.M.S. RODNEY were manoeuvred to make dawn attack but uncertain visibility necessitated waiting full light. From 0848 to 1020 BISMARCK was engaged by both battleships and kept under heavy fire at ranges down to 3300 repeat 3300.

H.M.S. NORFOLK after flanking marking joined in towards the end. Heavily damaged and with no guns left firing BISMARCK finally had to be sunk by H.M.S. DORSETSHIRE firing torpedoes at close range. No casualties or damage to capital ships or cruisers. A few casualties and slight damage in H.M.S. COSSACK and H.M.S. ZULU one man lost overboard from H.M.S. SIKH.

1957/27

Advance Copy Sent 1st Lord., M. for P.M., A.C.N. (F)
A.C.N.S. (H), O.D., O.I.C., D. of P.,
Press, U.W.R., Ops.,

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- 2nd. S.L.
- 3rd. S.L.
- Vice Controller.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
- Parl. Sec.
- Nav. Sec.
- C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
- Ops. (4)
- O.D. (5)
- O.I.C. (2)
- D.S.D. 9.
- D.N.I. (4)
- M. (6) for Prime Minister.
- D. of P. (3)
- D.A/S.W.
- D.N.A.D.
- D.T.S.D.
- Press Division.
- D.T.D. (4)
- D.T.D. (M)
- Capt. Pim., Admiralty House.
- Head of N.
- Head of C.W.
- E.P.S.
- D.S.D. (2)
- I.P. (3)
- W.D.
- A.H.Q.H.F.

MOST SECRET

928(B)

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

OUT

TO:- Naval Mission Washington

2353B/27th May
DATE:- 27.5.41.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CYPHER (V)

FROM: 1st S.L.

In continuation of my 1206B/27. Cruisers and Destroyers shadowing and from time to time engaged at visibility from 12 to 1 miles in showers. Enemy shore based aircraft engaged our ships from 1000/27 onwards. Indications that more than one enemy submarine in vicinity in action.

2. C. in C. Home Fleet, engaged enemy but had to break off action for want of fuel. DORSETSHIRE finally sunk the immobilised BISMARCK by torpedo fire at close range, in position 048 degs. 09' N 016 degs. 07' W at 1100/27.

3. Whereabouts of PRINCE EUGEN unknown, but possible that she will pass southwards through area of U.S. Operations.

4. British forces proceeding under air attack to bases for fuel.

2353B/27

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.
D. of L.D.
D.N.A.D.
D.A/S.W.
D.L.S.
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Captain
Hd. of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
N.I.D. 10. (Paym. Cdr. Wilson)

48.10 N. 16.12 W
(Plan 9, Battle Summary no 5
Cb. 2081(3))

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols.

It is considered that BISMARCK and PRINZ EUGEN may be making for a French West coast port.

2. One Wellington fitted with SE is to fly X-over Patrol through the following position:- DPTE 1321, DPDU 2843, WRRRA 2855, WRRRA 4417 with the object of intercepting reporting and shadowing A/C to be on patrol at 1000/27 and remain to P.L.E.

3. One Wellington fitted with SE is to fly X-over patrol through PHTE 2453, PHTE 2508, DPDU 2953, DPTE 2738 with the same object and to be on patrol at 1130/27 and remain to P.L.E.

4. These patrols are in continuation of those flown by two Sunderlands from 0600/27. (H.Q. 19 Group, 0308/27 to St.Eval)

Reference PL/G11/26.5. To intercept report and shadow enemy naval forces one Sunderland to carry out cross over patrol through following positions:- DPTE 1321, DPDU 2843, WRRRA 2855, WRRRA 4417. A/C to be on patrol as soon as possible and remain to P.L.E. (H.Q. 19 Group, 0325/27)

PL/G1/27/5. Patrols to be amended as follows:- Shift Northern Patrol 30 miles bodily due east Southern Patrol, 40 miles bodily due East. (H.Q. 19 Group 0450/27)

My 2352/26. Patrol one will be flown 30 miles to the Eastward, patrol two 40 miles to the Eastward. Sunderlands will be relieved by Wellingtons and Catalinas. (C. in C. Plymouth 0652/27)

(C) One long range Hudson to take off forthwith to carry out R/C of BISMARCK and activity in that area - returning with information as soon as possible. Latest position of BISMARCK is PHRC 0910 circling. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 0845/27)

/C. With object ...

War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols.
(contd.)

C. With object of locating, reporting and shadowing HIPPER Class cruiser thought to be making for a French West coast port, three Hudsons of 206 are to carry out parallel track search from datum line KRCT 0000 to KRAF 3000 on track 200° T to line joining MZXL 2006 to DPDU 3020. Thence on track 290° T for 80 miles and thence on 020° T to datum line extended thence to base take off forthwith. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 0900/27 to Adty.)

Striking Forces.

Bomber Command is sending a striking force to 48° 08' N. 8° 11' W. by 1000 B/27, to meet possibility of a second enemy ship endeavouring to make French Coast. (A.C.N.S. H. 0716B/27 to C. in C. H.F.) Three T.B. of WOLF Class passed Gris Nez at 0815 CO: 177° Speed 30 knots. It is expected that they will follow the 10 fathom line down Channel. XYUP to five A/C of 816 Squadron, armed with bombs, are to attack as soon as possible but only if cloud cover is suitable. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 0905/27)

812 Squadron.

Admiralty 2049/6/5. Consider 812 squadron efficient to take part in striking force operations in an emergency. Further report will be made when final training of unit is completed. (Hatston 1051/27)

Thames Estuary.

Your 1132B/26. Removal of D. Flight No.2 A. A.C.U. from DETLING and stopping of non operational flying in Thames Estuary was agreed in early days of war in order not to vitiate R.D.F. cover afforded to London. Air Ministry now being asked whether conditions permit reconsideration of this decision. (D.T.S.D. 1311B/27 to -C. in C. Nore)

/Bombing Restrictions

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd.)

Bombing Restrictions.

Cancel my 1309B/25. (F.O.S.1518B/27)
Cancel para. D. of my 204B/23. Following T.B.R. are now in force between 062° N. and 065° 30' N. and between 002° W. and 003° E. (F.O.S. 1531B/27 to MINERVE)
Request T.B.R. forthwith until further notice in area bounded by Coast of Scotland and lines joining following position:-
(a) Noss Head. (b) 058° 30' N. 001° 30' W.
(c) 059° 30' N. 001° 30' W. (d) 059° 30' N. 003° 30' W. (e) Butt of Lewis. (f) Cape Wrath. (F.O.S. 1702B/27 to H.Q.C.C.)

St.Nazaire Area.

It appears from P.R.U. reports that at least 3 U-Boat pens have been completed at Saint Nazaire.
As this port is being developed as a U-boat base and is also being increasingly used by tankers request that targets in the Saint Nazaire area be given every consideration by Bomber Command.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1755/27 and Recd.1853/27)

C. 3 Catalinas to proceed to Mount Batten at 1st light 27/5 for R/C. Depth charges not to be carried. (H.Q.15 Group 2325/27 to Lough Erne.)

Enemy Air Activity.

H.E. STROUD.

(Trawler) Bombed, machine gunned and abandoned in 135° Stromsay 10 miles at 1830B/26. 1 Casualty died hospital. 9 survivors landed Kirkwall by Trawler LOCH ESK of Aberdeen. No proof of vessel sinking. Am investigating when visibility improves. (N.O.I.C. Kirkwall 1315/27)
When visibility increases to 5 miles investigate position 135° Lamb Head Stromsay 10 miles for H.E. STROUD. (N.O.I.C. Kirkwall 1318/27 to SCALBY WYKE)
My 1315/27. H.E. STROUD towed into Kirkwall by trawler STAR OF DON and placed alongside salvage vessel BERTHA. (N.O.I.C. Kirkwall 2245/27)

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. (contd.)

Thames Estuary.

At 0355/27, low flying plane on S.W. course dropped three objects some of which exploded in area between Knob and Shivering Sand buoys. Thought objects more likely to have been bombs than mines. (S.O. T.L.D.F. 1810/27)

PIORUN
(ex-NERISSA)

Am being shadowed by aircraft. My position 049° 47' N. 011° 37' W. (NERISSA, 1845B/27)
(PIORUN in brackets)

PIORUN.
attacked.

Am being attacked by enemy torpedo aircraft. Request fighter protection. My position 049° 47' N. 011° 20' W. (PIORUN 2000B/27)

Convoy
W.S.8.B.
ABOSSO
damaged.

At 0825B/24 in 055° 37' N. 015° 06' W. West Convoy W.S.8.B. was attacked by one F.W. Aircraft which approached from 090° and flew over centre of convoy at height of 200 feet dropping 2 bombs near ABOSSO rear ship of port wing column. Although aircraft was heavily engaged during approach, attack was well pressed home, but since no other bombs were seen to fall it is thought possible the aircraft may have been damaged. Aircraft retired ahead of convoy. ABOSSO dropped astern with minor engine room damage but rejoined convoy by noon. (CAIRO 2000B/27)

Convoy "wheel"
WIVERN.
REGISTAN
(Ocean
boarding
vessel)
attacked.

Enemy bombing escorted group of M/V's Plymouth Falmouth to Helwick Light Vessel Position (unconvertible) (CLEVELAND 2307/27) Proceed to assistance of REGISTAN bombed in position 270° Cape Cornwall 8 miles at 2300. (C. in C. Portsmouth 2310/27 to WIVERN)
Fighters are being despatched to assist convoy ~~WIVERN~~. (Plymouth W/T 2322/27)
My 2307. 8 bombed. 2 ships sunk.
(CLEVELAND 2334/27 to C.in C. Plymouth)

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

B.S.62

Departure TEVIOT BANK and COTSWOLD in company at 0515 for B.S.62. (F.O. Humber 0531B/27)
Operation B.S.62 completed. (TEVIOT BANK 1730B/27)

Falmouth.

At 1025/27 S.A. Trawler detonated acoustic mine. Details. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1239/27)

Liverpool.

At 1813/26 two Mines detonated simultaneous. Details. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1614B/27)

Milford Haven.

Red Mine detonated by single L. Trawler 126° St. Ann's Head Light nine cables. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1831/27)
At 1548/27 one Red Mine detonated by Sweeper in 150° St. Ann's Head Light Eight cables. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1832/27)

Minelaying Programme.

A.L. M. 07680/21 of 20/5/41 Proposals. (A.C.O.S. 1843B/27 to Adty.)

Blyth.

Port of Blyth closed due to suspected minelaying. (N.O.I.C. Blyth 1907B/27)

Nore.

515 Q.Z.H. Nore Area, cancel 475 Q.Z.H. Normal conditions. (Hydrographer 2013B/27)

War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.→ SCHARNHORST.

Further examination of photograph of Brest taken on 25/5 shows SCHARNHORST has moved along the wall one length eastwards. (D.D.I.C. 0001B/27)

Three Enemy Destroyers.

Three German destroyers are based on Bay ports. 2 were at La Pallice on 21/5, 1 at Lorient on 20/5. (D.D.I.C. 0119B/27)

KONDOR (S.O.)
JAGUAR.
WOLF.

My 0754B. Three torpedo boats seen passing Gris Nez at 0815 course S.W. Speed about 30 knots. (V.A. Dover 0837B/27) (F.O.S. 1029B/27)

2 small craft.

2 small craft in 46° 28' N. 9° 28' W. (A/C Duty K. 1343/27 to 19 H.Q.)

Cherbourg.

Air R/C of Cherbourg at about 1520B/27 shows no major naval units present. (P.R.U. Recd. 1745/27)

→ Brest.

Visual R/C of Brest at 1900B/27 shows SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU present in same position. (D.D.I.C. 2305B/27)

935

War Diary.27.5.41.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.ERIDGE.

Have lost touch with ERIDGE who reported that steering gear broke down in 053° 52' N., 012° 22' W.
(CAIRO 0130B/27.)
Arrived ERIDGE with steering gear defective.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1951B/27.)

THYRA
sunk.
LEAMINGTON.
damaged.

In collision with THYRA at 0043B/27.
THYRA sank. Have twenty survivors on board. My stem damaged and forepeak flooded. Rejoining Convoy. Latitude 52/25^N Longitude 19/22^W.
(LEAMINGTON 0415B/27.)

INTREPID.

Delayed by evaporator defect.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1036/27.)

IXION's
Lifeboat.

At 69° 20' N., 18° 20' W., vessel picked up large life boat capable of holding 36 persons from British ship IXION boat was intact but no sign of life.
(Petsamo 1942/27.)

FANDANGO.

Proceeding Belfast with steering defect.
(FANDANGO 2000/27.)

Shipping & Convoys.

S.L.73.

23 British, 10 Allied, 2 neutral ships have arrived. Commodore Vice-Adm., Curtis, Vice-Commodore, Rear-Adm., Candy.
Cargoes. (D.S. 630, 27/5.)

H.X.125.

On time at R.V. with all 67 ships.
Fair weather.
(D.T.D. 1700B/27 to N.S.H.Q., Ottawa.)

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

LATONA

Cancel my 1553B/25. Return to Gibraltar.
at 20 knots weather permitting.
(1st S.L. 0134B/27 to LATONA).

See also p. 940

GERMANIA
German Tanker.

Left here 0300/27 fully loaded.
(Consul, Las Palmas, 0815/27, 0915/27 to
Admty).
GERMANIA loaded with Petrol arrived here
from Las Palmas 27/5.
(Teneriffe, 0910/27 to Admty amended 1602/27).

TODARO
GERMANIA.

Departure Teneriffe 0200/27 Italian Tanker
TODARO, departure Las Palmas 0300/27 German
Tanker GERMANIA.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1410B/27 to N.A. Stn.)
(S.O.(I) Gib. 1611A/27 to Admty).
My 1410B/27. Times quoted were G.M.T.
GERMANIA arrived Teneriffe 0900/27.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1852A/27 to N.A. Stn).
GERMANIA left Las Palmas at 0300 G.M.T. 27.
(D.D.I.C. 1701B/27 to F.O.C.N.A., C. in C.
S.A. etc).
N.I.D. Comment:- Cargo consists of 13,000
tons gasoline.

SEVERN

Cancel A.T. 1220/26. Rejoin CAIRNDALE.
(V.C.N.S., 1322B/27 to SEVERN).

See also next page

CANARIAS &
BISMARCK
survivors.

Spanish Minister of Marine states Germans
informed them BISMARCK sunk 48° N 15° W 400
miles from Ferrol. In view of possibility
saving survivors, cruiser CANARIAS and two
destroyers left Ferrol 1400.
(N.A. Madrid, 1631/27 to Admty).
My 1631/27. Minister of Marine states
destroyers returning to harbour on account of
weather. CANARIAS proceeding reduced speed.
(N.A. Madrid, 1941/27 to D.N.I.)

FAULKNER
FORESTER, FURY,
WISHART.

Will be sailed to pass through 036° 00' N
011° 20' W steering 320° at 0700/29.
Destroyers are routed through 036° 00' N 010°
00' W (F.O.C.N.A., 1640B/27 to S.O. Force H).

/TRUANT.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (contd).TRUANT,
suspicious
tanker.

Have lost touch with suspicious Tanker last seen in 040° 13' N 038° 19' W course 012° at 1245Z. My course 012° (TRUANT, 1657Z/27 to Admty). (Suspicious) Tanker last seen by TRUANT in 40° 13' N 38° 19' W at 1445/27 steering 12°. (F.O.C.N.A., 2322B/27 to N.A. Stn). Your 1657Z/27. Continue search so long as fuel permits, consistent with your safe arrival at destination. No friendly tanker likely to be in vicinity. (D.O.D. (F) 2345B/27 to TRUANT). My 1657Z/27. Have abandoned search. Am returning to original route. (TRUANT, 2346Z/27 to Admty).

Air and
S/M Patrols.

A.T. 1514/27. Cancel my 1228/26.
(D.O. D. (F) 1721B/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

→ SEVERN.

Left Gibraltar 1700A/27 routed through 036° 00' 009° 00' and 042° 25' 032° 00' 15 knots 45 R.V. with oiler CAIRNDALE during daylight 31/5.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1810A/27 to N.A. Stn. 1843A/27 to CAIRNDALE).

→ CLYDE
SEVERN.

Your 1244C/26 CLYDE sails 2100/28 (route and approx. programme). It is not anticipated that SEVERN will be available on 10th as she is now employed in Atlantic.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1824B/27 to C. in C. Med).

Operation
"Splice".

Your 2140/21 and 0338/24. Concur in principle Remarks. (D.N.A.D. 1926B/27 to F.O. Force H).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

938

South Atlantic.

T.C.11.

Simonstown's 1156/23 and N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 1833/22, following action is required in regard to ships proceeding to Canada to form T.C.11.
(D.S.T., 0312B/27 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown etc).

Suspicious Ship.

DEGMJ (BODMIN) N.R. position 36° 56' S 20° 52' E, suspicious craft no navigation lights SEMST OB stopped LFROM USTOR OR 0202 G.M.T. (Part of signal missed owing to interference). (Scapa, W/T No T.O.O./27).

QUEEN MAUD
CITY OF
WINCHESTER.

My 1224/10. (N.T. in W.D.) Remaining 16 survivors landed Bankwe French Guinea on 10/5. Survivors taken to Conakry and kept in a Prison Camp. Chief Engineer with 3 others released and arrived Freetown. 24/5. Chief Engineer reports that in Prison Camp were crew of S.S. JAPAN and following passengers: (C. in C. S.A. 0947N/27 to Admty).

JAPAN

W.S.8 A.

Durban arrivals H.T. STRATHAIRD and HAWKINS escorting convoy W.S.8 A. less EMPRESS OF ASIA.
(N.L.O. Durban, 1016Z/27 to Admty etc).

Enemy Units.

D/F bearings at about 1700/26 indicate surface unit within 200 miles of position 030° S meridian of Greenwich reliability 70%. Probably 2 units but bearings suggest any number up to 4. (C. in C. S.A. 1125N/27, 1128N/27 1129N/27 to S.A. Sqdn.)

NELSON
S.L. 76.

Cancel A.T. 0036/26. NELSON is to join S.L. 76 and escort to U.K.
(V.C.N.S. 1357 B/27 to NELSON).
Your 1357B/27. Convoy S.L.76 leaves Freetown 30/5. Is it intended that NELSON should return Freetown and escort from there, or is S.L. 75 intended. Your 1430/23.
(C. in C. S.A. 1709N/27 to Admty).

Your 1709N/27.....

MOST SECRET.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.NELSON
S.L. 76.
(contd).

Your 1709N/27.
S.L. 76 intended. It is at your discretion whether NELSON returns to Freetown or meets convoy at sea. She is required in U.K. on completion.
(V.C.N.S. 2327B/27 to C. in C. S.A.)
My 1709N/27 and Admty 2327B/27. Return to Freetown, keeping destroyer with you.
(C. in C. S.A., 2213N/27 to NELSON, HIGHLANDER)

TEBRO
(Italian.)

Went alongside this morning to load 50,000 bales of Cotton.
(N.C.S.O. Santos, 1400Z/27 to S.O.(I) Montevideo).

CAMERONIA,
CILICIA.

Your 1231N/26. Approved for CILICIA to escort CAMERONIA to Freetown. Further signal will be made as to CAMERONIA's passage from Freetown to U.K.
(D.O.D. (F) 1418B/27 to C. in C. S.A.)

*See also next page*Raiders,
plans to
intercept.

My 1125/27 and my 1231N/26. It appears that one or more raiders' supply ships or prizes are likely to have met to discuss action or exchange prisoners. Difficult to forecast subsequent movements but if to north or west will be difficult to interfere. Possible an attack on Cape-North-America or Cape-U.K. Trade route may result to east or N.E. and desirable to have forces in neighbourhood early as possible. With this object following movements are ordered. Possible unit may be proceeding to South Indian Ocean. CILICIA and CARNARVON CASTLE are to leave Capetown on 28 and 29/5 respectively. RV at 1000Z/30 in 30° S 10° E. then patrol in K.l.D, K.l.C, K.l.A, pending further instructions.

(C. in C. S.A., 1425N/27 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

My 1425/27. Suggestion that unit may proceed South Indian Ocean a possible alternative only and should have been at the end of signal. PRETORIA CASTLE may be used to escort CAMERONIA after taking French ships to Durban My 1231/26 refers.

(C. in C. S.A. 1819N/27 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown)

/TEBRO.....

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

940

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

TEBRO
(Italian.)

Santos reports went alongside today to load 50,000 bales of cotton.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 1449Z/27 to S.A.D.)

LATONA

Your 1310N/27. E.T.A. Freetown, 1000/30.
(LATONA, 1527Z/27 to C. in C. S.A.)

See p. 936

CILICIA.
W.S.8 A.

Your 1253/26. Request permission to utilise CILICIA (A) to escort EMPRESS OF ASIA and THYSVILLE to Durban probably leaving Cape Town 31/5. (b) To leave ships off Durban and meet CAMERONIA off East London escorting her to Cape Town where both ships will fuel and proceed to Freetown. Departure of revised convoy W.S.8A from Durban accompanied by as many ships of Group (B) (with Union Troops) as can be got ready will now have to be delayed to await arrival of EMPRESS OF ASIA and THYSVILLE.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1834B/27 to C. in C. SA)

See previous page

NEWCASTLE
CUMBERLAND.

Flag of R.A.S.A.D. transferred to NEWCASTLE 27/5. CUMBERLAND sails for Freetown 2300Z/27 speed of advance 18 knots. Intend NEWCASTLE and CUMBERLAND to remain in company until 29/5.
(R.A.S.A.D., 2031Z/27 to Admt, C. in C. S.A.)

NORDERNEY
German.

Moved alongside to-day.
(S.O.(I) 2032Z/27 to S.A.D.)

GERMANIA
TODARO.

German tanker GERMANIA left Las Palmas at 0300 G.M.T./27. Italian tanker TODARO left Teneriffe 0200G.M.T./27.
(C. in C. S.A., 2219N/27, 2315N/27 to S.A. Sqdn).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.Air Search
for Enemy
Convoy.

Cdr. (S) 1 S.F. 1620B/26.
Special Blenheim Sqdn proceeded dawn/25 to search area in which remainder of convoy would have been if they had proceeded towards Tripoli. Nothing sighted. Further search eastward by Maryland, sighted 3 cruisers proceeding toward Messina without a convoy. Augusta and Catania harbours empty. Messina was not reconnoitred. In Tripoli on same day less shipping in harbour than observed on any R/C in last 3 months. Consider therefore remainder of convoy turned back. Maryland aircraft now being primarily employed on R/C to westward to find target for Blenheims, but daily R/C of area to S.E. of Messina will also be arranged if possible. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1105B/27 to C. in C. Med).

TORBAY.

Alexandria Submarine Sanctuary will be in force 0930 to 1230/28 for TORBAY leaving. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1145C/27 to Med.Fleet).

Enemy Convoy.

At 1107B in 034° 20' 015° 50' convoy of 8 merchant ships escorted by 2 cruisers 6 destroyers course 205° speed 13 knts. Merchant ships in line ahead, URSULA endeavour to intercept at B, and RORQUAL at ?T. (Cdr. S.I. 1227B /27 to URSULA and RORQUAL).

CALIFORNIA
STAR.

^{N.T.W.D.}
Your 1611/24 Proposed use of CALIFORNIA STAR not concurred in. See also My 1459/24.^{N.T.W.D.}
(D. of S.T. 1414B/27 to P.S.T.O. Egypt.)

Aircraft
for Malta
and M.E.

Second operation is expected to take place about 2/6. There will be approx 25 Mark II Hurricanes for Malta and 19 Mark I's tropicalised for M.E. Arrangements. (Air Min. 1610/27 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., Malta, 200 Group).

UNDAUNTED

Your 1058C/20 (paying off UNDAUNTED) approved. (Head of M. 1625/27 to C. in C. Med).

/Air Attack on.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General (contd).

(1. 338. 27/5.)

Air Attack on
Enemy Convoy.

Following Maryland report of large convoy reported in My 1.337 27/5, 5 Blenheims 82 Sqdn. and 1 Blenheim 139 Sqdn. detailed to attack. 1350 hours convoy contacted in position 33° 48" N. 14° 44 E. course 210° 10 knots. 2 M.V.s 8 - 10 thousand tons attacked by 3 A/C each. Leader of first formation hit M.V. with 2 bombs resulting in volumes of smoke, and ship last seen down by stern. Second A/C seen to blow up in Mid air before attack. Cause unknown. At same time third A/C which was only 1 span away had tail blown off possibly caused by fragment from second A/C. Both A/C and crew went straight into sea. Other formation of 3 A/C. 2 A/C scored 5 direct hits caused clouds of smoke and steam. Third A/C failed to put distributor plug in and no bombs released. 1 A/C machine gunned decks while attacking. (H.Q. Malta, 1800/27) See also, 1915/28-.

Suez Canal
Mines.

Your 1730B/26.

Egyptian army look outs mark mines usually within 30 yards except in Bitter Lake Channel where observation craft are still too far apart. Negative report gives confidence. Object of 3 days delay is to sift thoroughly all observers' evidence and to search for inoperative mines with trawl and divers. This has been fairly successful, Whilst appreciating importance of reducing delay to traffic., less risk can be accepted in canal than in approaches to port and destruction of some inoperative mines important additional safeguard. It also reduces area over which ship must be unescorted which is very important consideration as I have only 3 LL sweepers for whole canal and approaches. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1801C/27 to Admty).

Air Recon.,
Sicily.

Your 1407C/27 H.Q. Med., will carry out R/C of East Sicilian Ports including Messina daily until we are informed this can be discontinued.

(H.Q. Malta, 1810Z/27 to C. in C. Med).

/PANAMANIAN.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd).

PANAMANIAN,
suspected
sabotage.

C. in C. E. I., 0524/24. Presume all Naval Authorities informed and precautions taken against this ship being used to block Canal. (D.O.D.F, 1819B/27 to C.O.I.S. Alexandria.-).

Suez Canal.

Situation report. Following movements of merchant vessels carried out today. Port Said to Suez 7, Port Said to Bitter Lakes 5 Timsah to Port Said 5, Bitter Lakes to Timsah 5, Suez to Bitter Lakes 6. No mines discovered or exploded.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1923C/27).

Enemy Convoy.
URSULA.

Anticipate convoy arriving position A 2330. At 1550B/27 p.c. and s. of enemy 033° 48' 014° 44' 210° 10, escorted by 6 destroyers. Cruiser had returned northward. If impossible to intercept at A, try B. Expect escorting force from Tripoli.
(Cdr. S.I. 1930B/27 to URSULA).

Enemy Units.

2 cruisers returning to northwards in estimated position 034° 20' N 016° 00' E at 1100B. 6 destroyers escorting convoy which was successfully attacked by Blenheim in 033° 48' N 014° 44' E at 1550B. Course 210° 10 knots.
(N.O.I.C. Malta, 1933B/27 to Med. Fleet).

Enemy M. V. 's

Proceed to investigate two merchant ships successfully attacked by aircraft 1550B/27 Position 033° 48' 014° 44'. Two escorting cruisers retiring northwards may return to salvage. Possibility of R.A.F. survivors from ?two Blenheims. On completion return to area.0 (Cdr. S.I. 2145B/27 to UNION).

/UPRIGHT.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

944

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd).

UPRIGHT.

On completion of special operation retire S.E. making brief report. Area M severely compromised by UPHOLDER'S successful attacks off Del Armi and position $036^{\circ} 45' 015^{\circ} 42'$. Approach area M on latitude $037^{\circ} 40'$ -until reaching longitude $015^{\circ} 40'$ thence steer (73) to operate in area P $035^{\circ} 50' 015^{\circ} 20' - 000^{\circ} 40 - 50$. Tripoli convoy passing through this area.

(Cdr. S.I. 2232B/27 to UPRIGHT.)

Greek
Cypher
and Code.

C. in C. Med., 23536/27. See Mediterranean Volume.

Malta
Stocks.

Your 1304/26. paras 3 and 4 not understood since according to Governor's return for week ending 10/5 there was 24 and 27 weeks stock of benzine and kerosene respectively while existing stocks of 100 octane "should last about 16 weeks". Has consumption increased substantially or much more been destroyed by enemy action?

(D. of S.T. 2339B/27 to V.A. Malta).

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

Situation Report.
FORMIDABLE,
→ NUBIAN,
GLENROY,
bombed.

No. 3? More heavy air attacks on ships at sea. FORMIDABLE hit. Starboard side forward torn open to waterline. Details on return to harbour early 27th. Position of attack 32° 55'N 26° 25' E., NUBIAN in company with Battlefleet also hit, reported stern blown off but able to make 15 knots. E.T.A. Alexandria 2330. GLENROY hit in 34° 22' N., 24° 40' E. Returning to Alexandria. One third landing craft out of action and all army petrol destroyed.

See also next page

AJAX
ABDIEL
A.N. 31.
→ NUBIAN.

2. Reports not yet received of AJAX sweep N. of Crete or of bombing of Scarpanto night ? 25/26. ABDIEL and destroyers continuing to Suda tonight 26/7 and convoy AN 31 has sailed two ships only. Attack on Melos by destroyers tonight 26/27 has been cancelled owing to damage to NUBIAN and necessity of escorting her to Alexandria.

GRIMSBY
sunk.

3. Western Desert. Unexpectedly heavy scale of air attack on shipping along coast has interfered temporarily with combined operation against Derna by APHIS and SS Troops. Hoped to carry out a modified form of latter tonight 26/27. GRIMSBY was sunk in 32° 15' N., 24° 35' E., at 1600/25, but still no details. (C. in C. Med., 0003C/27 to Admty.)

Message
from P.M.

Following from Prime Minister to C. in C. Med., and M.E. Victory in Crete essential at this turning point in the war. Keep hurling in all aid you can. (1st. S.L., 0015B/27 to C. in C. Med.)

→ GLENROY, D. 10.

Your 2101/26. Return to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med., 0017C/27, to Capt.D.10.)

/A.N.31.....

War Diary.

27.5.41. 946
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean Contd.

Attack on Crete.cont:

A.N.31.

Turn back convoy A.N.31, (C. in C. Med., 0809/27, to CALCUTTA.) *See also next page*

Enemy
Air Attack
CALCUTTA.

O.E.A.B. my p.c. and s., 218° 34° N., 27° E., 21, 330° 20 knots, convoy not yet located. Report position if sighted by enemy aircraft. (CALCUTTA, 0832/27, to AUCKLAND.)

Enemy air
attack,
AUCKLAND.

(? Enemy aircraft bombing) BIRT WPBJ 31. AUCKLAND, 0900/27, to CALCUTTA, C. in C. Med.)

Attack on
Scarpanto
FORMIDABLE
& NUBIAN
damaged.

Result of attack on Scarpanto by F.A.A. At least one enemy aircraft set on fire by Albacore bombing and considerable number shot up on ground by Fulmars. Damage to FORMIDABLE from two bomb hits considerable. NUBIAN's stern blown off by bomb (?no) steering gear but capable of 25 knots. (C. in C. Med., 1031C/27, to Admty.)

See previous page

Crete.

R/C's reported six MVS 200 feet Heraklion. One destroyer or MV 230 feet one MV 85 feet at Melos Island. Six small Coastal ships Retimo. Numerous Caiques Retimo and Heraklion. Enemy aircraft reported landing at and taking off from Maleme. During day enemy forced our troops from their position West of Canea. All R.A.F. personnel except small signals staff being despatched Sphakia for evacuation. Party comprises approximately 19 officers 180 Airmen.

Suez Canal.

26/5 One Sweep by two DWI Wellingtons exploded one mine in Bitter Lake Area Suez Canal. Hurricanes provided fighter protection for damaged FORMIDABLE 85 miles off shore. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1036/27.)

947

27.5.41.
Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean Contd.Attack on Crete.C.S.7.

Keep going. Fulmars are on their way.
Other fighters searching for you.
(C. in C. Med., 1034C/27, to C.S.7.)

F.O.2. to
return.

Return to Alexandria to arrive in harbour
by 2200/27. (C. in C. Med., 1057C/27,
to F.O.2 I.C., Med.)

DEFENDER
bombed.

Am being bombed, My p.c. and s. 113° 33' N.,
27° E., 15 miles 110° 15 knots, no ship in
company. (DEFENDER, 1305/27, to C. in C. Med.)
Following received Addressed Alexandria W/T
From DEFENDER. E.A.B. my p.c. and s., 126°
33' N., 27° E., 35' 180° 20 knots.
(Nore W/T, T.O.R. 1341/27.)
Report situation and p.c. and s.,
(B.S.I., 1421/27 to DEFENDER.)
Your 1421. Am being shadowed and constantly
bombed my p.c. and s., are 126° 33' N., 27°
E., 35' 180° 20 knots.
(DEFENDER, 1430/25, to V.A.I.)
JANUS and HASTY detached to join DEFENDER.
DEFENDER report p.c. and s., 1600.
(Malta, 1446/27, to C. in C. Med., DEFENDER
F.O.I. B.S.)
V.A.I.'s 1446/. Am leading BIRDES South
propose altered course 128° 25 knots at
1500. Request instructions. 1600 position
344 32° N., 28° E. (DEFENDER, 1449C/27 to
C. in C. Med.)

A.N.31.

Convoy A.N.31 returns to Alexandria.
(C. in C. Med., 1731C/27.) *See previous page*

BARHAM hit.

At 0900 in 032° 45' N., 028° 20' E., BARHAM
hit by bomb on Y turret which is out of
action. Fire reported under control.
2 bulges flooded by near miss.
(C. in C. Med., 1901c/27, to Admty.)

/KIPLING.....

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. Contd.

Attack on Crete.

KIPLING.

Port Said arrival KIPLING.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1925C/27.)

Situation
Report 38.

Scale of air attack at sea again heavy with no fighter protection available. BARHAM hit as in my 1901C/27 now returned to harbour. FORMIDABLE's aircraft shot down six aircraft on 26th and attacked Scarpanto aerodrome as in my 1031/27.

(2) AJAX, DIDO had no luck during sweep North of Crete night 25/26 and were unable to bombard Maleme aerodrome due to bad weather. ABDIEL, HERO, NIZAM successfully transported troops and stores into Suda Bay night 26/27 and have returned with 700 personnel of which 17 are prisoners of war for interrogation. Convoy A.N.31 have been turned back to Alexandria and GLENROY and neither (?) have arrived. Damage to GLENROY not serious and ship still fit for service.

(iii) Western Desert. Supplies being sent to Tobruk by a (? "A") lighter owing to scale of air attack on coastal shipping. SKUDD 3 and SINDONIS shot down one aircraft Tobruk on 25th. Enemy appears to be increasing pressure on land particularly in Gulf of Sollum area.

(iv) Canal Area. Movement of shipping has recommenced.
(C. in C. Med., 2325C/27 to Admty.)

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

LEANDER.

Will arrive Aden A.M./29.
(C. in C. E.I., 0812Z/27, to S.N.O.Red Sea.)

Air Search.

Catalina Flying Boat FVY flew from Ceylon to Diego Garcia 23/5 from Diego Garcia to Port Victoria, Seychelles, 25/5. Complete search of Saya de Malha Bank was carried out en route. Nothing sighted. Catalina will probably stay in Seychelles area about 14 days.
(C. in C. E.I., 1354Z/27, to Admty.)

RAMB IV.

RAMB (IV) was found to have embarked 9 Italian Merchant Seamen over and above original crew. This was contrary to my written instruction and was apparently carried out with connivance of Senior Italian M.O. of Hospital. The above were removed from her before sailing. Consider this attempt to remove able-bodied Italians out of British jurisdiction an abuse of her status. Military are being asked to enquire into conduct of Italian M.O.concerned. (N.O.I/C Massawa 1701Z/27. to C. in C. E.I.)
Position regarding crew RAMB 4 is not understood. Request instructions regarding crew which are presumed to be Italian. (P.S.T.O. Egypt 1931C/27, to C. in C.E.I.)

DUCHESS OF YORK.

^{NT WD}
C. in C. E.I., 1036Z/26. Confirm my 1958/14 does not apply to DUCHESS OF YORK if escorted. Request C. in C. E.I., inform Admiralty and other addresses of E.T.A. at Durban.
(D.O.D. (F) 1922B/27. to C. in C. E.I., C. in C. S.A.)

/Greek.....

950

War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies Contd.Greek
Shipping.

Message has been sent from Greek Govt., to all Greek vessels outside the Mediterranean requisitioning them and ordering Masters immediately (or, if at sea, on arrival at next port) to cable Greek Shipping Committee London. In the case of vessels at Aden, as there is no Greek Consul, endorsement of Masters' entry in log must await vessels' arrival at next port, but you should see that masters take other steps indicated. (D. of S.T. 2228B/27 to N.O.I.C. Aden.)

GOUVERNEUR
GENERAL
PASQUIER.
(French).

Extract from a Fairmiss telegram from Singapore. T.O.O. 0427z/27. Departure 26/5 for Saigon. (M. of W.T., No. T.O.O./28.)

America & West Indies.Docking
KING GEORGE V
class.

Admty., 1256B/25, docking not now required. Special blocks for KING GEORGE V Class should be prepared in readiness for fitting in a suitable dock so that a quick docking of this class of vessel could be arranged if necessary. (Controller, 0122B/27 to B.A.R.M.)

Air Searches.

Your 1015 26. Following air searches ordered tomorrow 27/5 from Newfoundland. (C.O.A.C. Halifax, 0233Z/27 to Admty.)

A/C carrier
report 21/5.

My 1721Q/21. Report of aircraft carrier off Castries not considered correct. Probably due to presence of U.S. cruisers catapulting aircraft. (C. in C.A.W.I., 1033Q/27th, to Admty., N.A. Washington.)

/WINNIPEG.....

951

War Diary.27.5.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies Contd.WINNIPEG
(French)
intercepted
26/5.

Your 0942Q/26. Decision whether WINNIPEG will be seized or requisitioned will be made when C.C.S.O. Trinidad's report of voyage and of main items cargo with consignors and consignees is received. Instructions in your 0941Q/26 are correct.
(D.E.W.D. 1109B/27 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

SUFFOLK
search for
BISMARCK'S
oiler.

A.M. 1424B/26. SUFFOLK will require to fuel in Newfoundland subsequently. Request oiler may be arranged.
(D.O.D. (H) 1226B/27 to N.O.I.C. St.John's.)

RAMILLIES.

A.M. 1424B/25. My p.c. and s. are 1400 G.M.T. 044° 25'N. 041° 01'W. 038° 15'. S.S. BRITISH (?MONITOR or EMPIRE) (W.R.Note.) As received. Presumably should be BRITANNIC.) not in company. Have searched allowing her being one hour ahead and 4 hours behind schedule and 20 miles each side track visibility good.
(RAMILLIES, 1330Z/27, to R.A.3.)

SURCOUF.

My 2201Q/23. Proceed patrol within 100 miles of 023° N., 040° W., until further orders. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1632Q/27 to SURCOUF.)

GERMANIA.
TODARO.
MONBALDO.

German tanker GERMANIA left Las Palmas 0300 G.M.T./27.
Italian tanker TODARO left Teneriffe 0200 G.M.T./27.
Italian ship MONBALDO expected to leave Para today 27/5.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1700Q/27, to SURCOUF, CARADOC, etc.)

/SAN ADOLFO.....

952

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. Contd.

SAN ADOLFO.

A.T. 1942/24. SAN ADOLFO is no longer required for this operation.
(V.C.N.S. 1809B/27 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

LACONIA.

My 1157 P/17. On completion of escort duty LACONIA is to (?) return to Halifax.
(R.A.3. 1847P/27, to LACONIA.)

CHURCHILL
BURNHAM.

Due St. John's N.F. 30/5. Request you will sail them after fuelling to escort H.X.130.
(C. in C. W.A., 1855B/27 to N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F., amended 1522B/28.)

VILLAR
PEROSA

Following extract from Fairmiss telegram. from Norfolk. T.O.O. 2212Z/27:-
Wilmington North Carolina departure 27/5
Italian ship VILLARPEROSA in tow to
Brooklyn Naval Yard.
(M. of War Transport, No. T.O.O./27.)

953

War Diary.

27.5.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia.

U.S.11.

Your 1034B/25. E.T.A. Trincomalee (date).

(A.C.N.B. 0034Z/27, to Admty.)

Your 1033B/25. In order to avoid delay sailing U.S.11 intend sailing AQUITANIA direct from Fremantle to Wellington to lift New Zealand contingent. Request C. in C. E. I., signal anticipated arrival of AQUITANIA at Fremantle.

Anticipate U.S.11 sailing from Sydney and arriving Trincomalee (dates)

(A.C.N.B., 0206Z/27, to D. of S.T.)

At request of the C. in C. E.I., the two portions of convoy U.S.11 will be referred to as 11 A and 11 B in all future signals.

(A.C.N.B. 0303Z/27, to Admty., etc.)

Your 1457/24. Confirmed. Free French personnel will be included in U.S.11.

(A.C.N.B., 0554Z/27, to D.S.T.)

War Diary

27.5.1941.
Tuesday

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Ships Attacked

START POINT

51.01 N., 22.07 W., sighted submarine.
(Valentia Radio 1330/27 to Admty.)
SSSS 51 01 N., 22 01 W., START POINT
sighted submarine. (Liverpool W/T 1335/27)
(W.D. Note - difference in minutes of
longitude)
SSSS START POINT chased by submarine 51.08 N
22.02 W., 1352/27. (Liverpool, T.O.R. 1607/27)
(W.D. Note Difference in position)
If fuel permits proceed to assist START
POINT chased by S/M in 051° 08' N., 022° 02' W
at 1544B/27. (C. in C. W.A. 1624B/27 to
ESKIMO)
Your 1624B. Regret fuel does not permit.
My position is 054° 16' N., 014° 11' W.
(ESKIMO 1735B/27 to C. in C. W.A.)

RODNEY STAR

My 1122/25. The 18 survivors ex RODNEY
STAR arrived Dakar 26/5. (S.O.I. Freetown
1838N/27 to Admty.)

BENVRACKIE

My 2042/25 6 survivors ex BENVRACKIE
landed Freetown 26/5 ship torpedoed in 02°
49' N., 20° 15' W., 13 of crew lost.
(C. in C. S.A. 1840N/27)

LASSELL

My 2157/16. 10 Survivors including one
woman passenger ex LASSELL landed Freetown
26/5. (C. in C. S.A. 1842N/27)

RADAMES
(25/5)

Egyptian RADAMES torpedoed 1400N/25½ in
approx. 06° N., 12° W. All crew except one
saved on board VELOX (C. in C. S.A. 2100 N/27)

955

27.5.1941
Tuesday

War Diary

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarines Reported

? 4 U/B's

My 2140B/26. (48° N., 17° 30' W) A number of U-Boat signals have been made during the night from this vicinity. One U-Boat could have made all these but it is likely that at least 3 others have been called to this area. (D.D.I.C. 0707B/27)

0525

By D/F at 0525/27 G.M.T. position of unknown enemy unit possible U-Boat was approx. 50° N., 20° W. Unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 0817B/27)

0030

D/F indicated U-Boat within 60 miles 010° N 016° 30' W., at 0030 N.,/27. Reliability of 80%. (C. in C. S.A. 1127N/27 to S.A. Sqdn.)

1026

By D/F at 1026Z/27 an enemy U-Boat was within 60 miles of 47° N., 14° 30' W. (D.D.I.C. 1314B/27)

Estimated U-Boat dispositions
(D.D.I.C. 1400B/27)

1331

Bt D/F at 1331Z/27 an enemy U-Boat was within 50 miles of 45° N., 22° W. (D.D.I.C. 1639B/27)

2228

At 2228 G.M.T. German submarine 315° Class 3. (F.O.C.N.A. 2343/27 to N.A. Station)

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

VANITY
damaged.

VANITY was holed in collision at Milford Haven during last night.

Biscay
S/M
patrol.

Normal submarine patrols have been resumed in the Bay of Biscay.

Enemy
T.B's in
Channel.

From air R/C it is considered that the KONDOR, JAGUAR and WOLF, reported passing Cape Gris Nez yesterday morning, passed Gris Nez about 1300 today, speed 30 knots, course easterly.

LECH
intercepted.

EDINBURGH intercepted German S.S. LECH at 1300Z/22 in 45° 33' N. 23° 25' W. The ship scuttled herself.

4th D.F.

In view of the urgent need of destroyers elsewhere C. in C. Plymouth has reported that the retention of the 4th D.F. (4 Tribals) in the Plymouth Command does not appear justified.

British Air Operations.

Patrols were flown off Brest throughout today, including a special cross over patrol 240 miles west of Ushant.

An offensive patrol in search of enemy shipping was flown from Ushant to La Rochelle this morning. A merchant vessel of 5000 to 6000 tons was hit and left listing to Starboard and apparently settling.

957

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Enemy Air Operations.

Attack on
Home Fleet,
MASHONA sunk.

KING GEORGE V and ships in company were shadowed from 0750 today. At 0913B C. in C. H.F. asked for fighter escort and reported that the oil fuel situation was serious. His position then was 53° 30' N. 11° 40' W., speed 19 knots. NORFOLK was shadowed from 0855B and at 0915B she reported being bombed in approx. 53° 45' N. 13° W, but was not hit. RIPLEY reported being bombed at 1410 off Tory Island. TARTAR and MASHONA were bombed by F.W. aircraft at intervals from 0859B in 52° 52' N 11° 46' W. MASHONA was hit at 0924 and had to be abandoned. She sank at 1200. At 1715B TARTAR reported that she was still being bombed and no fighters were present, though C. in C. W.A. reports that one of the aircraft escorting her brought down an enemy aircraft near her at 1650B. TARTAR shot down one enemy aircraft at 1025.

H.M.T. CHILTERN shot down an enemy plane at 2325 today, whilst on patrol off Lemorna Cove.

A few bombs were dropped in the Plymouth area between 0011 and 0312 today. No casualties and only trifling Naval damage occurred.

Mining.

38 Hampdens laid mines last night off Brest and St. Nazaire.

Mines were detonated off Sheerness today. The Medway was reopened at 0803B. Blyth was opened at 1226B.

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

French
RABELAIS
destroyed.

French S.S. RABELAIS was bombed and destroyed in Sfax harbour this afternoon by R.A.F. Blenheims, in mistake for Italian M/V FLORIDA II. An Italian destroyer in the harbour fired at the Blenheims.

Malta.

Two enemy aircraft dropped bombs on Malta and Gozo last night. No damage or casualties occurred.

Operation
by UPRIGHT.

UPRIGHT carried out a landing at 0200 today, about 4 miles S.W. of Punto Stilo Light and blew up the railway line.

Attack on Crete.

Air
Operations.

Wellingtons last night bombed and damaged enemy aircraft on the beach at Maleme.

Hurricanes and fighter Blenheims maintained patrols today over H.M. Ships en route to Crete from Egypt.

R/C's reported no shipping at sea between Maleme and Zante Island and Ras Kinayia, Shipping was reported at Stampalia and Milo.

AJAX
damaged.

AJAX was bombed and hit at 2016 but carried on in support of convoy.

959

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

America and West Indies.

The escort forces based on Newfoundland will be known as the Newfoundland Force.

The Admiralty consider that PRINZ EUGEN will operate on the normal H.X. convoy route in the near future. REPULSE is escorting H.X. 129. SUFFOLK is to operate on the H.X. convoy route. The U.S.A. and Canada have been asked to provide air and surface R/C in this area.

U-Boat Campaign.

18 of the crew of the ^{RODNEY.} ~~LIFENEY~~ STAR reported torpedoed en route Santos to Freetown 16/5 have been landed at Dakar.

It is reported that Greek S.S. PAPAEMOS was torpedoed today in approx. 8° 6' N. 16° 18' W.

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Reports on
Recent
Operations.

Reports on recent operations are required as soon as possible. (V.C.N.S. 0032B/28).

C.S.1 to
transfer to
DEVONSHIRE.

It is of great importance that all lessons that can be learned from the operations against BISMARCK should be elucidated as soon as possible.

C.S.1. should therefore disembark from NORFOLK before latter sails and transfer his flag to DEVONSHIRE. (1st S.L. 1045B/28 to C.S.1).

C.S.2.
Transfer
to AURORA.

Your 2307B/27; Flag will be transferred to AURORA and GALATEA has orders to leave for Greenock at 1600Z today. (C.S.2 1220Z/28 to Adty.)

DAGMAR.

CAPE PORTLAND 2145B/26. DAGMAR should be sent to Kirkwall for examination. (D.E.W.D. 1253B/28 to N.O.I.C. Faroes).

Unloading
of ships
E.4 and
E.9.
Labour
difficulty.

If these ships are to sail on date arranged, it will almost certainly be necessary to shut in some cargo in each case. Amounts involved will depend on attitude of labour employed, and extent to which night work can be carried on. Up to 300/400 tons pig iron may remain in E.9 and 200/300 tons copper and a similar quantity of maize in E.4. Regional Port Director has been approached with a view to employment of military labour in event of refusal by dockers to work night shifts. (P.S.T.O. West Scotland 1300B/28).

PIORUN.

The new organisation of escorts makes it desirable that the Polish destroyers PIORUN should as a "long legger" be based at Newfoundland. Request concurrence of Admiral Swirski be obtained as soon as possible. (C. in C.W.A. 1610B/28 to Adty.)

/4th.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy. (contd).

4th D.F.
Proposed
withdrawal
from
Plymouth
Command.

In view of urgent need for destroyers elsewhere retention of 4th D.F. in Plymouth Command does not now appear justified. reasons.

(4) Propose 4th D.F. be withdrawn from this Command and the question of basing fleet destroyers at Plymouth be reconsidered later in light of future enemy dispositions. In meantime until more HUNTS become available I shall require reinforcements when important ships require escort through my command.
-(C. in C. Plymouth 2201/28 to Adty.)

Defence of U.K.

Rosyth
A/2 Gun
Defences.

Since Nov. 1939 heavy A.A. guns sited for defence of dockyard and Fleet anchorage have been reduced from 68 guns static and mobile to 40. Should enemy learn presence of the PRINCE OF WALES at Rosyth it seems likely air attacks will take place. Request consideration may be given to filling some of the vacant sites with mobile 5.7 inch guns while this special need for protection exists. (C. in C. Rosyth 1850/28).

From PRINCE OF WALES.

Date. 28.5.41

Recd. 0730

Naval Cypher (A1) by W/T

Addressed Admiralty, C. in C. Home Fleet, C.S.1

Further to my 1029 27 after retiring PRINCE OF WALES joined C.S.1. Visibility was variable and enemy was not re-engaged until about 1347 when fire was opened at ship engaging SUFFOLK. Range 30,000 yards. 12 salvos were fired and enemy was twice crossed by an 300 yards (?salvo). No other results were observed. PRINCE OF WALES was not fired at. Nothing further of note occurred until attack by air striking force. German Battleship BISMARCK was not in sight but L.A. fire could be seen. A vessel at first thought to be BISMARCK was sighted at 0020 (?in) direction of gunfire and almost fired on. The control however considered she was an American coastguard cutter and it is now thought this ship was U.S. Coastguard Vessel HODOC. Enemy was not resighted until 0136 when a further two salvos were fired, range 20 thousand yards by R D F. Three flashes from enemy observed one of which did not appear typical of gun flashes. Only one enemy shell was observed to fall. Touch with enemy was then lost in low visibility.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
Vice Controller.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
Nav. Sec.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)
D.N.I. (4)
D.T.D. (4)
D.T.D. (M)
O.I.C. (3)
D. of P. (3)

0201Z/28

Advance copy sent 1st Lord.
A.C.N.S. (F) A.C.N.S. (H)
C.S.O. to 1st S.L. M. for P.H.

D.S.D. 9
D.../S.W.
I.P. (3)
W.D.
D.P.D.
D.S.D. (2)
Capt. Pim
D.N.A.D.
D.T.S.D.
M. (6) for Prime Minister.

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN.

Further to my 1029/27. Further account of action. (PRINCE OF WALES 0201Z/28) See Lion Copy.
Your 1957/27. A. Did BISMARCK reply to your fire and if not why not?
B. Were any survivors from BISMARCK picked up and, if so, how many?
C. Reply when W/T silence is not necessary. (1st S.L. 0234B/28 to C. in C. H.F.) *Reply: not poss*
If not in company with PRINCE OF WALES return to Scapa. (R.A.D. 0957B/28 to ANTHONY)
Join C. in C.H.F. with all available destroyers with despatch. P.C.S. at 0913B/28 (as C. in C. H.F. 0913B/28) (R.A.D. 1004/28 to D.3).
Intend KING GEORGE V and 3 destroyers to fuel at Loch Ewe arriving 0600B tomorrow. (C. in C.H.F. 1121/28).
My P.C. S. at 1300B are 054° 34' N. 010° 18' W. 053° 17.5 knots X 12. (C. in C. H.F. 1304B/28).
Propose detach TARTAR proceed with all despatch into nearest Irish Port to obtain fuel for full speed. (C. in C. H.F. 1414/28)
Has it been practicable to take any action on REPULSE's 0005Z/27. (V.C.N.S. 1438B/28 to R.A.3 B.S).
Your 1414/28. Approved if unable to reach British Port at a satisfactory speed. (D.O.D.H. 1457B/28 to C. in C.H.F).
Are you taking any action on my 1414. (C. in C.H.F. 1532/28 to Adty).
Your 1438B/28. Regret it was not possible to take any action as there were no ships within practicable range of this position. (C. in C.W.A. 1558B/28 to Adty).
Re. B.B.C. Broadcast. SIKH should have been included in description of night destroyer attack on BISMARCK. (C. in C.H.F. 1614B/28 to Adty.)
Report on the operation.
(S.O. Force H. 1623/28) See Lion Copy.

/Your.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN.
(Contd.)

Your 0234B/28. (a) Yes in order RODNEY at about 24000 yards BISMARCK and KING GEORGE V. (b) DORSETSHIRE has four officers including -gunnery officer and 75 ratings. MAORI has 24 ratings. (C. in C.H.F. 1628/28 to Adty.)

Move patrol to area X.1. forthwith.

(A.C.N.S.F. 1701B/28 to MALVERNIAN).

Boom defences at Aultbea are not yet complete

A double line of loop mines is in operation.

(A.C.N.S. H. 1718B/28 to C. in C.H.F).

A.M. 1457/28. Indicate your intentions.

(A.C.N.S.H. 1746B/28 to TARTAR).

Proceed with despatch. Report E.T.A. Fuel

immediately on arrival. (C. in C.W.A.

1810B/28 to WILD SWAN, VANSITTART, WIVERN).

Report on the operation. (C.S.1. 1921B/28)

See Lion Copy.

Your 1745B/27. If not met by dark proceed to

Scapa. (R.A.D.H.F. 1950B/28 to ACTIVE).

Am taking sufficient fuel to reach Scapa.

Intend proceeding there at 20 knots via

Minches. E.T.A. 1400B/29th. (F.O. 18th C.S.

2005B/28 to C. in C.H.F).

Expect to arrive 0115B tomorrow VANQUISHER.

SIKH, MAORI, LEBION and COLUMBIA in company.

(RODNEY 2005B/28 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

I urgently request 4th D.F., now dispersing

to various Northern port to oil, may be

concentrated at Scapa for a brief period,

before proceeding Southwards or elsewhere.

Reasons. (Capt. D.4 2006/28 to C. in C.

Plymouth).

DORSETSHIRE with 4 Officers 75 ratings ex

BISMARCK. E.T.A. 1500B/29. (DORSETSHIRE

2121B/28 to N.O.I.C. Tyne).

Your 1510B/27. BISMARCK's Senior survivor

Lieut. Commander Baron Burkard Von Mulleheim

states attack delivered by torpedo bombers

at approx. 2100B/26 secured a hit on star-

board quarter which jammed BISMARCK's

rudders putting her out of control and thus

reducing her S. of A. and so ensuring her

subsequent destruction. Further emphatically

he stated that only torpedoes which struck

were from aircraft, three in number, and

destroyers torpedoes did not hit.

(DORSETSHIRE 2124B/28 to Adty.)

/E.T.A.....

SECRET.

M E S S A G E .

1623/28 May.

963A

From S.O. Force H.

IN.
Date 29.5.41.

Recd.0030.

H.M.S. CYRUS (D) BY W/T.

Addressed Admiralty, repeated C. in C. Home Fleet, C.S.I., C. in C. Plymouth.

REPORT.

848. 25 May. Owing to heavy head sea speed reduced and Force H unable to reach desired position for 1st air reconnaissance. At 0830 26 May flew off air search from position 048 degs. 26' N. 019 degs. 13' W to cover approach Brest to Lisbon at speed from 25 to 21 knots. Weather conditions severe. Rise and fall round down 56 feet as measured by sextant. Maintained mean line of advance 015 degs. at 16 knots after flying off.

(ii) H.M.S. ARK ROYAL's reconnaissance sighted enemy at 1114 and touch maintained subsequently till 2230 when shadower withdrawn as enemy covered by H.M.S. SHEFFIELD and 4th D.F.

(iii) After return of air reconnaissance striking force 15 TSR prepared one returned unserviceable force H took position as requisite to ensure flying operations could not be impeded by action of enemy. Landing on A/C protracted owing to weather.

(iv) H.M.S. SHEFFIELD detached 1315 to close and shadow enemy. V/S signal ordering this movement not repeated to H.M.S. ARK ROYAL and my 1345 containing this information not decoded until after striking force left at 1456.

(v) In poor visibility 11 of striking force attacked H.M.S. SHEFFIELD in error. Torpedoes set to 30 feet with Duplex pistols. 2 fired on entering water and 3 in wake probably due to roll. H.M.S. SHEFFIELD avoided all torpedoes and did not open fire. As result of this regrettable but in some respects fortunate mistake decided second attack use contact pistol. *[Addition, see next page, overleaf]*

(vi) H.M.S. SHEFFIELD in touch with enemy 1747. D/T at this stage unreliable and few first class bearings of shadower. CATALIN's report at 1525 suggest that 2nd. ship to Southward but assumed this was probably navigational error.

(vii) At 1900 sighted PIORUN 9 miles to the South. Passed enemy bearing and distance by V/S and orders for destroyer to shadow and attack as opportunity affords. Latter part not received by PIORUN and considered unnecessary by me when I appreciated that Captain (D) 4 who never loses an opportunity was present.

(viii) Second T/B attack flown off at 1915 and attacked between 2055 and 2125. 15 aircraft with torpedoes set 22 feet contact pistols obtained one hit port amidships one hit starboard quarter and possibly third hit at port quarter. *[Addition, see next overleaf]*

(ix) My 1820 made owing to doubt concerning C. in C. Home Fleet's intention but his 1821 and 0022 suggest that he did not require H.M.S. RENOWN participate in engagement. I had hoped to send off third striking force before dark but decreasing visibility made it improbable that striking force would locate and I decided to reserve maximum final effort for dawn.

10. At 2140

963^B

(x) At 2140 enemy fired 6 accurate salvos at H.M.S. SHEFFIELD distance 9 miles who suffered casualties 3 killed, 2 seriously wounded, 6 wounded and slight material damage from near miss. H.M.S. SHEFFIELD lost touch but put destroyer on enemy and then kept clear 14 miles to Westward.

11. During the night while Force "H" complying with C. in C's 0022 occasional D/F and bearing of gunflashes gave me some indication of position of enemy.

12. At dawn low visibility and lack of information concerning position of C. in C. decided me withhold third torpedo spotter reconnaissance attack until situation clarified. Sent off 1 torpedo spotter reconnaissance to spot for H.M.S. KING GEORGE V but failed to establish contact. At 0810 sighted H.M.S. MAORI who gave V/S report of enemy which placed her 17 miles from H.M.S. RENOWN. Weather conditions made turn to southerly course necessary to range striking force which took off at 0920. At 0855 heard heavy gunfire to Northward but no report who was engaged.

13. At 0940 sighted H.M.S. SHEFFIELD and ordered her to close H.M.S. ARK ROYAL while H.M.S. RENOWN proceeded in the direction of the gunfire to investigate. At 0952 received C. in C. 0945 ordering destroyers to close and C.S.I.'s 1022 which suggested action completed. In view of Admiralty's 0909 decided close H.M.S. ARK ROYAL to protect. Weather too bad for fighters. Proceeded on course 290 degs. mean line advance to await results of striking force attack.

14. At 1104 received H.M.S. DORSETSHIRE's 1056 and recalled striking force. Pokke Wulf shadowing from 0943 to noon engaged intermittently by anti-aircraft fire.

At 1136 this or another aircraft bombed H.M.S. ARK ROYAL whilst landing on. 2 large and about 5 smaller bombs missed astern. No further interference.

15. No aircraft lost during operation. One pilot and one air gunner wounded. All time zone minus 2.

16. Lack of positive or negative information of situation at Brest was embarrassing.

* Add to paragraph 5. "Target located by G4 S V and attacked through low clouds."

† Add to paragraph 8 "Cloud base 700 feet prevented synchronized attack. fire heavy and accurate and experienced when aircraft were in cloud at 3000 land feet."

Add to paragraph 14 "Third striking force did not attack owing to proximity of H.M.S. DORSETSHIRE to German Battleship BISMARCK so closed H.M.S. KING GEORGE V for instructions, but could get no reply by V/S or W/T."

1623/28.

Advance Copy Sent 1st S.L., N.A. 1st S.L.,
Ops., O.D., & O.I.C.

1st Lord	Ops. (4)	D.A/S.W.
1st S.L.	O.D. (5)	D.S.D. (2)
5th S.L.	D.N.I. (4)	W.D.
V.C.N.S.	D.T.S.D.	D. of P. (3)
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.N.A.D.	Press
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.A/A.W.	M. (2)
Secretary	O.I.C. (2)	
N.A. 1st S.L.	I.P. (3)	
Naval Sec.	D.D. 9.	

SECRET

MESSAGE

1921H/28 May IN

From C.S. One

DDF 29.5.44

REF'D 1727

P/L by m/p

Addressed Admiralty Repeated C. in C. Home Fleet.

52 Your 2317B 25th May.

23/5

SUFFOLK made contact at 1922 at a distance of 7 miles. At 2030 NORFOLK made contact at about 6 miles and came under fire. Touch was maintained during the night by SUFFOLK in visibility which was sometimes as low as two miles. It was light all night.

24/5

At 0516 smoke of HOOD was seen on the port bow and at 0549 HOOD and PRINCE OF WALES were sighted closing the enemy. At that time the enemy battleship and cruiser were in sight of NORFOLK 16 miles away, with cruiser leading.

HOOD opened fire at 0553 followed by BISMARCK and PRINCE OF WALES and later by the cruiser. BISMARCK and HOOD appeared to straddle. Very shortly afterwards at 0557 a heavy fire was seen in HOOD somewhere abaft of midships. This increased and spread forward, died down, and then at 0559 HOOD blew up.

PRINCE OF WALES continued the action and appeared to be hit. At 0613 she turned away making smoke. PRINCE OF WALES salvos had a very big spread and at the end were short. Whilst on retiring course several salvos fell very close to PRINCE OF WALES.

Except during this action BISMARCK made no smoke, but heavy black smoke hung over her during the action, which may have been the result of hits.

About 0620 SUFFOLK from starboard quarter of enemy opened fire and enemy cruiser turned to starboard for a short time and then turned back.

NORFOLK and SUFFOLK continued shadowing the enemy with PRINCE OF WALES in company to port. During the day visibility was very variable and at 1835 SUFFOLK whilst closing NORFOLK came under fire and NORFOLK and PRINCE OF WALES turned towards the enemy and engaged. PRINCE OF WALES fired twelve salvos at about 30,000 yards. Enemy shifted fire to PRINCE OF WALES and her shots fell short and left, she then turned away and action was broken off.

At 2345 VICTORIOUS's torpedo aircraft were in sight and were directed on to enemy who had just been lost to sight from NORFOLK.

During the torpedo attack A.A. fire was seen but visibility was bad and the situation was confused by the appearance of a ship end on near the position of the enemy which was reported in NORFOLK and PRINCE OF WALES as a Merchant Ship. As a result touch was lost.

PRINCE OF WALES and cruisers then turned in towards the enemy and regained contact at 0213 when fire was opened at about 20,000 yards, just as it was getting dark. Flashes of enemy's guns only could be seen from NORFOLK.

963.D

2.

SUFFOLK was then ordered to maintain touch by RD/F during the night. NORFOLK and PRINCE OF WALES remaining in close support. At 0306 SUFFOLK lost contact and the enemy must have made a turn of at least 90 to starboard. After searching for enemy on south westerly courses for two hours this was realised.

1921B/28

Advance copy sent to 1st Lord, A.C.N.S. (F)

1st Lord
1st Sea Lord
5th Sea Lord
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
Secy.
N.A. 1st S.L.
Naval Secy.
Ops. (4)
O.D. (5)
D.N.I. (4)
D.T.S.D.
D.N.A.D.
D.A.A.W.

A.C.N.S. (1); N.A. 1st S.L., Ops., O.D.,
O.I.C., Mo., Press.

O.I.C. (2)
I.P. (3)
D.S.D. 9
D.A/S.
D.S.L. (2)
W.D.
D. of P. (3)
Press Divn.
M (2)

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for
BISMARCK
and PRINZ
EUGEN.
(contd).

E.T.A. 0130B/29. (C.S.1. 2153B/28 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).
While on patrol do not get westward of longitude 022° 20' W. (C.S.2. 2248Z/28 to ARETHUSA).
Normal submarine patrols have been resumed in Bay of Biscay. (F.O.S. 2254B/28).
Ships on patrol in the Denmark Straits are to keep to the Eastward of a line 360° from North Cape.
2. These instructions are to remain in force until other orders have been given. (A.C.N.S.H2315B/28).

LECH
intercepted.

E.T.A. in EDINBURGH 1500B. Request escort be provided for 40 prisoners crew of German S.S. LECH. (C.S.18 0739B/28 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry).
German ship LECH intercepted in 045° 33' N. 023° 25' W. at 1300Z/22. Ship scuttled herself by explosive charges. (C.S.18 0749B/28 to Adty).

Sweep by
M.T.B's.

Should weather be unsuitable for P.W.(10) but possible for other operations, M.T.Bs from unit No. 2 are to sweep between Nieuport and Zeebrugge object to destroy shipping found and check buoys off Ostend. Surface craft met East of 2° 15' E. may be attacked without challenge. (C. in C. Nore 1502B/28 to BEEHIVE).

Channel
Patrol.

Intend 3 M.L's to patrol 5 miles to South of convoy route tonight from 1° 50' W. to 3° W. to cover ~~convoy~~ returning to Portland at dawn. (F.O.I.C. Portland 1923B/28).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Search for
cruiser and
attack on
M/V.

On 27/5, five miles off Hague, A/C attacked Convoy of eight 800 ton Vessels. One direct hit claimed.

52 Wellingtons and 12 Stirlings were detailed to search for the Hipper class cruiser over a wide area but no sign of the enemy ship was seen although visibility except in showers was 15 miles. During the search two Arado 196 and a DO. 17 attempted an attack on one of our formations but evaded immediately on being replied to.

On night 26/27 no operations except mine-laying. (H.Q.B.C. 0117/28).

Bombing
Restrictions.

F.O.(S) 1551/27. T.B.R. are in force south of 065° N. between 002° W. and 005° E. (Capt. S.9 1013B/28).

Vatnsmyri
aerodrome.
Reykjavik.

Runway completed. Description. (G.O.C. Iceland 1325/28).

Patrols.

^{"Stand"} ^{"Hornli"}
Patrols ~~STAND~~ and ~~HORNLI~~ now in operation. (C. in C. Rosyth 1356/28).

St. Nazaire
Area.

Your 1755/27. Concur. This target has been noted for early attention. (A.C.N.S. H. 2320B/28 to C. in C. Plymouth.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity.REGISTAN
(Bombed 27/5)

Departure tug GOLIATH escorted by M/Ls 181 and 184 to assist M/V reported on fire off Lands End. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 0058/28). Your 0244. On arrival of GOLIATH and M.L. proceed in execution of previous orders landing survivors at Milford Haven. (C. in C. Plymouth 0448/28 to WIVERN). My 0244 and your 0448. REGISTAN still afloat and burning amidships. GOLIATH and M.L. 186 in attendance. M.L. 181 investigating boat reported off Pendeen. Total number survivors picked up 56 of which 8 dead. Captain of REGISTAN and 5 men remaining in their ship. Am proceeding. (WIVERN 0730B/28 to C. in C. Plymouth). REGISTAN bombed and abandoned and on fire in 270° Cape Cornwall 8 miles at 2300/27. Survivors being landed at Milford Haven. Ship now reported has 30° list to Port and in tow to Falmouth. (C. in C. Plymouth 0908/28) REGISTAN still sinking towing impracticable standing by. (GOLIATH 0910/28).

EVESHAM.

(A/P Trawler) Sunk by near bomb misses 2215/27. No casualties. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 0701B/28).

Air attack
on Home Fleet.

Aircraft shadowing me bearing 270° distance 12 miles my position is 53° 14' N. 11° 40' W. (C. in C. H.F. 0750/28). Am still being shadowed by F.W. aircraft. (C. in C.H.F. 0838B/28 to C. in C.W.A).

TARTAR
attacked.
MASHONA
sunk.

5 F.W. bombing my position 52° 52' N. 11° 46' W. Course 026 speed 15 knots. (TARTAR 0839B/28). Am being shadowed by one enemy A/C bearing 180° distance 4 miles 170 53° 40' N. 13° W. Course 045 speed 18 knots. (NORFOLK 0853B/28) My 0853. One Heinkel. (NORFOLK 0856B/28). Request fighter escort. Oil fuel situation serious. My position 053° 30' 011° 40. Course 045° speed 19 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 0913B/28 to C. in C.W.A). My 0853B. Enemy aircraft bombing. (NORFOLK 0915B/28). My 0839. Enemy still bombing. No hits yet. (TARTAR 0915B/28).

/MASHONA.....

War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity.

→ TARTAR
attacked.
MASHONA
sunk.
(contd).

MASHONA hit. (TARTAR 0924/28).
My 0915B. No hits. No longer in contact.
(NORFOLK 0929B/28).
Shadowing aircraft transmitting homing A
apostrophe S on 375 Kilocycles. (C. in C.
H.F. 0932/28 to C. in C.W.A).
Enemy still bombing. (TARTAR 0950B/28)
MASHONA being attacked by enemy aircraft,
my position 52° 58' N. 11° 36' W. (TARTAR
0955/28).
MASHONA abandoned ship. Am collecting
survivors. More attacks expected. (TARTAR
1045B/28);
My 0729. Enemy still bombing. No hits.
(TARTAR 1050/28).
Coastal and Fighter Commands are already
doing everything possible. They will be
assisted if you keep close inshore.
(V.C.N.S. 1105B/28 to C. in C.H.F. C.S.1 and
TARTAR) (D.O.D.(H) 1236B/28).
When may I expect fighter protection. ST.
CLAIR and SHERWOOD in company. My P.C. and
S. 52° 25' N. 11° 6' W. X 12. 022; 15.
(TARTAR 1225B/28 to Liverpool).
About 20 enemy aircraft proceeding in your
direction passed area of Scillies between
1145 and 1220. (D.D.I.C. 1248B/28 to C. in C
H.F., etc).
Fighter Command are still emphasizing that
they can only afford you Fighter protection
if you are close inshore. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1315B/
28 to C. in C.H.F. C.S.1. TARTAR).
Intermittent bombing continuing. P.C. and S.
212° Slyne Head 30 miles 022° 15 knots.
(TARTAR 1403/28).

RIPLEY
bombed.

Am being bombed My position 070° Tory
Island 80. (RIPLEY 1410/28).

→ A/C have been ordered to establish R/T
communication. (C. in C.W.A. 1414B/28 to
C. in C.H.F).
Is MASHONA still afloat. If so tugs will
be sent. (D.O.D.(H) 1439B/28 to TARTAR)

/MASHONA.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity. (contd).TARTAR
Attacked.
MASHONA
Sunk (cont.)

MASHONA capsized and sank 1200. Captain is in TARTAR. (TARTAR 1517B/28). My 1414B/28. Aircraft are using 2410 KC/S. (C. in C.W.A. 1525B/28 to C. in C.H.F). 5 aircraft bombing Posm. 226 Slyne Head 14 course 022 speed 14 knots. (TARTAR 1525B/28) Your 1414. Confirm 2410 k/cs. Nothing heard yet. (C. in C.H.F. 1546/28 to C. in C. W.A).

Enemy still bombing. (?No) fighters. P. C. and S. 320° Slyne Head (76 or 9 miles) 360° 5 knots. (TARTAR 1715B/28). Your aircraft are fighting hard for you and more are being sent. (C. in C.W.A. 1814B/28 to TARTAR).

Of 14 Officers and 215 ratings in MASHONA Lieut. Cdr. Elliot and 45 ratings were lost. Am proceeding Londonderry. SHERWOOD, ST. CLAIR in company. Propose taking survivors to Greenock after oiling. (TARTAR 1911B/28). One of your escorting A/C brought down an H.E. 111 in your vicinity at 1630B/28, two of the crew baling out. (C. in C.W.A. 2227B/28 to TARTAR).

E.T.A. 0500/29. SHERWOOD and ST. CLAIR in company. Request hospital drifter for about 12 cases. (TARTAR 2305B/28 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry).

Plymouth
Area
bombed.

Approximately twelve hostile planes passed over Plymouth area between 0011/28 and 0312/28, some of which dropped H.E. 1/Bs and flares, mainly in outlying districts. One H.E. 25 yards from Heybrook Camp, Wembury, minor roof damage, no casualties. One H.E. on fair ground, (Admiralty property for open air storage) Ferry Road, Morice Town. No casualties or damage reported. (C. in C. Plymouth 0856/28).

/Departures.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. (contd).

MARMION.

Departures paddle M/S MARMION towed by tug KENIA for Tilbury, escorted by A/S trawler GREENFLY. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1055B/28).

Convoy "Wheel".

~~WHEEL.~~
RÖYKSUND
(Norwegian,
695Tons)
sunk on
27/5.

ARTIC EXPLORER landed 2 survivors and 1 body from RÖYKSUND sunk off Padstow in "Wheel" ~~WHEEL.~~ (N.O.I.C. Barry 1205/28).

S.S. DIANA
(attacked 26/5)

Five machine gun attacks made on British (ex Danish) DIANA between 0500 and 0545Z/26 in -061° 35' N. (corrupt group) 06' W. by single aircraft believed H.E. 111. 3 near misses with oil bombs. No material damage to ship and 1 slight injury. Aircraft not visibly affected by ship's fire. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1310/28).

H.E. STROUD.
(Bombed 26/5).

Red ensign trawler STAR OF DON bound Kirkwall with Aberdeen trawler H.E. STROUD in tow. Vessel picked up at sea with no crew on board. Request instructions. (AXDO Kirkwall 1927/27).

TRILLIUM.

Request fighter assistance one enemy aircraft My position 55° 8' N. 9° 3' W. (TRILLIUM 2320/28).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.

28.5.1941.

Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.Medway.

River Medway is closed to traffic in Short and Gillingham Reaches till further orders. (C. in C. Nore 0111B/28).

River Medway open to traffic. Instructions for traffic. (C. in C. Nore 0803B/28).

Blyth.

Port of Blyth open. (N.O.I.C. Blyth 1226B/28)

Operation.
B.S. 63.

Particulars. To be carried out by TEVIOT
CBANK on 30/5 or soon after. (V.C.N.S.
1336B/28).

Operation
P.W. 10.

Weather permitting carry out P.W.10 tonight. (C. in C. Nore 1502B/28 to BEEHIVE).

9th M/S
Flotilla.
Clearance
Sweep.

Your 1125B/6. 9th M.S.F. is required to clear area defined in Q.Z.Y. 208. They will be under operational command of C. in C. Plymouth and based on Dartmouth. Request you will sail them on completion of present operation. (D.M.S. 2226B/28 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Enemy Intelligence.Brest.

Visual R/C of Brest at 0815B/28 shows SCHARNHORST in usual position. Pilot unable to see dry docks. (D.D.I.C. 1146B/28) Photographic R/C 0815/28. Both battlecruisers present in same positions. (D.D.I.C. 1930B/28).

/LEITH.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence. (contd).

LEITH.
Suspected
Sabotage.

A suspected case of Sabotage occurred in E.R. 14502 last night involving damage to A/S gear on bridge. Considered damage not very serious and can be replaced by date of completion. (N.O.I.C. Avonmouth 1535B/28).

Kiel.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C 1430/28.

- (1) TIRPITZ in S. floating dock.
 - (2) SCHEER alongside.
 - (3) HIPPER in dry dock.
- (D.D.I.C. 1551B/28).

KONDOR.
JAGUAR.
WOLF.

My 0754B/27 and 0837B/27. From aerial R/C it is considered these vessels passed Gris Nez about 1300 today. Course easterly, speed about 30 knots. (V.A. Dover 1612B/28).

Weather.

Ice.

Air R/C Denmark Straits shows ice breaking up and well built ship probably able to pass anywhere. Photographic R/C now being made. (N.O.i/C Iceland 1801/28).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects.VANITY
holed.

VANITY has been damaged in collision whilst leaving harbour. Is holed above and below waterline. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0250B/28)

IMPULSIVE.

IMPULSIVE reports has serious damage number 3 boiler room and required dockyard assistance. Maximum speed 26 knots. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0904/28).

PRINCE OF
WALES.

Sailed PRINCE OF WALES, ELECTRA, ECHO, ACHATES. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1115/28).

ECLIPSE.

My 1547/25. Discovery of further defects caused delay in completion. Now anticipate sailing ECLIPSE 9/6. (C. in C. Plymouth 1251/28).

Shipping and Convoys.JOSEFINA
THORDEN.

Sailed for Kirkwall at 0105 Finnish Tanker JOSEFINA THORDEN towed by fleet tug BRIGAND and MARAUDER escorted by NORTHERN ISLES and HAMLET. E.T.A. 0700/29. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 0110/28 to A.C.O.S).

Cancel my 0110/28, ships have returned owing to bad weather. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 0430/28).

My 0430/28. Ship is an unmanageable tow in anything but continuous flat calm.

Hazardous to move her until she has been lightened. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1255/28 to A.C.O.S)

My 1255/28. Recommend ship should remain where she is and Salvage expert take charge. (N.O.I.C. Faroes, 1750/28 to A.C.O.S).

/W.S.9A.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday;HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys. (contd).

W.S.9A.

Re delays. Request immediate confirmation that embarkation programme can still be maintained. (D.S.T. 0350B/28, to P.S.T.O. West of Scotland).

W.S.8B.

Following 5 troop transports sailed U.K. 22/5 in W.S.8B. Numbers on board, destinations, bunkers, water, etc. (D.O.D.(F) 1252B/28, D. of S.T. 1916B/28 to C. in C. S.A. C. in C.E.I.) See Lion Copy.

PETROPHALT.
Oiler.

To stand by to proceed to sea at short notice. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1736B/28 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry) Cancel my 1736B/28 on arrival of TARTAR. (D.O.D.(H) 2252B/28 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry).

W.S.8X.

Convoy and escorts detailed are to come to two hours' notice. (C. in C.W.A. 1846B/28 to F.O.I.C. Greenock). My 1846B/28. W.S.8X and escort at Clyde and Londonderry are to revert to 4 hours' notice. (C. in C.W.A. 1946B/28 to F.O.I.C. Greenock);

Use of
D/Cs.

Instructions for use of depth charges by single unescorted merchant vessels in D.E.M.S pamphlet No. 2, 1940 amended as follows. (D.T.D. 2109B/28 "A" Message) See Lion Copy. Amended, see 1302/31.

973A

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

1252B/28

MESSAGE

OUT.

Date. 28.5.41.

To. C. in C. South Atlantic. 374.
 C. in C. East Indies. 395.
 Repeated. C. in C. Mediterranean. 382.
 F.O.C. North Atlantic. 522.
 N.O.I.C. Simonstown. 2.
 S.H.O. R.S.F.
 C. in C. China. 29.
 F.O.C. Malaya. 273.

Naval Cypher (D)

From Admiralty.

Following five troop transports sailed U.K. 22.5. in
convoy W.S.8.B.

<u>Ship.</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>No. of Troops</u>	<u>Destination.</u>
ORDUL	14	2161	Middle East.
GEORGIC	18	3135	Middle East.
CHRISTIAN HUYGENS	16	460	Durban.
		70	Singapore.
		1062	Middle East.
DUCHESS OF RICHMOND	18	94	Durban.
		742	Singapore.
		2245	Middle East.
ALMIZORA	15	2009	Middle East.

2. In GEORGIC are Vice-Admiral Arbuthnot and Mrs. Arbuthnot who will disembark Durban for onward conveyance.

3. Proposals for movement from Durban of 812 personnel for Singapore will be communicated shortly.

4. Vacant accommodation in CHRISTIAN HUYGENS and DUCHESS OF RICHMOND totalling 1366 may be used from Durban for South African personnel.

5. Also included in W.S.8.B. is MERTLAND with M.T. vehicles guns ammunition stores one Sea Gladiator and one Fulmar for Middle East.

7. Commodore of convoy is Admiral Burke in GEORGIC.

8. Addressees pass to S.T.O's concerned.

1252B/28.
for D.O.D.(F)

00433

1st Lord
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 3rd S.L.
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.H.S.
 A.C.H.S.(H)
 A.C.H.S.(F)
 A.C.H.S.(T) (2)
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 D. of P.(2)
 D.O.D.(F)
 D.D.O.D.(F)
 D.O.D.(H)
 D.D.O.D.(H)
 D. of S.T.

D.N.I.(4)
 D.S.D.
 D. of L.D.
 D.N.A.D.
 D.A/S.W.
 D.H.S.
 I.P.
 W.D.
 Duty Captain.
 Head of M.
 D.T.S.D.
 D.D.I.C.
 E.P.S.
 D.T.D.(2)
 H.I.D.10 (Payr.Cdr.Wilson)

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET.

M E S S A G E

1916B/28th May.

OUT.

To:- C. in C. South Atlantic, Date 28.5.41.
 C. in C. East Indies,
 Reptd. N.O.i/c Freetown,
 N.O.i/c Simonstown,
 N.O.i/c Durban,
 N.O.i/c Aden,

Naval Cypher (XR)

From Director of Sea Transport,

Convoy W.S.8.B.

Ship.	Daily Fuel Consumption at convoy speed.		Type of Fuel.	Bunkers on leaving U.K.	Water required at Free-town.	Fuel required at Durban.	Fuel required at Aden.
	Consumption at convoy speed.	Type of Fuel.					
ORDUNA	101.	Furnace	2600.	550.	2800.	Nil.	2500.
GEORGIC.	45.	Diesel.	1200.	200.	1100.	Nil.	1400.
CHRISTIAN							
HUYGENS.	32.	Diesel.	1400.	750.	1000.	Nil.	1300.
DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.	66.	Furnace.	1800.	500.	1700.	Nil.	1000.
ALMANZORA.	109.	Furnace.	1700.	1400.	1500.	1400.	1300.
MARTAND.	40.	Furnace.	1300.	Nil.	600.	Nil.	1000.

2. It is essential that oil bunkering at Durban should be restricted to an absolute minimum and supplies should therefore be arranged on the basis of reaching Aden with safe margin. Reservations covering all the quantities given have been made ex commercial stocks. All vessels should be watered to capacity in Durban but any demands at Freetown in excess of the quantities stated should be carefully scrutinised.

3. Addressees pass to S.T.Os concerned.

1916B/28.
 Director of Sea Transport.

1st Lord.	D.N.I. (4)
1st S.L.	D.S.D.
2nd S.L.	D. of L.D.
3rd S.L.	D.N.A.D.
4th S.L.	D.A/S.W.
5th S.L.	D.M.S.
V.C.N.S.	I.P.
A.C.N.S. (H)	W.D.
A.C.N.S. (F)	Duty Captain,
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	Head of M.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.	D.T.S.D.
D. of P. (2)	D.D.I.C.
D.O.D. (F)	E.P.S.
D.D.O.D. (F)	D.T.D. (2)
D.O.D. (H)	N.I.D.10 (Pay Cdr. Wilson)
jr. D.D.O.D. (H)	D. of S.T.

973c

CONFIDENTIAL

M E S S A G E

2109P/28 May

OUT

To. A Message Home & Abroad. 129A.

Date. 20.5.41.

P/L BY T/P & NAVAL CODE (J)

WILL PRINT

Addressed. A Message Home & Abroad. 129A.
From Admiralty.

NOTE (pass to all concerned).

Instructions for the use of depth charges by single unescorted merchant vessels which are contained in D.E.I.S. Pamphlet No.2 - 1940 are amended as follows:-

- (a) References to unrestricted warfare no longer apply.
- (b) Depth charges should normally be set to "safe" with the primer in the withdrawn position. Subject to this being the case depth charges need not be jettisoned when under gunfire or aircraft attack. Article 163 of the pamphlet is therefore cancelled.
- (c) Depth charges are to be set at a 150 ft. when speed is over 11 knots and 250 ft. between 8 and 11 knots.
- (d) Depth charges are not to be dropped when speed through the water is less than 8 knots. Some loss of speed must be expected during a large turn and speed of engines should be increased to counteract. If it is doubtful whether a speed of 11 knots is being made good the 250 ft. settings should be used.

2. Stragglers or ships that have fallen astern of convoys are to act in accordance with instructions for single unescorted merchant vessels.

3. Vessels in convoy.

Depth charges are to be used by merchant ships in convoy subject to any restrictions ordered by the Commodore as follows:-

(a) Immediately the first emergency turn is completed after a submarine attack by day or night, rear ships of columns and ships of the wing column on the side away from the turn are to drop one depth charge, provided that:-

- (1) There is no ship out of station astern, or nearly astern of them.
- (2) Their speed is not less than 8 knots.

Depth charges are to be dropped without signal as normally time will not permit of any being passed.

(b) By day and ship in a wing column in a position to haul out and attack a periscope sighted on the side away from the convoy may do so, using depth charges as laid down in para. 186 (a), provided that there is no escort vessel which is capable of attacking.

4. The following signals are to be brought into force forthwith in connection with dropping depth charges and the necessary amendments are to be made to the Merchant navy code and decode and Consigs as follows:-

Merchant Navy Code, Page 38 after "Degaussing") insert new sub-section
"Consigs" page 32 after "Danger") headed "Depth Charges"
with following signals:-

Merchant Navy Decode, page 32, insert following signals in their appropriate places:-

(Continued on Sheet 2).

973D

YI - I am about to drop a depth charge (or number of depth charges indicated).

YJ - Drop a depth charge (or number of depth charges indicated).
(The depth setting may be indicated if necessary by a numeral group hoisted inferior with a tackline to the signal).

YK - Depth charges may be dropped after first emergency turn in accordance with standing instructions.

N. Tackline YK - Depth charges are not to be dropped after emergency turns.

The above groups should also be inserted in their appropriate places in "Consigns" Art. 72.

Merchant Navy Code, page 73 } Delete significations
Merchant Navy Decode " 31 } against groups WG and WH.

2109B/28

for D.F.D.

A.C.N.S. (T) (2)

N.A. 1st S.L.

Ops. (4)

O.D. (5)

O.D.8.

D.N.I.

D. of S.2a.

D.T.D. (4)

D.T.D. (M)

D.S.D.9.

D. of S.T.

I.P. (3)

D. A/S W.

O.I.C.

W.D.

I.M.N.G.

A.G.R.H.

A.C.R.

M. (2)

W/T Room

Hydrog.

D. of N.

D.T.S.D.

D.T.M.

D.A.S.

D.S.D. (2)

D.A.S.

D.N.O.

D. of S.

S.W.R.

}
} BATH BY COURIER.
}

RN

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.General.Raiders.

My 1748B/21. No known activity by armed merchant raiders this week.

North Atlantic.PRINCE³ EUGEN believed at sea, but probably no merchant raiders in N. Atlantic. Vessels overdue at Freetown and Rio de Janeiro believed to be U/B casualties.South Atlantic.

Press reports ZAMZAM sunk 17/4 27° 41' S. 08° 08' W. Survivors transferred to DRESDEN which sailed Santos 28/3 and landed St. Jean de Luz. Raider was commanded by Rogge so was presumably No. 16.D/F indicated a unit in area St. Helena-Tristan da Cunha-Capetown on 26/5. This unit thought to have been at sea for a considerable period and may be 16. On the other hand 16 may be returning home.

Indian Ocean.

Nothing to report.

Pacific Ocean.KULMERLAND with survivors from ships sunk by Pacific raiders met ^{ADMIRAL} SCHEER in South Atlantic in early March and then proceeded to Bordeaux. Probably no raiders in Pacific. (D.D.I.C. 1745B/28 to C. in C. H.F. N.A. Washington, F.O.C.N.A. etc).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.MADRID.

German, 8777 tons, which left Las Palmas 11/12/40, stated to have arrived in a German occupied port. (D.S. 631, 28/5).

Report.

My 0032B/28. Request you will also signal a summary of operations of Force H. (D.O.D. (H) 0212B/28 to S.O. Force H).

CANARIAS,
BISMARCK
survivors.

Spanish Cruiser CANARIAS left Ferrol 1400/27 to search for survivors of BISMARCK. (D.C. 0535B/28 to F.O.C.N.A. etc.).

CITY OF DIEPPE
SEVERN:

Your 2326/27. Estimate CITY OF DIEPPE will be 420 miles ahead of SEVERN at noon/28. Maximum speed of CITY OF DIEPPE is 15 knots. (F.O.C.N.A. 0646B/28 to Admty.). Your 1719B/24 and 2326B/27. Confirm it is your intention for SEVERN to proceed to St. Johns N.F. My 0646B/28 refers. (F.O.C.N.A. 1152B/28 to Admty.) Your 0646B/28. Cancel my 2326B/27. SEVERN is to return to Gibraltar. (V.C.N.S. 1120B/28 to F.O.C.N. A). Return to Gibraltar forthwith by direct route adjusting speed to arrive during daylight/29. (F.O.C.N.A. 1508A/28 to SEVERN.) SEVERN estimated position 2000B/28 037° (? 05') 012° 25' returning to Gibraltar direct, speed 15 knots. (F.O.C.N.A. 1510A/28 to N.A. Stn.).

MOUNT LYCABETTUS
(Greek).

Left Oporto via Fayal, Azores 27/5 believed making for U.S. should be sent in if encountered. (F.O.C.N.A. 0843/28 to N.A. Stn. amended 1531A/28).

/FAULKNER.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (contd).

FAULKNER,
FORESTER,
FURY,
WISHART.

Departure in accordance with F.O.C.N.A.'s 1640B/27. (S.O.I. Gibr., 1000A/28 to S.O. Force H).
Pass through 036° 20' N. 009° 20' W. at 0700B/29 steering 280°. (S.O. Force H., 1749B/28 to Capt. D.8).

GERMANIA.

Grade B.1. Master of Portuguese ship SERPA PINTO reports at Dawn/27 large German tanker left Las Palmas and steered northerly course. (Consul, Madeira, 1057/28 to Admty.)

NELSON.

Am proceeding by route given in C. in C. S.A. 2359N/25 S. of A. 15 knots. E.T.A. 0600A/2/6. (NELSON 1401Z/28 to F.O.C.N.A.)

See p. 978

BISMARCK
survivors.

Your 1631/27. Attention of Minister of Marine should be drawn to Art. 13 of 10th Hague Convention from which it is clear that any survivors taken on board Spanish man-of-war must be so dealt with that they do not again take part in operations of war. You should stress that the obligation attaches once they are taken on board and they cannot thereafter be transferred to any other ship nor returned to German controlled territory. (Head of M. 1529B/28 to N.A. Madrid).

TRUANT
suspicious
tanker.

Admty. 2345B/27. Area for search has centre 100 miles 324° from position reported in your 1657Z/27. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1659B/28 to TRUANT).

Enemy Unit.

German Surface Unit bearing 315° 2nd class from Gibraltar at 1613 G.M.T. (F.O.C.N.A., 1755A/28 to S.O. Force H).
By D/F at 1613 G.M.T. enemy unit in 47° 30' N 15° 30' W. unreliable fix. Probably surface rescue craft. There are at least two U/Bs operating in this area. (D.D.I.C. 2225B/28 to S.O. Force H., F.O.C.N.A. etc).

/Gibraltar.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (contd).Gibraltar
D/F Unit.

My 1932/6/5 and your 1300/14. Proposal for D/F unit, re evacuation. (F.O.C.N.A. 2128A/28 to Admty.) See Operations Volume.

ARGUS.

Adjust speed to arrive Northern entrance 0001B/31. Operation of transferring A/C is to be carried out with utmost despatch with object of sailing you before daylight, 31/5. (F.O.C.N.A., 2322B/28 to ARGUS).

South Atlantic.CANADOLITE.

British tanker, 11309 tons, which had been presumed sunk by enemy action in South Atlantic, now known to have been captured and taken to a German port. (D.S. 631, 28/5)

TROLLEHOLM.

Swedish, 5047 tons, overdue at Capetown since 17/4, now presumed sunk by enemy action, as relatives of crew have received letters stating they are prisoners of war. (D.S. 631, 28/5).

BANFORA.
CRITON.
BOURBONNAIS.
(French).

Portuguese JOAO BELO sailed 27/5 for Casablanca and Funchal. Due Casablanca 4/6. Embarked all remaining passengers and crew S.S. BANFORA except 2 passengers for whom special arrangements are being made. Also crews of S.S. CRITON and BOURBONNAIS less those who transferred to Free French forces. (C. in C. S.A. 0027N/28 to Admty.)

GASCONY.
CORDILLERA.
TEWKESBURY.

Cancel my 1105/26. GASCONY and CORDILLERA arrived Saint Vincent. TEWKESBURY sunk by Submarine. (S.O. (I) Freetown 1032N/28).

/NELSON.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).NELSON.

Cancel Admty. 1357B/27 and 2327B/27. NELSON is to proceed to Gibraltar in accordance with Admty. 0036B/26. Frequent changes of direction regretted, but you may be assured there are good reasons. (V.C.N.S. 1104B/28 to C. in C. S.A.) Cancel my 2213N/27, comply with Admty. 1104B/28. Detach destroyers to proceed to Bathurst to arrive a.m./29. (C. in C. S.A. 1131N/28 to NELSON). *See p. 976*

Dutch Tug.
FOSNA.
BERHALA.

Faults in routing in Freetown area. (C. in C.S.A. 1125N/28 to Adty.).

VASNA.

Hospital Ship VASNA ready to sail from Freetown 29/5. Request destination. (C. in C S.A. 1133N/28 to Admty.) Reply: Liverpool (D. of S.T. 0357B/30).

Enemy
Unit.

D/F Bearings 2051Z/27 indicate possibility of enemy surface unit within 150 miles of 037° S. 005° E. reliability 45% and at 0917Z/28, one within 60 miles of 030° S. 007° W. reliability 65%. These suggest movements from area given in my 1125N/27. (C. in C. S.A., 1331N/28 to S.A. Stn).

Minesweepers,
S. Africa.

Admty. 1243B/25/5. Re provision of crews. TREERN, GRIBB, SEKERN, and IMHOFF will sail 31/5 for fitting of LL gear at Alexandria. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1559B/28 to Admty.).

CARNARVON
CASTLE.
CILICIA.

Capetown departure 1550/28 CARNARVON CASTLE and CILICIA in company for patrol in K 1 in accordance with your 1425/27. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1603Z/28 to C. in C. S.A.)

See also p. 980

LIEUT. ST.
LOUBERT BIE.

Durban arrivals PRETORIA CASTLE and Vichy French Ship LIEUT. ST LOUBERT BIE. (N.L.O. Durban 1610Z/28 to Admty. etc).

See also next page

/Troop.....

War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd).Troop
Transports.

Your 1834/27 and my 1425/27. Unless EMPRESS OF ASIA and THYSVILLE will be ready before 31/5 PRETORIA CASTLE leaving Durban on arrival 30/5 should proceed at once towards Capetown to meet the two ships on 1/6 and escort to Durban. PRETORIA CASTLE then proceed to East London to escort CAMERONIA to Capetown and on to Freetown as in my 1819/27. If certain ships will be ready before 31/5 CARNARVON CASTLE can be used to escort PRETORIA CASTLE to meet if this will free CARNARVON CASTLE earlier. Request early report of intention. (C. in C. S.A. 1745N/28 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

BRITANNIA.
(sunk by
raider 25/3).

Reporting Officer Maranham reports CAYRU sailed for Trinidad 28/5 via Para with 38 survivors from BRITANNIA, Trinidad will disembark 11 Naval personnel. (N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1843Z/28, to Admty).

S.S. DEFENDER
MARIONGA.

Your 1142/18 and my 2020/19 to DEFENDER which has been passed to you. Ship has been ordered direct to Cape but not rerouted otherwise as report of crossing 20° N. and her route not received. Greek ship MARIONGA is believed to have been sunk on 22/5. This ship has not been reported crossing 20° N. and route was not known. (C. in C. S.A. 1844N/28 to Admty.)

C. Verde Is.
defence.

Lisbon informed we are prepared to release / at once three guns for Cape Verde Islands. (W.O. 1845/28 to G.O.C. W. Africa).

German A.M.C.
and HERMES.

Secret source C 3/4 states German A.M.C. in position 24° 56' S. 28 12 W. waiting arrival S.S. HERMES from Rio de Janeiro. (N.A. Buenos Aires, 1917Z/28 to Admty.) Additional details German HERMES ex KARNACK now at Rio de Janeiro. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2044Z/28 to S.A.D).

/NORDERNEY.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

NORDERNEY.
(German).

My 2032/27. NORDERNEY returned to anchorage after filling up with drinking water. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2112Z/28 to R.A.S.A.D).

CARNARVON
CASTLE.
CILICIA.

My 1603/28. Due to adverse weather CARNARVON CASTLE unable to carry out full calibre firing (?practice) or to (?handle) degaussing gear for change of polarity. S.E.E. and C.O. consider a very desirable test on degaussing range be carried out at earliest opportunity.

(ii) As CARNARVON CASTLE was ready for sea in other respects she sailed with CILICIA p.m. today 28 instead of 29/5 in accordance with your 1425/27.

(iii) Capetown degaussing range will be ready for use very shortly. (N.O. i/c Simonstown 2115Z/28 to C. in C. S.A). *See p. 978*

BUTTERFLY.
XXIV MAGGIO
AFRICANA
AIDA LAURO.

My 1753/25 for 850 tons read 1600 (BUTTERFLY cargo cotton, etc) XXIV MAGGIO has returned to anchorage having loaded 1100 tons including some Beryllium. AFRICANA is loading and AIDA LAURO has been listed for painting lower shell plates. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2305Z/28 to Cdre. S.A.D).

Enemy Oiler,
EAGLE and
DUNEDIN
to search.

Information A1 indicates enemy fast oiler will be within 30 miles of position 28° N. 34° 40' W. P.M./2 onwards for fuelling PRINZ EUGEN. Request you will arrange for EAGLE and DUNEDIN to carry out air search of this area as soon as possible. It appears DUNEDIN could arrive Bathurst on 30/5. (A.C.N.S. (F) 2329B/28 to C. in C.S.A)

LATONA.

Admty. 0032B/29. E.T.A. Freetown 0600/30. (LATONA 2330N/28 to Admty.).

War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.KASSA.

Hungarian, 1022 tons, reported making for Aegean with 5 German officers and cargo of searchlights, A/A guns, etc. (D.S. 631, 28/5)

TISZA.

Hungarian, 961 tons, reported 27/5 to be loading a similar cargo at Constanza for Aegean and will pass Istanbul about 28-29/5. (D.S. 631, 28/5).

CANADA.

Your 1636 and your 1640/26. No sign of French Hospital Ship CANADA yet. (N.O.I.C. Haifa, 0903C/28 to C. in C. Med.)

EMPIRE SONG.

(Mined at Malta 9/5) Conclusions of inquiry. (V.A. Malta 1158B/28) See Lion Copy.

Oil fuel.

Your 1554C/12. No Crude or Furnace Oil is to be released without reference to me (C. in C. Med.) Socony Vacuum Oil Company are proposing to receive 500 Tons of Fuel Oil from Refinery. May permission be given for this release. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1020C/28).

TORBAY.

Leaving 031° 22' 029° 12' at 1830C/28 thence through 035° 38' 029° 12' at 1800C/29. Passing Scarpanto Channel northbound p.m./30. (Capt. S.1, 1405C/28 to Med. Fleet at Sea.)

French
M.V. attacked
at Sfax in
mistake for
FLORIDA II
(Italian).

1. 340 28/5. Special Operational Summary. On information that Italian M/V previously identified and attacked was off Sfax Harbour two Blenheims 139 Sq. sent to attack. Owing to bad visibility ship was not seen in expected position but 8 250-lbs bombs were released on similar M/V 4,000 - 5,000 tons in harbour. No flag or markings on ship attacked but ship evidently loaded with ammunition as all 8 bombs scored direct hits followed by enormous explosion and vast column of black smoke. Time of attack 1117 hours G.M.T. Slight inaccurate light A.A. from Italian destroyer in Sfax Road and from Merchant Ships. Both Blenheims returned undamaged. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1500/28 amended 1815/28).

/This.....

1158 B/28 May

981A.

From V.A. Malta.

Date 28.5.41.

Recd 2009,

NAVAL CYPHER D BY W/T.

Addressed Admiralty, C. in C. Mediterranean, S.O. Force H.

37. Admiralty 1434 B 18 and 1750 B 19 next to all addressees. Enquiry held Malta took evidence from all Officers etc. of EMPIRE SONG concerned except chief engineer and from Officers H.M.S. FORESIGHT. Conclusions and my recommendations are as follows.

(a) No mine actually struck the ship's side but second was a near miss. Insufficient evidence to determine whether mine exploded by touching paravane towing wire or paravane itself

(b) Fire was started among ammunition in number one hold as result of concussion from second mine.

(c) Master took normal fire precautions by closing ventilations and injecting steam. Only hope was to flood at once. Recommended flooding arrangements for holds carrying ammunition should be improved and that Masters be instructed to flood at once if there is fire in holds containing explosives

(d) Recommended that at least one Ship's Officer should be present while cargo in hired transport is being loaded as it is very difficult to obtain real knowledge of cargo stowage from a cargo plan.

Full report follows.

1158B/28.

Advance Copy Ops. O.D. Trade.

Enquiries of mining of S.S. EMPIRE SONG

1st Lord.	Cdr. Holbrook.	E.P.S.
1st S.L.	D.M.S.	D. of N.
2nd S.L.	D.M.S. Basement.	D.T.M. }
3rd S.L.	D. of S.T.	S.W.R. } Bath
4th S.L.	M. (2).	
V.C.N.S.	C.W. (2).	
A.C.N.S. (F)	N.L.	
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)	I.P. (3)	
N.A. 1st S.L.	W.D.	
Ops. (4)	D.T.M.	
C.D. (5)	D.D.T.M.	
O.I.C. (2).	M. (3) for War Office.	
D.S.D. 9.	D.A/S.W.	
D.N.I. (4).	D.T.S.D.	
D.T.D. (4) for action	File X.	
D.T.D. (m)		

Lion

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

French M.V.
attacked
at Sfax in
mistake for
FLORIDA II
(Italian.)
(Contd.)

This afternoon 2 Blenheims were despatched to deal with Italian M/V FLORIDA in French Territorial Waters and known to be loading phosphates. Orders were given by H.Q. Med. to attack ship in Sfax Roads and position -on chart was shown to Pilots. Orders were given to Pilot who it was understood was to be leader of flight. This Pilot was changed at last moment and did not turn over necessary full orders to new leader. Blenheims bombed M.V. which they considered was FLORIDA and which was alongside in Sfax Harbour. She blew up and from secret source proved to be French M.V. RABELAIS of 5,000 tons. Same secret source now suggests bombardment of FLORIDA this evening would have excellent moral effect which would point to understanding of realization of an unfortunate error on our part. This will naturally not be carried out. It is much regretted if this incident should cause embarrassment to H.M.G. 1955B/28.

M.V.

One M.V. D.9 429 NYB 0556 360 Q 10.
(Malta W/T 1542Z/28 via Nore W/T)
W.D. Note - Coordinates undecipherable.

Malta
Air
Raid.

Enemy air activity. Night 27th/28th 9 Italian aircraft attempted to raid the Island separately between 2100 to 0240 G.M.T. Only two located Island. 1 stick dropped on Gozo and another on Malta causing no damage or casualties. 1700/28.

Convoy
A.N. 31.

Returned Alexandria. (N.C.S.O. Alexandria 1825/28 to Admty. etc).

/CANADA.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd).

CANADA.
(French).

Your 1636 and 1640 /26. Hospital Ship CANADA arrived at Beyrout 27/5 or possibly 26/5 but did not call at Haifa. E.T.L. Beyrout 29/5 or 30/5. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1825/28)

Suez Canal.

Situation report. Following Merchant Ship movements carried out today. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1901C/28).

Enemy Units Messina.
Attack on convoy, 27/5.

Further my I 341, 28/5 Maryland R/C Messina and approaches sighted at 1340 G.M.T. 3 M.Vs 8 to 10,000 tons escorted by 3 destroyers 36.20 N. 11. 50 E. course 030° 12 knots. Same time 3 Cruisers 36.20 N. 12.00 E. course 180° 20 knots. Messina harbour 16.30, 3 cruisers 3 possibly more destroyers, 2 M/Vs 3,000 tons and some smaller vessels. Ref. my I.338, 27/5 photos taken by Blenheims of 10,000 ton M.V. attacked and left down by stern reveal decks heavily packed with M/T. (H.Q. Malta, 1915/28).

Air Recon. Sicily.

In lieu of reconnaissance given in my A. -884 27/5 intend two Maryland leave 133 B daily until further order searching belt 120 miles wide centre line 060° Malta to Greek Coast, as this appears to give better results. (H.Q. Malta, 1920/28 to C. in C. Med).

PERSEUS.

Cancel my 1931C/24. Return patrol area given in Memo. S.O. 14 para 3. (Capt. S.1. 2011C/28 to PERSEUS).

Enemy Units.

Aircraft R/C 28/5 1540B, 3 Cruisers 036° 20' 012° 00' 180° 20 knots; 1820B, 3 cruisers 3 destroyers 2 small Merchant ships Messina. (Cdr.. S.1. 2102B/28 to UNIQUE, UPRIGHT).

FLORIDA II.
(Italian).

Loaded with phosphates is expected to leave Sfax tonight 28/5. (V.A. Malta, 2130B/28 to UTMOST, UNIQUE).

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

Crete.

Operational Summary No. 352 up to 1200 hours 28/5/41. Maryland R/C in early morning reported 3 H.M. Ships being heavily bombed by enemy between Crete and Scarpanto. No coastal shipping at sea between Suda Bay and Sitia Bay, and in area 30 miles north of Crete. 5 medium ships outside breakwater Heraklion. During morning 16 enemy troop carriers dropped stores 6 miles S.E. Heraklion and seaplanes landed troops Suda Bay.

Benghazi bombed.

Night May 26/27. Two Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour starting fires at base of Cathedral Mole which demolished one large building.

FORMIDABLE.

Day 27/5. One Ju. 88 intercepted and damaged by patrol of 3 Hurricanes engaged in protection FORMIDABLE en route to Alexandria after damage to flight deck by dive-bombing. A Hurricane located 3 lifeboats containing survivors of bombed British trawler off Ras Uenna.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1136/28).

Communications.

Crete communication at 1200/28. MAY has closed down but may set watch again occasionally on 4205 k.c's per second. At present holding A cypher only. MAY. 2 and 3 are still on 4205 kcs. per second. Both have Syko only with V Card. T cards are used by R.A.F. A secure line exists from Alexandria to Candia by cable in plain language. (C. in C. Med., 1211C/28 to Med. Fleet).

Enemy Units.

P.C. and S. of enemy (1 cruiser 3 destroyers, 3 merchant vessels) are YBNG 2540 030° 6 knots. (Malta via Nore W/T 1440/28 to Whitehall W.T). W.D. Note - YB = 11° E. long. N.G. = 36° N. lat. not clear whether numerals have been transposed in the same way.

/GLOUCESTER.....

War Diary:

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd).

GLOUCESTER
FIJI
ammunition.

Your 1657B/26. This was considered and rejected for following reasons. Primary function of FIJI and GLOUCESTER was to destroy seaborne expedition to Crete and there was definite possibility of intervention by enemy fleet. (C. in C. Med., 1744/28 to Admty.)

AJAX
damaged.

AJAX hit, has internal fire but carrying on (C.S.7 (via Nore W/T) 2016/28). AJAX returning Alexandria passing Kaso 2300. 28 knots. (C.S.7, 2153/28 to C. in C. Med.).

C.S.7
air attacks.

Following has been read. A good many attacks -Should like fighters at dawn Kaso. (C.S.7 1957C/28). Expect escort of 2 Fulmars from 1130/29. -(R.A.(A) Med. 2131/28 to C.S.7).

Your 1957C/28. Fighter protection during daylight at 0530/29 in Kaso Straits. Fulmars will take over about 150 miles from Alexandria. Glen Martins Blenheims or Hurricanes. (C. in C. Med. 2221C/28 to C.S.7).

Fighter protection may be expected at daylight/29 approx. position 110° Gavdo 63 miles Blenheims Glen Martins or Hurricanes (C. in C. Med., 2223C/28 to Capt. D.7).

Losses.

Re replacement. (1st S.L., 2356B/28 to C. in C. Med) See Mediterranean.Volume.

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U.S. 11
tankers.

A.M. 1034/25. Similar Water arrangements will be necessary. Fuel could be supplied with only one additional tanker, assume oiler APPLELEAF to be available as there is not so much need for haste on return voyage. (C. in C. E.I. 0958Z/28 to Admty.)

COLOMBO.

To leave Mombasa p.m./29 and carry out following programme: 30/5 a.m. arrive Dar-Es-Salaam, p.m. leave. 31/5 a.m. arrive Lindi, p.m. leave. 1/6 p.m. arrive Mombasa. (C. in C. E.I. 1236Z/28 to COLOMBO).

Kites for
A.M.C's.

Your 1536Z/24. Kites are approved for A.M.Cs. -Fitting in other warships depends on their employment but kites are not recommended for destroyers. No objection is seen to fitting in A.M.Cs or otherwarships in your Command if their employment is considered to justify doing so. (D.T.S.D. 2236B/28 to C. in C.E.1).

China.

LINOIS.
GOUVERNEUR GENERAL
MAURICE LONG.
(French.)

Following is extract from Fairmiss telegram from Saigon T.O.O. 0907Z/25. Departure 24/5 LINOIS for Haiphong. 25/5 GOUVERNEUR GENERAL MAURICE LONG Macao. (M. of W.T. No T.O.O./28)

KINDIA.
(French).

Extract from A Fairmiss telegram from Saigon T.O.O. 0810Z/28/5/41. Arrival 27/5 KINDIA French Ship. (M. of W.T. No T.O.O./28)

LIVERPOOL.

Manila departure 0710/25 LIVERPOOL for Honolulu. Route San Bernardino thence Great Circle. Speed 14 knots. (S.O.I. Singapore, 1109Z/28 to Admty.)

War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.MALAYA.

Your 2107/15/4. Is it intended that MALAYA shall leave the U.S. without midshipmen? All have now left. Ship completes on 1/7. 1629/27. (B.A.R.M. 0926/28 to Admty.)

QUITO.
BOGOTA.
RHAKOTIS.
FRANKFURT.

C.A.F.O. 422/40 QUITO and BOGOTA sailed from Coquimbo 1100Z/17. RHAKOTIS sailed from Antofagasta 2100Z/17. FRANKFURT sailed from Talcahuano 2055Z/17. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1008Q/28 to C. in C. S.A., R.A.S.A.D., C.O.I.S. Singapore).

REPULSE.

Your 2330Z/27. Return to harbour and complete to full stowage. Despatch is necessary. (V.C.N.S. 1012B/28 to REPULSE).
Has oiler TEAKWOOD been diverted to comply with Admty. 1012B/28 and what is her E.T.A. at Concepcion? If desired ROYALITE can replenish from TEAKWOOD. Report stocks remaining in oilers after each fuelling. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1112B/28 to N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F).
A.M. 1012B/28. Admiralty appreciation is that EUGEN will operate on normal H.X. route in immediate future. This route lies along:-
42° N. 52° W. 44° N. 47° W. 55° N. 41° W. 61° N. 30° W.
2. REPULSE is to escort H.X. 129, as far as 30° W.
3. H.X. 129 and B.H.X. portion will join in position DD 42° 32' N. 51° 48' W. at 1200 G.M.T./30. Convoy will then pass through position R 43° 00' N. 39° 00' W. position S 52° 30' N. 26° 30' W. position T 56° 20' N. 13° 00' W.
4. In the light of your knowledge of arrival of oilers you should decide whether to return to Newfoundland to fuel first. (D.O.D.(H) 1333B/28 to REPULSE amended 1608/B/28).
REPULSE returned to Concepcion Bay, Newfoundland 1715Z today to await arrival of TEAKWOOD. (N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F. 1812Z/28).

/Your.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

REPULSE.
(contd).

Your 1112B/28. No news of TEAKWOOD beyond 1739Q/24 from C. in C.A.W.I. ROYALITE had sailed for Halifax prior to receipt of your message. ROYALITE emptied by REPULSE. No stock of Admiralty fuel here until TEAKWOOD arrives. (N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F., 1907Z/28 to Admty.)

Have 50% oil remaining. No oil here and no certain prospect. Am proceeding now to Halifax to fuel. E.T.A. 0200B/30. This will inevitably make REPULSE about 30 hours late at junction in your 1333B/28. If oiler arrived here in next 12 hours intend to return to fuel Conception Bay. (REPULSE 1935Z/28 to Admty.) Cancelled see 0700Z/29.

SOUTHERN
PRINCE.
BRITANNIC.
RAMILLIES.

Your 1330Z/27. From important information SOUTHERN PRINCE should be in company with BRITANNIC and both should be following route given in my 1737P/22 at a S. of A. of 13 knots. If not met, return to Halifax following this route in vicinity estimated position these ships. (R.A.3, 1021P/28 to RAMILLIES).

C. in C.
to visit
Halifax.

In view of your 1939B/23. Intend to transfer my flag to PRINCE DAVID p.m./29 and carry out following programme. Leave Bermuda 29/5 St. Johns N.F. 1/6 3/6, Halifax 4/6 9/6, Bermuda 11/6. Have consulted C.N.S. Canada and intend to visit him at Ottawa from Halifax. (C. in C.A.W.I. 1021Q/28 to Admty).

Dakar
Intelligence.

Following from Navy Dept. From U.S. Consul Dakar 23/5. Two large submarines have arrived making a total of ten submarines in port. Other intelligence. (N.A. Washington 1121/28 to Admty.)

/Air.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd).

Air
Searches.

My 0235Z/27. 193 parallel track search completed. Visibility good to within 80 miles of Greenland then zero. Nothing reported. (b) Sector search completed. Visibility first half poor outer half maximum. Sighted one freighter, (details) 053° 48' N 45° 52' W. course 210° at 1136 G.M.T. 5 Digby aircraft will search area airport to 057° 12' N. 046° 00' W. to 047° 50' N. 040° 36' W. to airport 28/5. (C.O.A.C. Halifax, 1313Z/28 to Admty.).
My 1313Z/28 Sighting 1005Z/28 freighter * HANZ GEORGE Danish Flag 050° 52' N. 05° (50°) 23' W. course 360° 11 knots. At 1450 G.M.T. American Freighter 4000 tons, 054° 53' N. 049° 50' W. course 250° 12 knots. Search only half completed owing to weather. (C.O.A.C. Halifax, 2127Z/28 to Admty.).

** Not identified*

CHURCHILL.
BURNHAM.

Amend my 1855B/27 to read "To escort HX 130" (C. in C. W.A., 1522B/28 to N.O.I.C. St. Johns N.F).

THUNDERBOLT.

Leave patrol now and return to Halifax through 041° 35' N. 051° 40' W. and 042° 35' N. 060° 00' W. T.B.R. arranged 20 miles either side of your route. (F.O. 3 B.S. 1533P/28 to THUNDERBOLT).

Seizure of
WINNIPEG
(Vichy).

Following from Navy Dept. From U.S. Naval Observer Martinique 27/5. Re seizure of WINNIPEG, Adm. Robert states he has no intention of taking any retaliatory action and again voices his adherence to all previous agreements. He objects to violation of neutrality zone and considers that U.S. should intervene in this instance since he has held steadfastly to his engagements. (N.A. Washington 1621/28 to Admty.)

/Patrol.....

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd).

Patrol
areas.

My 1701B/28.* Request report when LADY SOMERS will be sailed. Cancel F.O.C.N.P. 1246B/18. LADY SOMERS should be sailed for A.1. (D.O.D. (F) 1720B/28 to B.S.5).
* Alteration of patrol areas.

Action
Survivors.

Your 1458B/28. (re sighting of lights possibly from boats containing survivors of recent operations) Regret no action taken as I had no ship I was able to divert. (F.O. 3 B.S., 1736B/28 to Admty.)

PRINZ EUGEN.
H.X. Convoys.

Admty. appreciation is that PRINZ EUGEN will operate on normal H.X. convoy route in immediate future. REPULSE has orders to afford protection to HX. 129. SUFFOLK, as soon as she has completed her present operation, is proceeding to Concepcion Bay for fuel and will then operate on H.X. convoy route. U.S.A. have been asked to provide air and surface reconnaissance in this area. Requested you will assist with air R/C, consulting and co-ordinating with U.S. Authorities as necessary. (V.C.N.S. 1915B/28 to C.N.S. Ottawa).

BRITANNIC.

My 1915B/28. Request you will if possible cover BRITANNIC with air R/C. (D.O.D.(H) 1945B/28 to C.N.S. Ottawa).

Air
Reconnaissance.

Admty 1915B/28. R.C.A.F. will provide as much air R/C as possible but co-ordination with U.S. aircraft is difficult as no common codes or cyphers are held at present nor are R.C.A.F. advised of projected movements of U.S. aircraft. Situation is similar to the naval difficulties referred to in my 1044Z/15 and your reply 1126B/19. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2036Z/28 to Admty.).

/Newfoundland.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.28.5.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. (contd).Newfoundland
Force.

A.M. 1959B/25. The escort forces based on St. John's N.F. will be known as the Newfoundland Force. C. in C.W.A. is authorised to communicate direct with O.C. this force. (V.C.N.S. 2522B/28 to C. in C.W.A. C.N.S. Ottawa, etc).

War Diary.28.5.41.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.S/M's Reported. Contd.

0430. U/Boat reported in $035^{\circ} 30' N.$, $010^{\circ} 16' W.$,
0430, course E., 12 knots.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1119B/28, to oiler CAIRNDALE.)
0756. By D/F at 0756Z/28 enemy U/Boat was within
40 miles of $48^{\circ} 30' N.$, $14^{\circ} 30' W.$
(D.D.I.C. 1140B/28.)
0920. By D/F at 0920 G.M.T. Italian U-Boat in
 $46^{\circ} N.$, $13^{\circ} W.$ Unreliable fix. Homeward
bound. (?D.D.I.C., 1206B/28.)
Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1503B/28.)
1850. Sighted U/B on surface in $36^{\circ} 58' N.$, 10°
 $48' W.$, at 1850z/28.
(SEVERN, 1850 z/28th May, to Admt.,
F.O.C.N.A., 2340A/28, to SCARBOROUGH.)
0934. Confirming telephone message. At 0934
1147. G.M.T. U/B in vicinity of $48^{\circ} N.$, $16^{\circ} W.$
At 1147 G.M.T. U/B in vicinity of $48^{\circ} N.$,
 $16^{\circ} W.$
(D.D.I.C. 1941B/28, to H.Q.C.C.)
2047. D/F Bearing of Italian S/M at 2047 270°
Class 2 from Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2301/28, to N.A. Stn.)

S/m's Attacked.By VERBENA.
21/5.

Preliminary investigation indicates VERBENA
destroyed U Boat of BATIRAY Class attacked
on 21/5 in $058^{\circ} 55' N.$, $039^{\circ} 30' W.$ U
Boat appeared to have thorough knowledge of
anti-ascic tactics.
(Cdr. D.12, 2116Z/28, to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.

28.5.1941.
Wednesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

BRITISH
GRENADIER.
(torpedoed
22/5.)

Now presumed sunk. All crew safe.
(D.S.631, 28/5.)

BRITISH
SECURITY.
(torpedoed
20/5.)

NORTHERN WAVE reports BRITISH SECURITY in 057° 14' N., 039° 23' W., at 2100 G.M.T./23. Badly holed and superstructure burnt out but considered good chance of salvage. Was drifting eastwards at 1 knot. Trawler TENACITY escorted by BUTTERMERE at 0100Z/28.
(F.O.I.C. Iceland, 1024/28, to Admty., etc.)

RODNEY STAR
(torpedoed
16/5.)

Following from War Dept., From Dakar 22/5. 18 of crew of ? RODNEY STAR torpedoed en route Santos to Freetown 16/5 have been landed Dakar. (N.A. Washington, 1634/28, to Admty.)

JONATHAN HOLT.
(torpedoed
24/2.)

Your 1403/25/2. On return to Harbour report if anything further is known regarding identity of unknown ship and Number of Survivors rescued by her from JONATHAN HOLT.
(C. in C. W.A., 1701B/28, to PETUNIA.)

S/M's Reported.

0845.

Coastguard at Tol Peden reports submarine on surface bearing 225° six miles course 302° at 0845.
(C. in C. Plymouth 0920/28, to CUTTY SARK.)

1200/27.

Grade B.2 Fishing boat reports having sighted about noon/27 submarine on surface nationality unknown no markings in 32° 21' N., 16° 27' W., proceeding on an easterly course.
(Consul, Madeira, 1017/28, to Admty.)
(F.O.C.N.A., 1525A/28.)

/0430.....

Continued on p. 992.

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Home Fleet.

C. in C. H.F. in KING GEORGE with 7 destroyers arrived at Aultbea at 1233B today for fuel. C.S. 1. in NORFOLK, with RODNEY and 4 destroyers arrived in the Clyde at 0345B. VICTORIOUS arrived at the Clyde at 1327.

C.W. 36
shelled.

Shortly after midnight last night an enemy battery, probably Wissant fired about 10 rounds at C.W. 36 when estimated to be off Folkestone. No damage or casualties occurred.

S.O.S. from
EMPIRE STORM.

Cutter NORTHLAND at 2203 G.M.T. intercepted S.O.S. from S.S. EMPIRE STORM in 55° N. 39° 50' W; particulars uncertain.

M.T.B.
operation.

In low visibility M.T.B's 69, 71, 72 and 5 were despatched from Dover today to attack enemy shipping located off Gris Nez. M.T.B. 69 (S.O) broke down en route. The remainder attacked a large trawler accompanied by an R-boat. The only result of the action was that the trawler captured 3 men of M.T.B. 72 who abandoned ship thinking the M.T.B. had been mined.

Search for
enemy
supply ship.

2nd C.S. and SUFFOLK if fuel permits are to search an area in the North Atlantic for a possible enemy supply ship.

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

British Air Operations.

3 out of 14 aircraft of Bomber Command detailed to attack TIRPITZ at Kiel dropped bombs where they believed Kiel to be. Weather was very bad.

Patrols were flown off Brest throughout last night, including a special cross over patrol 240 miles west of Ushant.

Enemy Air Operations.

Two bombs which did not explode were dropped at 0810 near Finnish tanker JOSEFINA THORDEN which was anchored off the Faroes after bomb damage earlier in the month.

Trawler PLETHOS was bombed at 0720 255 miles S.S.E. of Iceland (c) and had casualties but no damage.

Convoy C.W. 36 was bombed at 0315 S.W. of Dungeness. No damage or casualties occurred.

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

Aircraft last night laid mines off Brest, St. Nazaire, Boulogne and La Pallice.

There was considerable enemy air activity over the Thames Estuary last night; mines were seen to drop and channel to Ridham Dock was closed. A.A. ships will be stationed in the Thames Estuary from p.m./30 until further notice.

Mines were detonated off Liverpool today.

The Humber was closed from 0248B to 1107B. Milford Haven was closed at 0445B and reopened with local restrictions at 1130.

North Atlantic.

Force H. returned to Gibraltar this evening.

South Atlantic.

Search for
enemy oiler.

EAGLE and DUNEDIN are to carry out an air search near 28° N. 34° 40' W. where there is information that an oiler is to await PRINZ EUGEN from p.m./2/6 onwards. SURCOUF, on patrol in the Atlantic has been ordered to patrol between 33° 54' N. 36° 0' W and 33° 54' N. 38° 0' W.

Search for
raider

CUMBERLAND en route to Freetown is to investigate a position 24° 56' S. 28° 12' W. where it is reported that a German A.M.C. is awaiting the arrival of S.S. HERMES from Rio de Janeiro.

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Western
Desert.

Tobruk was bombed 4 times today, the first raid being made by 50 JU. 87's escorted by fighters. A.A. fire destroyed 4 enemy aircraft.

Reinforcements.

Whalers COS 2, COS 3, KOS 7, KOS 8, and KOS 9 are to proceed to the Mediterranean.

See p. 999

Attack on Crete.

Enemy
strength.

C. in C.M.E. reports that up to 30,000 German troops have probably been landed in Crete, of which 90% were air borne, including infantry, guns, mortars and motor cycles. There is an unconfirmed report that German tanks have now been landed by sea. The enemy losses in specialist personnel and in aircraft have been heavy. Further enemy air borne reinforcements reached Crete today and heavy dive bombing attacks continued throughout the day. In the evening a heavy dive bombing attack was made on Sphakia.

Italian force
landed.

An Italian seaborne force is reported to have landed at the east end of the island today.

Air Operations.

8 Wellingtons last night bombed Scarpanto Aerodrome from which German and Italian aircraft are operating against Crete.

IMPERIAL
sunk.
HEREWARD.
DIDO
ORION & DECOY
damaged.

IMPERIAL was disabled last night in operations north of Crete, and was sunk by our own forces. HEReward was hit at 0650, DIDO was badly hit at 0818, ORION was twice hit during the forenoon. The bombing of our ships continued during the afternoon. *DECOY was damaged.*

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign.

S.S. TABARISTAN is reported torpedoed at
2040 G.M.T. in 6° 39' N. 15° 9' W.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

ST. ALBANS.

As ST. ALBANS has carried out very few working up practices, suggest she should return to Scapa subject to C. in C. W.A.'s approval. (R.A.D. 0200B/29).

TRINIDAD.

My 1039/1. Transfer of TRINIDAD from Devonport to Rosyth is to be deferred. (D. of D. Bath 1405B/29). *See also next page*

CLEVELAND
Channel Convoy
escorts.

Since the withdrawal of the 3 'Vee' class destroyers from Portsmouth, forces at disposal of C. in C. Portsmouth have been hardly adequate to meet his commitments.
2. It is intended that CLEVELAND should rejoin his Command as soon as reinforcements have arrived at Plymouth about end of June.
3. In the meantime request that C. in C. Nore will assist C. in C. Portsmouth in meeting the escort requirements for the Channel convoy. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1616B/29 to C. in C. Nore, Portsmouth.)

Five
Norwegian
M/S Whalers for
Mediterranean.

My 1724B/19. Request you will sail LL whalers of Group 157 consisting of GOS 2 GOS 3 KOS 7 KOS 8 and KOS 9 for the Mediterranean via the Cape as they become available. Ships may be sailed in pairs but should not proceed singly.
2. The endurance of these whalers is estimated to be 1900 miles at 10 knots. Request you will report the route adopted.
3. C's. in C. concerned requested to arrange onward route from Freetown. (D.O.D. H. 1703B/29 to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of United Kingdom.

Depot ship
at Hvalfjord.

Recent events have demonstrated urgent necessity for a depot ship at Hvalfjord. Understand present intention is to send the GREENWICH there but recommend the HECLA be sent instead, her place at Greenock being taken by the GREENWICH. Reliance on cruisers and capital ships to assist in re-victualling H.F. destroyers and convoy escort groups reduces the bigger ships' endurance while base facilities at Hvalfjord are far inferior to those at Greenock.
(C. in C. H.F., 1105B/29 to Admty).

Movements.

BANDIT
MARAUDER.

BANDIT and MARAUDER are to remain in Faeroes at half an hours notice for sea. They are to be kept complete with fuel and provisions.
(A.C.O.S. 1031/29 to N.O.I.C. Faeroes).

TRINIDAD.

My 1039/1, transfer from Devonport to Rosyth is to be deferred.
(D. of D. Bath, 1405B/29). *See previous page*

DORSETSHIRE.

DORSETSHIRE is to arrive Pierheads Tyne not later than 2230/29. If unable to do this enter Rosyth. Signal intentions and E.T.A.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1614/29 to DORSETSHIRE).
Arrive 5 - 2230 p 1001

CALIFORNIA.

There is a considerable number of service personnel awaiting passage to Halifax. Suggest that on leaving Clyde CALIFORNIA should proceed direct to Halifax instead of carrying out a curtailed patrol, if this will not interfere with your programme of patrols. 2. Request your remarks.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1955B/29 to F.O.C.N.P.)

ICARUS
ANTELOPE
ACTIVE.

Sail for Scapa a.m./30.
(R.A.D., 2350B/29).

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET. MESSAGE 2221/29th May. IN.

From H.M.S. SUFFOLK. Date 1.6.41.

Time 1222

NAVAL CYPHER (A.1.) By W/T. CORRECTION.

Addressed C. in C. Home Fleet. Rept. F.O. 1st Cruiser Sqdn.

Admiralty 0032B/28/. At 1922B 23 H.M.S. SUFFOLK in position 066 degs. 59' 024 degs. 51' course and speed 230 18 sighted BISMARCK and one cruiser bearing 020 degs. 7 miles steering 240 degs. 20 knots along Ice edge. Reported on 210, 500, 8290 and 138 kilocycles per second. No repetition no answer received on first 2 frequencies. At 2011 ship call sign A C repeated (? report) on 4740 kilocycles per sec: H.M.S. NORFOLK repeated this report at 2010 H.M.S. SUFFOLK's next report 1934(? and) at 1942 both on 138 kilocycles per sec.

(ii) Worked on to enemy quarter in mist making use of type 284 shadowing by sight and/or R.D.F. according to visibility which was very bad during the night. Made 30 reports between 1922 B 23 and 0538 B 24. See report for position etc.

(iii) Ref. 1345B 26 from C.S.1. to Admiralty. At 2031B 23 H.M.S. SUFFOLK bore 080 degs. 12 miles away German Battleship BISMARCK circling eastward to open range. No 3rd enemy ship sighted any time.

(iv) Enemy altered course once behind smoke and fired twice otherwise took no counter measures 23 May H.M.S. SUFFOLK camouflage probably effective against mist.

(v) Believe Battle cruiser obtained three hits on 24 May. After that action enemy mean course was 210 degs. until (?1300) then 180 degs. until 1805. Continued to shadow from fine on starboard quarter making 36 W/T reports between 0629B 24 and 0505B 25.

(vi) Between 1805 and 1835 enemy in mist made good 10 miles 235 degs. suspected attempt (? to waylay) H.M.S. SUFFOLK approaching from open but was frustrated by R.D.F. warning and BISMARCK's fire avoided by use of helm and smoke. Believe 3rd broadside of brief return fire commenced at type 284 range 20700 yards.

(vii) From 1840 to dusk complying with F.O.C. 1st C.S. 1823B 24 and 1937B 24 which together with enemy 1805 manoeuvres brought H.M.S. SUFFOLK on to enemy port quarter his mean course now being 180 degs. until dusk then (? 160).

(viii) At 0112B 25 closed to type 284 range to comply with F.O.C. 1st C.S. 2145B 24. H.M.S. NORFOLK and H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES followed after brushing with enemy cruiser which had hauled over to port. Reported R.D.F. contact at 0124 B 25, 0213, 0225, 0229 and 0306 plot giving enemy course and speed 160 20.

(ix) Continued zig zagging in view of light night and C. in C. Home Fleet 1453B 24. Lost contact during zig zag and before regained enemy glided away undetected. Reported at 0401B 25 that he might have doubled eastwards under our stern but already decided to search courses 160 degs. to 200 degs. first since failure to cover immediately could not subsequently be made good.

(x) At daylight continued search further westwards turning at 1115 to comply with C. in C. Home Fleet 1047 B 25.

(xi) At 1600 decided to search towards Faeroes and to provide cover if necessary H.M.S. VICTORIOUS.

(xii)/.....

- 2 -

- (xii) Turned westward at 1158B 26 on receipt of Admiralty's 1015B 26.
- (xiii) No (corrupt group) or R.D.F. interference experienced.
- (xiv) A large British aircraft mis-led type 284 while range-finding during action a.m. 24 giving close echo by approaching ship from enemy without I F F.
- (xv) Maximum type 284 range 22000 yards on cruiser 26000 on battleship. Bearings to half a degree accuracy obtained by taking (corrupt group) meaning cut off received from (?contact).

2221/29.

/ Reports called for on recent operations (BISMARCK)

* Might be 1700.

1st Lord.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.T.S.D.

Duty Captain.

D.D.I.C.

D.F.I. (4)

D. of P. (2)

D.S.D.

W.D.

I.P.

Advance copies sent D.S.O.
D.S.D.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search
for BISMARCK.
(return from.)Arrived Clyde 0255 F.O.C. 1st C.S. NORFOLK,
RODNEY, MAORI, SIKH, LEGION, COLUMBIA.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0345B/29).Arrival of C. in C. H.F. in KING GEORGE V,
SOMALI, ESKIMO, PUNJABI, COSSACK, JUPITER,
NESTOR, LANCE in company.

(N.O.I.C. Aultbea., 1233B/29).

Fuelled and sailed INGLEFIELD, LANCE,
LEGION, SOMALI, PUNJABI, NESTOR, 1200/28th.
ESKIMO 1215/28th.

(N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1315B/29).

My 1712 on time. Amended list of German
prisoners four officers 81 men, includes four
cot cases. Request you will arrange removal
of prisoners on arrival.(DORSETSHIRE 2030B/29 to N.O.I.C. Newcastle
-on-Tyne).Request report by signal whether interference
to R.D.F. was experienced during action with
BISMARCK and if so what type of sets were
involved.2. Action with SUFFOLK will be taken later.
(D.S.D. 2216B/29 to C. in C. H.F., C.S.1).Report by
SUFFOLK
on the action.

SUFFOLK 2221/29. See Lion Copy.

DORSETSHIRE arrived.
(N.O.I.C. Tyne 2237/29).M.L. patrol.Intend M.L.'s 122, 233 and 213 to leave
Portland at 2230/29 and carry out anti-E
boat patrol to southward of convoy route
between 3° W and 180 Portland Bill 5 miles
to cover passage of vessels vide N.C.S.O.
Dartmouth's 1853/28. (Passage of LUXOR & ship
No. 3000 escorted by H.M.S. BLENCATHRA.)
M.L.'s return to Weymouth after S C O T O L.
D. and E Patrols will not be established.
(F.O.I.C. Portland 1147/29).

/C.W. 36.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. (contd).C.W. 36
shelled and
bombed.

Between 0018 and 0030 enemy battery probably ~~WISSE~~ fired about ten rounds at C.W. 36 when estimated position off Folkestone. At 0315 unknown number of bombs dropped in aircraft attack. No damage or casualties reported.

(V.A. Dover, 1211B/29) See also Enemy Air Operations.

M.T.B.
Operation.

In low visibility at 0850/29 M.T.B.'s 69, 71, 72 and 5 were despatched to attack enemy shipping located off Gris Nez. M.T.B. 69 with S.O. on board broke down en route and attack was made by remaining 3 boats on a large trawler accompanied by an R-Boat. 4 Torpedoes fired without result. M.T.B. 72 engines were temporarily put out of action when her torpedo seems to have exploded on the bottom and C.O. thinking he had been mined prepared to scuttle his boat. Later engines were got going but meanwhile 3 seamen had abandoned ship in Carley float. Owing to approach and attack by trawler M.T.B. 72 manoeuvred to fire second torpedo which missed and the Carley float with the 3 men were captured by the trawler.

A full enquiry will be held as soon as possible (V.A. Dover 1314B/29).

Search for
Supply
Ship.

If sufficient fuel remains you should proceed to search an area bounded by:-

Long. 46° - 48° W.

Lat. 57° - 59° N.

for enemy supply ship. After searching this area proceed to Concepcion Bay.

2. If fuel does not permit this course of action you should proceed now at best speed to Concepcion Bay. The 2nd C.S. (AURORA and ARETHUSA) is proceeding from Iceland to undertake the above duty if necessary.

3. You should report by wireless, therefore, when approaching Concepcion Bay, action taken.

4. There are strong indications that submarines may be in the vicinity.

(V.C.N.S. 1947/B/29 to SUFFOLK).

/Proceed as soon as.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
Supply ship.
(contd).

Proceed as soon as possible with the 2nd C.S. to search an area bounded by:

Long. 46° - 48° W.

Lat. 57° - 59° N.

for possible enemy supply ship.

2. SUFFOLK has similar orders, but it is doubtful whether her fuel will permit her to undertake the operation.

3. There are strong indications that submarines may be operating near the area. (V.C.N.S. 1948B/29 to R.A. 2nd C.S.)

Orders to
SEALION.

Proceed to 046° 56' N 003° 08' W and in that position keep special sharp look out to South westward from 0400 onward.

Reference intelligence summary part 3 section 13. (F.O.(S) 2029B/29 to SEALION).

Resume normal patrol at 0800B/30th.

(F.O.S. 2204B/29 to STURGEON, SEALION).

My 2029B/29. If you cannot get there till 0600B/30 it is still worth a try. Do not approach within 20 miles of STURGEON's position as given in my 2203B 29th.

(F.O.S. 2234B/29 to SEALION).

Orders to
STURGEON.

My 2029B to SEALION. If you can get there by 0200B/30 go to 046° 44' N, 003° 48' W and keep very sharp look out to South Westward.

(F.O.(S) 2203B/29 to STURGEON).

U.S.A. Operations.

4 American P.B.Y's carrying out R/C of Scoresby Fiord and King Oscar Fiord areas about 0600 tomorrow May 31. U.S. Destroyer BROOME leaves 2000 for W/T communication a position due North of North Cape as far ice permits. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1303/29 (sic) to C. in C. H.F.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Operations.Escort for
Home Fleet.

Owing to weather conditions it is unlikely that air escort can be provided between first daylight and arrival at Aultbea.
(C. in C. W.A. 0127B/29 to C. in C. H.F.) 730. Your 1547B/29. Expect A/S Air escort of one Hudson from 15 Group from 0600B/30. (C. in C. W.A., 1252B/30 to C. in C. H.F.) KING GEORGE V and 9 Destroyers are remaining in Loch Ewe owing to visibility conditions in Pentland Firth, and will sail 0600B tomorrow. Speed of advance 20 knots. Request fighter protection while at Loch Ewe and on passage. Request A/S air escort on passage code word ~~SIBIK~~ "Shack".
(C. in C. H.F., 1547B/29).

Fighter
protection
for
DORSETSHIRE.

Your 2121/28 and my 0150B/29. Fighter protection has been asked for from daylight/29 till arrival assuming your speed 25 knots. Code word ~~RIVER~~. Report if speed is not correct.
(D.O.D. (H) 0151B/29 to DORSETSHIRE).

R/C's

Owing to weather conditions it is extremely improbable that any reconnaissances by 18 Group A/C will be possible today Thursday (C. in C. Rosyth 1208/29 to C. in C. H.F. etc).

My 1208/29. ~~S T A N D~~ ^{"Stand"} now in operation.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1500/29).

Kiel
attacked.

Night 28/29 May.
Primary target was TIRPITZ at Kiel. 14 Whitleys were detailed but owing to 10/10 cloud, severe icing and electric storms, impossible to identify. Three aircraft attacked probably Kiel and dropped four tons of bombs.
(H.Q.B.C., 1620/29).

Survivors.

2010 48° 00' N 06° 00' W Blenheim sighted 40 or more various sizes of fishing boats passengers being transferred from sailing boats to motor boats. A/C sighted a trail of oil shape of letter U just off Lundy Isle fishing vessels hoisted French Flags and Yellow ensign.
(H.Q. 19 Group 2255/29).

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

Coastal
Convoy.

Enemy bombing convoy ^{'Bacon'} ~~BACON~~. Position 50°
50' N 0° 53' E.
(FERNIE. 0315/29).

A/C shot
down by
TARTAR.

C. in C. W.A. 2227B/28. It is confirmed
TARTAR brought one H.E. 3 Heinkel dived in
flames at 1025. Crew were not seen to bale
out. (TARTAR 0755B/29).

JOSEFINA
THORDEN.

My 1255 28 (Tanker & escort for Kirkwall) and
my 1750 28. (Recommendation that ship remains
where she is until Salvage expert takes
charge). At 0810/29 one Heinkel aircraft
dropped two bombs near Finnish Tanker which
did not explode. No other attack reported.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes 1041B/29).

Met. flight.

Enemy Aircraft has made Meteorological flight
from Trondheim this morning in a North
westerly direction extending to 69° N 05° W.
(D.D.I.C. 1123B/29 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.
F.O.I.C. Iceland (C)).

A/A ships
in Thames.

A/A ships will be stationed in Thames Estuary
from p.m./30 until further notice. Fire
will be opened on any aircraft flying below
3,000 feet unless recognised as friendly.
(C. in C. Nore 1246B/29 to H.Q.F.C.)

A/C shot
down by
CHILTERN.

R.N.O. Penzance reports:-
Report of Skipper Drake H.M.T. CHILTERN, at
2325/28 while on patrol 1-1/4 miles E. of
Lamorna cove sighted astern coming from N. one
low flying plane,. Opened fire with two
Hotchkiss that would bear at which plane
dipped nearly hitting water, on attempting to
rise again was hit with one round of 12 pounder
on which plane dived into the sea in search-
light, and saw what appeared to be two heads
in the water but on nearing them they
disappeared. Picked up German rubber dinghy
with wireless set intact.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1326/29).

/MASHONA.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity. (contd).MASHONA.Arrived TARTAR with survivors from MASHONA.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1532B/29).C.W. 36.

C.W.36. six two-gun salvos, spread for range on a line between convoy and sweepers, were fired from Frenchcoast between 0015 and 0030. 2. At 0315 a single aircraft dropped two sticks of three and nine small bombs respectively, about half a mile to starboard of convoy, S.W. of Dungeness. No damage or casualties from either shelling or bombing. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1923B/29).

Mining.Humber.Humber is closed to navigation. Enemy mine-laying. Anticipate opening 1200/29.
(F.O. Yarmouth 0248B/29).
Humber is open to navigation.
(F.O. Humber 1107B/29).Milford Haven.Port is closed owing to suspected minelaying.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0445B/29).
Port is open subject to local restrictions.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1130B/29).B.S. 63B.S.63 escort will arrive Humber 30/5. Operation to be carried out on 31/5 if practicable.
(C. in C. Nore, 1040B/29 to TEVIOT BANK).
One destroyer from those detailed for convoy cover tonight is to proceed to Humber on conclusion of convoy duties. She will be required to act as escort for B.S.63. She should proceed as far as outer Dowsing in company with E.C.26. Report name of destroyer detailed.
(C. in C. Nore 1112B/29 to D.21.)
Operation B.S.63. Intend to sail from Spurn Point at 0800/31. Laying will begin at 1315. Return North of B.S.35 and West of B.S.49 to 62 D Buoy.
(TEVIOT BANK 1141B/29).

Sheerness.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining. (contd).Sheerness.

One S.A. mine detonated 1528/28 as follows.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness 1040 /29) (Capt. M/S
Sheerness 1020/1/6).

B.S. 57

To take place night of 1/2 June.
Para one to five as in my 2304B/20.
6. Force to sail so as to take departure
from position A at 2315/1.
7. Minesweepers to sweep ahead of PLOVER
from position A until 0500 2nd.
S.O. 4 M.S. to be in general charge of the
operation PLOVER being responsible for
navigation.
10. Operation is to be cancelled if mines
are known to be cut or if for any other reason
S.O. considers it necessary.
(C. in C. Nore 1340B/29).

Liverpool.

Mine detonated 1150/29. 080° Bar L.V. 1.45
miles probably laid last night.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1638B/29).

Thames
Estuary.

There was considerable enemy activity over the
Thames Estuary during the night of 28th/29th
May. Parachute mines have been seen to drop
as follows.
(X.D.O. Sheerness, 1730/29).

Enemy Intelligence.Bordeaux.

Bordeaux now present 19 submarines in wet
docks being increased of one since 27/5
(P.R.U., Benson 1355/29).

Brest.

Brest 1915/29 Visual R/C shows both Battle-
cruisers in usual berths.
For reasons of security the results of this
daily R/C will not in future be signalled
unless a change has occurred.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 2028B/29).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects.S.S. EROS
Bombed 3/11/40.R/V with S.S. EROS in tow of tugs and provide escort to Tyne Pier Heads.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1203/29 to JAN VAN BRAKEL).S.S. EMPIRE
PELICAN.S.S. EMPIRE PELICAN stranded Lambs Head, Stronsay. Salvage vessel INFATIGABLE and Fleet Tug BUCCANEER with Chief Salvage Officer have been sent.
(A.C.O.S. 1308B/29 to Admty).
EMPIRE PELICAN now at Kirkwall, has only tank damage, no water in holds, engine room or boiler room, BERTHA is in attendance. BUCANEER and INFATIGABLE returning to Scapa.
(C.S.V.O. Lyness. 1945/29).PRINCE OF
WALES.Anticipate that repairs will exceed three weeks. Reference C.A.F.O. No. 192/41, main and secondary armament magazines are to be cleared and ship 90 per cent defuelled, both of which will be carried out in Basin. If ship arrives in time tomorrow Friday, 30th anchor B six berth and proceed to anchorage to Basin commencing 1730. De-oiling to be commenced at anchorage if possible. Report expected time of arrival May Island and your estimated draught fore and aft on arrival.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1850/29).CITY OF
BOMBAY.Harwich 29/5 departure rescue tug ST. MELLONS to assistance of CITY OF BOMBAY.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 2252B/29).Shipping and Convoys.W.S. 8X.
NORFOLK.

My 1908B/27. NORFOLK is required to provide additional escort for Convoy W.S.8 X. to vicinity of Freetown. Convoy will sail on 31/5. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1235B/29 to NORFOLK).

/RODNEY.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys. (contd).RODNEY
WINDSOR
CASTLE.

My 1735B/24. Cancel para 4. WINDSOR CASTLE will not proceed with W.S.9 A. RODNEY will be required to provide escort for WINDSOR CASTLE to Halifax before proceeding to U.S.A. She will leave Clyde on 3/6.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1250B/29 to RODNEY, etc).

W.S.9 A.

My 1235B/19 and 1735/24.
Request name of cruiser detailed for ocean escort, and sail her to arrive at Clyde for convoy conference a.m./3. Destroyers from Home Fleet mentioned in para. 6 of my 1235B/19 will not be required. Destroyers are being provided from W.A. and 4th D.F. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1259B/29 to C. in C. H.F.)
My 1235B/19 and 1735B/24. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to provide 4 Destroyers of 4th D.F. as additional escort for W.S.9 A. leaving Clyde 3/6. Subsequent movements of 4th D.F. will be decided after proposals in C. in C. Plymouth's 2201/28 have been referred to C. in C. H.F.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1305B/29 to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth).

Use of D.C.'s
by M/V's.

A.M. 2109B/28. Consider it undesirable for Merchant Ships in an escorted convoy to drop depth charges after a U boat attack by night unless U boat has been seen to dive close to a ship. Instructions in a.m. 1348/30 should prevent depth charges being dropped in these circumstances but ambiguity would be avoided if words "or night" were deleted from para. 8 (N) of a.m. 2109B/29.
(C. in C. W.A. 1903B/29 to Admty).

Vesca
Messages.

From 1/6 Admiralty will initiate all outward Vesca messages and Ministry of War Transport Intelligence Branch (Fairmiss) will discontinue sending outward Vescas altogether. Ministry's advice to their representatives abroad will be based on Admiralty estimates.
(A.C.N.S. (T) 2117B/29 to D.N.I., Melbourne, 2121B/29, to C. in C. S.A. 2122B/29 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, etc).

Fish
Carriers.

Policy as regards fishcarriers sailing between Iceland and U.K. is as follows.
(D.T.D. 2123B/29 to F.O.I.C. Iceland).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.TRUANT.

Admty. 2345B/27. I estimate that TRUANT has sufficient fuel to remain on patrol for about 23 days and her time at sea including passage will thus amount to about 37 days. TRUANT has just completed a series of arduous patrols in Mediterranean and unless urgency of her present duties requires her to remain on patrol to the limit of her fuel, I suggest that 30 days at sea should be regarded as a maximum. (F.O.S.1058B/29 to Admty.)

Blenheims.

X.118. My 1610/27. Owing to weather 10 Blenheims not expected to leave U.K. until P.M.30/5. 200 Group please pass to S.O. Force H. (Air Ministry 1415/29)

OSSAG
(German
tanker)

Departure Cartagena P.M./28.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2354A/29 to CLYDE)

South Atlantic.Enemy
Raider.

Your 1331N/28, not to Admiralty. Request bearings at 2051Z/27.5.41. (D.D.I.C. 0029B/29 to C. in C.S.A.)
Your 0029B/29, bearing 250° of unidentified message reported from Simonstown taken in conjunction with bearings from Freetown and Ascension on message reported in my 1617/26/5. (C. in C.S.A., 1145N/29 to Admty.)

LATONA.

If on receipt of this signal you have sufficient fuel to reach St. Helena, proceed round the Cape. If not return to Freetown first to fuel. Report your intentions. (1st S.L.0032B/29 to LATONA)

/NELSON, LONDON, S.L.75 ..

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

NELSON
LONDON
S.L.75.

NELSON is to proceed to join S.L.75 at 18 knots, or at a higher speed if this will leave sufficient fuel to remain with Convoy until 46° N. arriving at Scapa with 15% remaining. LONDON is to leave S.L.75 now and proceed to Bathurst to fuel and join S.L.76 as soon after it passes Bathurst as practicable. NELSON is to report her intentions now and LONDON is to report position of convoy 24 hours after leaving it. (1st S.L. 0043B/29 to NELSON, LONDON) Cancel my 0159. Your 0043B/29. Estimate to join S.L.75 on 1/6 and leave it on 6/6. Expect then to have fuel left for 3 to 4 days steaming at 18 knots and 15% left on arrival. (NELSON, 0336Z/29 to Admty.) A.T. 0043B/29 para. 2. LONDON is to proceed at best speed to Bathurst. LONDON to report earliest time she can leave Bathurst after completing with fuel. (V.C.N.S., 2252B/29 to C. in C.S.A.) Admty. 2252B/29. Proceed Bathurst at best speed report E.T.A. (C. in C.S.A., 2229N/29 to LONDON)

DUNEDIN.

Proceed to Bathurst at best speed and complete with fuel on arrival. (C.in C.S.A. 0127N/29, to DUNEDIN)
My 0127/29 report E.T.A. Bathurst.
(C.in C.S.A., 0215N/29 to DUNEDIN)

CITY OF
DURBAN.

Your 0056/19/5 and my 1923/19. Intend to sail CITY OF DURBAN 30/5 to patrol area G33 (C) and (D), H33 (A) and (B) as possible fuelling or supply area for U-boats. If ship is to stay in Freetown area request mails be diverted there. (C. in C.S.A. 0141N/29 to Admty.)

/Troop Transports

War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd.)Troop
Transports.

Your 1745/28. EMPRESS OF ASIA and THYSVILLE will not be ready of leave Capetown before 31/5 or 1/6. PRETORIA CASTLE arrived Durban 28/5 and was ordered prior to receipt of your 1755/28 to escort CAMERONIA from East London to Capetown. PRETORIA CASTLE would subsequently return to Durban escorting EMPRESS OF ASIA and THYSVILLE. CAMERONIA will embark further personnel at Capetown and sail for Freetown escorted by PRETORIA CASTLE when latter return to Capetown. CARNARVON CASTLE and CILICIA sailed from Capetown 28/5 for patrol. My 1603/28 and 2115/28 refer. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 0836Z/29 to C.in C.S.A)

KING EDWARD.

Your 1947/27 (name of ship reported overdue) British ship KING EDWARD. (S.O.I. Capetown, 1030B/29 to Admty.)

DALGOMA
"Q" Report.

Following has been read:- QQQQ DALGOMA 0130 N. 1136 W. Suspicious. (?1200/29) Tanker out of sight proceeding my P.C. and S. 2° N. 12° W. 315° 7 knots. (DALGOMA, 1340/29 to G.B.M.S.) Tanker ESTURIA position 1300 hours G.M.T. 001° 45' N. 011° 48' W. Assume message made by DALGOMA refers to me. (ESTURIA, 1525 G.M.T./29)

BERGENSFJORD.

D.S.T's 0231B/26. To be diverted to Victoria, Nigeria, to embark one battalion native troops thence Lagos to embark second battalion and bring both to Freetown. (C. in C.S.A. 1331N/29 to F.O.I.C. Simons-town)

Enemy A.M.C. 9
HERMES.

B.N.A. Buenos Aires 1917/28. CUMBERLAND is investigating this position en route to Freetown. ALCANTARA watch German ship HERMES. NEWCASTLE will cover Southern sector if available for search. (R.A.S.A.D. 1508Z/29 to ALCANTARA)

/VULCAN, ALBERT LE BORGNE ..

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd.)

VULCAIN.
ALBERT LE
BORGNE.

Overdue shipping. VULCAIN due Freetown 26/5 from Clyde 2/5, and ALBERT LE BORGNE due Bathurst 25/5 from Clyde 6/5 have not arrived. (S.O.I Freetown, 1814N/29 to Admty.)

U-Boats.

Your 1313N/26. Every effort is made to keep you informed of all submarines estimated to be operating in your area. Admty. receive certain information which for reasons of security cannot be transmitted in detail, but daily estimate of U-Boat dispositions is the best estimate available in Admty. from all sources. (A.C.N.S.(T) 1949B/29 to C. in C.S.A.)

BULOLO.

On meeting local escort you are to remain with the convoy, as no other escort is available for you. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1954B/29 to BULOLO)

Oil fuel at
Montevideo.

Future outlook oil fuel position Montevideo uncertain owing to tanker situation. H.M. ships may not be able to obtain supplies here. Further information later. (N.S.O.(I) Montevideo 2253Z/29/5 to N.S.O.(I) Freetown)

EAGLE.
VELOX.

Departures 1700N/29/5. EAGLE and VELOX in accordance with your 2329B/28/5. VELOX remaining in company to limit of endurance. (S.O.I. Freetown, 2327N/29 to Admty.)

PRIWALL
(German)

Sailing vessel, 3185 tons at Valparaiso, believed to have been turned over to Chilean Govt. (D.S.633, 30/5)

1014

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

OSSAG.
(German)

Departure evening 28/5 probably for
Marseilles. (Cartagena, T.O.O. 1105/29
via M.W.T.)

ELIZABETH
HENDRIK FISSER.
ACHAIA.

German, are about to be employed
transporting ore from Gardia. (D.S.633,
30/5) ? Gardia

HANS ARP.
(German)

Arrived at Trieste 24/5, believed with
a cargo of 4400 tons Yugoslav bauxite.
(D.S.633, 30/5)

Blenheim
Striking
Force.
Malta.

For information A.O.C. Med. informs me
that his request for additional Blen-
heims for attacks on shipping has been
approved. These attacks extremely
successful and I consider that during
the summer Blenheim striking force if
maintained at good strength is likely
to be more effective than unsupported
destroyers. Essential to keep Maryland
aircraft up to full strength to provide
all round R/C necessary now that enemy
convoys are passing both east and west
of Malta. (V.A. Malta, 1148B/29 to
C. in C. Med.)

Enemy Traffic
and
Intelligence.

C. in C. Med's 1244C/26. Information
obtained by TORBAY and TAKU not known
here. Latest intelligence is of
RORQUAL's patrol along N. coast of
Sicily March/April when H.E. indicates
heavy traffic between midnight and dawn
on route 032° and 075° from position
038° 16 N. 012° 08' E. but it now
seems probable fast convoys proceed

/direct

1015

War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.Enemy Traffic
and
Intelligence
(contd.)

direct from Naples to Marittimo. USK reported intense A/S activity in area N. of Marittimo on 25/4. UNBEATEN blank report for same area 5 days later. RORQUAL's mine fields laid as follows. No (? sailings from) N. of Cape Bon. Sightings E. of Malta indicated south-bound Tripoli convoys pass Messina during afternoon. (V.A. Malta, 1151B/29 to F.O.C.N.A.)

M.W.8.

D. of S.T.'s 1459/24. Concur in release of CLAN LAMONT, CLAN CHATTON, CLAN CAMPBELL as there is no immediate prospect of running M.W.8. (C. in C.Med., 1409C/29 to D. of S.T.)

KRAKOW.
CAMPINA.
TISZA.

(A) My 1844/21, KRAKOW and my tel. 14/5 to CAMPINA. Vessels passed to Black Sea 29/5 0200 and 0700 respectively. (B) My 1057/27. TISZA arrived Bosphorus 28/5 and will not now proceed to Aegean. (N.S.O.(I) Istanbul 1701/29 to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal.

Situation report. 11 M.V's arrived Suez from Canal. 6 arrived Port Said. Congestion at terminal point relieved and numbers transitioning now normal. Not intended to make further reports until situation changes. (S.B.N.O. Suez, 1913C/29 to Admty. etc.)

Hungarian S.S. TISZA 960 tons arrived Istanbul 1640/28 bound for Aegean. 1 Roumanian ship sailed from Chanak for Aegean Noon/27. (Capt. (S) 1 2207C/29 to PARTHIAN) *See also next page.*

/Mining in Gulf of Suez

1016

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Mining in
Gulf of Suez.

C. in C. E.I. 1400Z/21. It is not considered sufficient protection against aircraft mining in Gulf of Suez can be provided by skids.

(2) Propose that when enemy mining starts in Gulf two minesweeping group corvettes fitted for L.L. and S.A. should operate from Suez or Port Tewfik and sweep a channel out to 30 fathoms line.

(3) Until arrival of corvettes from U.K. proposed minesweeper from Meditn. should be held available for this work.

(4) Propose that anchorage at Suez be swept by skids operating in conjunction with a watch organisation. Up to four skids and tower(s) to come from E.I.

(5) Consider that after crossing 30 fathom line ships must keep to deepest water possible and that the danger from aircraft mining must be accepted.

(C. in C. Med. 2013C/29 to Admty.)

TISZA.

Hungarian S.S. TISZA 960 tons arrived at Istanbul 1640/28 bound for Aegean. One Roumanian ship sailed from Chanak for Aegean noon/27. (Capt.S.1, 2227C/29 to PARTHIAN) *See previous page.*

Malta
Aviation
Spirit Supplies.

Reply to 2339/27 (N.O.I.C. 2115B/29 to D. of S.T.)

1017

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete.

C.S.7.

Request maximum fighter protection.
(C.S.7, 0605/29 to C. in C. Med.)

HEREWARD.
bombed.

HEREWARD hit. (C.S.7, 0650/29 to
C. in C. Med.)

Fighters not assisted (?arrived) my P.C.&
S. 237° 35' N., 27° E., 14 152° 21 knots
sustained dive bombing worse.
(C.S.7, 0731/29 to C. in C. Med.)

→ DIDO
bombed.

DIDO badly hit. (C.S.7, 0818/29 to
C. in C. Med.) *See also next page*

D.7.

O.E.A.B. My position now is 318° 33' N.
27° E. 19 Miles. (Capt. D.7. 0915/29,
to C. in C. Med.)

→ ORION.
→ DIDO.
bombed.

ORION and DIDO hit. Am unable to get
into touch with fighters my P.C. and S.
034° 10' N. 027° 00' E. 150° 24 knots.
(DIDO, 0937C/29, to C. in C. Med.)
See also next page

C.S.15.

One Enemy A/C shadowing 33° 02' N.
26° 19' E. course 312° speed 18.
(C.S.15, 1009/29 to Alexandria W/T)

→ ORION.

ORION hit again my P.C. and S. 033° 35'
027° 30' 145° 25 knots. (DIDO, 1115/29
to Alexandria.)

Fighters.

Fighter aircraft should be with you as
follows, 1315 to 1445, one Beau fighter
and three Hurricanes. (C. in C. Med.
1210C/29 to C.S.15)
Fighter aircraft should be with you as
follows, 1300 to 1500, one Blenheim
three Hurricanes. (C. in C. Med.,
1212C/29 to C.S.7)

/Enemy Convoy

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

Enemy Convoy.

P.C. and S. of enemy 1 destroyer 4 merchant vessels 38. 08 N. 17.42 E. 020° 9. (A/C Duty Q. 1420Z/29 to Halfar R.A.F. Stn.)

DIDO
bombed.

Have been bombed in position 032° 20' N. 028° 13' E. (DIDO, 1501/29 to C. in C. Med.) My 1501. Conditions better. (DIDO, 1819/29 to C. in C. Med.)

See previous page

D.10
JAGUAR,
DEFENDER.

Take JAGUAR, DEFENDER under your orders. Sail when ready to join C.S.15 as soon after daylight 30th as possible. C.S.15 intends (? to) pass through position 034° 33' N. 024° 28' E. at 0600/30 and position 033° 52' N. 024° 50' E. at 0845/30 thence (?direct to) (?Alexandria) (C. in C. Med. 1513C/29 to Capt.D.10)

Fighter
Protection.

My 1218C/28 and 1513B/29 Maximum fighter protection is required from daylight/30 for force D, position as in my 1804C/29. Fulmars are to take over patrol within 150 miles of Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 1621/29 to H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 240 Group)

C.S.7.

Six Tomahawks will be over you about 1700. (C. in C. Med., 1646C/29 to C.S.7)

M.L. 1011
sunk, C.B's
on board.

Admty. 63A of 10/5 (Schedule of charges consequent on compromise of certain tables.) Whilst on passage from Suda Bay to Spakia, M.L.1011 with emergency communication staff on board was bombed and sunk in 2 fathoms off Palaiochero. Following S.P's. were on board. Two attempts made to recover these books but impossible without suitable equipment. -Request 02353 (xi) be ordered to be brought into force on 1/6. (C. in C. Med. 1933C/29 to Admty.)

From C. in C. Middle East.

Date 29.5.41.
Recd. 0400.~~1018~~CIPHER

Addressed. The War Office.

16371.

IMMEDIATE.

I/68338 cipher 28/5.

Personal Gen. Collins from Shearer.

Crete. From captured documents evident that Germans hoped to occupy Canea on first day by parachute troops alone. Thereby to paralyse civil administration and immediately jeopardise our main base at Suda Bay and prepare ground for landing air borne troops. Scale and extent of our resistance evidently came as complete surprise. Despite all German claims to contrary their losses in specialist personnel and in aircraft have been heavy. You already have details of military situation. Our failure to hold Maleme and subsequent withdrawals due entirely to unprecedented scale of dive bombing which has been continuous for seven days. Troops familiar with conditions in France and Greece agree present attack from air heaviest yet experienced. So far, up to thirty thousand German troops have probably been landed of which ninety per cent. air borne including infantry guns, mortars and motor cycles. Unconfirmed report that German tanks now landed by sea. Greeks and Cretans co-operated with great courage. British, New Zealand and Australian forces employed have fought and are fighting magnificently in spite of unrestricted bombing and no rest since invasion started. The fight put up by our men has undoubtedly set back German plans and inflicted losses he can ill afford and which will take considerable time to replace.

Iraq. Capture of Fallujah and continued successful raiding by R.A.F. combined with inadequate material support from Axis have seriously discouraged rebels. Opportune arrival Regent in Iraq with plans for constitutional Government made material contribution towards settlement. Rebel prisoners assert they were deceived by Rashid Ali whose partisans told them they were merely going on manoeuvres. They are disillusioned and dispirited and unanimously express willingness to fight against the faction who misled them.

East Africa. Events of such world importance elsewhere again tended to overshadow the really remarkable achievements of our troops in this theatre where positions of great natural strength have been captured one after the other in unbelievable climatic conditions. The Massif of Amba Alagi stands up like Rock of Gibraltar. The Duc D'Aosta, himself a resolute fighter, was apparently satisfied that he could hold on until starved out. This consolation was denied to him and his troops were fought to standstill by Indian and South African troops who made ground day after day by vigorous offensive action. With fall Amba Alagi Strada Imperiale becomes Imperial highway affording and excellent through road for communication between our East African and Sudan Commands. General feature of operations has been splendid co-operation between R.A.F. S.A.A.F. and combined British and Imperial troops. Also greatly enhanced value of patriot forces when led by British Officers and N.C.Os. In the battle of the lakes our recent achievements have been no less spectacular. Especially if prominence be given to the heavy and continuous rains during period April to September.

Sollum-Tobruk.....

Solium-Tobruk. After initial setback in Cyrenaica our advanced mechanised forces are adopting the same policy, which was so successfully applied last year. Their covering role is a vigorous offensive defensive. Constantly harassed by these activities, the Germans in the forward area have twice been obliged to advance in greatly superior strength to elbow us from our positions on the escarpment upon which our own patrols were based. On the first occasion the German advance was not only arrested but the enemy was hustled back at the opportune time. Our continued occupation of Tobruk acts as thorn in flesh of axis forces. It has been necessary to allocate a disproportionately large number of enemy troops to contain Tobruk itself.

2145/29

Advance copy sent Ops. O.D. O.I.C.

1st Ldrd

1st S.L.

4th S.L.

5th S.L.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (T)(2)

Secretary.

N.M. 1st S.L.

Naval Sec.

Ops. (4)

O.D. (5)

O.I.C. (2)

D.N.I. (4)

D.S.D. 9.

D.N. D.

D.T. D.

D. of P. (3)

M. (2)

D.C.O.

D.D.T.S.D. (C.O.)

E.P.S.

W.D.

I.P. (3)

Received by hand from War Office 1335/29 May.

/MC

1019

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

LYCABETTUS.

Greek ship LYCABETTUS left Oporto (?27th) May, believed making for U.S.A. Ship if encountered is to be sent in to British port. (C. in C.S.A. 0949Q/29 to DIOMEDE, PRINCE DAVID, S.S.T.O. Port Said. CARADOC, VAN KINSBERGEN.)

HECTOR.

My 0736/28. HECTOR is to leave patrol so as to arrive P.M./3/6 at port left on May 26/5. (C. in C.E.I. 1234Z/29 to HECTOR)

B.P.5.
ANTENOR.

My 1130/8. After leaving B.P.5 ANTENOR is to proceed to Karachi instead of Bombay. (C. in C.E.I. 1238Z/29 to ANTENOR)

OTRANTO
ratings for
U.K.

C. in C. Med. has (? 300) ratings for U.K. Only vessel available before W.S.8 if OTRANTO sailing ex Suez 31st but she must not be delayed vide D. of S.T.'s 0446B/14. In view of your 1256/11/4 can they be embarked? (P.S.T.O. Egypt, 1251C/29 to C. in C.E.I.) Your 1251/29. Regret no. Escort is necessary from Aden for a ship carrying this number of ratings. No Escort can be made available Aden until about 11/6. Request confirmation that these ratings are those referred to in C. in C. Med. 2240/24. (C. in C. E.I., 1754Z/29 to P.S.T.O. Egypt) See C. in C. Med. 0810C/30.

U.S.11

Possibility of large ships not being able to proceed to Suez. (D. of S.T., 1354B/29 to P.S.T.O. Egypt and India) See Operations Volume. Reply of S.S.T.O. India, 0710Z/3/6. See Operations Volume.

1020

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Enemy Oiler
SURCOUF
patrol.

D/F Bearings indicate supply ship, probably oiler, in position 058° 340 miles from centre position of SURCOUF's patrol as ordered in your 2232Q/24. Request you will direct her to patrol within 30 miles of this new position. (A.C.N.S.(F) 0044B/29 to C. in C.A.W.I.) Cancelled: see 2254B/29. Admty. 0044B/29. Proceed to new position (d) 146° 500 miles from position (c) given in C. in C. W.A.'s 2246B/13. Search for enemy supply ship probably oiler within 30 miles of position (d). (C. in C.A.W.I., 0729Q/29 to SURCOUF) Cancelled, see 2201Q/29. My 0729Q/29. EAGLE and DUNEDIN will be operating from 30/5 in area to which you are now proceeding. C. in C. S.A. pass to EAGLE and DUNEDIN in appropriate cypher. (C. in C.A.W.I. 0929Q/29 to SURCOUF, EAGLE) My 0044B/29 and C. in C.A.W.I. 2232Q/24 have been passed to F.O.C. North Atlantic. (D.O.D.(F) 1350B/29 to C. in C.A.W.I.etc.) Cancel My 0044B/29. Request you will direct SURCOUF to establish a patrol line between following positions 33° 54' N. 36° 00' W. and 33° 54' N. 38° 00' W. (V.C.N.S., 2254B/29 to C. in C.A.W.I.) W.D. Note.- Cancelled on 10/6, (Admty.1616B/10)

RAMILLIES.
ESKIMO.
BRITANNIC
SOUTHERN PRINCE.

Your 1021P/28. Situation as understood in RAMILLIES, ESKIMO parted company from ~~BRITANNIC~~ at 0001Z/26 in 048° 42' N. (031° ?) 12' W. speed 14 knots. At this time SOUTHERN PRINCE and one M.V. being escorted by BEDOUIN and IMPULSIVE as far as position X were 100 Miles astern speed 11 knots. Ships following route given in your 1737P/22. Am continuing on route at 15 knots in estimated vicinity of ~~BRITANNIC~~. (RAMILLIES, 0120Z/29 to F.O.3. B.S.)

/Your 0120Z/29

1021

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

RAMILLIES.
ESKIMO.
BRITANNIC ~~REDACTED~~.
SOUTHERN PRINCE.
contd.

Your 0120Z/29. BRITANNIC now arrived Halifax. (R.A.3.B.S., 1507P/29 to RAMILLIES)

WARSPITE.

Your Ukarm 305, WARSPITE can be accepted. Navy Dept. would prefer her to be taken on West coast at Bremerton U.S. Navy Yard but if this is unacceptable to Admiralty would arrange for her to be taken on the East coast. 1511/28. (B.A.R.M. 0433/29 to Admty.)

REPULSE.

Cancel my 1935/28. Have found TEAKWOOD and am returning with her to Conception Bay. Having fuelled intended to sail P.M. today to comply with your 1333/28. (REPULSE, 0700Z/29 to Admty.) Your 1935Z/28. In addition to TEAKWOOD Oiler VANJA should also arrive Conception Bay today 29th. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1110B/29 to REPULSE)

U.S.
Submarines.

Following received from U.S. Naval Authorities Washington. Approx. dates of routine submarine voyages in Atlantic. (Alusna, 0945/29, to Admty.)

WINNIPEG.

Crew totals 115 including officers. Anticipate latter will all stay Vichy. Indications of crew about 30 will sign for De Gaulle. Passengers include 3 Junior French Naval Officers enroute for Martinique to join EMILE BERTIN. Request special instructions as regards these. (N.O.I.C. Trinidad 1008Q/29 to Admty.) Reply: Head of M., 0001/4.

/Canadian Destroyers, St. John's..

1022

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

→ Canadian
Destroyers,
St. John's.

Proposals in your No.844 were put to Canadian Gov. on 24/5 and member of the staff was informed orally today that reply will indicate that Canadian Gov. should welcome suggestion that destroyer flotilla should be based on St. John's N.F. and that they would offer to take responsibility for it under R.C.N. (U.K. High Commissioner, Canada, 1234/29 to S. of S. Dominions.)

CALIFORNIA.

Carries large number of passengers for U.K. and stores for Iceland. Desirable she should be escorted to Reykjavik as soon as possible. Can this be arranged? (R.A.3 B.S. 1441P/29 to C. in C.W.A.)

ARICA.
BARFLEUR
(Vichy)

Following from Navy Dep. from U.S. Naval Observer Martinique. French vessel ~~ARICA~~ will leave Martinique 30/5 escorted by BARFLEUR in an easterly direction. Will return to Martinique 31/5 or 1/6. (N.A. Washington, 1445/29 to Admty.)

~~ARICA~~ expected to leave Martinique 30/5 escorted by BARFLEUR. If intercepted ship is to be shadowed and reported but no other action taken until escort has parted company and has been clear for at least 12 hours. (C. in C.A.W.I. 2131Q/29 to CARADOC, VAN KINSBERGEN)

→ Base at
St. John's
N.F.

Your 1940B/23 and My 1502Z/26. All requirements at St. John's N.F. outlined in Admty.1940B/23 will be provided from Canadian sources. Meantime we would appreciate assistance of tanker and store ship and also if possible depot ship until facilities are established. Increased oil fuel storage already in hand. Permanent moorings for one store ship or oiler and Trots for destroyers and Corvettes will be laid (? early) in June. Personnel for base staff will be provided from R.C.N. so far as is practicable. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1626Z/29 to Admty.)

/PRINCE DAVID

1023

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

PRINCE
DAVID.

Bermuda departure PRINCE DAVID flying flag of C. in C. A.W.I. in accordance with my 1021Q/28. (C. in C.A.W.I. 1730Q/29)

Stores,
W. Indies.

My 1558/23. Diversion of ships to Western Atlantic will lead to greater demand for provisions and stores than normally, notably Pernambuco and Trinidad and to a lesser extent at Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Thomas. To avoid possible delay to shipping bona fide suppliers should be warned confidentially of likelihood of an increased demand in future. (D.T.D. 1950B/29 to C. in C.A.W.I.)

Newfoundland
Escort Groups.

Pending arrival of further escort forces request corvettes at St. John's, N.F. be organised into two Groups and that first group be detailed to escort H.X.129 accompanying convoy to prudent limit of endurance and then returning to St. John's. Second Group will be required to escort H.X.130. (D.O.D.(H)1953B/29 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

Explosion.

Heavy explosion seen and heard 250° 20 miles from my position 42.5° N. 43.8° W. Nothing heard on wireless. (SALAMIS 2100/29 to Admty.)

ZAMZAM.

Request you will report reason S.S. ZAMZAM was issued with S.P.02272(12) contrary to instructions in A.M.S.I. (D.T.D. 2118B/29 to Consul, New York)

/IZARRA

1024

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

IZARRA.

Your 1641B/17. IZARRA arrived here 1800Z today. Request instructions as to return of armed guard. Admty. please pass to last 3 addressees. (N.O.I.C. St. John's, N.F. 2147Z/29)

SURCOUF.

Cancel my 0729Q/29. Proceed to establish patrol between following position :-
033° 54' N. 036° 00' W.
033° 54' N. 038° 00' W. C. in C. S.A.
is requested to inform EAGLE and DUNEDIN.
(C. in C.A.W.I. 2201Q/29 to SURCOUF)

Dutch Ships
to French
Ports.

Pass to ^{"Netherlands"}~~NEDSHIP~~ New York, from ^{"Netherlands"}~~NEDSHIP~~ London (begins) No Dutch ships are to call at French Antilles ports. Understand PRINS BERNHARD now at Trinidad has 700 tons fertilisers loaded at Puerto Rico for Guadeloupe. Please instruct Master and Owners accordingly. (ends)
(D.T.D. 2217B/29 to Consul, New York.)

REPULSE
Fuel at
St. John's.

(1) REPULSE oiled from TEAKWOOD today. TEAKWOOD still has 6500 tons Admiralty fuel. (N.O.I.C. St. John's, N.F. 2241Z/29 to Admty.)

1025

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

TEWKESBURY
(torpedoed 21/5.)

British, 4601 tons, bound independently from Rosario for Oban with foodstuffs, reported torpedoed at 2145/21 in 06.00 N., 24.00 W. 20 survivors picked up by American EXHIBITOR. (D.S. 633, 30/5.)

RADAMES
(torpedoed 25/5.)

Egyptian, 3575 tons, bound independently from Vizagapatam for Barry Roads, torpedoed at 1700/25 about 70 miles W. by S. of Monrovia. All crew except 1 saved and on board, H.M.S. VELOX (D.S. 633, 30/5.)

MARCONI
(torpedoed 26/5.)

21/5 WD 21/5/41
page 645

British, 7402 tons, from Manchester to River Plate in ballast, American Press report states torpedoed and sunk on 26/5 and that 39 survivors rescued by an American Coastguard cutter 270 miles S.E. of Greenland. (D.S. 633, 30/5.)

S/M's Reported.

1850/28.

Your 1850z/28. Catalina aircraft will take off at 0430/29 to search. (F.O.C.N.A. 0040B/29 to SEVERN, 0055A/29, to S.O. Force H, Capt. D.8. FEARLESS.)

2047/28.

D/F bearings at 2047/28, G.M.T. indicate Italian U/B within 40 miles of 36° N., 11° W. (D.D.I.C. 0322B/29 to ARGUS.)

0830.

Aircraft report U-Boat in position 035° 30' N., 010° 10' W., at 0830 course E., 12 knots. (F.O.C.N.A. 1115B/29 to N.A. Stn.) Estimated U/B dispositions.

ITALIAN.

(D.D.I.C. 1401B/29.)

1431.

U-Boat in position 035 30' N., 010 00' W., at 1431. (F.O.C.N.A. 1509A/29, to Admty.)

/My 1509A/29.....

1026

War Diary.29.5.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.*S/M's Reported. Contd.*Ships Attacked. Contd.1431.
Contd.

My 1509A/29 S/M was sighted on the surface by LONDON aircraft on course 290° speed 10 knots and subsequently submerged. (F.O.C.N.A., 1543A/29, to Admty., ARGUS, etc.) U-boat sighted by aircraft in position 035° 30' N., 010° 00' W., at 1431A. (F.O.C.N.A. 1541A/29, to CAIRNDALE.) Five motor launches sailed 1915 to hunt U Boat reported in position 035° 30' N., 010° 00' W., at 1531. S.O. in HICKORY. (F.O.C.N.A., 1945B/29, to FURY, FORESTER, ARGUS, FEARLESS, COREOPSIS, FLEUR DE LYS.)

1701.

Italian U-boat bearings by D/F from Gibraltar 266° first class. (F.O.C.N.A. 1701/29, to FURY, FORESTER, ARGUS, SCARBOROUGH, FLEUR DE LYS.)

1535.

882 U Boat reported by aircraft in position 050° 46' N., 006° 00' W., (?) at 1535/29 course 90° 4 knots. Reliable report. (C. in C. Plymouth; 1804/29, to Plymouth Command.)

1531.

5 M.L's sailed from Gibraltar at 1915 to hunt U Boats reported in 035° 30' N., 010° 00' W., at 1531. (F.O.C.N.A. 1949B/29. to CAIRNDALE.)

2130.

Investigate U/Boat D/F in position 224° Milford 23 miles at 2130 B. (C. in C. W.A., 2142B/29, to CAMELLIA.) Cancel my 2142B/29. (C. in C. W.A., 2159B/29.)

1027

War Diary.

29.5.1941.
Thursday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

S/M's Attacked.

1335/23.

Attacked by Beaufort A/C., returning to base from La Rochelle Bay 160 kts., co. 313 height 200 feet. When crossing Isle d'Oleron at 1335 sighted U/Boat 2 miles away 20 points to port co. 220 - 18 kts. U/Boat was on the surface and men were on deck and in conning tower. A/C circled U/Boat fired red Vereys. A/C made dive attack 800 to 500 feet releasing stick of 4 x 250 G P bombs tail fused 11 seconds delay one second intervals and firing with forward M/G. U/Boat opened fire with cannon and M/G. One bomb was seen to burst having undershot by 20 yards other bursts not seen A/C did climbing turn to 800 feet and U/Boat again fired red vereys. A/C delivered beam attack diving from 800 to 500 feet and releasing 2 bombs as before one seen to burst on either side of U/Boat missing by 20 yards. M/G fire from U/Boat ripped holes in leading edges of both wings. A/C turned again and saw that U/Boat had turned and was heading for La Rochelle. A/C delivered M/G attack from 200 feet with forward gun abeam of U/Boat. Bullets seen to hit conning tower but no casualties seen. Cannon shells from U/Boat hit A/C in observers cockpit and starboard petrol tank many M/G bullets hit wings and fuselage. A/C made for base and crash landed near Penzance. 2205/29.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.

F.O. 2 C.S. in AURORA sailed with KENYA .
at 0430 today from Iceland to search an
area in the North Atlantic for a possible
enemy supply ship.

Newfoundland
Escort
Force.

The proposed reorganisation of the Western
Approaches Escort Force necessitated by the
institution of the Newfoundland Escort Force
is given in C. in G. W.A. 1301B/30.

Enemy Air Operations.

At 0100 enemy aircraft flew over Sanday
(Orkneys). Three explosions were heard,
but no damage appears to have been caused.

S.S. EMPIRE SAILOR reported being attacked
at 2318 in 57° 6' N 10° 7' W. (P.D.)

Mining.

Mines were detonated off Sheerness.
S.S. WEST AVON was mined in the Thames
Estuary at 1402.

Mines were detonated off Yarmouth.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.Suez Canal.

Admty. 1041B/30 to C. in C. Med. refers.

Syria.

The Admiralty today sent two important messages to C. in C. Med., concerning Syria.

Alexandria.

A few mines are reported to have been dropped at Alexandria last night.

S.S. FLORIDA II
ISARCO

Three Blenheims today attacked the damaged Italian S.S. FLORIDA II and the ISARCO which was stationary near her, about 4 miles east of Sfax. Results were not seen.

Syria.

Blenheims carried out a R/C of the harbours at Latakia and Beirut today, but no unusual shipping was seen.

Hospital ships.

In view of the deliberate attacks on British Hospital Ships, the Admty today gave permission to C. in C. Med., to seize any Italian hospital ships encountered.

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign.

North
Atlantic.

R.F.A. Oiler CAIRNDALE was reported torpedoed and sunk at 0818 today in 35° 19' N 8° 33' W.

Tanker BRITISH YEOMAN (independent) was reported torpedoed at 0304 in 35° 28' N 8° 11' W, but actually she was unsuccessfully attacked at 0351/30.

S.S. EMPIRE STORM, a straggler from H.X.128 made S.O.S. this morning in 55° N 39° 50' W (about 700 miles N.E. of St. Johns N.F.)

South Atlantic.

M.V. SANGARA was believed torpedoed at anchor at Accra at 2230 G.M.T. today. S.S. EMPIRE PROTECTOR is reported to have been torpedoed at 1120 G.M.T. in approx. 5° 48' N 14° 18' W.

S.S. SILVERYEW (independent) was reported torpedoed at 0030 G.M.T. in 16° 42' N 25° 29' W.

S.S. RINDA (Norwegian) was torpedoed and sunk at 2240 G.M.T. in 6° 52' N., 15° 14' W.

1031

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Channel
Convoy
Escorts.

Admty. 1616/29. Request you will provide 2 destroyers for C.E.36. Both these destroyers and one from Nore Command will be sailed as escort for C.W. 37. Thereafter propose escort should be one destroyer from each Command, the destroyer from Nore generally remaining at Portsmouth between arrival of C.W. and sailing of next C.E. (C. in C. Nore 1026B/30 to C. in C. Portsmouth) Your 1026 B/30 Concur. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1725B/30 to C. in C. Nore.)

W.A. Escort
Forces.

My 2241B/26. Following reorganisation of escort forces is proposed. Request very early approval. (C. in C.W.A. 1301B/30 to Adty.)

Action if
Germans occupy
all France.

Add to address of my 1332b/27 "repeated F.O.C.N.A. 583". (Head of M.2025B/30)

Defence of U.K.

Invergordan.

Following received from N.O.I.C. Invergordan begins. Re provision of more efficient A/A defences. (C. in C. Rosyth 1829/30 to Adty.)

Rosyth A/A
Gun Defences.

A.293. Please transfer eight H.A.A. Guns immediately from Clyde to increase defences of Rosyth Dockyard as temporary measure. (H.Q.F.C. 2047/30 to A.A.Command)

1032

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

OSIRIS.
THRASHER for
Gibraltar.

Sail OSIRIS and THRASHER for Gibraltar on completion of working up about 14/6. (F.O.S. 1226B/30 to S.3.)

ASCANIA.

ASCANIA to leave patrol 1200/1/6 and return to Reykjavik.
2. N.O.I.C. Iceland is requested to sail ASCANIA for Halifax providing A/S escort if available. (F.O.C.N.P.1430/30)

GOS.7
KOS.10,11,12.

Request you sail GOS 7, KOS 10,11, and 12 in O.G.64 for onward routing to Freetown in compliance with Admty. 1636B/14. (C. in C.W.A. 1636B/30 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

BIRMINGHAM.

BIRMINGHAM is to return to Scapa with all convenient despatch. (C. in C. H.F. 1936B/30)

Operations.

Search for
Enemy supply
ship.

Your 1948/29. As ARETHUSA is on patrol and requires fuel am taking KENYA if ready in time, and HERMIONE if KENYA is not ready. (C.S.2. 0015B/30 to Adty.) Admty's 1948B/29. 70% fuel remaining at 2359B/29. My position is off North Cape proceeding Hval Fiord. (ARETHUSA 0017B/30 to F.O.2nd C.S.) E.T.A. 0900B. (ARETHUSA 0500B/30 to N.O.I.C. Iceland)
Cancel my 0017B/30. Am returning to Denmark Straits. Patrol in view of F.O.C. 2nd C.S. 0015B. (ARETHUSA 0711B/30 to F.O.C.2nd C.S.)
F.O.C.2nd C.S. in AURORA and KENYA sailed 0430. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1249/30)

/Search for BISMARCK

1033

War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
BISMARCK.
(return from.)

Departures C. in C.H.F. in KING GEORGE V. and COSSACK, INGLEFIELD, ZULU, ESKIMO, LANCE, NESTOR, SOMALI, JUPITER and PUNJABI. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea 0623B/30) Arrived Scapa (A.C.O.S. 1231B/30)

It has been reported that at 0300B/25 in 57° 40' N. 30° 40' W. and at 0345B/25 in 57° 26' N. 31° W. Lights as from boats, including flares, were sighted believed to be from survivors. Keep a good look out for these. (C. in C.W.A. 1344B/30 to PETUNIA)

Operation "Tracer".
TRACER.

Your 2328B/29. Will be ready to sail on 31/5. (VICTORIOUS 0955B/30 to Admty.)

PW.10 or other
Operations by
M.T.B.'s.

Weather permitting carry out orders contained in My 1502B/28 tonight. (C. in C. Nore 0957B/30 to BEEHIVE)

British Air Activity.Escorts.

A/A escort by Hudson fighter arranged from first light/30 until arrival. A/S escort by Anson A/C from 0600 until 0815 then by Hudson. (C. in C. Rosyth 0226/30 to C. in C.H.F.) Expect close A/S escort with one Catalina aircraft from 2100/30 all night. (A.C.W.A. 1901B/30 to OTTAWA)

Patrols.

Coastal R/C flight 2000/30. MMRJ COXWOLD LONDONDERRY 062° 24' N. 016° 40' W. to Reykjavik 9. (C. in C.W.A. 1643/30) A Rover patrol by 3 Beaufort A/C is being flown this evening. Object to attack enemy shipping in Skaggerak. R/C of Narvik is also being flown by a Sunderland A/C. (C. in C. Rosyth 1726/30)

1034

War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity.Orkneys.

At 0100/30. Enemy aircraft flew N.E. over Sanday. Three explosions heard but no damage. (A.C.O.S. 1100/30)

Peterhead
bombed.

Enemy aircraft dropped 2 bombs at 1820 Peterhead Harbour. North Basin slight structural damage. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen, 1840/30)

Mining.Liverpool.

One Mine detonated by S.A. in 080° Bar Light Vessel 1.4 miles. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0941/30)

Thames Estuary.

Two Magnetic Mines detonated at 2335/29 and 0350/30 as follows. (Capt.M/S. Sheerness 1000/30)

9th M/S.
Flotilla
Clearance
Sweep.

9th M/S F. 1s to be sailed as soon as possible in accordance with Admty. 2226B/28. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1041B/30.)

Yarmouth.

Two L.L. Trawlers detonated Red Mine in 052° 49' 20" N. 002° 10' 30" E. today. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1216B/30)

WESTAVON
Mined.

WESTAVON in F.S.⁵⁰ 1 was mined at about 1400 today in reported position 040° 1 point 8 miles from B.4 buoy. Ship was 13th in line and was dead astern of ship ahead. Explosion was immediately under bridge. Ship degaussed on 1/2/41 and two coils working at time. After grounding forward ship sank in about 026° 1 point 3 miles from D.4. buoy. No casualties. (C. in C. Nore. 2219B/30.)

/Convoy F.S.⁵⁰ 1

1035

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd.)

Convoy F.S. 1.501
WESTAVON
Sunk.

(British, 2842 Tons) Mined 026° 1.3 miles from B.4 buoy. Ship aground forward. Have 27 survivors. No casualties. (MEYNELL 1402/30)
Following 23 survivors of WESTAVON have been landed at Sheerness today. Following 2 naval ratings and 2 military ranks were landed. (Commodore, Sheerness 2309B/30)

Enemy Intelligence.

German Main
Units.

Positions. (D.D.I.C. 1520B/30)

M/V off
Bergen on 23/5.

MINERVE reports at 2055B/23 sighted one large northbound merchant ship in 60° 10' N. 3° 33' E. too broad on bow to enable attack to be carried out. (F.O.S. 1828B/30)

Technical.

DORSETSHIRE.
KING GEORGE V.
Turret Defects.

Before and during action with BISMARCK. Recommendations. (DORSETSHIRE 1223B/30, C. in C.H.F.1531B/30)

1036

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE STORM.

Following from Resolution Island begins. 2203 G.M.T. S.O.S. EMPIRE STORM particulars unreadable weak signals bearing impossible. Following from Cutter NORTHLAND S.O.S. EMPIRE STORM 55 N. 39.50 W. particulars uncertain. Wishes verification of ships name and call advise Officer in Charge. Ends. (OTTAWA 0116Z/30 to Adty.)

EMPIRE PELICAN.
Grounded 29/5.

My 1308/29. EMPIRE PELICAN refloated yesterday and now at Kirkwall for underwater examination. Preliminary survey indicated damage to tanks only. (A.C.O.S. 1444B/30)

EMPIRE SONG.
(Mined 9/5)

Admiralty desire to find out as much as possible about loss of S.S. EMPIRE SONG. Survivors stated to be taking passage to Avonmouth in ARUNDEL CASTLE. Request any important witnesses may be interrogated before they disperse. (Head of N.L. 1618B/30 to F.O.I.C. Cardiff)

SALADIN.

Your 1830B/30. SALADIN A/S gear out of action. Maximum speed 12 knots. Defective bulkhead valve. (SALADIN 1920B/30)

EROS.
(bombed
3/11/40)

Tugs CHAMPION and SEA GIANT towing EROS with DOLIUS in company escorted by JAN VAN BRAKEL sailed. (N.O.I.C. Leith 2100/30)

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

W.S. 8.X.

Intend sailing VICTORIOUS, NORFOLK, NEPTUNE, ESPERANCE BAY, ASSINIBOINE, and SAGUENAY, with Convoy W.S.8.X consisting DUCHESS of BEDFORD, PORT WYNDHAM and WAIWERA 2230/31 to R/V with WIVERN, VANSITTART and WILD SWAN from Londonderry in position 270° Oversay 10 miles at 0700 B/1 thence as in Admty. 1341B/23. Fighter protection code word "~~SECRET~~". (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1150B/30 to Admty.)
A.M. 1341B/23. R.A.M. requested to sail 2 destroyers of 17th Div. to escort W.S.8.X. and report names. They should R/V in position A. 360° 8 miles Altacarry at time ordered by C. in C.W.A. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1926B/30 to R.A.M.)
A.M. 1341B/23, 1235B/29 and 2328B/29 VICTORIOUS is to remain in company with convoy until in latitude 40° N. VICTORIOUS is then to proceed to Gibraltar escorted by NEPTUNE routed through 35° N. 10° W. NEPTUNE is to embark 12 Oerlikon guns for onward passage to Med., and then proceed with despatch to overtake convoy. F.O.C.N.A. requested to arrange inward A/S escort. (V.C.N.S. 2306B/30 to VICTORIOUS, NEPTUNE, F.O.C.N.A.)

H.E.D.F.
fitting.

C.S.S. 1531/20. Request you will report name of ships selected. (C. in C.W.A. 1314B/30 to F.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

W.S.9.A.

Your 1259B/29 Para.(1) BIRMINGHAM is detailed. (C. in C.H.F., 1432B/30 to Admty.)

Escort Groups.

And convoys which they are to meet. (C. in C.W.A. 2212B/30) See Lion Copy.

/H.X.125

SECRET

MESSAGE

2212B/30 May

IN

1037A.

From C. in C. Western Approaches

DATE 30.5.41.

REC'D 2247

P/L by T/P

Addressed Captain D Londonderry, Liverpool, Greenock, S.O. 1 H.S.F.
Repeated F.O. i/c Belfast, Liverpool, Greenock, N.O. i/c Oban,
Admiralty.

767 Orders for Escort Groups as allocated in my 1301B/30.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Out</u>	<u>Sail Liverpool</u>	<u>Meet</u>	<u> Rendezvous</u>
2	O G 64	4	S L 75	9
3	O B 331	6	H X 130	13
Special	O B 332	7	None	
5	O B 333	10	H G 64	15
4	None	10	S G 33	13
Special.	O B 334	11	None	
8	None	14	H X 131	17
7	O G 65	14	S L 76	19
1	O B 335	16	H X 132	23
3	O B 336	17	S G 34	23
.6	O B 337	20	H G 65	25

2. Special groups escorting O B 332 and O B 334 will consist of ships sailing to join Newfoundland Escort Force.

3. Group meeting H X 131 will be the new 8th Group based on Londonderry.

2212B/30

Advance copy sent to Ops and O D.

1st Lord
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
Secretary
Nav. Sec.
N. A. to 1st S.L.
D.N.I. (4)
C.D. (5) (for action)
Ops (4)
M. (2)
D. of P. (3)
O.I.C.
D.S.D. 9.
I.P. (3)
C.C.C.S. (Canada House)

V.D.
D.T.D. (4)
D.T.D. (M)
D.M.S.
D.M.S. (Basement)
A.H.Q.H.F.

1038

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys. (contd.)

H.X.125.

Has arrived complete under Cdr. A.S. Mackay, R.N.R. with 56 British and 11 Allied ships. Cargoes. (D.S.633, 30/5)

Kites off
N. Cornish
Coast.

A.M.992A - 1939/22/4 My 1347/16/4.
As convoys off N. Cornish coast are still suffering from air attack at night when no fighter escort is present request reconsideration of my proposal that these convoys be allowed to fly kites and balloons up to 1500 feet during dark hours when between Lands End and Hartland Point. Procedure would be similar to that in convoys near Rattray Head and so far as is known would not endanger any of our own bombers. (C. in C. Plymouth, 2259/30 to Admty.)

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

1039

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

IDA,
ATLANTA
Italian.

Left here 2300/29 fully loaded with general cargo. (Consul, Las Palmas, 0900/30 to Admty).

U/Boats.

Attacks on BRITISH YEOMAN and CAIRNDALE, etc. See U-Boat Campaign.

CLYDE
Enemy
Intelligence.

med.

Additional intelligence. In March/April indication that heavy traffic on route 035° from position L between midnight and dawn, but now probably fast convoy proceeding direct from Naples to Marettimo. Indication southbound convoy passing Messina during afternoon. (F.O.C.N.A., 0948A/30 to CLYDE).

OSSAG
(German).

Cartagena departure evening 28/5 probably for Marseilles. (S.O.(I) Gib., 0955A/30 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta).

SEVERN
REGENT
O.24.
OLYMPUS.

med.

My 1824B/27 not to Admty. SEVERN now available, intend sailing after completion for patrol 10/6 to comply with your 1244C/26. Anticipate REGENT ready to sail 7/6. O.24 is also available patrol in Western Mediterranean 7/6, her place on convoy duties being taken by OLYMPUS. Request you inform me of your G. Patrol for REGENT and O.24. (F.O.C.N.A., 1010A/30 to C. in C. Med).

SURCOUF.

Your 2254B/29. As SURCOUF is now on N.A. Station am I to pass intelligence and information to her. If so request W/T watch. (F.O.C.N.A., 1330A/30 to Admty) Reply 1948B/31

Aircraft for
Gibraltar.

X.297. Further to my X.118 29/5. Owing to weather 10 Blenheims have not yet left Thornaby. 200 Group pass to S.O. Force H. (Air Min., 1355/30, to H.Q. R.A.F., M.E.) Your X.297, 30/5. Have aircraft left? (200 Group, 2010/30 to Air Ministry.)

/Suspicious.....

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (contd).

Suspicious
Escort
Vessel.

Sighted escort vessel identity unknown modern type. Approx. 900 tons P.C. and S. 039° 00' N 009° 58' W 000° 11.
(LOCH OSKAIG. 1455B/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Movements.

Sail Destroyers toward position 035° 19' N 008° 33' W. WRESTLER 1600 at 25 knots. BIDEFORD 1700 at 13 knots, request you issue them necessary orders. At 2130 order motor launch to return to Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1541A/30 to Capt. D.8).
My 1541A/30. Amend last sentence to read: Motor Launches remain until daylight/31 if fuel permits.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1701/30 to Capt. D.8).

Air attack
on U/B

Daily Summary operational. 1 A.3. search following attack on BRITISH YEOMAN. No results Ref. summary aircraft dropped 2 bombs 25 yards ahead periscope. Sub. blown to surface but re-submerged not re-located.
(H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 1700/30 to Air Ministry).

South Atlantic.

DUNEDIN.

Cancel my 1101N/29. (N.T. in W.R.) Remain at Bathurst after fuelling further instructions follow. (C. in C. S.A., 0011N/30 to DUNEDIN).

Distress signals
from torpedoed
ships.

Your 1137B/29.
Following is correct version of my 2249N/26 All after "atmospherics bad" (begins). Propose attention of merchant ships (MY 2249N/26 part 2 final from C. in C. S.A.) be called to importance of ships in this area observing D.M.S. (2) article 84. For consideration also that ships should repeat position in words after it has been satisfactorily transmitted in figures if time permits. In one known case also position first made was that of 6 hours previous to attack.
(C. in C. S.A., 0123N/30 to Admty).

/LONDON.....

1041

War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd.)LONDON.Admty., 2252B/29. E.T.A. Bathurst 1000N/31.
Departure 1630 N/31.
(LONDON, 0136B/30 to C. in C. S.A.)INSPECTOR
BENEDETTI.Have Capt. and 13 survivors from Argentine
ship INSPECTOR BENEDETTI.
(ASTURIAS, 0303Z/30 to N.A. Buenos Aires.)VASNA
hospital
ship.Your 1133N/28. (destination) Liverpool.
(D. of S.T., 0357B/30 to C. in C.S.A.)LATONA.Arrived Freetown, will fuel and proceed for
St. Helena and Cape at 1300N/30 in accordance
with your 0032B/29.
(C. in C. S.A., 1013N/30 to Admty.)
Arriving 1530/7/6. Request 300 tons of oil
and fitters etc., to make good urgent defects.
Intend sailing 2100/9/6.
(LATONA 1040N/30 to N.O.I.C. Durban.)BENALBANACH.Your 0909B/28. BENALBANACH with particular-
ly important M.T. cargo left Freetown 26/5
for Suez via Cape. Speed 13 knots.
(D.D.O.D.(F) 1115B/30 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown.)LIBERTY GLO.Overdue Shipping. U.S.S. LIBERTY GLO
estimated due Freetown 27/5 from Lisbon
departure 18/5 has not arrived.
(S.O. (I) Freetown, 1146N/30 to Admty.)NORDERNEY
(German.)Returned to anchor after filling up with
drinking water.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1533N/30 to Admty.)AIKATERINI T.Overdue shipping. AIKATERINI T due Cape
Town 24/4 not arrived.
(S.O.(I) Cape Town, 1643B/30.

/CUMBERLAND.

MOST SECRET.

1042

30.5.1941.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

CUMBERLAND.

Abandon present operation and proceed towards Cape Verde Islands at 22 knots.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 1826B/30 to CUMBERLAND).

CILICIA
CARNARVON
CASTLE.

My 1125/27 and My 1233/28. CILICIA, CARNARVON CASTLE left Simonstown 28/5 to patrol K.l. D.C. 832 A in view of possible attack on Cape North American or Cape U.K. trade routes. Possible now one enemy unit may have moved to West and one to South.
(C. in C. S.A., 1901N/30 to R.A.S.A.D.)

U/B Report.

At 0233Z/30. (See U-Boat Campaign).

CAP
ARCONA.
(German).

My 0131/1 not to Freetown. Santos report (begins). Consul General Sao Paulo reports German Colony are expecting German ship CAP ARCONA. Press report 18/5 stated ship was ready to sail from Bordeaux for Rio de Janeiro. (Ends).
(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2141Z/30 to Admty).

WINDHUK
(German).

Following from Santos, A.2. Machinery which was landed from German WINDHUK is now being replaced.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2147Z/30 to S.A.D.)
WINDHUK obtained clearance expected to sail tonight.
(N.C.S.O. Santos, 2245Z/30 to R.A.S.A.D.)

CITY OF
DURBAN.

Departure 1245N/30 CITY OF DURBAN to operate in vicinity of S.L. 76 until about 1200/31 then to patrol as in my 0141N/29.
(C. in C. S.A., 2155 N/30.)

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

ATLAS
-(German)

Arrived Valencia 28/5.
(Valencia No T.O.O.,/30 via M.W.T.)

OTRANTO.
ratings for
U.K.

P.S.T.O. Egypt 1251C/29. This is of vital importance as these Officers and men are required most urgently at home. I have directed that these men should be embarked. (C. in C. Med., 0810C/30 to C. in C. E.I.)

UPRIGHT
UTMOST.

Leave patrol as follows to arrive Marsamxett 0730B/4. UTMOST p.m./2 through 036° 15' 012° 50'. UPRIGHT p.m./3 through 035° 51' 015° 15' and 036° 00' 014° 52'. (Cdr. S.l., 0959B/31 to UPRIGHT, UTMOST).

OTTO
LEONHARDT.
(German).

Following is a repetition of corrupt Gibraltar most immediate. OTTO LEONHARDT cleared from Malaga between midnight and 0630/30 0745. (Ends.) (Consul Malga, 1015/30 to Admty).

RAMB IV.

Following is N.O.I.C. Port Tewfik's 2245C/29 to S.B.N.O. Suez Canal area. (begins) RAMB IV has arrived as Hospital ship flying Italian colours with original Italian crew of 36 including four Officers plus British navigating party. Master under impression ship returning, the Italians immune from seizure (Ends). Request definite instructions whether (?colour) is to be removed and British flag flown. (P.S.T.O. Egypt, 1033C/30 to D. S.T.)

Suez Canal.

1st S.L. 1041B/30 to C. in C. Med., See Mediterranean Volume.

Syria.

1st S.L., 1043b/30 and V.C.N.S. 1045B/30 to C. in C. Med., See Mediterranean Volume.

/ Suez Canal.....

War Diary.

30.5.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (contd).

Suez Canal.
Mines.

Your 1730B/26 para (1) In amplification of my 1801/27 in cases of mines destroyed markings has proved good. Main disadvantage we have to contend with is that so many splashes are always reported on which we have to act. How many of these are actual mines we never know. Recent minelaying has always been accompanied by bombing and machine gunning. This and the dropping of some mines without parachute makes description of objects dropped in canal difficult to determine. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1052C/30 to Admty).

Operation "Splice."
SP-LION.

What was the average, maximum and minimum fuel remaining in each of flights referred to in para 2 and 3 of my 2120/21. (F.O. Force H., 1140/30 to V.A. Malta).

UNION.

Leave patrol along 035° 20' and through 035° 31' 014° 12'. Arriving Marsamxett 0730B/2. URGE leaves Malta p.m./1 through 035° 42' 014° 10' to Westward. (Cdr. S.I. 1230B/30 to UNION).

See also next page

Alexandria
Raid.

Air raid over Alexandria 0200 to 0330 when a small number of bombs and mines were dropped. 2 naval ratings killed and 5 injured in a shore establishment. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1251C/30 to C. in C. Med).

→ URGE.

Leaves Malta p.m./1 through 035° 45' 013° 00' for area L 035° (? 20') 011° (? 27') - 342° 30 - 70. (Cdr. S.I., 1327B/30 to UNIQUE, UTMOST.)

See also next page

Air attack
on FLORIDA II.

On information that Italian M/V FLORIDA II previously attacked and damaged by Blenheims had been towed out of Sfax Harbour, 3 Blenheims of 82 Sqn. detailed to attack and dropped 4 250 lbs GP bombs. No destroyer seen but FLORIDA II and another stationary M/V 6000 tons 60 feet away attacked 3 to 4 miles East of Sfax. No direct hits but near misses delay

/action bombs no!.....

30.5.1941.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean (contd).

Air Attack on
FLORIDA II
(contd).

action bombs no results seen. Considerable and fairly accurate opposition from FLORIDA II only. All aircraft returned. (H.Q. Malta, 1346/30).

URGE
UNION
UPHOLDER
UNBEATEN

See previous page

URGE leaves Malta p.m./1 for area L 035° 20' 011° 27' - 342° - 30 - 70. UNION arrives Malta a.m./2 UPHOLDER and UNBEATEN ready to leave about 6/6 and 8/6 respectively, latter having battery earths rectified. Patrol area not yet decided. (Cdr. s.l. 1350B/30 to Capt. S.l.)

Malta air
Raid.

C.S.R. Malta. All times G.M.T. up to 1600/30. Early morning 30/5, 5 enemy aircraft approached Malta individually 4 dropped bombs in sea north of Island. 5th aircraft dropped bombs in field causing no damage or casualties. (H.Q. Malta, 1710/30 to Air Ministry.)

BARHAM.

Your 1939C/29. Approved for BARHAM to dock at Durban. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1730B/30 to C. in C. Med).

BESSARABIA
TRANSILVANIA.

Reported Roumanian Merchant ships BESSARABIA and TRANSILVANIA will be sailing shortly for Beirut with German troops. (Capt. S.l. 1831C/30 to Greek S/M NEREUS).

Malta
Fulmars.

As requirements for Fulmars at Gibraltar as given in Air Ministry 1488/25 no longer appear necessary in view of Admty 1926/27. It is proposed to employ Fulmars Malta largely in conjunction with 830 Sqdn. until they are required elsewhere. Their employment would be (1) as long range escort to Swordfish (2) to provide crews to repair strength of Swordfish striking force. (V.A. Malta, 2009B/30 to C. in C. Med).

CANADA

French Hospital ship CANADA was sighted in 34° 35' N 29° 15' E course 250° 10 knots at 1755/30. If this ship is sighted she is to be asked to proceed to Haifa forthwith. (?Force) is not to be used. (C. in C. Med., 2236C/30 to Med Fleet).

Enemy.....

30.5.1941.

Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (contd).

Enemy
Hospital
ships,
capture.

Your 1254/26/4 and 1150/18/5. Proposal approved. Delay due to necessity of consulting Dominions who also possess hospital ships. (Head of M, Approved by Prime Minister 2243B/30 to C. in C. Med).

Enemy Aircraft
losses.

Number and type of enemy aircraft shot down by Naval forces. (C. in C. Med., 2254/C/30) See Lion Copy.

Attack on Crete.

C.S.15.

Fulmars 845 call sign F.2 patrol over you 1700 to 1830 relieved by second section call sign L C.3 from 1830 to 1945. (C. in C. Med., 1210C/30 to C.S.15).

F.B's

2 Flying boats leave Egypt for Crete E.T.D. 1700/30. (Capt. O.S. Alexandria, 1515C/30 to Med Fleet Force I).

15 C.S.
PHOEBE.

E.T.A. in PHOEBE 2200. Remainder of Force D. E.T.A. 0030/31 unless otherwise ordered. PHOEBE has on board 765 passengers including 75 walking wounded and 21 (2 corrupt groups) also 2 women. (F.O. 15 C.S. 1830C/30 to N.O.I.C. Alexandria). On arrival about 2230 PHOEBE is to disembark passengers and complete with oil fuel and ammunition with all despatch to be ready for sea by 0600. NAIAD is to provide full ammunition part. (C. in C. Med. 1845/30 to C.S.15).

Supplies by
Air.

1 Wellington dropping supplies at Fukka at approx 0400/31 local time then proceeding to Plaka Bay for same purpose. (C. in C. Med., 2309/30 to NAPIER, NIZAM).

SECRET

MESSAGE

2254C/30 May

From C. in C. Mediterranean

Date 1.6.41.

Recd. 0240

NAVAL CYPHER (D) BY CABLE

Enemy air attacks, Aegean

Addressed Admiralty Repeated S.O. Force H.

19-27-5-41

603 Your 2355 B 24th* not to S.O. Force H. Records are inevitably incomplete under the heavy scale of attacks to which force were subjected in the Aegean on 21st and 22nd May, and during the short period ships have been in harbour it is not possible fully to investigate and consolidate reports.

(ii) H L B attack by D O 215 H E 111 and J U 88's were made both independently and simultaneously with dive bombing by J U 88 and J U 87's and torpedo attacks. Unconfirmed reports of latter being carried (?out) by J U 52's dropping two torpedoes each.

(iii) New form of attack by M E 109 also experienced, horizontal or shallow dive bombing at height of few hundred feet.

Aircraft circled fleet at five miles range for about an hour and attacked at very high speed when ships' attention was liable to be distracted elsewhere. Bomb trajectory is so flat that bomb may ricochet on striking water.

(iv) H.M.S. WARSPITE and H.M.S. NAIAD hit by this horizontal bombing. H.M.S. JUNO and H.M.S. VALIANT by dive L B. H.M.S. GLOUCESTER, FIJI, KELLY, KASHMIR, GREYHOUND, FORMIDABLE, CARLISLE, NUBIAN, by dive bombing.

(v) Estimated minimum number of aircraft casualties inflicted in Cretan operations between 19th and 27th May. By gunfire 14 destroyed 11 probably destroyed 12 damaged. By fighters 4 destroyed 1 probably destroyed 3 damaged.

(vi) In addition to above SKUDD 3, SINDONIS and Tug C 307 have each shot down one aircraft at Tobruk, and H.M.S. APHIS 2 JU 87's operating off Libyan coast.

2254C/30

* Note. 2355/24/5 circulated to 1st Lord only - requested details of number & type of enemy aircraft shot down by Naval Forces.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1st Lord | E.P.S. |
| 1st S.L. | D.N.A.D. |
| 3rd S.L. | D.M.S. |
| 4th S.L. | D.M.S. Basement |
| 5th S.L. | D.T.M. |
| V.C.N.S. | D.D.T.M. |
| A.C.N.S. (F) | M. (7) |
| A.C.N.S. (H) | I.P. (3) |
| A.C.N.S. (T) (2) | W.D. |
| Nav. Sec. | |
| N.A. 1st S.L. | |
| D. of F. (3) | |
| Ops. (4) | |
| O.D. (5) | |
| D.N.I. (4) | |
| O.I.C. (2) | |
| D.S.D. 9. | |
| D. of I.D. (2) | |
| Press Div. | |

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.LEANDER.

Request you will sail LEANDER to join Med. Fleet. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0036B/30 to C. in C.E.I).

ERICA.

ERICA sailed E.T.A. Kilindini 1400Z/5. Routed in accordance with C. in C. E.I. 1110Z/18/4. (N.O.I.C. Durban, 0649Z/30 to N.O.I.C. East Africa).

Raider Intelligence.

CORNWALL's 1430/10 my 0700/11. Further interrogation of survivors gives following. (C. in C. E.I., 0820Z/30 to Admty etc).

DURBAN.

DURBAN is to leave Colombo at 1100Z/31 and proceed Penang arriving a.m./4/6. (C. in C. E.I., 1206Z/30 to DURBAN).

Abadan.

Instruction to inspector, Admiralty Fuel, in a certain contingency. (C. in C. E.I., 2058Z/30 to S.N.O. Persian Gulf). See Operations Volume.

China.T/B attacks on BISMARCK.

C. in C. F.E. asks experience gained by F.A.A. Aircraft in attack on BISMARCK. (C. in C. China, 0513Z/30 to Admty).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.SUFFOLK.

Your 1947B/29. Search of area 057° to 058° N and 044° to 050° W ordered in your 1015B/26. completed 2200B/29 60% efficiency in bad weather low visibility using type 284. Intend to sail for further search after refuelling Concepcion Bay probably p.m./31. (SUFFOLK, 0001Z/30 to Admty).

C. in C.

UKARM 339. Your 1021Q/28. In view of PRINZ EUGEN being at large it is undesirable that you should leave Bermuda at the present time. (V.C.N.S. 0150B/30 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

SALAMIS explosion.

S.S. SALAMIS reports seeing and hearing heavy explosion bearing 250° 20 miles from her position 42° 30' N 43° 48' W at 2100 G.M.T. /29. No W/T signal heard. (D.C. 0523B/30 to C. in C. A.W.I.) Heavy explosion reported at 2100Z/29 in approx. 042° 25' N 044° 10' W. Any ship in vicinity should investigate if circumstances permit. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1042Q/30 to North Atlantic Escort Force, TRUANT, TALISMAN.)

WINNIPEG. (Vichy).

Terms for recruiting crew for De Gaulle, etc. (D. of S.T., 0750B/30 to C. in C. A.W.I.) See Lion Copy. WINNIPEG French passengers report when ship ordered stop by Dutch Cruiser several sacks were thrown overboard from bridge B.2. No steps yet taken to convert Casablanca to German Naval Base.. 14/5 French battleship JEAN BART in harbour, activity on superstructure guns, and torpedo landed from her. Activity 10 submarines 1 cruiser 1 aircraft catapult ship. B.1. 2 Further refugee ships due to follow WINNIPEG. (C.C.S.O. Trinidad, 1044Q/30 to Admty). Your 0941Q/26 Hope to remove everyone in few days when examination by very small staff of security officers is (?complete). (N.O.I.C. Trinidad, 1535Q/30 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

/TRUANT.....

AWI
1048A

SECRET. MESSAGE. 0750B/30th May. OUT.

Addressed C. in C. America and West Indies, Date 30.5.41.
Repeated N.O.I.C. Trinidad.

Naval Cypher 'A One'

From D. of S.T.

French ship WINNIPEG. Immediately on arrival please endeavour to recruit crew for De Gaulle.

Reference your 1603/26 position of crew and passengers of WINNIPEG is somewhat different from that of SHEHERAZADE. As to conditions of service to be offered to passengers who are not Merchant Seamen see Colonial Office Secret Circular telegram No.20 of 6th February. Terms to be offered to crew of WINNIPEG and passengers who are Merchant Seamen, are as follows:-

- Recruits should sign declaration as in my 1623/23 May. As soon as declaration is signed.
- (1). Arrears of wages due on current French articles which have not been paid should be paid to Officers and men who sign at rate of exchange of 176.50 Francs to the Pound.
- (2). N.M.B. Rates should be paid to such Officers and men as sign and if the Captain signs the declaration he should receive rate of salary equivalent to that of Captain similar British Merchant Ship.
- (3). Recruits should be told that they may opt for Free French Naval Forces.
- (4). We have learned Vichy Government is paying bonus of 150 Francs daily to Officers and 100 Francs daily to men on their Merchant ships. We prefer not to make such payment. If crew unwilling join Allied Cause without such payment and if Vichy bonus not already paid you could agree to pay not more than £7. 10/- to Officers and £ 5 to seaman for each completed month of service or 35/- to Officers and 24/- to men for each completed week of service on current articles. Emphasising that bonus is only payable in Vichy France to which rate of exchange 176.50 Francs to the Pound is not applicable and that as from the 1st January 1941, N.M.B. rates have in effect been increased by £2. per month to every officer and man.

In recruiting attention should be drawn to advantages of service in Allied Cause, namely:-

- (a). N.M.B. Rates.
- (b). French ranks and seniority accepted as equivalent to British and usual prospects of promotion.
- (c). Admission to British schemes for sickness, invalidity, pension and unemployment insurance.
- (d). Admission to British schemes of protection against accidents in course of employment and against loss of life, limb and effects due to war risks.
- (e). Exemption from liability to British income tax.
- (f). French discipline food and wine.

As soon as possible please inform us of numbers and categories of Officers and men who undertake to serve and give similar information regarding Officers and men who refuse to serve.

Understand passengers on WINNIPEG include Sarah Rapkine and child. Former is wife of Louis Rapkine naturalised French Citizen of Canadian birth now in U.S.A. under auspices of Royal Society. Madame Rober Raynaud mother-in-law of General de Gaulle's aide de camp may also be passenger. Please give special consideration to these persons, arrange for them to proceed as soon as possible to their destination and report action taken.

1048 B

- 2 -

Madame Reynaud's relationship to General de Gaulle's aide de camp should be kept secret.

0750B/30.

For D. of S.T.

V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F).
A.C.N.S. (H).
A.C.H.S. (T). (2).
N.A. 1st S.L.
O.D. (5).
O.I.C.
D.S.D.9.
D.N.I. (4).
I.P. (3).
W.D.
M. (2).
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (4).
D.T.D. (M).
D.E.W.D. (3).
N.L.
Admiral Chalmers.
N.A. (F). 2 S.L.
D. of S.T. (2).

MMK....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. (contd).TRUANT.

Cancel A.T. 1659B/28. Establish patrol between 44° N 41° W and 41° N 44° W. (A.C.N.S. (H) 0928/30 to TRUANT).
Cancel my 1302Q/25. H.M.S. TRUANT is required for A/S test with U.S. authorities in Long Island Sound before refitting and is to arrive in daylight in 041° 09' N 071° 57' W. Acknowledge on reaching 060° W and report E.T.A. at above position.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1312Q/30).

C. in C.
A.W.I. flag.

Cancel my 1027Q/28.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 0958Q/30).

FORTH.

Present intention is that FORTH should proceed to St. John's N.F. and act as depot and repair ship, until shore facilities are satisfactory.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1136B/30 to R.A.3).

French
territory
Martinique.

Ambassador Washington telegram to F.O. 2450/29 being passed to you. British aircraft are not to fly over French territory or territorial waters. Report whether Walrus was over Fort de France on 29/5.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1201Q/30 to CARADOC).
Your 1201Q/30 to CARADOC. Albacore aircraft from this station was over Fort de France morning 29/5.
(Piarco, 1601Q/30 to C. in C. A.W.I.)
Ambassador Washington telegram to F.O. 2450/29 British R/C aircraft passed over Martinique am/29. Air R/C in this area is essential at present time and is being carried out daily by one Walrus aircraft in view of reported activity of French warships who are believed to have accumulated sufficient fuel by now for passage to African ports. I am not content to rely on U.S.A. R/C owing to time lag in passing information. Instructions have now been given that British aircraft are not to fly over French territory or territorial waters.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 2221Q/30 to Admty).

/Reports.....

MOST SECRET.

30.5.1941.

Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. (contd).Reports from
Ferry aircraft.

Arrangements have now been completed for Atlantic ferrying aircraft to report by W/T positions of any submarines sighted and on landing particulars of enemy surface vessels seen. Arrangements will come into force as from 2359/30.

(Air Ministry, 1250/30 to Admty).

French
Fishing
Schooners.

Report by Officer of REGISTAN in charge of Armed Guard in IZARRA that pro-British Master and Chief Engineer of IZARRA advise following French Fishing Schooners left Bayonne towards end of April: 3 masted ANGELUS, 3 Masted QUANCALAY, 4 Masted BAT SMELOURD (?), 3 masted DUCHATELEY. That DUCHATELEY is being paid 200,000 francs from Germany for report by W/T on movements of British Ships. These vessels are now believed to be fishing about 044° - 045° N 049° 20' - 050° 20' W. The MARTIN PECHEUR had been in company with these ships. (ends). (N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F., 1420Z/30 to Admty).

PRINCE DAVID
DIOMEDE
ALAUNIA.

Bermuda arrivals PRINCE DAVID Flying Flag of C. in. C. A.W.I. Departures DIOMEDE. Convoy BHX 130, Ocean escort ALAUNIA, returning to Halifax through position 42.45N 60.QP. (C., in C. A.W.I., 1633Q/30 to Admty etc).

IAN
TROPIC.

N.T. in W.D.
S.O.(I) Freetown 1118N/7. Yugo Slav IAN TOPIC has not arrived Baltimore. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1927Z/30).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.BRITISH YEOMAN

Following has been read:- SSSS 35.28 N
08.11 W BRITISH YEOMAN torpedoed.
(Lyness W/T, 0304/30).
SSSS 35.28N 08.11 W at 0300 G.M.T. BRITISH
YEOMAN submarine sighted being attacked.
(Gibraltar W/T T.O.R. 0351/30).
Attack unsuccessful. Ship is being escorted
to port. (D.O.R., 31/5, D.S. 634).
See also 1143/30.

S.S. TEWKESBURY.

(4,601 tons) Rosario to Oban, independent,
reported torpedoed 2145/21 in 6° N 24° W.
U.S.S. EXHIBITOR picked up 20 survivors.
(D.S. 633).

MARCONI
(torpedoed
21/5).

E.T.A. 1730. G.M.T./30 BURNHAM in company.
Have Chief Officer and (?16) survivors from
S.S. MARCONI torpedoed on 21/5, all stretcher
cases.
(CHURCHILL, 0600Z/30 to N.O.I.C. St. John's
N.F.) MARCONI had dispersed from O.B. 322.
(D.O.R. 31/5).

EMPIRE
SAILOR.

SSSS Following received from G P.K Port
Patrick Radio. 56.41N 14.59W. EMPIRE SAILOR
submarine in sight.
(Liverpool W/T 0940/30). W.D. Note -
Valentia Radio, 0948/30 gave 56.51N., 14.59W.
EMPIRE SAILOR 56.42 N 15.02 W Submarine
sighted 0940/30.
(Valentia Radio, 0943/30).
Following has been read. SSSS Unknown Station
correction 56.42N 15.02W.
(Liverpool W/T 0950/30).
Following has been read. Malin Head Radio.
Intercept 0957 G.M.T. S S S S correction
56.51N 14.59W EMPIRE SAILOR.
(Liverpool W/T, 0954/30)
Detach one Hunt Class destroyer to assistance
of EMPIRE SAILOR who reports U.Boat in 056°
05' N 015° 02' W at 1144B. Destroyer to
report name when well clear of convoy.
(C. in C. W.A., 1224B/30 to OTTAWA.)
Your 1224B, FARNDALE detailed.
(FARNDALE, 1639B/30).

/CAIRNDALE.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.→ CAIRNDALE.

Proceed to assistance of Oiler CAIRNDALE in 035° 19' N 008° 33' W.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1007/30 to Capt. D.8).

Does CAIRNDALE require a Tug?

(F.O.C.N.A., 1009/30 to FLEUR DE LYS).

→ My 1001 to Fleet Tug ST. DAY only. Proceed assistance CAIRNDALE torpedoed 035° 19' N 008° 33' W and be prepared to tow.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1013A/30 to Fleet Tug, ST. DAY).→ BRITISH YEOMAN
CAIRNDALE.

Situation 1200/30 FURY, 4 motor launches, hunting U-boat which unsuccessfully attacked BRITISH YEOMAN in position 035° 28' N 008° 11' W at 0351/30. ALOUETTE sailed 1130 to join FURY. Capt. (D) 8th D.F. COREOPSIS, FLEUR DE LYS, hunting U-boat which sank oiler CAIRNDALE in 035° 19' N 008° 33' W at 0818/30, FORESTER joining. IMPERIALIST sailed at 0945 AZALEA, WOODRUFF sailed 1300 all to join Capt. (D) 8. Capt. (D) 8is to take charge of hunt. FORESIGHT escorting ARGUS sighted U-boat on surface at 0600/30 036° 03' N 010° 30' W (5) Motor launch 134 escorting BRITISH YEOMAN to Gibraltar, Fleet Tug ST. DAY returning to Harbour. (6) One Catalina aircraft leaves 1200 to patrol area west of Gibraltar until dark. Remaining aircraft return Gibraltar 1330.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1143A/30 to Gibraltar Force, Admty etc).

Corvette trawler and motor launch hunting submarine keep watch on 500 kcs. per sec. Destroyer keep watch on 500 kcs. per sec. and 348.8 kcs. per sec.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1158/30).

Believe 4 U-boats are operating between approx. 007° and 010° West.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1243A/30 to N.A. Stn).

WANGI
WANGI.

C. in C. S.A. 1354/26 from intercepted message passengers and complete crew except one fireman, landed Cape Mount Liberia 27/5. (S.O.(I) Freetown 1710N/30).

/S.S. JAPAN.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked (contd).S.S. JAPAN.

C. in C. S.A. 0947/27 intercepted message from Master Swedish JAPAN at Dakar states ship torpedoed 4/5 time or position not stated passengers and crew safe crew at Dakar.

(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1712N/30 to Admty).

LEXA.

Following has been read. SSSS LEXA torpedoed A.S.

(Freetown W/T T.O.R., 2129N/30).

S/M's Reported.

2224/29.

At 2224 G.M.T. bearing 283° class 2 from Gibraltar, Italian Submarine.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0013/30 to N.A. Stn).

0300

M.L. 3 and 4 Motor Launches proceeding to 035° 28' N 008° 11' W to hunt U-Boats. FAULKNER proceeding Gibraltar shortly.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0429A/30 to FURY, FORESIGHT, ARGUS, FLEUR DE LYS, Oiler CAIRNDALE.)

0300

Admty A.F. Position 35° 28' N. 08° 11' W. at 0300/30 G.M.T.
(D.D.I.C. 0540/30).

0600

Sighted U Boat on surface in 036° 03' N 010° 39' W. Pass to (? HICKORY).
(FORESIGHT, 0600A/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)
My 0600A. U Boat was sighted at range of approx. 4 miles and dived immediately.
(FORESIGHT, 0715A/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)

See previous page

0642.

By D/F at 0642/30 G.M.T. position of German U Boat probably homeward bound was 46° N - 47° N 6° W - 7° W.
(D.D.I.C., 0927B/30).

/Estimated U.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.30.5.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported. (cond.)Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1435B/30).

- 1736 SALADIN and LEAMINGTON proceeding to hunt for U Boat reported by aircraft in 055° 56' N 009° 28' W at 1736B.
(C. in C. W.A., 1830B/30 to SALADIN).
0233. D/F bearings at 0233Z/30 indicate U-boat within 60 miles of 012° 30' N 036° 30' W. Reliability 65%. The type message may indicate a rendezvous.
(C. in C. S.A., 1903N/30 2031N/30 to S.A. Stn)

Submarines Attacked.By FORESTER.

Attacked submarine on the surface position 180° 36° N, 10° W. 18 X 19.
(FORESTER, 0030B/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 0415A 30th. Three attacks delivered, result not seen, have lost contact. Am sweeping with (?FURY) in the vicinity 035° (?41) N 010° 00' W.
(FORESTER, 0445A/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 0413 A to M.L 3. No further contact obtained. My P.C. & S. at 0800A, 035° 41' N 010° 00' W 100° 20 knots. FURY in company.
(FORESTER, 0800A/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)

By NORTHERN CHIEF.

Investigated contact position 063° 09' N 014° 42' W.
(NORTHERN CHIEF, 1935B/30 to S.O.N. Pt.)
My 1935B/30 one attack carried out. Contact dispersed. Resumed patrol.
(NORTHERN CHIEF, 2020B/30 to S.O.T.N.P.)

By NOTTS COUNTY. In contact with Submarine on my starboard side my position 62.52N., 15.25 W.
(NOTTS COUNTY, 2315B/30).

B₂ A/C.*See North Atlantic, p. 1040*

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

4 M.G.B's left Harwich at 2057B for operations off the Belgian coast.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command carried out no operations today on account of bad weather.

Mining.

Enemy minelaying aircraft operated lastnight in Liverpool Bay and the Bristol Channel.

Mines were detonated off St. Ann's Head and cut off Falmouth today.

North Atlantic.

RENOWN will not be taken in hand for refit at present.

It appears from a corrupt signal that P.32 on passage to Gibraltar has been damaged by bombs.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.South Atlantic.

C. in C. S.A. reports that he considers it imperative to increase the A/S vessels available at Freetown.

Mediterranean.S.S. FLORIDA II
attacked.

S.S. FLORIDA II (Italian) was attacked by 3 Blenheims at 0700 whilst at anchor 4 miles outside Sfax. Three direct hits are reported.

Alexandria.

From 2300 to 2400/31 there was an air raid on Alexandria during which mines were laid south of the Great Pass. The port is open.

Evacuation of Crete.

NIZAM/

About 12,000 troops had been evacuated from Crete up to midnight tonight, with 500 military casualties from Air attack on passage. NAPIER and NIZAM have arrived at Alexandria with 1509 troops. PERTH and NAPIER have been damaged by air attack. NAPIER and NIZAM shot down one a/c and damaged 3 more. KELVIN was extensively damaged.

Some long range fighter protection was available yesterday and today for H.M. and Merchant ships evacuating troops, and several enemy aircraft were destroyed, damaged or driven off. Many fighters, failed, however, to make contact with our forces at sea.

Twelve aircraft last night attacked Maleme and Heraklion aerodromes which the enemy are using as bases for attacks on our troops in Crete. Several enemy aircraft are reported to have been destroyed or damaged.

Naval casualties during the recent operations are reported to be 100 officers and 1700 men.

VALIANT is now fit for service.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.East Indies.

The Iraq authorities today asked for and were granted an armistice.

America & West Indies.

SUFFOLK's orders have been altered (see Home Commands 29/5) and she is to search for PRINZ EUGEN. Other forces in the area are TRUANT, REPULSE and REVENGE (For dispositions see Admty. 1328B/31 to SUFFOLK).

Arrangements have now been completed for Atlantic ferrying aircraft to report by W/T positions of any S/Ms sighted and on landing particulars of enemy surface vessels seen.

U-Boat Campaign.

It is thought that U-boats may be operating in Denmark Straits and to northward of Iceland (C).

N.W.
Approaches.

S.S. GRAVELINES, a straggler from H.X. was torpedoed at 0130B in 55° N 10° W or 56° N 10° W.

South
Atlantic.

S.S. CLAN MACDOUGAL reported being torpedoed at 0226 N in 16° 50' N 25° 10' W (off Cape Verde Is.)

Owing to the increase in the number of ships calling at St. Vincent (C. Verde Is.) it is thought that enemy S/Ms will be waiting off the islands. The Admty have instructed C. in C. S.A. to arrange for ships leaving St. Vincent to be escorted from territorial waters as far out as possible. Ships are being re-routed to avoid Cape Verde Is.

War Diary

31.5.1941.
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

U-Boat Campaign

SS SIRE which left Las Palmas 25/5 for Freetown is reported to have been torpedoed at 0807 today. The position is not known.

1059

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

A/A
Protection
by
Destroyers.

In view of the bombing of ARCHANGEL who was escorted by one of the Hunt class, it is considered no Home Fleet destroyer can give adequate A/A protection to these ships full of troops.

The point of view is borne out by the recent sinking of MASHONA in company with another TRIBAL "Tribal".

When there is no "Hunt" class available at Scapa I suggest that this should be a liability of the Rosyth Escort Force. (R.A.D. 0046/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

R.A.(D)'s 0046/31. The bombing of S.S. ARCHANGEL was carried out at a time when any protection would be of the most doubtful value and it is considered that action in accordance with my 1512/28/4 is the way to avoid these attacks. Only Sloops with very moderate A/A gunfire are available for convoy escort duties North of the Forth. The Rosyth Escort Force, being already hard put to it to carry out its normal convoy escort duties, has quite inadequate numbers to cover extraneous commitments of this nature. Only very rarely can special escorts for independent sailings be provided. (C. in C. Rosyth 1319/31, to C. in C. H.F.)

Closing of
N.A. Section
at Sullom
Voe.

Your 2102B/22 May. Concur. A.C.O.S. is making necessary arrangements for Sullom Voe, but Stornoway is not now in Orkneys Command. (C. in C. H.F. 1540B/31.)

Ocean
Convoy
Escorts.

It is considered that the force referred to in your 1939B/23 / para. 2 should be amended in accordance with the numbers shown in my 1301B/30. i.e. 32 destroyers, 31 corvettes, and 9 sloops initially, plus cutters as they become available.

(2) This Force, which will be based on St. Johns, will work between Newfoundland and Iceland and will provide escort right through from the R.V. off Newfoundland as far as the R.V. with U.K. escorts off Iceland, and vice versa, as in my 2241B/26.

/There will.....

1060

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy Contd.

Ocean
Convoy
Escorts.

There will thus be no separate force based in Iceland, but the present. Intended maintenance facilities in Iceland should enable some relief to be given to St. John's by carrying out a proportion of running repairs in Iceland while escorts are waiting there for 3 or 4 days at the end of each northerly run.

(3) It is estimated that up to 16 ships initially, i.e. an average of 7 Destroyers, 7 Corvettes and 2 Sloops, will be in Harbour at St. John's at one time.
(C. in C. W.A. 1827B/31, to Adty.)

Fighter
Patrols
Trial
procedure.

Intend to adopt the following procedure suggested by 10 group for trial with Fighter Aircraft from 10 Group only. The leader of the final fighter Patrol for the day will close S.O. Escort before leaving and fire colour signal for the day. This means that aircraft approaching after this, other than aircraft whose approach has been pre-warned, may be considered hostile. F.O.I.C's Belfast and Milford Haven pass to vessels of Irish Sea Escort Force.

(C. in C. W.A. 1946B/31.)

To help surface escort to decide whether A/C near Convoy are friendly or hostile the following procedure will be carried out,
(1) When last Sortie of day of Fighter Command A/C is about to leave the Convoy the leader will indicate this by closing surface escort and firing current recognition signal.

(2) As Coastal Command A/C always signal by V/S when leaving Convoy the C. in C. will inform surface escort which will be last Sortie of these A/C.

(C. in C. Plymouth 1310/31 to TYNEDALE, etc.)

1061

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

Thorshaven
A/A Defences.

* JOSEPHINE

Your 1740/21, was presumably sent before the arrival of N.O.I.C. Faroes 1106B/21. It appears certain enemy must now realise we have no adequate AA protection at Thorshaven and it can only be a matter of time before the harbour is heavily bombed. See also N.O.I.C. Faroes 1041B/29 passed to you. * JOSEPHINE THORDEN is a valuable ship containing seven thousand tons of petrol. It is requested therefore that the question of AA defence of Thorshaven may be reopened forthwith.

(A.C.O.S. 1635B/30 to Adty.)

Your 1635B/30. Matter is being considered by Chiefs of Staff in connection with June allocation.

2. Assumption in your first sentence correct.

(D. of L.D. 2050B/31 to A.C.O.S.)

Movements.

MALVERNIAN.

MALVERNIAN is to be ordered to return to Greenock by 12/6.

(A.C.N.S.H. 1512B/31.)

Operations.

Sweep by
M.G.B.'s.
off Belgian
Coast.

Weather permitting carry out orders contained in my 1520B/28 tonight. See also p 1064 (C. in C. Nore 1107B/31 to BEEHIVE.) Departures M.G.B.'s 64, 58, 59 and 62. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2057B/31.)

/Denmark.....

1062

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations Contd.

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

HERMIONE is to proceed Hvalfiord to replace ARETHUSA on Denmark Straits patrol.

(2) ARETHUSA is to leave patrol at 1600 B/ 1/6 and return Hvalfiord.

(3) C.S. 18 in EDINBURGH is to proceed a.m./1/6 to Hvalfiord. After refuelling EDINBURGH is to replace HERMIONE on Denmark Straits patrol, as arranged by C.S.18, and HERMIONE is to return to Hvalfiord.

(C. in C. H.F. 1209B/31.)

Ships on patrol in Denmark Straits are normally to keep to eastward of a line 360° from North Cape.

(C. in C. H.F. 1211B/31.)

C. in C. H.F., 1209B/31. Intend to proceed 2200B tonight passing through 066° 30' 025' 30' at 1200 B tomorrow.

(HERMIONE 1600B/31.)

Search
for
BISMARCK.

DORSETSHIRE's 2124B/28. Survivors in MAORI admit three torpedo hits during the night. (C. in C. H.F. 1757B/31.)

British Air Activity.

Sydenham,
Belfast.

A.O.C.H.Q., R.A.F. Northern Ireland has informed me that he wishes to transfer 31 Wing which administers Sydenham Belfast from there to Long Kesh before the end of June and that in any case this Wing may move at 24 hours' notice in the event of hostilities in South Ireland. He has requested Air Ministry to establish a reduced H.Q. at Sydenham Belfast to administer 804 Squadron and the R.A.F. communication flight there. As an alternative I would suggest Navy, take over Sydenham Belfast as a Naval Air Station. No alternative accommodation for 804 Squadron exists in Northern Ireland at the present time.

(N.O.I.C. Belfast 1843P/31.)

1063

31.5.41.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

EMPIRE SAILOR
attacked.

Intercept 2320 G.M.T. from EMPIRE SAILOR
57 06 N. 10 07 W., attacked. Position
doubtful. (Liverpool. T.O.R. 0127/31.)
Intercept 2329 G.M.T. from EMPIRE SAILOR
Position O.K. Plane now made off de
G.L.V. (Liverpool 0136/31.)

Shetlands.

Aircraft identified as JU 88 came in from
W.N.W. over Sumburgh at 17-20000 feet at
1030. Sumburgh A/A fired 4 rounds.
Aircraft was heard over Lerwick at 1037
and went away N.E.
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick 1141/31.)

Convoy "Frank Two."
FRANK TWO.

One enemy aircraft shadowing convoy ^{"Frank} ~~FRANK~~
~~TWO~~ in position 57° 57' N., 102° 55' E.,
at 1545.
(IMPULSIVE 1552/31.)

Milford
Haven.

Examination vessel machine gunned 2 miles
S by E from St. Annes Head at 1725.
No damage, No casualties.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1740B/31.)

Orkneys.

One A/C Flying at 8,000 feet identified
as J.U.88 was picked up by R D/F North of
Strathie Point at 2047/31 and, proceeding
on a general Easterly Course, turned North
East over Torness. A/C was visually
reported by 2 gun.sites at 2106/31 as
having crossed the Northern part of Flow
between 20,000 and 25,000 feet flying
N.E. fighters failed to intercept.
Visibility extreme.
(A.C.O.S. 2214/31.)

PNEUMATIC
ELEVATOR NO.2.
(295 tons.)
EMILY BURTON
(Barge, 58 tons.)
BONGO.
(Sailing Barge,
46 Tons.)
submerged.

Destroyed or damaged in Air-Raid on
Liverpool on Night 3/4 May. (D.S.634.)

1064

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. Contd.

<p><u>PIKE</u> (Sailing Barge 168 Tons.) <u>LING</u> (Sailing Barge, 164 Tons.) destroyed by fire. <u>LIMPET</u> (Sailing Barge, 164 Tons.) <u>BONITA</u> (Tug, 65 Tons.) destroyed by <u>Bomb.</u></p>	}	<p>Destroyed or damaged in Air-Raid on Liverpool on Night 3/4 May. (D.S.634.)</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Mining.

B.S.63.

Operation B.S.63 postponed on account of thick weather. All times in my 1141B/29 to be 24 hours later accordingly. (TEVIOT BANK 0540B/31.)

P.W.10.

My 0957B/30. V.4 reports operation P.W. (10) not completed as position was not established with sufficient accuracy. (C. in C. Nore 0952B/31.)
Weather permitting, carry out orders contained in my 1520B/28 tonight. *See p.1061*
(C. in C. Nore 1107B/31 to BEEHIVE.)

Harwich
Minefields.

My 1417/24. Operation completed. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1047B/31.)

Milford Haven.

5 Mines detonated today by Sweeper off St. Ann's Head. Details. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1621/31,1623/31.)

Falmouth.

1 mine cut and sunk by rifle fire in 50°11' 42" N., 4° 47' 48" W. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1800/31.)

1065

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

E-Boats.

E. Boats bear 100° approx., from position N., by D/F. (Harwich W/T 0103/31.) There are slight indications of E Boats on bearing 050° from Winterton at 0142. (C. in C. Nore 0207B/31.)

Casualties and Defects.

GOLDEN
SUNBEAM.
(A/P Drifter.)
damaged.

Wooden drifter GOLDEN SUNBEAM damaged by collision. Temporary repairs being effected at Dover. (V.A. Dover 1129B/31.)

ASIE.
(A/S Trawler.)

Clyde arrival ASIE with defects. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1210/31.)

GOLDEN NEWS.

(M/S drifter.) Cancel my 0852B/30. GOLDEN NEWS delayed owing to D/G and hull defects. (F.O. Humber 1438B/31.)

Shipping & Convoys.

Troop Convoys.

Defects preventing sailing, action to be taken. (D.S.T., 0338B/31 to P.S.T.O's etc.) See Lion Copy.

W.S.8.X.

Admty., 1926B/30. Request destroyers may R/V in position 270° Oversay 10 miles at 0700B/1. (C. in C. W.A., 0340B/31 to R.A.(M).
My 1150 B/30 sailed, Codeword "~~GAUZE~~" Gauge.
Delete ASSINIBOINE and add LEGION and PIORUN from Clyde. Add to ships meeting at R/V SHERWOOD from Londonderry BRIGHTON and ST. MARY'S from Port ZA. S.O.A. until ESPERANCE BAY and A/S Escort leave 12½ knots thence 14 knots, expected time of passing into North Atlantic Stn., 2000B/4. E.T.A. VICTORIOUS and NEPTUNE 0600 A/7.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2317B/31, to Admty.)

/W.S.9A.....

SECRET MESSAGE 0338B/31 May GUT

To:- P.S.T.O. Union of South Africa, Simonstown.
P.S.T.O. Egypt.
P.S.T.O. India.
D.S.T.O. Mombasa.
S.T.O. Durban
S.T.O. Capetown
S.T.O. Freetown.
F.C. North Atlantic.
A.C. Malaya.
N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.

Date 31.5.41.

NAVAL CYPHER (C).

From Director of Sea Transport.

Several cases have occurred recently where troop ships on arriving U.K. have reported various defects which have prevented their being ready in time for their intended outward convoys.

2. To enable accurate forecasts of future troop convoy sailing dates to be made request that following action be taken.

(a) Enquiry should be made by S.T.O's at all ports of call of masters of all troop transports normally based on U.K. as to any defects requiring attention which are likely to cause delay to vessels programme. These should be reported to D. of S.T. with an indication of whether it is proposed to deal with them abroad or whether they must await return to U.K.

(b) In particular P.S.T.O. Union of South Africa should report in respect of ships in U.S. convoys when they call on the outward voyage so that vessels homeward programme may if necessary be adjusted accordingly.

(c) P.S.T.O. Egypt P.S.T.O. India or A.C. Malaya should report at commencement of homeward voyages of U.S. ships.

(d) P.S.T.O. Union of South Africa should report when vessels call on homeward voyages what period masters estimate will be required for turn round in U.K. taking into account amount of cargo loaded etc. Anticipated date of arrival U.K. should also be reported automatically.

(e) S.T.O. Freetown should if necessary add any further details in respect of ships calling Freetown homeward bound.

0338B/31.

Director of Sea Transport.

- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S.(F).
- A.C.N.S.(T)(2).
- N.A. to 1st S.L.
- Cps.(4).
- O.D.(5).
- M.(2).
- D. of P.(3).
- O.I.C.(2).
- D. of S.T.
- D.T.D.(4).
- I.P.(3).
- W.D.
- E.P.S.

S.B.

1066

War Diary.

31.5.41.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys Contd.

→ W.S.9A,
BIRMINGHAM.

You are required to provide Ocean Escort for convoy W S 9 A to Cape and will be sailed to arrive Clyde A.M./3. You will subsequently operate in South Atlantic. (C. in C. H.F., 1205B/31, to BIRMINGHAM.)

Use of
D/C's.

A.M. 129A of 28/5 delete words "or night" in para. 3 (a) and add new para. 3 (c) "Merchant Vessels in convoy are not to drop depth charges at night without orders unless a U-boat has been seen to dive close to the ship". (A.C.N.S. (T) 1302B/31, "A" Message.)

Kites off
N. Cornish
Coast.

Following received from C. in C. Plymouth: (quotes his 2259/30.) Request your remarks or concurrence. (D.T.S.D. 1309B/31, to Air Ministry F.O.6.)

BELPAREIL.

Sailed ARMERIA and BURDOCK escorting S.S. BELPAREIL in accordance with my 1232B/22/5. E.T.A. Punta Delgada a.m. /7. Code word ~~FAITH~~. Request you will provide onward route in accordance with C. in C. W.A., 1437B/21. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2013B/31.)

Greek Ships.

Advising pay no attention to any orders unless satisfied that they have come from Greek Committee London or from British Authorities. (D. of S.T. 2154G.M.T./31 to all Greek Vessels outside Med'n.)

→ W.S.9A.
4th D.F.

4th D.F. are to proceed as requisite to arrive Clyde not later than A.M./3, where they will be required to act as escort for W.S.9A. (R.A.D., 2358B/31, to D.4.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Enemy
Unit.

German surface ship bearing from Gibraltar 298° second class at 0611 G.M.T. (F.O.C.N.A. 0741A/31 to N.A. Stn.)
D/F Bearing at 2042Z/30 indicates enemy surface unit within 200 miles 045° 30' N. 014° W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1105B/31 to N.A. Stn.)
Enemy surface unit indicated by D/F bearing at 2042 G.M.T/30 may have been within 200 miles of 045° 30' N. 014° W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1154A/31 to S/M P.32).

4 U/B's.

Following may affect you. 2 British trawlers on patrol off Lisbon. 2 Portuguese exercising off Cezimbra 037° 00' 008° 40'. Believed 4 U-boats are operating between lat. 035° and 037° and meridian 007° and 010° (F.O.C.N.A. 1110A/31 to P.32).

Operation "Rocket"
ROCKET.

Your X.411 31/5. F.M.N. requires immediate information. Subject of weather improving today 31/5.

(A) Will Blenheim be despatched to arrive before or during night 31/5, (B) Or after first dawn 1/6, (C) Or before 1000 G.M.T. 1/6. (200 Group 1220/31 to Air Ministry 0.8). Your A.784 31/5. 10 Blenheims not yet left Thornaby due weather. They cannot reach Gibraltar before 1800 G.M.T. 1/6. Latest forecast indicates earliest probable time of arrival to be 1500/2/6. (Air Min., 1820/31 to 200 Group).

Now been agreed with Admiralty still air flying off distance may be 600 nautical miles - (Air Ministry 1750/31 G.M.T. to 200 Group)

Lifeboat
Found.

An empty ships lifeboat painted yellow No. 50 P E P and riddled with bullets was beached off Porto Moniz, Madeira. (N.C.S.O. Funchal, 1230/1 to Admty.).

/W/T.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (contd).W/T
Interference.

PRINCE OF WALES 2256/26. No interference experienced by A S V fitted in ARK ROYAL's aircraft 26/27/5. Para. 2 of PRINCE OF WALES report. No jamming of W/T on any waves in use was heard. (S.O. Force H., 1525/31 to Admty.)

RENOWN.

Owing to damage received by PRINCE OF WALES it will not be possible to take RENOWN in hand for refit at present. Request report whether recent high speed steaming has caused further damage to RENOWN's bulges. (V.C.N.S. 1947B/31 to S.O. Force H).

SURCOUF.

Your 1530A/30. Intend SURCOUF should remain under direct operational control of C. in C.A. W.I. in present circumstances. He will therefore remain responsible for keeping SURCOUF informed and for ordering her W/T organisation. (D.O.D.(F) 1948B/31 to F.O.C.N.A).

South Atlantic.WINDHUK
(German)

Santos reports obtained leave for admittance to sail tonight 30/5. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 0145Z/31 to S.A. Div.) (C. in C.S.A., 0201N/31 to S.A. Sqdn).

A.2. Clearance for WINDHUK was given at 2200 G.M.T./30 available 24 hours. Ship expected to sail any time. (N.C.S.O. Santos, 1501Z/31 to R.A.S.A.D; S.O.I Montevideo, 1615Z/31 to R.A.S.A.D).

SANGARA.
St. Vincent.

Torpedoed at anchor in Accra Roads. (See U-Boat Campaign) U/Boats waiting off Island. (N.C.S.O. St. Vincent 1020/31) (See U-Boat Campaign).

/LATONA.....

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd.)

LATONA.

The frequent alterations of LATONA's movements are much regretted, caused by the many and rapid changes in Mediterranean situation. (V.C.N.S. 1027B/31 to C. in C.S.A.)

HIGHLAND
PRINCESS.
BRIDGEWATER.
CALENDULA.

BRIDGEWATER (? Fuel at) Takoradi if necessary then escort HIGHLAND PRINCESS to Lagos with CALENDULA. (C. in C.S.A. 1301N/31, to BRIDGEWATER)

EAGLE.
Bathurst.

The low endurance of EAGLE and the activity of submarines off Freetown make her ability to use Bathurst very desirable. Request steps such as improving marking of channel by buoys that will ensure her being able to use the harbour in safety. (V.C.N.S. 1628B/31 to C. in C.S.A.)

LONDON.

Intend leaving Bathurst at 1800N/31 and steaming westward. 27 Officers and 110 ranks landed. 334 passengers including 12 invalids remaining on board. Request repetition of C. in C.S.A.'s 1325N/31. (LONDON, 1825B/31 to C. in C.S.A.)

A.S.Vessels
Freetown.

Proposals to increase. (C. in C.S.A., 1957N/31) See Lion Copy.

Brazilian A/C
and WINDHUK
sailing.

Lati plane left Pernambuco this morning on an experimental flight with Brazilian Major of Brazilian Air Force as observer for Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. Similar flight took place 28/3 when FRISCO, FRANCO MARTELLI and DRESDEN sailed. WINDHUK expected to sail tonight. (N.A. Rio de Janeiro, 2011Z/31 to Admty. etc.)

/Shipping at St. Vincent. ...

MOST SECRET

1,069A

MOST SECRET.

MESSAGE

1957/31 May.

IN

From. C.in C. South Atlantic.

Date. 1/6/41
Recd 0711.

NAVAL CYpher X. BY W/T.

Addressed. Admiralty.

515. I consider it imperative to increase the A/S Vessels available at Freetown and West African Area at earliest moment and earlier and to greater extent than already arranged if in any way possible. The escort requirements are continually increasing and there (are) few if any forces available to operate in the area near Freetown in which U-Boats move almost undisturbed.

Escort requirements at moment EAGLE, CUMBERLAND, W.S. 8B, S.L. 76, ANSON, HIGHLAND PRINCESS and shortly BERGENSFJORD from Victoria, Nigeria, some of these both in and out. There is a U-Boat off St. Vincent Cape Verde and four ships inside, My 1611/19, and a ship reported torpedoed off Accra. Quite likely that U-Boats may appear off Takoradi at any time and N.C.S.Cs should be warned to route ships in from various directions.

Corvettes and Destroyers are required but consider in addition to other requirements six A/S Trawlers of modern type would help to augment escorts and possibly free Corvettes to hunt and to operate from Takoradi and off West Coast ports if required. Convoy to and from these may have to be considered.

1957N/31

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (T) (2)
A.C.N.S. (F)
Nav. 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F) for action
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.H.I. (4)
D. of L.D.
D. A/S W.
I.P.
V.D.
Duty Capt.
Hd. of M.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
D.T.D. (M)
N.I.D. 10 (Pay.Cdr. Wilson)

MIP.

1069B.

Date 2.6.41.

From War Registry.

Reference message from C. in C. South Atlantic circulated with T.O.O. at top of message 1957/3 and with T.O.O. at foot of message 1957/21, the correct T.O.O. of message, which is about A/S vessels at Freetown, is 1957/31 (N.B. message was MOST SECRET.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(H).
A.C.N.S.(F).
A.C.N.S.(T). (2).
N.A.1st S.L.
D. of P.(2).
D.O.D.(F).
D.D.O.D.(F).
D.O.D.(H).
D.D.O.D.(H).
D.N.I.(4).

D. of L.D.
D.L./S.W.
I.P.
W.D.
Duty Capt.
Hd. of M.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D.(2).
D.T.D.(M).
N.I.D.10 (Pay Cdr. Wilson).

War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (contd.)Shipping at
St. Vincent.

Request you arrange for ships now at St. Vincent and due to join S.L. Convoy to be escorted from territorial water as far out as possible. Southbound ships from St. Vincent should also be escorted if this is possible. (D.T.D. 2018B/31 to C. in C.S.A.)

Shipping
Routes.

Signals re routing certain ships. (D.T.D., 2019B/31, C. in C.S.A. 2056N/31, 2058B/31, 2111N/31, 2114N/31, 2116N/31.)

W.S.8.B.
DUNCAN.
BOREAS.

BRILLIANT having left to join CUMBERLAND, DUNCAN and BOREAS only are available to join and escort W.S.8.B. though possible may provide one corvette for last two days of passage 1 Sunderland will be available 2/6 and 3/6. (C. in C.S.A. 2223N/31 to Admty.)

FORTUNSTELLA.
(Italian)

At Quequen loading 300 tons coal from E.H. Juliani and Co. Reported she will also take coal from VOLUNTAS and MARISTELLA. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2301Z/31 to Admty.)

Mediterranean.General.UPRIGHT.
UTMOST.

Leave patrol as follows to arrive Marsamxett 0730B/4.
UTMOST p.m./2 through 036° 15' 012° 50'.
UPRIGHT p.m./3 through 035° 51' 015° 15'.
and 036° 00' 014° 52'. (S.O.(S) Malta, 0959B/31 to UPRIGHT, UTMOST)

/TRIUMPH

1071

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

TRIUMPH.

If TRIUMPH has had small expenditure of torpedoes during present patrol intend to divert her to Malta to disembark spares and embark as much 4 inch ammunition as possible. This will only be done however if TRIUMPH can land 6 or more torpedoes and retain 4 for passage from Malta to Alexandria. (Capt.S.I. 1019C/31 to Cdr. S.1)

BARHAM.

Anticipated BARHAM will be sailed from Suez about 3/6 for Aden en route for Durban to Dock. (C. in C. Med., 1055C/31 to C. in C.E.I.)
BARHAM E.T.A. Port Said 1100?/1.
(C. in C. Med. 2251C/31 to N.O.I.C. Port Said)

FLORIDA II
(Italian)
bombed.
ISARCO
located.

Following my 1,344,30/5, 3 Blenheims 82 Squadron carrying 4 250 G.P. bombs each detailed to carry out fresh attack against FLORIDA II 31/5. 0700 hours FLORIDA II sighted anchored 4 miles outside Sfax and attacked mast high. 3 direct hits at least and clouds of black smoke. Aircraft machine gunned decks. Opposition machine gun fire from FLORIDA II. No other ships anchored nearby. M/V reported 60 yards away in my 1.344 known to be ISARCO, 5900 tons, and today seen at entrance of Sfax harbour coming out - no destroyer seen. 0752 hours G.M.T. 1 cruiser 34° 52' N. 11° 52' E. course 160° speed not known. All aircraft returned safely. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1100/31)

/Lights seen off Gavdo ...

1072

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

Lights seen
off Gavdo.

Aircraft reports seeing flickering lights on water at 2355/30 in a position 070° Gavdo 10. Another was seen at 0100/31 in 3338 N. 26 or 47 20 E. (Capt. O.S. Alexandria, 1111/31 to Med. Fleet, Force I)

Ships at
Beirut.

N.O.I.C. Haifa reports that the three submarines and other ships based at Beirut appear bunkered to Capacity and were back at that Port on 28/5. (S.O.(I) Alexandria, 1112/31 to Admty.)

MAURO CROCE.

Arrived 31/5 from Tarragona. (Barcelona, 1445/31 to M.W.T.)

TAKU.

Alexandria Submarine Sanctuary will be in force 0800 to 1100/1 for TAKU leaving. Exercise Sanctuary will be in force 1100 to 1600/1 in area within 5 miles of position 278° Ras-el-Tin 36. All times G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1526C/31 to Med Fleet Force I)

Malta
Air Raid.

Report Malta up to 1600/31/5. All times G.M.T. Night 30/31, 2000 hours, 3 aircraft approached, 2 of which dropped bombs in the sea North of the Island. (H.Q. Malta, 1700/31)

TORBAY.

Is operating in area 038° 00'N. 024° 35'E - 000° - 90 - 114 shown 1/6, subsequently relieving you. (Capt. S.I. 1825C/31 to PARTHIAN)

/BESSARABIA, TRANSILVANIA

1073

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General. (contd.)

* BASARABIA

~~BESSARABIA.~~
TRANSILVANIA.

Capt. S.1's 1831C/30 addressed Greek submarine NEREUS reports that Roumanian merchant ships *BESSARABIA and TRANSILVANIA will be sailing shortly for Beirut with German troops. Request information concerning origin of this report. (D.N.I.18 57B/31. to S.O.I Alexandria, Wolfson, Beyoglu)

VAMPIRE.

Intend following programme for VAMPIRE (Suez to Singapore) (C. in C. Med., 2151C/31 to Admty.)

Proposed Operation.

Chiefs of Staff 123 (1st S.L.2221B/1 to C. in C. Med.) See Mediterranean Volume.

Area in which shipping may be attacked.

My 2353/1. Aircraft, Surface Ships and Submarines may now attack at sight any ship navigating without our permission in extended area given in B.P.B.message 382 subject to restriction in my quoted above. (C. in C. Med. 2329C/31 to Med. Fleet.)

1074

War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Attack on Crete.Air
Protection.

Following received (begins) C.in C. Med. from H.Q., 204 Group. Fighter protection for Capt.(D) 7 on 31/5. 0520 to 0720 - 2 ~~MARLBOROUGH~~. 0650 to 0850 - 3 Hurricanes. 0700 to 0900 - 3 Beau fighters. 0740 to 0940 - 3 Hurricanes. 0800 to 1000 - 3 Hurricanes, 0805 to 1000 - 3 Hurricanes. 0805 to 1000 - 1 ~~MARLBOROUGH~~ and 3 Hurricanes. 0850 to 1050 - 3 Hurricanes. 0900 to 1100 - 1 ~~MARLBOROUGH~~ and 3 Hurricanes. Arrangements in my A.6 802 G.F. 10, 29/5. Your 1810/30. Fighter protection will be provided as arranged when H.M. Ships are 150 miles out from Alexandria. Request repetition of Capt. (D) 7 and new force meeting (Corrupt group) in my A 831 of 0100 30th. T.O.O. 2123/30 (ends) (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 0231C/31 to Capt. D.7.)

D.7 attacked

Enemy aircraft have dropped bombs my position 33.18 N. 26.44 E. course 131° speed 29 knots. (Capt.D.7 0855/31 to Alexandria W/T)

Following received addressed to C.in C. Med. from H.Q. 204 Group. A.873 31/5. Capt. (D) 7 D.F. handed over to F.A.A. at 1100 local time. Five JU.88's and one S.79 shot down, three severely damaged and six forced to jettison bombs. 20 JU.88's attempted to attack Capt. (D) 7 D.F. Air protection being provided for F.O. 15 C. Sqdn. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 1520C/31 to Capt. D.7.)

CALCUTTA.
COVENTRY.

CALCUTTA and COVENTRY have been ordered to join you 100 miles from Alexandria at 0800/1 (C. in C. Med. 1143C/31 to F.O. 15 C.S. 204 Group)
Cancel my 1143C/31. CALCUTTA and COVENTRY have been ordered to be 100 miles from Alexandria at 0800/1 ready to reinforce you if required. They have your route. (C. in C. Med. 2137C/31 to F.O. 15 C.S.)

/A/C Report

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Attack on Crete. (contd.)

A/C Report.

Following has been read. 2 aeroplanes bearing 330° 23 miles from 32° N. 25° E. (A/C Med., 1805/31)

Air Escort
C.S.15.

Fulmar section call sign A.F.2 over you 1100. Second Fulmar section call sign M.14 ? and be followed by Tomahawks escorted by Fulmars call sign A.2.M L.C.3 and H. 1 S. (R.A.(A) Med. 2211/31 to C.S.15)

Situation
Report 42.

Total of troops so far evacuated from Crete about 12,000 with 500 military casualties from air attack on passage. NAPIER and NIZAM have arrived Alexandria with 1509 troops. NAPIER port main circulator out of action and turbine feet fractured by near misses. NAPIER, NIZAM shot down one JU.88 and damaged three more. C.S.15 in PHOEBE, ABDIEL and three destroyers due Sphakia 2359/31. CALCUTTA and COVENTRY have sailed to support C.S.15 1/6 if necessary. Some long range Fighter Protection has been available 30th and 31st resulting 14 enemy aircraft destroyed, 5 damaged and 20 to 25 forced to jettison bombs. This in spite of many fighters failing to make contact with our forces at sea. BARHAM, DIDO, have sailed to make passage of Canal. VALIANT now fit for service. AJAX noon tomorrow 1/6. Western Desert. WATERHEN, VENDETTA, are working service between Tobruk, Mersa Matruh and Alexandria with personnel. (C. in C. Med., 2349/31 to Admty.)

1076

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

River Transport
to Kut.

Depending success of operation against Baghdad, S.N.O. Persian Gulf informs me Army movements by river towards Kut at very early date contemplated. Plan being prepared and it may be necessary to provide crews for river craft from H.M. ships in area. (C. in C.E.I. 0434Z/31 to Admty.)

GLASGOW.
defect.

Port outer L.P. turbine gearing pinion of GLASGOW has two portions of teeth broken away and missing one in each Helix. Maximum speed reduced to 20 knots as a precautionary measure, except in extreme emergency. (C. in C.E.I. 0712Z/31 to Admty.)

Ships
proceeding
to Abadan.

My 0842/19 my 0848/19 and my 0850/19 (N.T. in W.R.) (none to all addressees) Any active service personnel embarked in lieu of personnel of crews in ships proceeding to Abadan should be placed on ships articles and receive uniform. Close range guns should be dismantled and stowed away before arrival at Abadan but should be available for quick mounting in case of emergency. (C. in C.E.I. 0804Z/31.)

HERON.

N.T. in W.D.
N.O.I.C. Port Sudan 1108/30 passed to you with reference to his 1405/27. From the point of view of security from air attack I would prefer HERON to go to Massowa on completion of degaussing, but if frequent and urgent demands are likely to continue I am prepared to retain her at Port Sudan. Request your views. (C. in C.E.I. 0812Z/31 to C. in C. Med.)

/Iran

1077

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (contd.)

Iran. enemy
ships using
W/T.

Tel. No.44/30. My letter Oct. 18.
I am informed (B.2) that Iranian
Authorities now have evidence in their
hands that German ships at Banda Shapur
particularly the HOHENFELS are using their
wireless transmitters. (Consul, Colombo,
T.H.I. 1025/31 to Teheran)

Iraq
Armistice.

Following received from G.O.C. British
Troops in Iraq. (Begins) No offensive
action will be taken against Iraq troops
other than minimum necessary for escort.
Armistice asked for and being arranged.
(Ends) River patrols are to continue to
operate in accordance with existing orders.
(S.N.O. Persian Gulf, 1415Z/31 to P.G.
Force, C. in C.E.I. Admty.)
Ref. Armistice with Iraqis. I hope any
final terms arranged will include a clause
which will give us complete control of
Iraqi Banks of Shatt-el-Arab for a depth
necessary to prevent interference with
shipping. The river is as much part
of our lines of communication to
Palestine etc. as land route. S.N.O.
Persian Gulf pass to General Bagrah.
(C. in C.E.I. 1850Z/31 to Admty.)

OTRANTO.
ratings for
U.K.

Your 1052Z/30. In view of absence of
raider activity on E.I. Station and
importance of movement of these ratings,
request you will sail OTRANTO for Cape
or Durban by coastal route unescorted
if no escort is available. C. in C.S.A.
is requested to consider distribution
of personnel between other ships at Cape
or Durban or, alternatively, provision
of onward escort. (V.C.N.S. 1626B/31
to C. in C.E.I.)

/LUCIA, EMERALD

1078

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (contd.)

LUCIA.
EMERALD.

For information (1) At Massawa, epidemic of dengue fever. About 90 cases among Naval Shore Staff and in LUCIA since 3/5. (2) At Bas~~ta~~ EMERALD had over 70 cases of malaria. Two deaths reported. Ship now on passage to Singapore for repairs, via Bombay and Colombo. (C. in C.E.I. 1712Z/31 to Admty.)

WS.8 X.
WS.9 A.

A small fast convoy to be known as WS.8 X. and consisting of two important M.T. ships and one Personnel ship, will leave U.K. 31/5 for Middle East. Convoy will be escorted from U.K. to Aden by NEPTUNE, who will not however be available thereafter to reinforce your command. Convoy W.S.9 A consisting of 10 personnel and 5 M.T. ships will be made to leave U.K. about 3/6. W.S.9.A. includes 2 ships for India and 1 for F.E. (D.O.D.(f) 1823B/31 to C. in C.E.I.)

MAURITIUS.
SHROPSHIRE.
S.L.78.

MAURITIUS is to relieve SHROPSHIRE on E.I. Station as arranged by C. in C.E.I. and C. in C. S.A. (2) C in C. S.A. is requested to sail SHROPSHIRE so as to arrive at Freetown in time to escort S.L.78 to U.K. (V.C.N.S. 1945B/31 to C. in C.E.I. C. in C.S.A.)

America and West Indies.

Suspicious
Ship.

^{NT. in W.D.}
My 1952Z/30 re TREDINNICKS position unlikely U.S. Warship. U.S. Navy Dept. now reports U.S. Destroyer in this position. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 0050Z/31 to Admty.)

/H.X.129

1079

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

H.X.129.

In order to comply with Admty.1953B/29 as H.X.129 has been turned back, please give R/V and time for corvettes. (N.O.I.C. St. John's, N.F. 0221Z/31 to C.O.A.C. Halifax.)

REPULSE.

My 2241Z/29 REPULSE sailed 1759Z/30. (N.O.I.C. St. John's, N.F. 0759Z/31 to Admty.)

FORTH.

Should your 1136B/30 to taken as cancelling arrangement made for docking FORTH (Corrupt Group) my 1953B/28 ? (R.A. 3 B.S. 1004B/31 to Admty.)

SAN ADOLFO.

^{Not in Navy List - P.L., 12 c.B. 1815.}
R.F.A. SAN ADOLFO was in collision with S.S.D.L. HARPER near Bermuda night 30/31 May. D.L.HARPER has proceeded on her voyage to U.K. (Cdre.I/C Bermuda, 1137Q/31 to Admty.)

ARICA
escorted by
BARFLEUR.

My 1445/29. Following from Navy Dept. From U.S. Naval Observer Martinique 28/5. Capt. Benech, Chief of Staff to Admiral Robert, states WINNIPEG incident is reason for escort being provided for ARICA. (N.A. Washington 1222/31 to Admty.) *See also p.1081*

Search for
supply ship
and for
PRINZ EUGEN.

V.C.N.S. 1328B/31 to SUFFOLK. See Operations Volume. *31/5 p.171*

Suspect French
Fishing Vessel.

Three masted French Fishing Schooners ANGELUS, QUANCALAY, DUCHATELEY and four ~~Masted~~ (?BARC) SIELOURD reported to have left Bayonne about 12/4 and now to be fishing about 044° to 045° N. 049° 20' to 050° 20' W. Information received that DUCHATELEY is being paid by Germany to report movements of British ships by W/T. (R.A.3. 1433/31 to N.Atlantic Escort Force.)

1080

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

Newfoundland
Forces, St.
John's Base.

Intend following organisations to give effect to Admty.1939B/23. Commodore L.W. Murray as Commodore Commanding Newfoundland Forces on arrival. Capt. C.M.R. Schwert R.N. on loan R.C.N. will retain present appointment as N.O. in C. St. John's, N.F. within commands of C.O. Halifax Atlantic Coast and for the present will command base of St. John's (N.F.) which is herewith commissioned as independent account establishment as H.M.C.S. AVALON. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1441Z/31 to Admty. etc. etc.)

Following from Commodore Murray. (Begins) R.C.N. Corvettes as well as destroyers will be based in Newfoundland H.M.N.S. NIOBE no longer required. Recommend NIOBE be transferred to St. John's, N.F. details of the move to be worked out on my arrival in Ottawa (ends) (C. in C.W.A. 1713B/31 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa)

FRANZ KLASSEN.

Panamanian FRANZ KLASSEN from Campana 9/5 not arrived Caripito. (S.O.I Jamaica 1534R/31 to Admty.)

Dakar
Intelligence.

Following from State Dept. from Dakar 30/5. Graded A.1. arrived SAINT LOUIS from Conakry; AISNE and (?TOURS) from Morocco with 6000 tons of coal. Sailed ALICE ROBERT for Conakry. Ships bringing coal have recently brought 2500 tons of munitions. (N.A. Washington 1812/31 to Admty.)

MASSIS
(French
tanker)

Following from State Dept. from Vichy undated despatches graded B.2:- MASSIS was sold on 10/5, placed under Italian flag at Sete and sailed for Italy 11/5, with 4000 tons petrol. (N.A. Washington, 1823/31 to Admty.)

/French fishing vessels ...

1081

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (contd.)

French
fishing
vessels.

My 2133Z/21 not to Admiralty. R.C.N. ships encountering French fishing vessels, sail or steam, outside French territorial waters are to send them into St. John's, N.F. or other convenient ports for search. Ref. St. John's, N.F. 1420Z/30, C.O.A.C. Halifax is to take any action possible to send DUCHATALEY and others into port. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2049Z/31 to C.O.A.C. Halifax)

SUFFOLK.

Your 1328B/31. Request SUFFOLK refuel Bermuda (?after) this patrol (?rather) than in Newfoundland, in order to obtain essential spare A/C. (C.S.2. 2241Z/31 to Admty.)

Proposed Visit
of C. in C. to
Canada.

Your 0150B/30. I have instructed R.A.3 to proceed to St. John's, N.F. instead. (C. in C.A.W.I. 2312/31 to Admty.)

ARICA..
BARFLEUR.
(Vichy)

VAN KINSBERGEN is shadowing two ships believed to be French ARICA., escorted by French A.M.C. BARFLEUR. Last report 1550' N. 5935' W. at 0130Q/31 course 060° speed 10½ knots. Escort is expected to part company tomorrow 1/6. (C. in C.A.W.I. 2322/31 to Admty.) See p. 1079

1082

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

GRAVELINES.

055° W. 010° W. Unknown Ship torpedoed.
(DEPTFORD, 0130B/31 to C. in C.W.A.)
My 0130B. Ship was GRAVELINES straggler
from H.X. Convoy. Her back is broken,
salvage of foremost half might be
possible, her cargo being timber. Have
searched for U-Boat without result.

Am now collecting survivors, then intend
making further search for U-Boat. Request
air and surface co-operation. (DEPTFORD,
0510B/31 to C. in C.W.A.)

Proceed in company with all despatch to
056° 00' N. 010° 00' W. where steamship
GRAVELINES with timber cargo was tor-
pedoed at 0100. DEPTFORD is standing
By. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0826B/31 to
SUPERMAN, SEAMAN)

Your 0832B. Present position of
GRAVELINES 055° 57' N. 010° 01' W. based
on fix at 0030B. (DEPTFORD, 0930B/31 to
C. in C.W.A.)

Proceed to assist DEPTFORD to hunt U-boat
in 056° 00' N. 010° 00' W. (C. in C.W.A.
0941B/31 to FARNDALE)

Detach ST. KENAN to stand by GRAVELINES
torpedoed in 056° 00' N. 010° 00' W. at
0130B/31 tugs are being sent. (C. in C.W.A.
0946B/31 to OTTAWA.)

My 0826B/31, position of S.S. GRAVELINES
at 0930B, 55° 57' N. 10° 01' W.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1158B/31 to SUPERMAN,
SEAMAN)

If nothing is found by dark tonight
DEPTFORD and FARNDALE return to base,
ST. KENAN to stand by GRAVELINES and
escort tug SUPERMAN and SEAMAN which have
been sent to tow her in. (C. in C.W.A.
1658B/31 to DEPTFORD, FARNDALE.)

CLAN
MACDOUGALL.

Following has been read:
SSSS 16.50 N. 25.10 W. torpedoed, CLAN
MACDOUGALL. (T.O.R. 0226N/31)

Following has been read:
SSSS de G.L.D. Lands End 16.50 N. 25.10 W.
Unknown ship torpedoed. (Liverpool,
0322/31)

Following received from OPNAV:-
CLAN MACDOUGALL torpedoed position 16.50 N.
35.10 W. at 0328 G.M.T. according to
report intercepted by coast guard on
4050 kc/s. (Alusna, 0811/31 to Admty.)

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (contd.)

SANGARA.

Motor Vessel SANGARA torpedoed at anchor at Accra 2230 G.M.T/30. (C. in C. S.A. 0845N/31 to Admty.)
 British 5,445 tons, from Liverpool to Lagos with general cargo, "was torpedoed at 0030/31 while at anchor in Accra Roads" (D.S.635, 1/6)
 SANGARA holed while at anchor in Accra Roads. *Tug VULCAN today 31/5 to tow to Lagos. Request insurance etc. (Lagos, 0930/31 to Admty.)
 Ship reported torpedoed in Roads off Accra if you have left Takoradi keep well clear of area on passage to Lagos. (C. in C.S.A. 1101N/31 to CALENDULA)
 My 0845/31. Governor Gold Coast make the report stated explosion at anchor off Accra, survivors stated torpedoed. Fact of torpedoing not established definitely yet. (C. in C.S.A. 1131N/31 to Admty.)

*Tug not sent -
WD 1/6/41 p25

SILVERYEW.

British ship SILVERYEW torpedoed 16.42 N. 25.29 W. 0030 G.M.T/30. (N.C.S.O. St. Vincent, 0950/31 to Admty. C.in C.S.A.)

U/B's off St. Vincent.

Owing to increase in number of ships calling at St. Vincent, probable that enemy S/M's will be (?waiting) off (? Island). If sailings temporarily suspended will only increase number of ships in harbour. Propose continuing sailings pending further instructions. Probable local Germans and Italians have means of communicating times of departure of ships. If a S/M is in both Western and Eastern Channel almost impossible for a ship to leave St. Vincent unobserved. (N.C.S.O. St. Vincent, 1020/31 to C. in C.S.A.)

/N.C.S.O.

1084

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

U/B's off
St. Vincent.
(contd.)

N.C.S.O. St. Vincent thinks submarines will be waiting off Island and likely Germans and Italians have means of communicating departures. CLAN MACDOUGALL torpedoed O226/31 five miles from either shore in Western Channel shows at least one submarine there. Have no forces to send. Consider most unsafe to coal any ship there at present with submarine sitting in Channel. If essential to call, propose all ships already routed there be told to keep close to land and inside territorial waters on approach. (C. in C.S.A. 2147N/31 to Admty.)

CAIRNDALE
(torpedoed
30/5)

Your 1143A/30. From Admiralty information it would appear that CAIRNDALE's course led her directly towards the position in which BRITISH YEOMAN had reported the presence of a U-boat at O351Z/30. Request you will report if any action was taken to divert her. (V.C.N.S. 2057B/31 to F.O.C.N.A.)

PAPALEMOS
(torpedoed
28/5)
EMPIRE PROTECTOR
(torpedoed
30/5)

Survivors reported Greek PAPALEMOS torpedoed on 28/5 in approx. 08° 06' N. 16° 18' W. and steamship EMPIRE PROTECTOR torpedoed at 1120 G.M.T./30 in approx. 05° 48' N. 14° 18' W. (C. in C.S.A. 2125N/31 to Admty.)

SIRE
(torpedoed
31/5)

British 5664 tons. Presumed sunk, crew with exception of three men landed Freetown. (D.S.643 9/6)

War Diary.31.5.1941.
Saturday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.

If no sign of U-Boat return to base.
(C. in C.W.A. 0040B/31 to LEAMINGTON.)

Off
St.Vincent.

See CLAN MACDOUGALL and SILVERYEW
torpedoed. (Ships Attacked)

1327.

Following received from GALATEA. At
1327 German unit thought to be U-Boat
working up 550 Kcs. made report to consort
that query bore 020° from him. As
German unit sounded very close and bore
190° from GALATEA, there is thought to be
some connection. My pos. 13 37 B was
50° 06' N. 4° 22' W. (C. in C. Plymouth,
1419/31 to Admtty.)

Estimated U/B dispositions.
(D.D.I.C. 1506B/31)

Denmark
Strait.

U-Boats may be operating in the Denmark
Strait and to Northward of Iceland.
(A.C.N.S. (H) 1541B/31 to C.S.2.,
F.O.C.N.P., C. in C.H.F. etc.)

1625.

Am over 1 enemy Submarine in 58.48 N.
18. ? 30 W. (A/C Duty B. 1625/31 to
13 Group H.Q.)

2112.

By D/F at 2112 G.M.T. U-Boat in 50° N.
18° 30' W. Unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C.
2345B/31)

1086

War Diary.

31.5.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

By
NOTTS COUNTY.

My 2315B, have attacked. Resultant oil patches and air bubbles observed. Contact broken up and lost. Am proceeding to rejoin my convoy. Please investigate position. Depth 900 fathoms. (NOTTS COUNTY, 0035/31 to Admty. etc.)

By A/C 0735.

Following has been read. Am investigating suspicious object oil patch in 59.26 N. 18.37 W. (A/C duty E. 0735/31)
Following has been read. My 0735, definite new oil streak moving 115° have attacked. (Liverpool W/T, 0758/31)
My 0758, remaining (? with) O.J.L. not met Z.P.I. 93 4 300 5 becoming worse. (Part 2, Duty E., 0824/31 to Whitehall W/T).

Following has been read. Submarines submerged position O.E.C.S.150 3 weather improving 465 submarine submerged 59.20 N. 18.32 W. (Part 2, duty E., 0857/31)

By PANDORA
24/5.

^A
PANDORA reports at 1137/24 position 41° 04' N. 11° 12' W. sighted large Italian U/B South bound. U/B fired recognition signal of 4 red Very Lights. PANDORA fired 2 rounds of H.E. at 12,000 yards range and U/B dived. At 1153/25 position 44° 32' N. 09° 13' W. sighted south bound U/B. PANDORA dived at once. U/B probably dived simultaneously and -was not seen again. (F.O.S. 1659B/31 to Admty. etc.)