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# WAR DIARY

## German Naval Staff Operations Division

PART A VOLUME 43

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WAR DIARY OF THE GERMAN NAVAL STAFF

(Operations Division)

Part A

March 1943

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Chief, Naval Staff:  
Chief of Staff, Naval Staff:  
Chief, Operations Division, Naval  
Staff:

Grand Admiral Doenitz  
Vice Admiral Meisel  
Rear Admiral Wagner

Volume 43

begun: 1 Mar. 1943  
closed: 31 Mar. 1943

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVAL STAFF  
OPERATIONS DIVISION





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FOREWORD

1. This volume entitled War Diary of the German Naval Staff, Operations Division, Part A, is Volume 43 covering March 1943. Other volumes will follow shortly.
2. The War Diaries, Part A, are important because they contain a day by day summary of the information available to the German Naval Staff and the decisions reached on the basis thereof. Together with Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 1939-1945, which have been published, the War Diaries should provide valuable material for the study of naval problems arising from total war. The War Diary, Part A, is also a useful index to the German Naval Archives of World War II; references may be found in the Classified Operational Branch of Naval History Division (Op-29).
3. Due to the cost of publication, only a limited number of copies could be made. If any recipient of this War Diary does not need to retain it, it is requested that it be returned to Naval History Division (Op-29).
4. The translation of this War Diary was made in London, England, under the guidance of Commander S. R. Sanders, USNR. When his London Office was closed and the translation project was discontinued, much unfinished material was sent to Naval History Division, (Op-29). Because the dissemination of the data contained in these documents is important, the translations and stencils have not been checked for accuracy of interpretation, phraseology, and spelling of officers' names or geographical names. Distribution under these conditions seems justified because translators are not available in Naval History Division. Research to correct possible inconsistencies and to revamp in smooth form the rough or literal translations did not warrant the expense involved.

John B. Heffernan  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)  
Director of Naval History

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations  
Naval History Division  
Washington 25, D. C.

1955



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Items of Political Importance.

There are hardly any current political events affecting the war to be noted. A review of the foreign press shows that the Russian successes up to February have brought the discussion of post-war problems to the fore, as though the defeat of the Axis Powers were already sealed. All the world is considering how an understanding can best be reached with a victorious Russia. In view of the differences of opinion which must necessarily result from such discussions and which may already have become manifest, Attlee felt constrained to give a warning in one of his speeches that England should not be distracted in her war efforts by considerations of post-war problems. Moreover, the unity essential to victory might be broken. Although this warning may have been given for domestic reasons, it applies still more strongly to relations between the Allies. The Axis Powers could only welcome it if their enemies forewent the advantage of an exclusive concentration of power on the war and risked their unity in trying to divide the carcass before the kill. It would be a mistake, however, to reckon seriously at this time with such a weakness of the enemy (though it is quite possible), especially in the assessment of military questions. It remains to be seen how the world will react to a failure of the Russian operational plans for this winter. The three weak political points for the Axis at present are Spain, Turkey and Finland. In the two first-mentioned countries, things seem to be changing gradually for the better. In Finland, the apparently very difficult task of forming a cabinet must be completed before the new tendency becomes evident. No authentic information concerning the background of Ribbentrop's visit in Rome has been received.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff be requested to supply Air Force mobile anti-aircraft units to reinforce the anti-aircraft defense of St. Nazaire.

II. Chief, Naval Communications Division reports that the method used by the Navy to prevent jamming of our radar when enemy planes are approaching has proved successful. Equipment of the first ten submarines with fixed antennas for radar interception has been started.

III. Quartermaster General reported on the installation of naval anti-aircraft guns at St. Nazaire. Chief, Naval Staff has given orders for the work to be expedited and for a sequence of priority



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to be established at once (if this has not already been done) for all work arising simultaneously at the base. Most important of all is to ensure the power supply. St. Nazaire is especially vulnerable due to its locks. Commander in Chief, Air Force has promised all possible assistance for the submarine campaign. He must now help with anti-aircraft guns and with fighters.

Quartermaster General also reported on the transfer of Siebel ferry construction or the relative quotas from the Air Force to the Navy. The actual position in regard to quotas is evidently not yet entirely clear. Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that an attempt be made to transfer all naval construction quotas from the Air Force to the Navy and will himself take the first opportunity to discuss it with Reich Minister Speer.

IV. Report by Operations Division, Foreign Affairs Section on Naval Staff's question to the Foreign Office and the latter's reply in regard to Anglo-American/Portuguese relations. The reply states that the Americans have so far made no demands of any kind for Portuguese bases. British efforts in this direction have been warded off for the time being by Salazar's strong attitude. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

V. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division presented a summary of ships sunk in Feb. 1943. This list has been checked by the Foreign Merchant Marine Branch. Copy as per 1/Skl 6523/43 geh. in War Diary, File "Enemy Shipping Losses."

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

VI. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

a) On the question of submarine escort in to Toulon by the Italians, according to notes in War Diary, 26 Feb.

b) On the sinking of the Spanish steamer IGUELDO by an Italian submarine in the Atlantic and the official German-Italian explanation thereof. The steamer was sailing under U.S. air cover.

c) On the sinking of an Irish steamer at 48°N, 12°W by a German submarine. The affair is not to be published.

d) On Group North's plans in regard to the transfer of the SCHARNHORST, in accordance with notes in War Diary of 28 Feb., with which Naval Staff agrees. Chief, Naval Staff also agrees.

e) On the necessity to refuse the request by Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West to German Naval Command, Italy concerning the transfer of coastal minelayers. Chief, Naval Staff concurs.

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VII. Chief, Operations Division reported on the intention of the Fleet Command not to transfer destroyer Z "28" to the west area, but to send her to Norway in order to change Commanders. The present Commander of Z "28" has been requested by Commanding Admiral, Task Force, Admiral Kummetz, for appointment as Chief, Operations Branch. Chief, Naval Staff granted this request at a meeting between Commanding Admiral, Fleet, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and Chief of Staff, Naval Staff on 28 Feb. The conference between the two Commanding Admirals and Chief, and Chief of Staff, Naval Staff was held for the purpose of discussing views on the operational possibilities of the large vessels in the northern area in the light of the new situation.

VIII. Report by Operations Division, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section on its sphere of activities.

IX. Chief, Naval Staff reported on the result of his discussions with Reichsmarschall Goering on 25 Feb.

The Reichsmarschall declared that, in his opinion, submarine warfare was the only possible means of successfully attacking England and America. He promised to give all possible support to the submarine campaign by provision of long-range reconnaissance planes. However, he warned against over-optimism in regard to the planes' readiness for action. Developments took a long time and the industries usually did not keep their promises. However, he hoped that the He 177 type might be suitable as a reconnaissance plane by the fall of this year. He did not believe that the Me 264 would ever be ready for action. These planes had their gasoline supply in the wings and no one could fly them against the present defense. He agreed that the three BV 222 planes, at present employed on supply service in the east, should be used instead for submarine warfare reconnaissance. He could not issue orders to this effect, however, because the Fuehrer had assigned these planes to carry supplies. The request of Commander in Chief, Navy that long-range reconnaissance be flown twice a day, each time with six planes, was not considered exaggerated by the Reichsmarschall, who believed that it could be done by one wing. He promised his full support towards the establishment of such reconnaissance. He offered to help Commander in Chief, Navy with the anti-aircraft defense of the submarine bases.

He stated that he was not interested in the matter of Siebel ferries.

Notes of 1 Mar. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

In view of this attitude of the Reichsmarschall, Chief, Naval Staff merely reported to the Fuehrer on 26 Feb. that the former had concurred in the Navy's demands. The Fuehrer took note of this report but expressed some doubt as to the possibility of the promises being fulfilled.



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Chief, Naval Staff again stated in conclusion that the Reichsmarschall has promised to support the submarine campaign with all means available to him.

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Special Items.

I. On 24 Feb. Group North submitted a survey of the situation regarding the Skagerrak declared area and the West Wall. Naval Staff agreed with the estimates, which were given because of impending transfer of Group North's tasks to North Sea Station or Naval Command, Norway.

Reinforcement of the Skagerrak barrages is not necessary for the time being. It is, however, desirable that the West Wall barrages be strengthened during this summer. For reports of Group North as per 1/Skl 586 and 587/43 Gkdos. Chefs. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

II. Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Navies Branch has taken data from British captured material for a report on the organisation and activity of the British Intelligence Service in East Africa. For copy as per 1/Skl 6306/43 geh. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. I. The report is of general interest and gives a good insight into the working methods of the British in the collection and evaluation of information. The data on the methods of deception employed by the enemy are of special interest.

III. In regard to the distribution of the available iron quota for the second quarter of 1943, and in accordance with information received from Naval (Ship) Construction Division, Naval Staff has established the following sequence of priority for continuation of construction work:

- a) Submarines, war transports and naval landing craft in the south area,
  - b) Torpedo recovery vessels 9-24,
  - c) Continuation of the construction of minesweepers, at least within the current program; small mine-exploding vessels,
  - d) Destroyers and torpedo boats 39/41,
  - e) Motor minesweepers,
  - f) PT boats,
  - g) Armed fishing vessels,
  - h) Auxiliary ships etc.
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Situation 1 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

According to an intelligence report from Copenhagen of 27 Feb., the U.S. convoys for Murmansk sail directly along the pack-ice border and no longer call at Iceland.

Another intelligence report from the U.S.A. via "Ostrov" dated 8 Feb. states that one to three large convoys were expected to sail about 10 to 12 Feb. from Chesapeake, Philadelphia or Charleston, with escort from Norfolk. When this report was sent, troop embarkation was in full swing. The steamers SIRIUS, GEORGIC, WESTPOINT, AMERICA and PRESIDENT WILSON were definitely observed among the transports. The other transports are of various sizes, at least 40-50% being new ships of the C 2 and C 3 classes with a few Liberty ships. At that time there were several cruisers and numerous destroyers in Norfolk, but no corvettes or aircraft carriers. It is definitely known that no tropical equipment was taken on for the troops embarked. It is said that additional escort vessels, including a British aircraft carrier, are expected to join the convoy in the West Indies.

According to another intelligence report from Santa Isabel dated 27 Feb., a convoy of three medium-sized vessels and one very large one - possibly a heavy cruiser - passed by making for Victoria Duala.

2. Own Situation:

No reports have been received from our own vessels in foreign waters. Otherwise nothing special to report.

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II. Situation West Area.

Atlantic Coast:

In order to ensure that vital blockade runners reach Japan, Naval Staff is planning a massed break-through of the blockade area to be made simultaneously at various points with the aim of splitting up the enemy's defense and thus increasing the chances of a break-through by individual vessels. Group West has therefore been ordered to make preparations for the OSORNO, PORTLAND, HIMALAYA and if possible, ALSTERUFER to be brought out together and to despatch them as soon as destroyers and sufficient air reconnaissance are available.



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Naval Staff expects this to be carried out between 10 and 16 Mar. The departure of tankers will be postponed.

Torpedo boats T "9", "12" and "18" arrived at Nantes. On 28 Feb. one ELM/J mine was cleared by a mine-exploding vessel off Lorient. Concerning the high-explosive bombing attack on the afternoon of 27 Feb., Brest dockyard reports that six hits by 500 kg. bombs caused serious damage to buildings but small material damage. The dockyard's working capacity is unimpaired. For report by Group West on damage to St. Nazaire on the evening of 28 Feb., see teletype 0812.

For bringing in the DOGGERBANK, Naval Staff has established codeword "Kaptaube".

Channel Coast:

At 0200 PT boats S "90" and "121" entered Cherbourg. Torpedo boats T "13" and "17" are transferring from Dunkirk to the Hook of Holland.

The action by the 5th PT Boat Flotilla against the westbound convoy in Lyme Bay was unsuccessful due to heavy clouding up and poor visibility. For brief report, see teletype 1848.

An exploratory operation by the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla off the southeast coast was also without result on account of poor visibility. For brief report, see teletype 1845.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

No particular reports have been received.

Own Situation:

During the night of 28 Feb. about 17 enemy PT boats were located off Helder. Patrol position "Rom" was therefore withdrawn. A ground mine was cleared before a convoy north of Ameland. Two motor minesweeper flotillas are engaged in search-sweeping the convoy channel; two minesweeper flotillas, one mine-exploding vessel and one minesweeping plane are employed on channel sweeping.

A supplementary report states that naval anti-aircraft guns shot down one enemy plane on 18 Feb. and one on 19 Feb. in the area of Wilhelmshaven.



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Starting at 1937 harrassing sorties were made between Terschelling and Wangeroog. From 2015 strong enemy air forces penetrated between Esbjerg and Heligoland. The attack was concentrated on Berlin. One plane was shot down by a patrol boat north of Terschelling and one each by naval anti-aircraft guns near Brunsbuettel and Heligoland. The sets in Borkum, Heligoland, Wangeroog, Sande and Schillig were jammed.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

The 20th Mountain Army Command reports that 17 vessels have sailed from Kola Bay to the north. This report is not absolutely reliable.

### Own Situation:

Situation reports from Admiral, Arctic Coast and Admiral, North Norwegian Coast have not come in on account of line trouble. The steamer TROMOESUND, which escaped on 28 Feb. from Raeke Fjord, was intercepted at 0825 by our Air Force and was sunk at 1130 in grid square AN 4922. The crew had probably already been picked up by a British destroyer.

Admiral, Northern Waters transmits an extract from an operational order for transport of a weather observation instrument by weather ship COBURG to Bear Island (Operation "Brausewetter"). Estimated date of sailing is 5 Mar. A submarine will escort her at sea as far as the ice border. The instrument is to be set up near Heedin if possible. Return according to orders of Admiral, Northern Waters.

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## IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Patrol of the Skagerrak was carried through by eight boats. Escort tasks in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were at times interrupted owing to weather conditions. In regard to the SCHARNHORST, Naval Staff has sent Group North its approval, with copy to the Fleet, of reported plans and order for the provision, if possible, of berths in Strande Bay, Kiel, and also for participation of the destroyers equipped for rough-sea torpedo firing in the transfer to the northern area. This is irrespective of Commander in Chief, Air Force's decision on Naval Staff's request for assignment of an He 59 plane.

A large amount of truck traffic was observed on 28 Feb. between Lissi Noss and Kronstadt and between Kronstadt and Oranienbaum. An air attack by us on Lavansaari was repulsed by accurate heavy anti-aircraft fire. A few enemy planes dropped leaflets over Tallinn in the morning.

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According to a report from the Naval Attaché, Helsinki, an attempt will be made to open traffic to Kotka as early as the beginning of March with the aid of steamers reinforced against ice and ice-breakers.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

In the sea area of the convoy operation south of Greenland, contact was made with several small groups. A concentration of about ten steamers sailing on southwesterly course is believed to be a fast convoy. Contact with this enemy group was lost in the darkness. One boat reports sinking a motorship of 9,000 GRT and that, while maintaining contact with two large steamers, one of them was seen to sink though no explosion was heard. The operation is being continued.

The sinking of a steamer of 5,000 GRT is reported from the Western Mediterranean. Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

No special reports of daytime operations. According to a report from Air Force General Staff, 176 enemy planes flew over German territory in the evening in two groups; 120 planes flew into the area Rostock-Eberswalde-Leipzig-Erfurt-Bocholt. This group concentrated its attacks on Berlin. The number of planes engaged in this action has not yet been established accurately. At times up to 30 planes were over the city simultaneously. Heavy damage was done.

Twenty planes dropped mines in the mouth of the Elbe and 10 planes were sighted in the area of Papenburg-Dortmund. Seventy-three Me 110, 10 Do 217 and 8 Ju 88 planes were in action as night fighters. They shot down 12 planes and 4 more were shot down by anti-aircraft guns. It is probable that this figure will prove to be even higher.



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2. Mediterranean Theater:

Strong enemy air forces attacked Palermo at noon and Naples in the afternoon. At both places damage and losses, also to ships in port, were caused. For further details see "Own Situation Mediterranean."

3. Eastern Front:

No special reports have been received.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

No special reports from Gibraltar. Sections of the eastbound convoy reported on 28 Feb. have apparently entered Algiers. On the afternoon of 28 Feb. 3-4 more vessels were reported west of Algiers and in the evening 1 cruiser, 1 destroyer and 1-2 steamers 14 miles northeast of Algiers, with no details of course and speed. According to photographic reconnaissance 3 light cruisers, 4 destroyers, 1 gunboat and 11 steamers were in Bone on the afternoon of 28 Feb. The harbor was protected by a balloon barrage.

At 1025 on 1 Mar. 6 light naval vessels were sighted 26 miles north-northwest of Phillippeville on southwesterly course, proceeding at high speed.

Submarines were observed near Gaeta, Capri and Messina.

An eastbound convoy consisting of 6 small steamers was reported on the morning of 28 Feb. west-northwest of Appolonia.

On 28 Feb. the British Admiralty reported the loss of the corvette ERICA, with no further details. According to captured material, a corvette escorting a British convoy to Malta sank on 22 Mar. 1942 after striking a mine. It is uncertain whether this is a new vessel of the same name.

According to an intelligence report from France, the attitude of the population in the Italian-occupied areas, which was at first very hostile, especially in Nice and Toulon, has taken a surprising turn for the better due to the extraordinarily reserved behavior of the Italians.

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## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines were in the operational area. On the evening of 28 Feb. one of our submarines torpedoed a steamer of 5,000 GRT 45 miles east-northeast of Algiers.

On the evening of 1 Feb. (obviously meant to read 1 Mar., Tr. N.) the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas left Bizerta for operations off Bone. PT boat S "56" was sunk on the afternoon of 28 Feb. in the harbor of Palermo by air attack. While searching for S "35", wreckage and a small rubber dinghy were found 28 miles northwest of Bizerta. According to a report from German Naval Command, Tunisia, the loss of S "35" was probably due to a floating mine. While on channel sweeping a motor minesweeper group found a barrage 25 miles northwest of Bizerta and has so far cleared seven Mark XVII mines.

Submarine-chasers "2204" and "2202" left Marseilles. Minesweeper M "6024" is en route from Savona to Genoa and M "6022" with six auxiliary motor minesweepers is en route from Leghorn to Naples.

The British MTB "262" which sank off La Galite was scuttled by her crew after her engines and radio had failed. This boat, with three others, was stationed at Bone.

Heavy enemy air raids on 28 Feb. on Cagliari and on 1 Mar. on Naples and Palermo caused considerable shipping losses. At Cagliari, the steamer PAOLO (3,855 GRT), a submarine-chaser and several minesweepers were sunk. Four steamers, a hospital ship, two motor minesweepers and 16 barrage and patrol boats were damaged. Besides that, heavy damage was caused to the quays and port installations. The torpedo boat MONSONE sank at Naples. The motorship ORIANI and the German steamer RHEA were heavily damaged, two more torpedo boats and the motorship CORRADO slightly damaged. In Palermo the steamer SCHIAFFINO sank and the destroyer GENIERE was apparently heavily damaged.

Commander in Chief, Air Force has already arranged for anti-aircraft vessels employed on transport service to Africa to be used to protect Italian ports between passages.

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

At 1305 on 28 Feb. the steamer ISCHIA (5,101 GRT) was sunk on her way from Genoa to Spezia by an enemy submarine near Portofino.

On the evening of 28 Feb. the convoy BELLUNO entered Tunis. On the afternoon of 1 Mar. five destroyers disembarked German troops in Tunis.



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The following were unloaded in Tunisian ports during February: 2,120 motor vehicles, 52 tanks, 163 guns and 49,600 tons of cargo. The hoped-for minimum discharge of 60,000 tons was not reached since not enough steamers arrived. Discharge at Bizerta on 1 Mar. amounted to 3,210 tons.

In reply to a query from Naval Staff, the Naval Attaché, Rome has confirmed the following responsibility for the movement of vessels from the area of southern France to Italian ports: The Naval Attaché, Rome remains responsible for this task north of the latitude of Naples; all movements and commercial traffic south of this line, particularly between Italy and the Aegean Sea area are controlled by Chief, Supply and Transport, Italy, insofar as military safety measures are required. Only one exception has been made to this rule, which has been in force since 19 Dec. 1942, i.e. for the Spanish steamer JUAN DE ASTIGARRA, in which case it was found necessary to use a more direct channel of communication because of imminent danger.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

No special reports have been received.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance sighted a submarine in the morning 35 miles south of the Strait of Kerch. Two merchantmen were sighted off Sochi, a merchantman sailing northwest 30 miles west of Sukhum and a cruiser sailing east 60 miles east of Samsun off the north coast of Turkey.

Own Situation:

On 28 Feb. there was lively gunfire and air activity near Novorossisk. No enemy vessels were detected in the Bay of Novorossisk-Kabardinka. A freighter aground off Cape Myshako was attacked by our dive-bombers. On 27 and 28 Feb. the 8th Air Corps dropped 27 aerial mines in the entrance to Ghelenjik.

During the night of 28 Feb., nothing was sighted by four boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla operating in the area southeast of Ghelenjik. Four Italian PT boats in waiting position in the Novorossisk area observed, apart from six Russian PT boats, no supply traffic and no vessels at the landing stage. PT boat operations were cancelled on the night of 1 Mar. on account of weather conditions.

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Submarine U "9" has left the operational area and is on her way back to Constantza. Two naval landing craft with cotton and ammunition put in to Kerch from Anapa. Ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was carried out without obstruction from ice. Enemy air activity was only slight due to low ceiling. A combined operations landing craft was damaged by a mine between Yenikale and Kossa Chuchka. Another mine was exploded by a landing boat. A minesweeping plane was employed on channel sweeping. The Yenikale-Kossa Chuchka route was temporarily closed due to danger of mines.

The following were ferried to the west: 3,300 soldiers, more than 600 prisoners, 800 civilians, 2,100 horses, 340 motorized and 486 horse-drawn vehicles. Twenty-five naval landing craft made 64 trips in both directions.

In the rest of the Black Sea convoy traffic went according to plan.

The carburetor of harbor defense vessel Ro "33" caught fire and the boat is a total loss.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance.

Nothing special to report.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

Report by Chief, Fleet Operations Section, Operations Division on the situation in the South Pacific area. Notes in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

Otherwise no special reports or decisions.

Commander in Chief, Navy held a conference with Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, the Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy and others on the subject of reconnaissance in the west area for purposes of submarine warfare. Minutes of this conference as per l/Skl I L 6625/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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Special Items.

I. As ordered, a report was submitted to the Fuehrer on Naval Staff's plans for continuation of the blockade running service. Copy as per teletype l/Skl I k 622/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

II. In respect to the employment of auxiliary cruisers, Naval Staff is of the opinion that, however the war may develop, there are two operational areas that will always offer possibilities for successful action: the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Both these sea areas are vast and difficult to patrol. Owing to their geographical situation, effective submarine operations are possible only in the coastal areas and, even there, only with large boats having an especially wide radius of action. The remoteness of these seas will admirably achieve the desired diversion of enemy naval forces upon the appearance of auxiliary cruisers. As long as only one German cruiser is operating the enemy will be forced to maintain numerous forces in areas far removed from the main theater of naval warfare. In the opinion of Naval Staff, this heavy strain on the enemy forces, compared to which our own efforts would be insignificant, shows the necessity for overseas commitment of auxiliary cruisers, even if only of a single vessel.



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At present only two auxiliary cruisers are available. Ship "28" is in Japan and Ship "5" is being made ready at home for the fall of this year; therefore, after Ship "28"'s engines have been overhauled, this auxiliary cruiser will be available for operations in summer and fall 1943 and Ship "5" will be available following her return. Thus, during the years 1943 and 1944, only one cruiser in each year will be ready for action. Our commitment of forces, therefore, against which the enemy will be compelled to protect himself on all the oceans, will be extremely small.

All the experiences and requirements of auxiliary cruiser warfare to date have been incorporated on Ship "5". In armament and equipment and with her speed of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  knots this vessel represents the ideal type of a modern auxiliary cruiser attainable by us. Naval Staff is convinced that the commitment of even a single cruiser will force the enemy to maintain strong defensive measures, so that the suspension of auxiliary cruiser warfare would give him a considerable moral and practical advantage.

For these reasons, Chief, Naval Staff has agreed that Ship "5" be completed and made ready for action.

III. On 1 Mar. Group North submitted an order for passage of the SCHARNHORST from home waters to Norway (codeword "Paderborn".) Port of destination will be Narvik - Bogen Bay, intermediate port - if necessary - Trondheim. The following escort forces are planned: Commander, 5th Destroyer Flotilla with BEITZEN, IHN, STEINBRINCK and Z "28"; Commander, 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla with T "16", "20", "21", JAGUAR and GREIF. For reasons of fuel supply, the latter Flotilla will be transferred in advance to Kristiansand South. For this operation, destroyers IHN and STEINBRINCK will interrupt their rough-sea torpedo firing at Bergen and will move to Kristiansand South for supplies. Destroyer BEITZEN will join the SCHARNHORST in the Kattegat, coming from Aarhus.

From Kristiansand South the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla will be called upon only if the SCHARNHORST's speed is not reduced by weather conditions. In this case, after arrival in Kors Fjord, two torpedo boats can be detached to Bergen for rough-sea torpedo firing. If unfavorable weather sets in, the torpedo boats will remain in Kristiansand South for the time being. If weather conditions are such as to exclude only the torpedo boats from accompanying SCHARNHORST, the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla is to proceed independently as far as Skudesnes Fjord and then through the skerries to Bergen. There two boats will be detached for rough-sea torpedo firing.

Operational control of the transfer will be in the hands of Commanding Admiral, Group North at Kiel; from Trondheim onwards



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in the hands of Admiral, Northern Waters. The Commander of the SCHARNHORST will hold the tactical command and Commander, 5th Destroyer Flotilla will be in command of the escort forces. Estimated date of departure is 6 Mar.

If visibility is poor or if weather conditions exclude enemy air reconnaissance, it is planned to sail partially or entirely outside the skerries. From Kristiansand South to Narvik it is hoped to sail outside the skerries. If visibility is good, it is planned to take the skerries from Kors Fjord, rounding Stadlandet by night. The order to sail inside or outside the skerries will be given by radiogram from Group North or by decision of the Commander on the basis of local conditions. The operation may be broken off at the Commander's decision only in case of great urgency or otherwise by Group North. If the formation should be intercepted by the enemy in the Skagerrak, it will either: discontinue the operation and return homewards; discontinue and deviate along the south coast of Norway towards Oslo Fjord; discontinue and stand on and off in the Skagerrak.

IV. Brief Report on the Enemy Situation No. 2/43, by Naval Intelligence Division, Enemy Situation Branch contains information on the construction of U.S. auxiliary aircraft carriers, the anti-submarine equipment of the British Fleet, radar procedure, the commissioning of so-called anti-submarine frigates, the establishment of special Coastal Command bomber combat groups operating with depth-charges on convoy escort, and on ships commissioned and launched in America where the first battleship of the IOWA class, which has taken 32 months to construct, was commissioned on 23 Feb. The second vessel is due to be ready in April. The report also contains further information on the voting of large funds to the U.S. Navy for the acquisition of advanced bases, probably in the Pacific Ocean, and on a law providing for the establishment of a global system of floating and dry docks for repairing American and Allied ships. Finally, there is information on the attempt to replace the air route from North America to the Middle East via Natal-Freetown-Lake Chad, which has taken a heavy toll of losses, by a new air route via French Morocco-Algeria-Libya; also information on the battle strength and the morale of the island of Malta, evidently based on conditions at the beginning of summer 1942.

Report as per 1/Skl 6524/43 geheim in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation."

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Situation 2 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

A Japanese agent reports the following convoy movements: On 31 Jan. a convoy of 21 vessels with 1 light cruiser and 4 destroyers left Baltimore for Australia. On 8 Feb. a convoy of 17 vessels with 1 light cruiser and 3 destroyers left Baltimore for North Africa. On 12 Feb. a convoy of 25 vessels with 2 light cruisers and 6 destroyers left Baltimore in the direction of England, apparently bound for Russia. Finally, on 14 Feb. a convoy was being prepared in Baltimore, probably for Australia.

Indian Ocean:

On 2 Mar. a report was intercepted from a vessel in the Gulf of Oman being pursued by a suspicious ship which did not reply to signals.

In regard to the loss of the HOHENFRIEDBERG, the British Admiralty has announced that the tanker was detected by a Liberator plane 500 miles from Cape Finisterre on northerly course and that the cruiser SUSSEX was able to intercept and sink her six hours later at a range of about 9 miles. In view of the presence of a submarine and a German FW plane, the cruiser was unable to pick up survivors.

2. Own Situation:

Ship "28" entered Kobe on 2 Feb. (Mar?, Tr.N.)

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo has been informed that Naval Staff will appreciate receiving reports on the Japanese situation in the same manner as heretofore, as they are particularly valuable in assessing the situation and for cooperation with Admiral Nomura. For the reports which the Attaché will submit to Armed Forces High Command, in his capacity as Service Attaché, the instructions issued at the end of Dec. 1942 by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff remain in force.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:



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Twelve minesweepers on operation were observed by air reconnaissance south-southwest of Start Point on 1 Mar. At noon there was a convoy of 8 steamers with 2 patrol boats east of Lizard Head on northeasterly course, and in the evening a convoy of 16 steamers with 1 cruiser and 8 more escort vessels on southerly course 150 miles west of Lisbon. On the afternoon of 2 Mar., 11 steamers and 1 tanker with 2 destroyers, on northeasterly course, were sighted between Lizard Head and Start Point. Other steamers were observed south of Plymouth and south of Lizard Head.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

On the evening of 28 Feb. there were 50 fishing vessels at sea in the northern area and 113 in the southern area.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has advised Naval Staff for information of the order to the 3rd Air Force and Commanding General, Air Force Command, Center, to expedite reinforcement of the defense forces in St. Nazaire, La Pallice and Bordeaux against the increasing enemy air attacks. The 3rd Air Force is to increase the anti-aircraft defense of the ports mentioned - from its own forces, if necessary at the expense of the defenses on the south coast of France. By agreement between the 3rd Air Force and Commanding General, Air Force Command, Center, night defense will soon be amplified by use of anti-aircraft trains. The trains employed in Pomerania will be brought up first (see teletype 2030).

Channel Coast:

In the evening British long-range batteries opened fire on a German convoy. At 2230 the steamer PENTIVER (2,382 GRT), sailing in the convoy, was sunk by gunfire.

This is the first success by British long-range shelling in the Channel.

Further details have not yet been received.

The planned operations by the 5th PT Boat Flotilla on the night of 2 Mar. into the southern part of Lyme Bay and by the 2nd, 4th and 6th PT Boat Flotillas into the sea area south of Southwold were broken off because of poor visibility.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Sweden dated 1 Mar., preparations are being made in southeast England for a landing in Denmark with the purpose of cutting off Norway from Germany. In order to divert attention, landing attempts will also be made on Crete, Sicily and the French coasts.

Own Situation:

Eight Dutchmen, who were trying to escape to England by motorboat, were captured by a patrol boat off the Hook of Holland. Torpedo boats T "13" and "17" moved from Dunkirk to Rotterdam. North of Juist and north of Ameland four ground mines were cleared ahead of a convoy. Another ground mine was cleared north of Wangeroog. Escort service was hindered by weather conditions. Mine-sweeping operations also had to be interrupted. Patrol positions were taken up as planned.

From 1940 enemy planes flew over the Heligoland Bight to lay mines on the convoy routes between Wangeroog and Schiermonikoeg. The centers of this operation were the areas of Borkum and Heligoland. Naval targets north of Terschelling were unsuccessfully bombed. Our radar sets were jammed again.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Very active air reconnaissance by day in the direction of the Norwegian west and southwest coasts.

Our own reconnaissance reported from Murmansk at 1900 on 1 Mar. an outgoing QP convoy 100 miles east-northeast of Cape Teriber-ski on course 40° with three escort vessels. At 0555 on 2 Mar. this convoy was detected by one of our submarines in grid square AC 8625. The number of vessels was not reported.

Own Situation:

Five of our submarines operating in the area about 140 miles northeast of Vardoe made temporary contact with a QP convoy on course 310°. Enemy defense and poor visibility, as well as heavy ice floes, made attack impossible.



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On 28 Feb. Russian batteries on the Rybachi Peninsula fired 70 rounds at a naval landing craft near Nurmansetti without effect. The convoy route was checked without results. Submarine-chase centered on Nordkyn. On 26 Feb. the ferry ship WIKING burnt out in Faeg Fjord. During an enemy air attack on Petsamo on 1 Mar. 95 bombs and machine-gunfire caused only slight damage. Escort service was conducted according to plan. Examination of the steamer NORDFAHRT revealed an attempt at sabotage by means of an explosive charge attached to the outside. On 1 Mar. the PT boat accommodation ship UTHAUG burnt out in Bugn Fjord. On 2 Mar. the minelayer ROLAND drifted on to the rocks in the port of Kristiansand South, but was towed off again.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has ordered the transfer of one night fighter squadron each to Herdla and Oerlandet for use during the transfer of the SCHARNHORST (see teletype 2310).

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

On account of weather conditions, boats of the Skagerrak patrol took shelter in coastal waters. For the same reason, convoys and channel sweeps were restricted.

In Kronstadt Bay motor sleds were fired on by a naval battery near the Leningrad breakwater. The battery position northeast of Seiskaari was attacked with 10 SC 50 bombs.

Admiral, Northern Waters reports that the 3rd Air Force Field Corps has requested guns to reinforce the flank defense on Koporya Bay. Admiral, Baltic States proposes that a battery from Odenholm be transferred to the Dubnia Peninsula as soon as the mine-laying operations scheduled by Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic have been carried out and surface forces have been transferred to the Gulf of Finland. As a provisional measure, the former anti-aircraft battery at Ustluga will be transferred to Peipia at the beginning of March and will later be used as anti-aircraft defense for Battery "Prinz Heinrich" (see teletype 1250).

Group North will settle this matter.

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#### V. Merchant Shipping.

As soon as the new organization of the Navy has come into operation, it is planned to hold a conference, at Wilhelmshaven, at which the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping will be

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present, on the control of merchant traffic in the Baltic and North Seas in case of mine danger. Naval Staff has given directions to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, with copy to Group North and North Sea Station, that until then they can order merchant traffic to be stopped or diverted only with the approval of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, via the Deputy for Maritime Shipping, Hamburg. Group North has objected that, from the military aspect, this order is an intolerable constraint for the responsible Commanding Admiral as, in case of sudden danger of mines or PT boats or of attack by enemy naval forces, impossible delays would be caused if the approval of the Reich Commissioner had to be obtained in advance. Naval Staff has pointed out that the order refers exclusively to danger of mines and, even so, leaves the military commanders the possibility of taking immediate measures in cases of imminent danger.

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## VI. Submarine Warfare.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

There was lively reconnaissance activity in the Bay of Biscay. Thirty-two enemy planes were observed. According to radio intelligence, one of our submarines was bombed in the eastern part of the Bay of Biscay.

### 2. Own Situation:

A submarine operating against the convoy detected south of Greenland sank an unaccompanied vessel of 8,000 GRT. Off the South American coast, 12 miles south of Bahia, a submarine intercepted a convoy of 18 steamers in ballast with 5 escort vessels on easterly course; a 7,000 GRT freighter was sunk.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

On 1 Mar. 35 planes of the 3rd Air Force were on operation in the west area and 10 in the Mediterranean; on 2 Mar. 46 were on operation in the west area and 17 in the Mediterranean. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast continued patrol of the sea area off the coasts of Portugal and Northern Spain.



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During the enemy attack on St. Nazaire on the night of 28 Feb. six enemy planes were detected by our night fighter controls. However, since the enemy effectively jammed radio telephone communication with our ground stations, contact was not made.

According to a report from Air Force General Staff, 3 mine-bombs, about 50 high-explosive bombs, 50,000 incendiaries, 30 phosphorus bombs and 12 liquid incendiary bombs were dropped during the attack on Berlin on the night of 1 Mar. From the extent of the damage to be observed, the number of bombs used would seem to be greatly underestimated. For details of damage see "Daily Situation".

Between 1100 and 1600 repeated attacks were made on traffic installations in the Belgian coastal area. Nine locomotives were put out of action. On the evening of 2 Mar., 62 enemy penetrations into German territory were reported, 30 of them into the Heligoland-Borkum-Westphalian industrial area; bombs were dropped on Essen, Cologne and Duesseldorf.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

During the night of 28 Feb. a steamer of 6,000 GRT was damaged in an attack on a convoy northeast of Algiers. Other operations against targets off the Algerian coast were unsuccessful. On 1 Mar. seven enemy planes were shot down over the Tunisian area. During an attack on Palermo ten planes were shot down. Due to weather conditions, the planned attack on Tripoli on the night of 28 Feb. was shifted to Bone, where it was carried through against ships and port installations with observed effect. The Italian Air Force reported on 1 Mar. that four enemy planes were shot down for certain and another probably shot down during escort operations and alerts.

On 2 Mar. three bombers were sent out to attack the port of Bone and six torpedo bombers were sent out against a convoy off Cape Bougaroni. Five merchantmen were torpedoed and heavily damaged; two ships were probably sunk.

## 3. Eastern Front:

No special reports from the Army fronts have been received. The 4th and 5th Air Forces report reconnaissance flights. Eight Ju 88 planes of the 5th Air Force were engaged in the sinking of the Norwegian steamer TROMOESUND on 1 Mar. Three hours later, an enemy destroyer on southwesterly course was sighted in the area where the steamer had been sunk; she probably picked up the steamer's crew. A hit was scored on the destroyer. No further details have been reported.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

In the morning a convoy from the Mediterranean consisting of 20 steamers, some of them with balloon barrages and torpedo defense nets in position, escorted by 1 destroyer and 2 corvettes, entered Gibraltar. The convoy was followed by the heavy Task Force consisting of the NELSON and the RODNEY and a total of 10 destroyers.

In the Algiers-Bougie area, only a few shipping movements were observed. At noon there were 8 merchantmen in Bone and 4 in Bougie.

No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

According to Italian radio intelligence, there were vessels off Tobruk. According to an intelligence report from Lisbon, a large troop convoy is being assembled in Gibraltar, believed to be intended for an attack on Sicily or Italy. Another intelligence report states that a convoy of 18 transports, escorted by 3 cruisers and 6 destroyers and allegedly also submarines, will leave Beirut for Bizerta between 3 and 4 Mar. The embarked troops are reportedly Americans and Greeks and the cargo consists of aircraft material and ammunition.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

During the night of 1 Mar. the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas carried out a minelaying operation according to plan in the Bone area. S "60" transferred to Ferryville from Empedocle. Only one boat of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is ready to sail. Minesweeper M "6024" is en route from Genoa to Spezia.

In the morning a number of aerial mines was observed 8 miles east of Bizerta just north of the convoy route. The route has been temporarily closed. It is now reported that on 28 Feb. a Siebel ferry was lost by striking a mine 43 miles north-northwest of Cape Bon.

German Naval Command, Italy reports that the artillery defense of the Italian escort forces is inadequate. The report is based on the observations of German naval officers aboard and enumerates the measures considered necessary to remedy this state of affairs. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl 6464/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

Further steps are to be taken by Quartermaster Division.



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3. Sea Transport Situation:

Convoy CAMPANIA, consisting of three steamers and the tanker LABOR, entered Palermo from Africa on 1/2 Mar. Otherwise nothing special to report.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Nothing special to report.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there were 2 cruisers, 2 destroyers, 3 tankers and 11 steamers at Batum.

Own Situation:

On 2 Mar., 31 naval landing craft were operating in the ice-free Strait of Kerch. Road traffic on the Taman Peninsula was greatly hampered by mud. No report on the volume of transport is yet available.

Otherwise no special reports.

In accordance with Naval Staff's request, Group South has reported the following reasons for the so far unsuccessful operations by submarines in the Black Sea:

- a.) Difficult conditions for attack near the coast with continuous strong air patrol; traffic consists almost entirely of single vessels, generally with heavy escort; routes are patrolled by light naval forces and there are extensive mined areas off the ports.
- b.) Too few submarines.
- c.) Poor fighting qualities of small submarines.
- d.) So far insufficient experience of the Commanders.
- e.) Unfavorable season for air reconnaissance and insufficient number of reconnaissance planes.

The Group sees prospects of success, justifying increased submarine activity, in:

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- a.) Systematic and continuous action against the main bases, Poti and Batum, in conjunction with air reconnaissance during favorable seasons.
- b.) Tying down enemy forces by making escort of transport traffic necessary, which will greatly relieve our own convoys.

In order to produce any noticeable results it will be necessary to increase the number of submarines to nine. This is also desirable in view of the possibility of an extension of the war in the Black Sea.

Chief, Naval Staff has ordered Commander, 30th Submarine Flotilla to report in person to Berlin. Any decisions are postponed until then.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In reply to a question in the House of Lords in regard to the possibility of increasing the speed of ships in order to lessen the submarine threat, the Minister for War Transport replied:

"If we build faster vessels, we shall have to build proportionately fewer. There is no advantage in building ships which travel at more than convoy speed unless their speed is so high that they can proceed unaccompanied. About one third of the ships now under construction come into the category of high-speed vessels. These are mainly large freighters and in future will also include an increasing number of tankers."

The Under Secretary for Air stated that on the night of 1 Mar. Berlin had been more severely battered than ever before. Well synchronized day and night attacks by the R.A.F. and the U.S. Air Force were paving the way for invasion of Europe. The time was coming when, at no hour of the day or night, would the Axis be safe from attack by Allied planes. The present bombings were to be regarded as part of a large-scale general offensive which would have to be launched at a future date and at an unspecified place before Great Britain could count on final victory.

According to Reuter, the President of the Polish Government in Exile, Sikorski, has issued a warning against exaggerated optimism. It would be a mistake to believe that Germany's military or home fronts were on the point of collapse. The Underground in German-occupied territories must be encouraged in every way. The people demand proof by deeds that moral political principles are not merely words but a sacred duty for all Allied brothers in arms. These people want to be certain that there is really sincerity and unanimity in the Allied camp in regard to war aims. It is therefore evident that consolidation of peace depends on the loyal cooperation of all interested states. Sikorski is then said to have stated verbatim: "We shall achieve this close cooperation by the creation of various federative blocks, which have been drawn up particularly from the economic standpoint. This precise conception of the problem has met with the consent of the U.S.A. and the British Empire."

Finland:

The President, Ryti, has entrusted the President of the Council, Hakkila, with formation of a government, as he is the representative of the largest (social-democratic) party. Establishment of a Hakkila government would not be considered particularly favorable for Germany.



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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported that the Minister of Propaganda has issued new directions in regard to the treatment of the populations of the eastern countries. Copy in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

II. Report by Operations Division, Foreign Affairs Section on the delivery of weapons to Spain as per notes in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII. Chief, Naval Staff agrees with the proposals, since nothing must be left undone to give support to the Spaniards.

III. Report by Chief, Maritime Branch, Operations Division on the operational control of independent merchant shipping.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

IV. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo has transmitted an urgent request from the Japanese Navy that operations by submarine U "180" after the exchange of goods be cancelled, and that, in view of the important cargo, the boat be used solely for transport purposes. In addition, the Japanese Navy suggests that three torpedoes made available be taken by the German submarine, so that trials may be made on them. In order to make transportation possible, the Japanese propose that German torpedoes, if not all fired, should be turned over to the Japanese to be stored in Penang. The Japanese submarine is named IDA "29".

Chief, Naval Staff has decided that the operation planned for our submarine after the exchange of goods cannot be cancelled. However, the boat will not be assigned to operations against convoys. The Japanese are therefore to be informed that the danger in the assigned operational area is not so great as in the Bay of Biscay. Naval Staff agrees with the suggestion regarding the three torpedoes and with the Japanese proposal to shift the rendezvous to 33°S, 54°E, with alternative 31°S, 54°E on 10 Apr. at 1300 German summer time. A directive to this effect is being sent to the Naval Attaché, Tokyo by telegram 1/Skl I opa 654/43 Gkdos. Chfcs; copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

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Special Items:

I. Quartermaster Division issued service instructions to Admiral, Landing Craft and Bases and offices under his command on 19 Feb. 1943. Copy as per 1/Skl 6719/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V

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II. On 10 Feb. a conference took place between Naval Staff and the Air Force and Inspectors of the Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy on the results of helicopter experiments aboard the DRACHE in the Mediterranean. In order to help production, the Air Force had requested the transfer of naval specialists or building facilities. On 3 Mar. Naval Staff replied that the Navy was unable to provide specialists due to the shortage of personnel and material in that sphere. Furthermore, it was Naval Staff's understanding that Commander in Chief, Air Force had assumed responsibility for the construction of any flying gear for all branches of the Armed Forces. It was therefore requested that, notwithstanding this situation, the demand for construction of the prototype helicopter FL 282 be considered still effective and that the established numbers be delivered.

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Situation 3 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

A report from an agent reaffirms the fact that the total launchings in England during Jan. 1943 again comprised a remarkable number of vessels of 900 to 1,100 GRT.

According to another intelligence report via "Ostrov", 69,000 men were shipped from U.S. ports during the second half of Feb. As most of their equipment was not shipped at the same time as the men, it is assumed that these troops are not intended for an immediate invasion but are reinforcements. Details of the escort are not known. However, it is known with certainty that the escort that took the RICHELIEU to Brooklyn has put out to sea again. This included the cruiser SAVANNAH and the aircraft carrier CHARGER. Two battleships accompanied the troop convoy, of which one presumably crossed the Atlantic from North Africa or Gibraltar at the beginning of Feb. They are probably the WASHINGTON and a vessel of the IDAHO class.

Furthermore, the NEW MEXICO is said to have come back into service in Jan. after several months' repair and to have been attached to this convoy. New troops are already at the loading positions, to be embarked probably in three to four weeks, i.e. in the middle of Mar.

According to an intelligence report from Spain, seven steamers



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with war material and 7,000 Senegalese arrived at Casablanca from Dakar between 12 and 14 Feb. Other transports with Senegalese are expected. About twelve U.S. destroyers and one cruiser are presumably stationed at Casablanca.

The JEAN BART has been raised but is not yet ready to sail. It is said that she will be towed to Gibraltar. However, it is likely that this report is a deception and that the ship will be taken to the U.S.A. as was the RICHELIEU. The only ports in Morocco that can be used for unloading war material are Safi and Fedhala. The entrances are protected by mines.

#### Indian Ocean:

According to a delayed report from Lourenço Marques, a large tanker convoy for Australia has assembled in Durban. A large U.S. convoy of tankers is said to have passed Mombasa at the end of Feb. in the direction of the Persian Gulf. A similar convoy is said to have left Capetown for the same destination at the beginning of Mar.

#### 2. Own Situation:

According to the British radio, the tanker sunk by the SUSSEX was the fifth blockade runner detected and sunk by the Royal Navy within the last ten weeks, i.e. four in the Atlantic and one in the Indian Ocean. This statement refers to the GERMANIA, the CORTELLAZZO, the RHAKOTIS and the HOHENFRIEDBERG off the Bay of Biscay, and the RAMSES in the Indian Ocean. The ANNELIESE ESSBERGER is not included as she was sunk by U.S. forces.

The ROSSBACH, WESERLAND, KARIN and IRENE have been ordered by radiogram 2216 to cross a longitude 17° to the east and a latitude at least 7° to the south of point "Schraube."

For the motorship ALSTERUFER a new list of camouflage ships has been issued as per 1/Sk1 I k 658/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance reported a convoy of 21 steamers with 4 escort vessels 180 miles west-northwest of Lisbon on course 310°. There have been no reconnaissance reports on the south coast of England.

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Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 1800 there was an explosion of ammunition at the Naval Ordnance Depot, St. Nazaire during the unloading of ammunition damaged on 28 Feb. Casualties were caused.

Channel Coast:

During the night of 2 Mar. the 10th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared five EFA mines off Etaples. The loss of the steamer PENTIVRE by long-range shelling and simultaneous PT boat attack resulted in casualties on the steamer and on two patrol boats.

At 2117 motor minesweeper R "187" was slightly damaged by a mine on Route "Herz" between Boulogne and Etaples. The mine was definitely observed to be an antenna type with float buoy.

Air Commander, Atlantic Coast plans to send out FW 200 planes on 4 Mar. against the convoy detected off the Portuguese coast.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Two ELM/J mines were cleared on 2 and 3 Mar. south of Heligoland. Minesweeper M "8" struck a floating mine with her bow protection gear and was damaged. Details have not yet been received.

Escort service was carried out according to plan. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports that the convoy route from the Elbe to Terschelling has been heavily mined in the last days with ELM/A mines. This is an only slightly improved acoustic mine which, however, makes it necessary for the vessels of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North to be provided with cracker equipment and noise box (turbine).

In the evening numerous planes flew through the North German coastal area; the attacks were centered on Hamburg. A supplementary report states that two enemy planes were shot down by naval anti-aircraft guns on 2 Mar. in the Brunsbuettel and Wilhelmshaven sectors.



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Special Items:

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports that 66 ELM/J, 19 ELM/A and one ground mine were cleared during Feb. 1943. Fifteen enemy air attacks were made on the forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North and two PT boat engagements took place. One enemy plane was shot down and three PT boats were sunk. Two patrol boats were sunk by floating mines; one patrol boat, one steamer and one fishing smack were sunk by UMA/K mines and two steamers by ground mines. One torpedo-recovery vessel capsized in a storm.

In escort service, 328 ships totalling 579,426 GRT were escorted, 152 of these, totalling 298,798 GRT, in convoys to Holland. Twelve short escort trips were made for warships and submarines and fifteen for supply ships.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Lively air activity between the Faroes and the central North Sea. Our reconnaissance for the QP convoy had to be discontinued owing to bad weather.

Own Situation:

It is now reported that on 27 Feb. a Russian battery on the Rybachi Peninsula fired 129 rounds on an eastbound convoy. No damage was done. Fire was returned by our batteries. On the same day, the Cape Romanov battery fired 49 rounds on an enemy submarine according to noise bearing. Enemy air attacks on Petsamo on the morning and afternoon of 28 Feb. caused no damage.

In the Kirkenes area, air incursions were reported but no bombs were dropped. Escort service was carried out according to plan.

Interrupted contact with the QP convoy was maintained by the five assigned submarines. They have been hindered from attacking so far by heavy drift ice.

The weather observation ship COBURG dropped anchor in Reppe Fjord preparatory to starting Operation "Brausewetter".

Admiral, Northern Waters submits an extract from the transfer order for the TIRPITZ, with the GALSTER and JACOBI, from Trondheim to Bogen Bay. The code name for the action will be "Rostock". The transfer is planned to take place on 7 Mar.



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It is now reported that, in view of the capture of the HOHENFRIEDBERG, Group West again proposed on 27 Feb. that the next blockade runner be brought in on the northern route through the Iceland Strait, taking advantage of the element of surprise and periods of bad weather which are more frequent there than on Route "Anton".

Group North has submitted an operational order for the REGENSBURG for a break through the northern passage. Naval Staff is in command as far as the line from the northern point of the Hebrides to the southern point of Greenland; north of this line the Kiel command station of Group North will be in command, after rendezvous with the escort forces Admiral, Northern Waters in Narvik. The order will be delivered to the REGENSBURG by a submarine. Before reaching point "Anton" (250 miles from 57°30' N, 43°10' W on 239°) the REGENSBURG will receive directions from Group North as to the routes through the Denmark Strait or south of Iceland ("Hamilkar" or "Hannibal"). Rendezvous with three to four destroyers is planned at point "Ceasar" (132 miles from 72°50' N, 11°40' E on 45°). The 5th Air Force will make reconnaissance flights in the area east of 20° W as weather permits. The ship is to put in to Narvik.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

No minesweeping in the Great Belt due to bad weather. The other routes in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were checked according to plan. One mine was cleared by a Danish minesweeper in the Little Belt. One ground mine was cleared in the Kattegat.

Naval Staff has directed that gunboats K "1", "2" and "3" remain at the disposal of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic until at least four boats of the 21st Minesweeper Flotilla are ready for action.

Naval Staff has also directed that Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic place six boats of the 9th or 11th Motor Minesweeper Flotillas at the disposal of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic from 15 Mar. to 15 May. Details will be arranged direct between Group North and North Sea Station. Copy of teletype, with note on distribution of forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, as per 1/Skl I op 6434/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

Admiral, Baltic States has informed Naval Staff of a report to Baltic Station on the site for emplacement of Battery "Prinz Heinrich", which may be ready for firing about the end of April if construction is carried out according to plan.

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Because of the small range of the guns, the site is 8 km. from the front line and is seriously threatened by enemy airfields 25 km. away, especially since terrain conditions make it impossible to sink the battery. Reinforcement of at present very limited anti-aircraft defense will therefore be necessary. (See teletype 1300).

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was very active. Forty planes were detected. According to radio intelligence, an unidentified steamer in the Cape area reported at 2140 that she had been torpedoed and was sinking. Shortly after midnight, it was learned that a second vessel from a convoy had been torpedoed. Both reports are due to operations by our submarines.

2. Own Situation:

The operation against the convoy between Greenland and Iceland was broken off. For further reports see "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 132 planes out on operation in the west area and 6 in the Mediterranean.

At 1430 the molybdenum plant northeast of Egersund was attacked by enemy planes and heavily damaged. In Air Force Area Command, Western France two locomotives were damaged. An evening air raid on Hamburg caused heavy damage to houses and considerable damage to industrial plants, especially to the Vacuum Oil Company. Four enemy planes are reported to have been shot down by anti-aircraft fire and eight by night fighters. For further details see "Daily Situation".

2. Mediterranean Theater:

Ten enemy planes were shot down during the day. During the night of 3 Mar. 15 bombers were sent out against ships and port installations at Algiers. According to reports so far received, seven planes reached their target. For results of



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photographic reconnaissance of Phillipeville, Valetta, Port Said and Suez, see "Daily Situation". The pictures indicate no change in the situation.

3. Eastern Front:

On 2 Mar. eleven enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts. According to radio intelligence, eleven British reconnaissance planes and one sea-rescue plane were in action on 2 Mar. at the spot where the steamer TROMOESUND was sunk. It is therefore unlikely that the whole crew of the steamer has been saved.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to Intelligence Center, Spain, the corvette sunk on 22 Feb. by mines from submarine U "118" was probably the K "22".

A convoy of 6 troop transports passed Tangier at noon on easterly course. In the evening 4 destroyers left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean. Photographic interpretation of Valetta and Phillipeville furnished no special information. There have been no sighting reports from either the Western or the Eastern Mediterranean.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. There are no reports from our own submarines.

There were no operations by our PT boats because of bad weather or by the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, which is completing equipment and repairs. Motor minesweepers R "12" and "13" were damaged by air attack in the shipyard at Palermo. It is planned to tow the boats to Naples.

Of the mines reported on 2 Mar. to have been dropped 8 miles east of Bizerta, 3 were drifting on the surface and were sunk by Italian vessels. During channel sweeping off the Tunisian coast by all available Italian forces, another mine exploded 7 miles east of Bizerta in the vicinity of a minesweeper.

German Naval Command, Italy has ordered that a mine of this type be salvaged. Another mine was cut west of Trapani. Four further surface mines were observed.

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Submarine-chaser "2208" sailed at noon from Marseilles as escort for the steamer LUIGI carrying Air Force material to Genoa. Minesweeper M "6024" is expected in Spezia on the evening of 3 Mar. At noon minesweeper M "6022" entered Naples with six auxiliary motor minesweepers.

At noon on 2 Mar. an enemy air attack was made on the town and port of Tunis. No military damage was caused.

For the report of German Naval Command, Tunisia on the execution as planned of the operation by the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas on the night of 1 Mar. see teletype 2110. The 7th PT Boat Flotilla fired 8 MTA torpedoes at a range of 5,000 m. on the harbor entrance of Bone. When withdrawing a brief engagement with enemy PT boats took place without results. Northeast of Cape Delgarde the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla was detected by coastal searchlights and opened fire with 2 cm. guns. Covering impacts from coastal guns were evaded.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

Convoy COSTA, consisting of 3 steamers with 1 destroyer and 2 torpedo boats, left Naples during the morning for Bizerta. Additional escort by 2 corvettes was provided from Trapani. At 0900 war transports KT "13" and "14", for the first time unescorted, put out from Tunis for Palermo.

According to a report from German Naval Command, Italy, 34 ships totalling 112,958 GRT, not counting small vessels, were engaged in African traffic during Feb. 1943. Of these, 13 totalling 52,648 GRT or 46.6% were lost. From Italian escort forces, 1 destroyer and 1 torpedo boat were lost; 3 destroyers, 1 torpedo boat and 1 corvette were damaged.

The total amount of supplies shipped to Tunisia was 34,000 tons of military supplies and 14,500 tons of fuel. In addition, altogether 33,800 men were transferred by sea and air. Supply requirements totalled 60,000 tons of military supplies and 28,000 tons of fuel. On six days sea traffic with Tunis was suspended due to bad weather.

This month's balance is disturbing.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

An Italian torpedo boat located a mine barrage by echo-ranging 4 miles from Keos. Admiral, Aegean Sea considers this report doubtful.



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Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has issued the following instructions:

The defensive power of Crete has been considerably increased during recent months. It must therefore be expected that, if our enemies decide on large-scale operations in the Eastern Mediterranean, they will not attack Crete direct but will begin by trying to take Rhodes and Scarpanto, thus preventing supply traffic with Crete. At the same time, they may make continuous air raids on the island's airfields and supply bases in an attempt to destroy stocks of provisions and exhaust anti-aircraft ammunition.

Even a landing on the Peloponnesus is more likely than a direct attack on Crete.

The Fuehrer has therefore ordered:

1.) Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast will exert his influence to the utmost to convince Command Egeo and the Italian 11th Army that the enemy will, in all probability, first attack the Dodecanese islands or the Peloponnesus and that the only successful defense will be to prevent the landing. This is only possible, however, if the defense is established directly on the coast, as it is on all coasts occupied by us.

2.) Stocks on Crete, including the Italian zone, are to be raised as soon as possible to six months' supply, especially of foodstuffs not available on the island. Canned meat stocks can be as low as allowed by possible resort to the numerous sheep on the island.

Concentrated and tropical-packaged food must be mainly used for these provisions. It would be inexcusable for food to be spoiled by storage.

3.) The Army Rations Office and Quartermaster General will issue the necessary orders in accordance with the recommendations of Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast and report thereon to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff. Calculations must be based on the fact that in such a situation, apart from a few submarines, supply by small vessels and plane will only be possible occasionally (3,000 to 4,000 tons per month).

4.) The supplies must be protected from air raids and from naval bombardment. It will therefore be necessary to stow them in hollow shelters in the rocks even at the expense of constructing combat stations.

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5.) The supply of ammunition as provided up to now will meet requirements if it is brought up to full quota and stowage is mainly bulletproof. Anti-aircraft ammunition, however, will be far from sufficient in case of an enemy attempt to take the island only by air attack and cutting off supplies. The stock of anti-aircraft ammunition must be built up so as to be able to withstand several weeks of air raids and large-scale attack (compare our attacks on Malta). A stock of reserve guns is equally important.

Group South and Admiral, Aegean, with copy to German Naval Command, Italy, have been informed by Naval Staff.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

Enemy transports sighted from the beachhead south of Novorossisk were fired on by our guns. At Novorossisk demolition was continued in cooperation with the 73rd Infantry Division. Sea mines, depth charges and demolition blocks have been exhausted.

Operations by our own and Italian PT boats were cancelled on the night of 3 Mar. owing to bad weather. Minesweeping operations and convoys were stopped for the same reason.

A mine was cut on the convoy route Theodosia-Cape Takil. On the Kerch-Taman route a Russian drifting inertia-contact mine was exploded.

Naval landing craft space in the Strait of Kerch ferry traffic was not fully utilized by the Army on 2 Mar. since the approach roads were hardly passable. On 3 Mar. traffic had great difficulty in tying up due to heavy seas. Only 26 naval landing craft were employed and made 43 crossings.

The following were ferried to the west: 1,592 soldiers, 207 prisoners, 337 civilians, 1,454 horses, 93 motorized and 297 horse-drawn vehicles. The departure of naval landing craft for Anapa was postponed by 24 hours.

Admiral, Black Sea reports that the Azov transport operations ordered by the Fuehrer can be effectively carried out only if transport ships are available as well as naval landing craft.



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It is therefore essential that the production of war transports at Nikolayev be expedited. Failure in meeting schedules to date is attributed to breakdown in material deliveries. The estimated date of completion of the first ship by 1 June is very late and even this is doubtful. Furthermore, Admiral, Black Sea reports that the Army and Air Force are claiming the tankers, which have so far been used for the Navy, for their own fuel transport. Increased use of small vessels from Sevastopol on will, therefore, be necessary (see teletype 0342).

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

The Military Attaché, Bangkok reports:

The aim of current Japanese operations in China is to prevent the establishment of enemy air bases near the coast.

Japanese residents in Bangkok expect American air attacks from combined carrier forces on the main Japanese Islands in the middle of July. Counter-measures are being prepared. It is expected that the Japanese offensive against Russia will be launched at the beginning of July. The function of the Japanese Army group in the New Guinea area is essentially defensive. Estimates of the situation are optimistic. Attempt at close cooperation with Axis offices.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

The First Lord of the Admiralty stated on 3 Mar. in the House of Commons that German submarine production is probably still higher than the number of submarines destroyed, though the difference is steadily decreasing. The results of anti-submarine warfare during the last four months were the best of the war and best of all during February, while shipping losses during the past three months had been much lower than in the corresponding period of last year. The convoys to Russia have so far cost two cruisers, six small warships, many merchantmen and many valuable lives. According to careful estimates, the Germans and Italians have lost to date some five million GRT of merchant shipping. During 1942 more than half the attacks by which submarines had been damaged or destroyed were made by planes. In spite of the great number available, additional escort ships are urgently needed. This sector of production will be given priority over all others. In spite of heavy losses Great Britain now has many more destroyers and submarines than at the beginning of the war. Battleship strength has been maintained at the same level as it was at the beginning of the war, while cruiser losses have not been fully made good by new constructions. The corvette fleet at present numbers over 200 vessels.

The Statistical Institute at Oxford calculates that 29 million GRT of shipping are now available to the Allies. Gross losses to date amount to 18 million tons.

According to Reuter, Ghandi has ended his 21-day hunger strike. The British Government's unyielding attitude has thus proved itself.

Finland:

Hakkila has failed to form a government. Professor Linkomies has now been entrusted with this task. He is a right winger. His personality appears more favorable to German interests.

According to a Swedish press report, Finnish interest in a separate peace has markedly cooled. Confidence in Germany is said to be on the increase since the general mobilization. Leading Finnish circles are again hoping for a decisive defeat of Bolshevism. Ryti's speech is said to have contributed considerably to the collapse of rumors about a separate peace.

U.S.A.:

The Government has suggested to the British Government that an Anglo-American conference be held in Ottawa to discuss the problem



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of refugees, oppressed peoples and immediate assistance for the Jews in Europe.

An additional appropriation of over 4 billion dollars has been voted for the U.S. Navy. By the middle of 1944 there will be 2,800,000 officers and men serving in the U.S. Navy. In Congress, Secretary of the Navy Knox demanded a Navy strong enough to control all the seas of the world.

Spain:

Chief, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division has reported to Armed Forces High Command on the result of his conference with General Vigon on 14 and 15 Feb. in Madrid. Copy to Chief, Naval Staff as per 1/Skl 565/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, File "Gisela".

His report states that, at the present time, there are no definite indications of an Allied landing operation on the Iberian Peninsula. The competent Spanish authorities have no apprehension in this regard. The Spanish military authorities in particular can be relied upon to advise us as soon as there are any indications of Allied plans against the Iberian Peninsula. Military considerations as to foregoing a landing may not be decisive. It is difficult to judge how far political considerations may weigh. In any case, the possibility of a military action, perhaps at first only in Portugal, must not be overlooked. Spain has called up another 350,000 men.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Chief, Naval Communications Division reports that operational commands have suggested the possibility of detecting inaudible frequencies by inserting an optical eye into the radar interception gear. All submarines will be speedily provided with optical eyes, probably within this month.

II. On the proposal of the Bureau of Naval Administration, Quartermaster Division plans to use the SCHLESWIG HOLSTEIN and the SCHLESSEN as training ships.

Chief, Naval Staff concurs.

In compliance with enquiries from the Fuehrer, Quartermaster General reports that transfer to the Black Sea of the artillery barges capable of being dismantled cannot be accomplished sooner than April and that the war transports are not equipped with four-

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barreled guns because these are not available in sufficient number. The ships have already produced remarkable results with their 3.7 cm. guns.

III. Chief, Naval Staff reports that Reich Minister Speer has promised to increase the Navy's iron quota by 40,000 tons and that he will try to obtain the rest from the Fuehrer. Minister Speer has given instructions that a Siebel ferry quota of 7,000 tons per month is to be assigned to the Navy.

IV. Chief, Maritime Branch, Operations Division continued his report on the operational control of independent merchant shipping.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

V. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

- a.) The transfer of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla to the west area is under way. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West reports danger of mines due to a new mine offensive by the enemy. The decision lies with Group West which ordered this movement since convoys using this route during last night were undisturbed. The critical period is the passing of the Dunkirk barrier. Cherbourg is planned as the first port. PT boat flotillas have been assigned as flank escort.
- b.) Group North's operational order on the transfer of the SCHARNHORST has been received. For copy, see War Diary, 2 Mar.
- c.) Group North has approved the transfer of the TIRPITZ to Bogen Bay after 7 Mar. In spite of doubts in regard to furance oil, Naval Staff recommends approval, which has been given by Chief, Naval Staff.
- d.) Admiral Bertoldi has advised that the Italians are unable to carry out submarine escort in to Toulon. Toulon is ready to receive four submarines.

VI. Chief, Operations Division reports that at the end of April it will be possible to start submarine supply from Japanese ports for operations in the Indian Ocean. The question of provisions requires special consideration. Commanding Admiral, Submarines is to find out whether it will be possible to equip the submarines so that replenishment of provisions will not be necessary.

VII. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff reported on the intention of Commander in Chief, Air Force to disband the offices of the Air



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Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy and of the Inspector (Sea). The Navy might approve this plan if the functions of these two offices were included in a similar new organization.

Chief, Naval Staff will make a decision as soon as the requested conference with the Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy has taken place.

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Special Items:

I. A conference was held on 2 Mar. between Naval Staff and the General, Air Reconnaissance concerning the technical possibilities of Atlantic reconnaissance in 1943/44. Not much effective long-range reconnaissance can be expected before fall 1943. Copy is contained as per 1/Skl I L 6632/43 Gkdos. in Files 1/Skl I L 9/II Gkdos.

II. On 2 Mar. it was observed that aerial mines were dropped into water more than 40 m. deep in the Bizerta area. During check sweeping operations, a mine exploded in the vicinity of a minesweeper. Non-contact firing is therefore assumed. Naval Staff has informed Groups North, West and South, Naval Commands, North, Baltic and Norway, Admiral, Aegean and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic, with copy to German Naval Commands, Italy and Tunisia, indicating that these mines may also be expected in other theaters of war.

III. A summary of data on the enemy obtained by radio deciphering and radio intelligence from 22 to 28 Feb. is given in Radio Monitoring Report No.9/43.

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Situation 4 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

A U.S. formation consisting of aircraft transport KITTYHAWK, carriers CROATIN and CARAVAN and two destroyers arrived in Freetown at the end of Jan. Two cruisers, which escorted this formation, continued on to Monrovia. Two days later the formation put out to the south, making either for the Indian Ocean or for Australia. A transport command was embarked on the KITTYHAWK

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to direct loading in Casablanca, Dakar, Freetown, Bathurst, Duala and Lages. Particularly coastal traffic with French ports from Dakar to Brazzaville is to be reorganized. For this purpose, small coastal vessels are expected from North America.

At the beginning of Feb. the cruiser SHROPSHIRE, flying the Australian flag, called at Freetown. She was escorting a convoy and is now proceeding to Australia.

2. Own Situation:

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff reports that the Fuehrer has approved Naval Staff's plans for the blockade running service as reported on 2 Mar. (See War Diary, 2 Mar. Special Items I).

Naval Staff intends to have the DOGGERBANK sail via the neutral route to Lisbon until the Portuguese coast is reached and then probably inside the three mile limit to the north. Since cooperation with Submarine Division has been greatly simplified by the transfer to Berlin, Naval Staff will, as an exception, retain command until the ship arrives off Cape Finisterre and will only then turn over the command to Group West. Group West has been informed to this effect and advised that the DOGGERBANK will probably start her passage east on 17 Mar. in grid square CE 78 and may be expected off Cape Villano on 23 Mar. She is to be brought in by destroyers. In addition, Group West has been requested to arrange for long-range reconnaissance from 20 Mar. by the 3rd Air Force off the Portuguese coast to the west on the presumed approach route of the DOGGERBANK. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl I k 683/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

The DOGGERBANK has received the following order from Naval Staff:

For Commander only:

- 1.) Coming east from the U.S.A. the neutral channel divides out at  $39^{\circ}W$ ,  $34^{\circ}N$  into three routes. The southern one leads from this point to Gibraltar, the central one to Lisbon and the northern one through the Azores to Cape Ortegal.
- 2.) Ships coming from South America and bound for Northern Spain sail from the Canary Islands on course  $25^{\circ}$  to the intersection with the central route mentioned under 1.); from there direct course to Vigo.
- 3.) The northern route runs through the Azores where there are always British warships and is therefore out of the question for the DOGGERBANK.



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4.) The most appropriate route will be the central one or between it and the southern route. It is known from experience that neutral vessels do not keep to the routes very accurately. The ship will turn north either on the route leading from the Canary Islands to Vigo or not until she is near the coast but just out of sight of it.

5.) Naval Staff thinks that the following procedure will be the most opportune:

- a.) By day, camouflage to resemble British or American ship separated from convoy and making for Gibraltar;
- b.) By night, camouflage to resemble neutral vessel making for Lisbon. In this case lights will be on and neutral identity marks illuminated. Further directions on this point will follow.

6.) Information on the enemy situation will follow.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been ordered by radiogram 1016 to hold a course between  $30^{\circ}$  and  $50^{\circ}$  west of the longitude of "Genova" and to the south of  $6^{\circ}$  south of the latitude of "Genova". All ships in foreign waters have been informed of the enemy situation by radiogram 1303.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

At 1155 our air reconnaissance detected a convoy, consisting of 50 steamers with 1 destroyer, 10 escort vessels and 1 flying boat, 200 miles west of Vigo on course  $170^{\circ}$ . The convoy was attacked by two FW 200 planes. At 1250 a convoy of 20 ships with 1 destroyer and 5 escort vessels was sighted 450 miles west of Oporto on course  $350^{\circ}$ . This convoy was also attacked.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

An ELM/J mine was cleared in the Gironde estuary by a mine-exploding vessel and another ELM/J mine in grid square BF 6865 lower right.

A supplementary report from Group West on the enemy air attack on St. Nazaire on 28 Feb. states that all detached buildings in the

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naval dockyard have been burned down. Submarine repair is difficult but is proceeding. About 60% of the houses in the town have been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. A smoke-laying boat sank in the harbor. The closing of the lock due to breakdown of electric power has been remedied.

The tanker SUDETENLAND is being moved from Nantes to Donges in order to take on supplies and will be ready for operations from 6 Mar.

Group West has forwarded a report from Admiral, Atlantic Coast which reveals that the Feb. deadlines for the naval anti-aircraft program have already been exceeded and those for Mar. and Apr. cannot be met. The explanation for this is as follows:

- 1.) The question of procuring manpower through the Todt Organization is still unsettled. The Organization has no additional manpower available. The only solution would be to draw labor from installations under construction, which is a matter for the decision of the 7th Army Command.
- 2.) A decision in regard to the request for assignment of two naval construction battalions has not yet been issued.
- 3.) The same applies to the assignment of nine labor service detachments.
- 4.) Investigations at Lorient have not yet been completed because the 17th Infantry Division has raised objections. Consequently, the new schedule for settling outstanding matters, which was ordered for 6 Mar., cannot be submitted either.

The report shows that no progress has yet been made in the urgent expansion of anti-aircraft defense of the submarine bases, which the Fuehrer ordered at the end of Jan. Naval Staff considers that this is an impossible situation and that strong measures must be taken to remove the evident obstacles.

Channel Coast:

The convoy route south of Boulogne has been closed owing to the presence of moored mines.

Six boats of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla were operating from 1830 on the convoy route off Lyme Bay. The 2nd, 4th and 6th PT Boat Flotillas carried out an exploratory torpedo operation in grid square AN 8414 during the night of 4 Mar.



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The 8th Destroyer Flotilla reports that the magnetic condition of its vessels has already deteriorated to a marked degree within a week and that this should be urgently remedied. Up to now it has not been possible to procure short circuit rectifiers nor has there been time to install them.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Mine-exploding vessels, minesweepers and a minesweeping plane cleared nine ELM/J mines in the Heligoland Bight.

The 12th Patrol Boat Flotilla detonated 97 drifting mines between 23 Feb. and 2 Mar. Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

The NETTELBECK and nine boats of the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla left Amsterdam for Kiel. Torpedo boats T "2" and T "5" transferred from the Hook of Holland to Dunkirk. Motor minesweepers R "85" and R "104" are en route from IJmuiden to Borkum. The Elbe is closed between Stade and Hamburg due to danger of mines.

At 1030, 37 enemy bombers attacked Rotterdam. Ten bombs fell in the dockyard area. War industry damage is slight. 115 high-explosive bombs fell on the railroad line Schiedam-Vlissingen. Traffic was temporarily stopped. Two of the attackers were shot down by fighters.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Lisbon, a convoy from the U.S.A. is said to be expected in Murmansk in the middle of Mar.

Own Situation:

It is reported as of 26 Feb. that batteries on the Rybachi Peninsula fired on an escort vessel and a fjord boat without causing any damage. On 1 Mar. 65 rounds were fired at the entrance to the fjord and on the same day 175 rounds were fired at an eastbound convoy without effect. Fire was returned with 119 rounds and hits were observed.

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Enemy air activity in the area of Kristiansand South and Bergen is reported on 3 Mar. Bombs were dropped in the area of Egersund on the Knabe quarry. Further incursions were made into the Feiestein-Obrestadt area.

At 0300 the QP convoy was in grid square AC 4354. Sinking prospects are not good because of drift ice. The latest shadowing report gives the enemy's position as about 100 miles south-southwest of Bear Island at 2315.

Group North has advised Naval Staff, for information, of its request to Commanding General, Air Force Command, Center for immediate confirmation that he will take over the escort for Operation "Paderborn" in addition to other naval tasks.

Naval Staff's views on the pros and cons of transferring the TIR-FITZ from Trondheim to Narvik are set out as per 1/Skl op 676/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a. Naval Staff proposes that the move be made but emphasizes that the fuel oil stocks at the Norwegian bases may not be sufficient thereafter to refuel the ships to capacity after an operation.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The patrol line in the Skagerrak is occupied by four boats, the Hanstholmbarragegap by two boats. Minelayer SKAGERRAK arrived in Kristiansand South together with gunboat K "1". Twenty-two boats and five mine-exploding vessels were engaged in channel sweeping in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. A Danish minesweeper cleared a ground mine off Svendborg. Escort service was carried out according to plan.

Group North has advised Naval Staff, for information, of orders for carrying out Operation "Klein Erna" (see teletype 1347).

On 3 Mar. there was a large amount of truck traffic over the ice in Kronstadt Bay. Our own and the enemy's air activity was lively. Peterhof was shelled by the enemy. Ships in Lavansaari were attacked with 18 SC 50 bombs.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay; 34 planes were observed. Our submarines were reported off French Guiana,



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130 miles south-southeast of Cape Orange, and 75 miles west of the Windward Passage. SOS calls from an unidentified U.S. steamer 90 miles east-northeast of Bahia were picked up (probably a successful German or Italian submarine action).

2. Own Situation:

Group "Wildfang" with 9 boats, Group "Burggraf" with 15 boats, Group "Tuemmler" with 7 boats and Group "Robbe" with 4 boats are operating in the North Atlantic.

Groups "Wildfang" and "Burggraf" are operating between grid squares AJ 5713 and BD 1164 to intercept SC and HX convoys. An SC convoy is expected on 5 Mar.

Group "Tuemmler" was assigned to intercept a convoy from America to Gibraltar, but according to dead reckoning it must have already passed the patrol line.

Group "Robbe" is west of the Straits of Gibraltar. It is difficult to keep this position because of the great risk of air attack. No reports have been received from the Group so far.

Group "Neuland" is being re-formed and on 7 Mar. it will take up position from grid square AK 6685 to BE 1521 in order to intercept ON and ONS convoys.

During passage to the east coast of North America, submarine U "172" sank a 9,000 GRT ammunition steamer on course 100° in grid square CD 3236, and U "115" sank the British motorship CALIFORNIA STAR on course 45°, with a cargo of butter and meat for Great Britain, in grid square CD 3245.

In the West Indies, U "185" has been assigned as operational areas grid squares DM 80 and 90, DN 70, EB 20 and 30, and EC 10.

During the night of 2 Mar. U "160" intercepted a southeast bound convoy of 10 steamers with 3 escort vessels in the Cape area, sinking 4 of the steamers and 1 tanker, totalling 32,000 GRT, and probably sinking 2 more steamers totalling 16,000 GRT. All ships were fully laden. This action shows that convoy traffic is also being maintained in the Cape area, although it does not seem to be strongly escorted. The submarine reports daytime traffic south of Durban by fast, unaccompanied vessels and small convoys, and escort by naval and air forces on the 200 meter line as well as incoming and outgoing escort up to grid square KZ 1336. On 4 Mar. U "506" observed four steamers with destroyers and air escort in grid square KY 5640. The Capetown submarines were informed that a U.S. convoy was to sail from there for the Persian Gulf about 5 Mar. The present area of operations has been extended to the south as far as the latitude of grid square JJ 7482.

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Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV., which will again be appended daily to War Diary, Part A from today.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 285 planes, mainly fighters, on operation in the west area and 8 in the Mediterranean.

The two convoys detected by our reconnaissance off the Portuguese coast were attacked. One steamer was sunk, two others probably damaged. The escort forces and the flying boat put up strong anti-aircraft defense.

Enemy planes were very active in the west area during the day. Two flights of five to six Mosquitoes attacked railroads and repair works in the Maubeuge and Le Mans area. Twenty to twenty-five Fortresses flew over Westphalia via Vlieland-Rheine-Muenster-Hamm. Forty high-explosive bombs were dropped on Hamm and caused considerable industrial damage. Our fighters shot down ten of the attackers. Another was shot down by anti-aircraft fire. Thirty more Fortresses attacked the Wilton Shipyard in Rotterdam. For details, see "Situation West Area." Around noon other bombers and fighters flew at high altitude over the Vlieland area, but turned off to the west without taking action. A fighter formation that penetrated into the Dunkirk-Calais area also went off without attacking.

In the evening 109 enemy planes entered German-controlled territory, 10 over the Baltic as far as Elbing, 4 over the Heligoland Bight, 22 over Northern and Western France and 13 over the Atlantic coast., all of them presumably on minelaying operations. Fifteen planes made nuisance raids on the Rhine-Westphalian industrial area, concentrating on Bochum.

A reprisal raid was made on London by 117 of our planes in three waves. Since the weather was not very favorable, the attack is not likely to have had especially good effect. Six of our planes were lost.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

In the afternoon 19 of our fighter-bombers were on operation in the Medenine area of the southern Tunisian front. In the evening 14 Ju 88 planes attacked ships in Phillipeville harbor and scored hits on three steamers.



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At 1445 our CATARINA COSTA convoy was unsuccessfully bombed by 15 enemy planes. The convoy escort consisted of 41 Me and 6 Ju 88 planes.

3. Eastern Front:

Nothing special to report.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The convoy of 6 troop transports reported off Tangier at noon on 3 Mar. passed Ceuta on the same day sailing towards the Mediterranean. On 4 Mar., about mid-day, 4 destroyers and, in the afternoon, 1 passenger ship sailed from Gibraltar for the Atlantic. Minesweeping activity was observed in the Straits of Gibraltar in the morning. At 1400 there were in the harbor: 2 battleships, 1 carrier, 1 cruiser, 1 minelayer, 1 auxiliary cruiser in dock, 12 destroyers, 16 corvettes, 10 escort vessels, 1 cable layer, 6 transports, 8 tankers and 61 freighters; 212 planes were counted. No sighting reports have been received from the Central and Eastern Mediterranean.

An intelligence report from Aden via Naval Intelligence Station, Istanbul states that there is continuous air transport traffic from Beirut to Cyprus and that troops and material are being concentrated in Kryssuko for a simultaneous attack on Castelrosso and Rhodes.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines are reported in the operational area.

On 27 Feb. submarine U "593" fired a spread of four torpedoes, which missed, against the escort of a convoy consisting of 5 steamers and 6 escort vessels in grid square CP 7174; on 3 Mar. she fired a spread of three torpedoes which missed in grid square CP 7177 and at 2340 scored a probable hit on a 4,000 GRT steamer in grid square CP 7431. On 3 Mar. at noon U "596" fired a spread of three torpedoes, which missed, on an eastbound cruiser of the LONDON class in grid square CH 8287.

U "77" was ordered to operate in grid square CH 94. For further reports see "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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The 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas were not on operation on account of bad weather. Only one boat of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is in sailing readiness since, of the three boats which up to now have been operational, one has reported out of action due to engine trouble and one due to a leak caused by a mine explosion.

On 2 Mar. the Italian minesweeper group at Bizerta cut and salvaged a Mark VI type mine with 6 m. upper antenna and 100 m. mooring rope 10 miles east of Bizerta. Naval Staff has forwarded this information to the other operational commands.

On 3 Mar. the first harbor defense boat of the Bizerta Harbor Defense Group took up position for the first time. Submarine-chaser "2208" entered Genoa on the afternoon of 4 Mar. Minesweeper M "6024" moved from Spezia to Leghorn. Minesweeper M "6022" is repairing in Naples, while the auxiliary motor minesweepers are continuing their passage alone.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

Five destroyers with German troops aboard put in to Tunis in the morning and, after disembarking the troops, put to sea again at once. During the night of 3 Mar. the convoy COSTA was detected by enemy air reconnaissance and attacked by torpedo bombers. At noon another attack was made by bombers. No damage was caused.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

Situation report has not been received.

#### Black Sea:

#### Enemy Situation:

No new reports.

#### Own Situation:

The weather was too bad for convoy and transport traffic to be resumed. For the same reason it was not possible for German or Italian PT boats to operate on the night of 4 Mar. The sailing of the naval landing craft to Anapa was delayed for a further 24 hours.

Loading of the Strait of Kerch ferries at Taman and the fish salting plant was rendered very difficult by heavy seas and offshore winds. Five naval landing craft were damaged by heavy seas.



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After that only 13 were used and made 19 crossings. The roads to Taman and to the fish salting plant are in bad condition so that troops can only be brought up very slowly. On 5 Mar. bombers are to be used to break up the still heavy ice layer in Senaya Bay. On 4 Mar. 1,436 soldiers, 191 prisoners, 312 civilians, 1,396 horses, 84 motorized and 328 horse-drawn vehicles etc. were ferried to the west.

In regard to the employment of submarines in the Black Sea, Group South and Admiral, Black Sea have received the following instructions from Naval Staff:

Disposition exclusively off the coast in area of heavy traffic, at present approximately between Tuapse and Pizunda; no special assignments off naval ports for the purpose of attacks on naval forces alone, likewise no operations in the open sea or as a defensive measure.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

The Admiralty announced in the House of Lords that the following warships have been lost since the beginning of the war: 5 battleships, 7 aircraft carriers, 25 cruisers, 14 auxiliary cruisers, 94 destroyers, 14 corvettes, 44 submarines, 1 monitor, 8 sloops, 22 minesweepers, 156 trawlers, 14 drifters, 1 minelayer, 3 yachts, 5 gunboats and 3 cutters.

The Chief of the British Shipping Mission in the U.S.A. considers that the gravity of the Allied shipping situation lies in the fact that new construction is not keeping sufficiently ahead of losses. Merchantmen built by the Americans in 1942 amounted to 8 million GRT. In the same period 3-4 million GRT were constructed in British and Canadian shipyards. Estimated total construction in 1943 is 19 million GRT.

All these figures are higher than those previously available to us. They would check if these new figures referred to dead weight tons.

Spain:

On 4 Mar. the Spanish authorities seized the French post and telegraph office in Tangier.

Finland:

The new Linkomies Government has been formed.

Portugal:

Salazar declared that Portugal's attitude towards Bolshevism was unchanged. There was no acute military threat from the Allies.

Persia:

Negotiations for an American/Iranian security pact have been opened in Teheran.

China:

Chungking has decided to break off diplomatic relations with Vichy.



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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division on the Fuehrer's instructions in regard to Crete as per notes in War Diary, 3 Mar.

II. Chief, Naval Communications Division reports that the separation of the code systems for the Atlantic and the Mediterranean areas has been completed. Equipment of the vessels with the new codes will take eight weeks.

III. Quartermaster General reports that, according to information from the Naval Liaison Office attached to Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, the latter intends to contest Naval Staff's right to issue orders concerning naval warfare in the Central Mediterranean and has already applied to this effect to Armed Forces High Command. Furthermore, Quartermaster General states that the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping is still trying to intrude in the control of merchant shipping in the Mediterranean beyond the agreed arrangements. Chief, Naval Staff plans a conference on this matter with Commanding General, Armed Forces, South on the occasion of his intended visit to the Mediterranean. He is not willing to permit any trespass on his sphere of authority.

IV. Report by Operations Division, Foreign Affairs Section concerning the request of the Foreign Office that no action be taken against Chilean merchantmen, even if they are sailing in convoy, in order to avoid unfavorable reactions on Argentina. Chief, Naval Staff has agreed that the instructions to submarine commanders be modified accordingly. Further details are contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

V. Report by Chief, Organization and Mobilisation Branch, Quartermaster Division on organization of the Navy.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

VI. Chief, Operations Division proposed that radar gear and operators be taken out to incoming blockade runners by submarine. Chief, Naval Staff concurred.

The question of whether the DOGGERBANK's fuel supply would be sufficient for her also to be sent through the northern passage is being investigated.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, attached (temporarily, Tr.N.) to German Naval Command, Italy, has submitted a detailed report on the escort situation in the Tunisian supply traffic, attaching

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an experience report by Lt. Cdr. von Kamptz, as escort officer, and giving a clear exposition of the problems to be solved and proposals for their solution. The report sums up as follows:

"The Tunisian traffic is a decisive factor in the war. Presently available escort facilities are wholly inadequate both at sea and in the air. The convoys cannot be protected to an even approximately satisfactory degree. It is therefore necessary to concentrate on especially valuable convoys in order that at least these may be fairly well protected. In view of the danger of attack by surface forces, which might be particularly disastrous, flanking barrages must be improved as soon as possible. In addition to other measures which have already been introduced (increase in number of vessels, improvement of minesweeping and communication service and submarine chase etc.) the training and armament of Italian vessels must be improved. The situation will become still more serious, since the British are not yet attacking as heavily as in the Channel. The convoys can be taken through with relatively small losses only if a strong, determined and well-armed naval escort is provided, if the transports also are well-armed and not too slow and if strong air cover is furnished by day. The performance of the Italian escort vessels can be improved to some extent by interchange of officers between German and Italian vessels, by training the Italian officers in German gunnery courses and by armoring the Italian vessels. It is probable that the use of exclusively German-manned vessels would rouse the Italians to better achievements."

Naval Staff has forwarded the demands resulting from this report to Quartermaster Division with the request that they be taken up if this has not already been done. Naval Staff pointed out that it is particularly urgent that the standard of material and personnel efficiency of the escort forces be improved, especially in the case of the Italians. The questions of Air Force operations and improvement of the flanking barrages in the Sicilian Channel will be followed up by Operations Division. The question of transferring large motor minesweepers will be decided as soon as a way to accomplish this has been found. The transfer of coastal minelayers must be postponed for the present, as already stated.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West will report in person to Chief, Naval Staff in Berlin on 9 Mar.

A draft memorandum was submitted in accordance with the Fuehrer's request for an estimate by Naval Staff of the consequences to Army operations of the loss of further iron and steel producing areas and of an insufficient allocation for the Navy. Copy as per 1/Skl 642/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX.



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VII. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

a.) On the occasion of General Warlimont's visit to Rome, the Italians submitted a series of requests in regard to arms supply etc. The following naval matters were raised:

- 1.) Increase of the number of German submarines in the Mediterranean.
- 2.) Assignment of 8 torpedo chasers, 12 PT boats and 30 fast minesweepers; it is not clear whether these vessels are to be given to the Italians or whether they are to operate in the Mediterranean with German crews.
- 3.) Delivery of protective nets for steamers on Tunisian traffic.
- 4.) Delivery of depth charges, range finders, "Freya" sets, direction indicators, rapid direction-finding gear, radar firing gear and minesweeping gear.

The matter will be followed up by Quartermaster Division in cooperation with Operations Division.

b.) Group North has added the BEITZEN to the vessels included in the operational order for the transfer of the SCHARNHORST. BEITZEN was withdrawn from the northern area for major overhaul to be begun in mid-March and is now at Aarhus on her way south. Naval Staff objects to this plan in view of the resultant increase in fuel requirements for the action and of the postponement of the dockyard period and proposes that the BEITZEN go no further north than is unavoidably demanded by the situation. Chief, Naval Staff concurs. Instructions to this effect have been sent to Group North. Copy as per 1/Skl I op 667/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

c.) The Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports that the former Military Attaché in Berlin, Brigadier General Okamoto, will arrive in Berlin in the middle of April in order to inform Ambassador Oshima on Japan's actual situation and to gain information for the Japanese General Staff on the European situation, since General Banzai's report was inadequate for an assessment of this.

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Special Items:

I. For a summary 1/Skl opa 692/43 Gkdos. Chefs. of the status of arrangements for a German-Japanese submarine rendezvous, see War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

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II. At a meeting with Commander in Chief, Navy on 2 Mar. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast stated, amongst other things, that as regards the operations of the 5th Group, 40th Bomber Wing a marked deterioration of the air situation over the Biscay area is becoming noticeable, as the combat characteristics of the Ju 88 C VI planes are undoubtedly inferior to those of the enemy types encountered. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast said that he was no longer able to provide effective protection against enemy air attack for incoming and outgoing submarines and that he intended to report accordingly to Chief, Air Force General Staff. Chief, Naval Staff thereupon pointed out that the equipment of Air Commander, Atlantic Coast with the best heavy fighter plane available is an imperative necessity for the continuation of submarine warfare, the more so since the submarines' radar interception gear can apparently no longer detect locations by enemy planes because they have gone over to new wave lengths. Thus the enemy is again able to take the submarines by surprise.

Naval Staff has forwarded to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff the request of Commander in Chief, Navy that Air Commander, Atlantic Coast be equipped with the best type of plane available. Copy as per letter 1/Skl I L 6501/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. V.

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Situation 5 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, a convoy with Brazilian troops entered Dakar on 4 Mar.

An intelligence report from Spain states that at 1400 on 4 Mar. Spanish air reconnaissance sighted 8 vessels, including 2 warships with a plane and 2 large steamers, on northerly course in the vicinity of the Canary Islands, west of Fuerte Ventura.

An "RRR" signal was intercepted from a U.S. steamer in the Indian Ocean about 300 miles southeast of the southern point of Madagascar. The signal was later cancelled.

2. Own Situation:

At 2136 a short signal from the KARIN was received, of which only the position report, 28° S, 10° W, could be definitely deciphered. Further decoding efforts are being made. Relative confirmation to the KARIN was given by radiogram 0042.



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The REGENSBURG has been ordered by special "Regensburg" code to arrange her passage so as to reach point "Reichsflagge" not sooner than 20 Mar. in order to pass Iceland in the period of new moon. The ship has also been informed that a rendezvous with a submarine which will bring orders is planned, probably at "Reichsflagge".

Information on the enemy situation was sent by radio to the Commander of the DOGGERBANK in special code "Doggerbank". Copy of the radiogram as per l/Skl I k 693/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I. Also by special code, the Commander of the ship was given the following instructions:

1.) The loss of HOHENFRIEDBERG shows that the incoming and outgoing route in the Bay of Biscay between about 41° and 46° N is continuously watched by the enemy. The enemy remains outside our air range. Submarines assigned as escort are forced under water by enemy planes, and are thus no protection to blockade runners.

2.) Therefore, in view of the vital cargo of the blockade runner, Naval Staff has decided that new and unusual routes must be used.

3.) DOGGERBANK is ordered to run the blockade south of the Azores, approximately on the neutral route to Lisbon, sailing as a harmless or separated and unaccompanied vessel as far as the European coast. She will then proceed to the north so as at least to reach a Spanish port.

4.) Within the scope of this order, the Commander will have full freedom of action and movement in accordance with local circumstances and will be kept thoroughly and continuously informed on the enemy situation in the respective sea area. Our submarines have been forbidden to attack shipping here. Details will follow.

5.) Confidence in your ability and in your crew's morale and your successful performance of previous missions have induced Naval Staff to assign you this new task.

All vessels in foreign waters are being informed that it has been found necessary for the four blockade runners to return because, in view of their limited speed and late arrival, Naval Staff sees no probability of their successfully running the blockade. Further operations are not planned before fall 1943. (See radiogram 0923).

Instructions to Quartermaster Division in regard to plans for Ships "28", "14", "5" and "49" will follow. Copy as per l/Skl I k 6431/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Paris, French military circles frequently refer to an enemy landing operation in the Bay of Biscay. Mimizan is mentioned as a landing place.

At 1815 air reconnaissance reported a large passenger steamer 45 miles southwest of Lisbon on northerly course. The steamer fired at the plane. At 1835 air reconnaissance reported a convoy of 53 steamers with 6 escort vessels and 2 flying boats on course 20° about 150 miles west of Lisbon.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

A mine-exploding vessel cleared an ELM/A mine off Lorient. On 3 Mar. a French fisherman reported a mine explosion 1.4 miles north-northwest of point "L 2". The mouth of the Charente and the area between Oleron and Ile d'Aix were closed due to suspected ground mines.

In accordance with instructions from Naval Staff, Group West has submitted a proposal for bringing out blockade runners. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast is expected to have 20-25 FW 200 planes at his disposal from 15 Mar. and about 30 by the end of March. Thus it should be possible after mid-March for 8 planes to be employed every day for a limited time. The Group proposes to send out the blockade runners not earlier than the period of new moon starting 1 Apr., although utilizing periods of bad visibility in the second half of Mar., even with full moon. Naval Staff approves this proposal, provided that the break-through is not made before 26 Mar. Copy of order as per 1/Skl 697/43 Gkdos. Chfs. with the proposal of Group West in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

Channel Coast:

Seven EFA and some lead horned mines were cleared from the barrage south of Boulogne. A detour was created.

Our batteries fired three salvos each at enemy targets located off Le Tréport. Results were not observed.

At 2137 the 8th Destroyer Flotilla entered the area of Group West.

PT boat operations during the night of 4 Mar. were not without incident. The 5th PT Boat Flotilla was driven off by destroyers.



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S "85" and S "68" entered Peterport after touching ground and the four other boats put in to Cherbourg. See brief report in teletype 2045.

At 0115 S "70" of the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla struck a mine; a reserve torpedo exploded and the boat immediately sank. Four men are missing. The 6th PT Boat Flotilla started return passage after chasing destroyers. Around 0800 enemy fighters made repeated attacks on the 2nd Sub-Division. S "75" was set on fire and sank at 0840. Ten men were killed. S "74" was heavily damaged but was able to reach port under her own power. See brief reports in teletype 1900.

Commander, PT Boats gives the situation of PT boat forces in the west area after these losses as follows: 19 boats in operational readiness; 8 out of commission due to heavy damage, 10 out of commission for other reasons (see teletype 1425).

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### III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

#### 1. North Sea:

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports that a total of 14 ELM/J mines was cleared on 4 Mar. and 12 on 5 Mar. Convoys and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan. The transfer of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla to the west area has been carried out in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North according to schedule. Closing of the Elbe channel between Stade and Hamburg has been cancelled. A damaged PT boat was brought in to Ijmuiden by a tug during the morning.

#### 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

##### Enemy Situation:

At 0926, submarines reported and attacked a QP convoy in grid square AB 5939. The last contact report from the submarines was made at midnight on 5 Mar. from grid square AB 8216. The convoy was sailing on course 230° at 8 knots. According to air reconnaissance, there was a formation of three heavy cruisers 240 miles southwest of Bear Island. Contact was lost at noon due to engine trouble on the plane. The QP convoy was detected in the morning consisting of 29 steamers with 3 cruisers, 8 destroyers and 9 corvettes. Flank escort by a heavy cruiser was also reported with certainty.

A report on the reinforcement of the Russian naval forces in the Murmansk area has been issued by Naval Intelligence Division under

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the heading "Enemy Situation East". Copy as per 1/Skl 6947/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation." The report states that the Arctic Fleet was further reinforced in fall 1942 by the transfer of submarines from the Far East through the Panama Canal to the Murmansk area.

It is believed that altogether five submarines are involved. Prisoners have stated that four other Russian submarines that recently appeared in the Arctic Ocean were built in Gorki on the Volga and taken to Murmansk by rail.

Own Situation:

There have been no special reports from the coastal areas of Naval Command, Norway.

Contact with the QP convoy was maintained by five submarines. At 0926 U "255" probably sank two medium-sized steamers in grid square AB 5939. One was a vessel of 6,000 GRT and the other the U.S. steamer EXECUTIVE (4,978 GRT). According to our air reconnaissance, the following were observed: at 1030 one steamer of 4,000 GRT on fire and left behind, two steamers of 6,000 - 8,000 GRT sinking, one 10,000 GRT steamer on fire and, at 1430, one 6,000 GRT steamer torpedoed by a submarine. The final result is not yet known.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Six boats took up patrol line in the Skagerrak. Channel sweeping was carried out according to plan.

Minelaying operation "Karlchen" (barrage "16 C") was discontinued. Group North ordered immediate action readiness to be maintained in case Commander, Minelayers should decide to continue.

In view of air incursions over the Kattegat during the night of 4 Mar., mines are suspected in the warship channel and off Hirtshals. Minesweepers have been sent out. Mines are also suspected in Danzig Bay. There have been no special reports from the area of Admiral, Baltic States.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

In the Bay of Biscay 44 planes were observed on very active reconnaissance. An attack report was intercepted 40 miles northwest of Port of Spain.



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2. Own Situation:

A convoy of 16-20 steamers on course 20° was intercepted in grid square BE 97 (probably meant to read BE 9497, Tr.N.) by U "130". The submarine scored five hits in grid square BE 9495 and reports the sinking of two steamers of 2,500 GRT each and the probable sinking of two more for a total of 8,000 GRT.

At noon on 4 Mar. U "445" of Group "Robbe" reported a convoy coming from Gibraltar in grid square CG 9577. Twelve hours later the submarine was attacked with bombs and depth-charges.

From the Cape area, U "516" reports the sinking on 27 Feb. of a modern passenger steamer of 10,000 GRT on course 240° in grid square KZ 1791.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 44 planes on operations in the west area and 4 in the Mediterranean. A Wellington plane was shot down. For results of reconnaissance, see "Situation West Area".

During daylight, enemy air activity was limited. In the evening over 200 enemy planes entered German territory. The bulk of them carried out a heavy attack on Essen. Severe damage was done. Opposition to our night fighters was very strong as the enemy bombers flew in groups and as the commitment of night fighters was hampered by heavy jamming. From reports so far received, five enemy planes were shot down by anti-aircraft fire and ten by night fighters. It is also probable that mines were dropped in the sea area off the West Frisian Islands.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

An enemy convoy of 5 steamers and 2 tankers was attacked under difficult weather conditions 180 km. northeast of Tripoli by 14 Ju 88 planes. Two steamers of 10,000 GRT each were sunk and two more damaged.

Photographic reconnaissance of the air bases on Malta revealed 116 fighters, 76 twin-engined planes, 1 four-engined plane and 16 torpedo bombers. Unfortunately the main airfield "Venice" was not covered. As only 188 planes on all airfields were seen on 14 Jan.,

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it is evident that the number of planes on Malta has been increased.

3. Eastern Front:

Reconnaissance was flown in the Black Sea.

The report from the 5th Air Force on the operation against a QP convoy in northern waters is included in "Situation Northern Waters."

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

During the morning 3 loaded tankers entered Gibraltar from the Atlantic. At the same time a convoy of 1 transport and 6 steamers in ballast left port for the Atlantic. According to an agent's report, the NELSON and the RODNEY are expected to sail shortly for the Mediterranean. Minesweeping activity west of the Straits of Gibraltar was again noted during the morning.

In the Western Mediterranean, only slight shipping was observed. According to Italian radio intelligence, the 6 troop transports which entered the Mediterranean at noon on 3 Mar. were apparently off Algiers in the morning. At about 0700 our air reconnaissance sighted 13 steamers 75 miles east of Tripoli on westerly course. The convoy was attacked by our air forces. No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

On 1 Mar., according to an intelligence report, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 8 small torpedo boats, 12 PT boats, 4 submarines, 5 minesweepers and 3 loaded tankers left Alexandria on westerly course. On the same day, the British steamer RABY CASTLE, from Port Said, put in to Mersin with an unidentified cargo. A British steamer is expected to leave Iscenderum on 5 Mar.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. Five of our submarines occupied attack areas in a north-south strip of equal width between the longitudes of grid squares CH 7811 and 9513. Submarine U "602" has been ordered to enter Toulon as the first boat. Further reports in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Our PT boats were unable to operate on account of bad weather.



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Two mines were cleared by the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla east of Bizerta and north of Plane Island. During the minesweeping operations enemy planes attacked and dropped more than 70 bombs without causing any damage or casualties. Italian minesweepers operated according to plan.

On the afternoon of 3 Mar. an enemy air attack was made on Messina and at noon on 5 Mar. one on Bizerta. Military damage is not reported.

Vice Admiral Weichold has been relieved as Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy by Rear Admiral Meendsen-Bohlken.

According to a report from German Naval Command, Italy, the total loss of PT boat S "35" was definitely due to a drifting mine. In the circumstances it is possible that some of the crew may have been saved.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

Convoy COSTA, consisting of three steamers, put in safely to Bizerta on the evening of 4 Mar. On 5 Mar. convoy traffic was hampered by bad weather. Convoy FROSINONE, consisting of three steamers, dropped anchor off Bizerta. A motor vessel returned to Bizerta. Nine naval landing craft coming from Tunis could not continue their passage as planned.

In accordance with the plans to transfer vessels from France to Italy, another ship has arrived at Genoa.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

During the morning of 4 Mar. a chase was started for an enemy submarine sighted by a plane off the harbor of Milos. According to a report from the 10th Air Corps, enemy torpedo bombers penetrated into the Aegean area on the same morning.

The auxiliary warships DRACHE and BULGARIA carried out their mine-laying operation according to plan. Passage through the Doro Channel is temporarily closed for large vessels. Minesweeping operations off Chios have not yet begun on account of bad weather. Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance observed great shipping activity off the Caucasian coast. For details see "Daily Situation".

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Own Situation:

German and Italian PT boats were not sent out on account of bad weather. Submarine U "9" entered Constantza on 3 Mar.

Because of bad weather, ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was possible only with the aid of tugs. Bombing raids on the route to Senaya were ineffective. Traffic with combined operations landing craft had to be stopped. Enemy air activity was brisk. A combined operations landing craft was damaged and a naval landing craft was slightly damaged by two dud bombs.

Westbound ferries carried 2,940 soldiers, 455 prisoners, 271 civilians, 1,434 horses, 87 motorized and 360 horse-drawn vehicles etc. Twenty-six naval landing craft were used and made 45 crossings.

Escort service in the Black Sea was suspended on account of the weather. Group South has forwarded a report dated 4 Mar. from the Naval Liaison Officer to Army Group A in regard to the plan to hold a line excluding the Novorossisk bridgehead. Group South points out that the loss of Novorossisk will mean that Russian naval forces could again use that port, even if it is thoroughly demolished, so that the Russian base for attacks on Army sea-borne supplies would be brought close to our supply line.

Naval Staff has forwarded this report to: Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; Naval Liaison Officer attached to High Command, Army, Army General Staff; Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison.

Special Naval Transport Staff reports that 12 naval landing craft are out of commission and 6 others are only in restricted readiness. This is due to the unremitting strain of continuous operation. From experience to date, it must still be calculated that about 40% of the establishment will be continually out of operation; this number may be still further increased by heavy enemy action. Present dockyard capacity at Kerch is sufficient only for two to three naval landing craft, besides harbor defense boats, tugs, remote minesweepers, lighters and combined operations landing craft. The following measures are urgently required: construction of two large slips; provision of machine tools and emergency constructions for workshops; provision of Diesel generators for power; expedited shipment of spare parts, tools and expendable supplies; increase of dockyard personnel by 90 German skilled workers, besides labor already requested by the Dockyard Control Staff.

The continuous commitment of 30 naval landing craft, as promised by Naval Staff to the Fuehrer, can only be accomplished if the establishment at Kerch is increased to a total of 50 vessels. It is therefore requested that a corresponding number of new naval



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landing craft be sent to the Black Sea. The matter will be immediately taken up by Quartermaster Division.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

On the basis of information from the Japanese Naval Staff, the German Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports that on 2 Mar. a Japanese convoy en route to Lae was attacked by 200 U.S. planes. Due to the damage to several ships, the convoy was partially scattered. The harbors at Lae, Madang, Wewak and Hollandia on the north coast of New Guinea are being enlarged for the landing of reinforcements with a view to clearing the enemy out of New Guinea.

In connection with this report, American statements have been made to the effect that twelve Japanese transports in convoy, escorted by ten cruisers and destroyers, were all sunk or left sinking after a relentless air attack. Fifty-five planes from the convoy's air cover are said to have been shot down or put out of action. Nearly all of the 15,000 troops which were being sent to New Guinea are said to have been drowned.

A second convoy of 14 vessels is said to have been subjected to uninterrupted air attack on the same day, and to have been heavily damaged at small cost to the attackers. A Reuter dispatch comments that, as a result of these engagements, the serious Japanese threat to Australia has been to some extent relieved. It has been stated that not a single Japanese vessel reached her destination in New Guinea.

The Associated Press remarks that, with their enormous air superiority, the Allies are in a position to dispute the route south to any Japanese convoy. The operational significance of the great Japanese base at Rabaul is said now to have been practically neutralized.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In a public announcement, the British Colonial Secretary expressed himself as being strongly opposed to the internationalization of the British colonies. He declared that he was more interested in what Great Britain thought of the British Empire than in what the Americans thought of it.

U.S.A.

Knox stated at a press conference that 150 warships, 130 merchant vessels and 70 landing craft had been completed in February. These were the highest production figures ever reached in the history of the American Fleet.

Finland:

In regard to the new Cabinet, neutral circles are of the opinion that a direct change in Finnish policy is not to be expected. It must, however, be remembered that the extreme nationalists and the Greater Finland groups are not represented in the Government.

Portugal:

According to a press report, six senior Portuguese officers led by an Admiral are to go to the U.S.A. to inspect the war industries.

Pacific:

The great convoy battle in the Bismarck Sea is being widely discussed in the Allied press. After this success it is believed that the Japanese are no longer strong enough to realize their offensive plans in the Southwest Pacific.

Sweden:

According to a report from the Swedish Telegraph Agency, the Swedish Air Administration has asked for 5½ million Kronen for expansion of the Swedish air formations.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reports that, after a year's negotiation, a German/Portuguese shipping agreement has been concluded. Details in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.



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II. Report by Chief, Supply and Fuel Branch, Quartermaster Division and Fuel and Supply Section, Operations Division on the supply situation, particularly regarding fuel oil.

III. Further to the report of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, attached to German Naval Command, Italy, Chief, Operations Division reports that examination by Group West/Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West of the possibility of transferring large motor minesweepers to the Mediterranean has shown that, contrary to previous opinion, transfer would in fact be possible via the Seine to the Saône with a short overland haul. The Commanding Admiral therefore proposes that a motor minesweeper flotilla be transferred from his area for use in the Sicilian Channel. Chief, Naval Staff concurs.

Instructions have therefore been sent to Group West and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, with copy to German Naval Command, Italy, to expedite preparations for the transfer of a motor minesweeper flotilla from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West to the Mediterranean via the Seine. The latter is to report which flotilla is to be transferred and will arrange for the boats to be fitted out in good time. Quartermaster Division has been advised accordingly with the request that all further arrangements be expedited.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

IV. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division on the investigations concerning reinforcement of the Balearic Islands in accordance with notes in War Diary, 26 and 28 Feb.

V. Chief, Naval Staff ordered that an agenda be prepared of the discussions to be held during his planned visit to Rome.

VI. Thorough examination of all possibilities of using the ten Italian Atlantic submarines for transport purposes shows that:

In order to carry an annual quantity of some 3,000 tons of rubber, it will be necessary to use some of the fuel bunkers as cargo space. This will necessitate refuelling en route on the return passage. The supply point must be located at least 3,000 miles from Batavia. On the way out Batavia can be reached without intermediate refueling if the torpedo tanks and ammunition chambers are converted to fuel bunkers. The round trip will take about 182 days. If able to go into dock in Batavia, the keel ballast can be replaced by metal, which will enable the boats to bring in an additional 900 tons of metal annually. The first two transport boats can be ready to sail at six weeks' notice. It would be well for the boats to be manned by Italians in order to save time. At present five of the ten Italian boats are of no further use for war operations, and four more are of only limited value. Their employment as transport submarines would therefore be highly desirable.

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Refuelling for the return passage can be accomplished by tankers BRAKE, CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN or the Etappe supply ships RIO GRANDE, BURGENDLAND and WESERLAND. Fuel should be obtainable from the Japanese as they have already undertaken to provide supplies for German submarines in the Indian Ocean. Refuelling on the outward passage, which might be necessary for small submarines, would be possible at the earliest at 92 days' notice, calculated from today, and on the return passage at 131 days' notice. Therefore ample time remains in both cases for the fitting out and passage of the supply vessels.

Chief, Naval Staff ordered that a report to this effect be prepared for the Fuehrer.

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Special Items:

I. Further to the increase in torpedo production ordered on 31 Oct. 1942, Commander in Chief, Navy has ordered:

The production figure of type G 7 a will remain at 600 per month; production of type G 7 e is to be increased from 1,000 to 1,400 per month. Production of the G 7 e is to be increased by every possible means.

II. According to an intelligence report of 3 Mar. from a diplomatic source in Portugal on the enemy plans for attack, the main point of the offensive is to be transferred to the Mediterranean, primarily to Sicily, Crete and Greece. This will probably not take place before the middle or end of April. Great numbers of troops are being concentrated and supply depots established in Syrian ports preparatory to an attack on the Balkan countries via Turkey. Every available means are to be used to achieve the occupation of Tunis as soon as possible. The British 1st and 8th Armies have been reinforced by Indian and U.S. troops. A Brazilian contingent of 25,000 men is to be dispatched. Until the opening of the offensive, continuous air attacks on Italy are to go on.

Another objective is an attack on Norway from the east coast of Scotland and England, where large concentrations of troops and material are already being made. Besides this, every effort is to be made to induce Italy and Finland to make a separate peace.

III. Report on the Enemy Situation No. 5/43 by Naval Intelligence Division, Enemy Situation Branch, as per 1/Skl 6703/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Enemy Situation Reports of Naval Intelligence Division". In this report Naval Intelligence Division states:



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From the spate of rumors, which is of similar proportions to that which preceded the North African campaign, the impression is gained that the enemy's preparations for an attack must be almost completed. Plans for launching the attack have so far been cleverly camouflaged. Only in exceptional cases can concrete indications of new operations be established. They are kept secret with the utmost care. Their jump-off bases lie mainly beyond our intelligence sphere. However, the greatest caution must be used in drawing any conclusions from these reports.

The report also deals with the remarkable changes in enemy warship strength and with convoy traffic and states that during Feb. 29 convoys, with at least 730 vessels, crossed the Atlantic, including northern waters, in both directions. From these, 20 ships were sunk, 18 of them carrying cargo to Great Britain. These figures do not include sinkings in the last days of Feb. The report concludes by drawing up a balance of the results of the war against merchant shipping and giving an exposition of enemy losses and new constructions; it also gives the distribution of British naval forces as at the end of Feb. 1943 and the estimated disposition of the U.S. Navy as at 1 Mar.

IV. Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Merchant Marine Branch has summarized and analysed enemy views on the submarine campaign. Copy of this report as per 1/Skl 6904/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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### Situation 6 Mar.

#### I. War in Foreign Waters.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to an Italian report, a convoy of 19 steamers escorted by 3 cruisers, was sighted on 4 Mar. sailing north between the Canary Islands of Gran Canaria and Fuerte Ventura. This is obviously the same group that Spanish air reconnaissance had reported as consisting of 8 vessels (see War Diary, 5 Mar.)

An intelligence report dated 4 Mar. from a diplomatic source in Portugal states that a convoy with war material is expected to arrive in Northern Ireland from the U.S.A. about 25 Mar. In the middle of Mar. a large convoy is expected to sail from the west coast of England with supplies for North Africa, bound partly for Gibraltar and partly for Casablanca. The cargo consists mainly of tanks and guns.

The General Staff of the U.S. troops in Northern Ireland has been

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instructed to prepare accommodation and food supplies for 15,000 U.S. troops by 15 Mar.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has been advised by radiogram 1532, in special code "Doggerbank", in regard to the communications traffic of neutral shipping with Lisbon and has been given a detailed description of the Spanish steamer MAR CANTABRICO, which is a suitable camouflage for the DOGGERBANK in case of need.

The garbled short signal from the KARIN (see War Diary, 5 Mar.) appears to indicate that this ship has taken the turn-about order to the ROSSBACH, WESERLAND, RIO GRANDE and BURGFENLAND as applying to her also. As a precaution, therefore, she has been instructed by radiogram 0957 to continue passage to the north as previously ordered.

Information on enemy shipping movements has been forwarded to all vessels in foreign waters by radiogram 1644.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

There was great reconnaissance activity by 42 planes in the Bay of Biscay.

The convoy reported on 5 Mar. 150 miles west of Lisbon was sailing on course 120° not 20° . On the same day three lifeboats with crews were sighted at 1415 by our air reconnaissance in grid square BF 8676. Our reconnaissance on 6 Mar. produced no results.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Minesweeper M "4041" struck a ground mine in the inner roads of Le Verdon and sank. Fifteen men were killed.

During the day Brest and Lorient were attacked by strong enemy air formations. There was no military damage in Brest. Two enemy planes were shot down. In Lorient damage was caused to traffic and military installations. The dockyard power supply was interrupted. Submarine repairs are reduced by 25%. A tanker with 450 cbm. of fuel oil was destroyed. Submarine refuelling can now be done only by two tankers and is therefore limited. For further details see "Daily Situation".



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Special Items:

Group West has submitted to Commanding General, Armed Forces, West, with copy to Naval Staff, its views in regard to the possibility of transferring the 999th Division from Southern France to the Balearic Islands by sea. Report as per l/Skl 672/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in Files I opa. Operation "Gisela".

The report reaches the conclusion that, if good security is kept, the first wave of transport steamers from Marseilles would probably be unobserved. Considerable difficulties must be anticipated in disembarking this first wave. Strong counter-action must be reckoned with against subsequent transport units and supplies needed later on. The German Navy will not be able to supply the necessary escort forces as they are not available. Operations Division shares this opinion. At the suggestion of Naval Staff, Armed Forces High Command is finding out from the Italians to what extent the Italian Navy and the 3rd Air Force can be used for the escort duties.

Channel Coast:

An operational order by the 8th Destroyer Flotilla Command for the transfer of destroyers Z "23", "24", "25", "32", and "37" to the west was submitted on 27 Feb. It provided for distribution as follows: Z "23", "24" and "25" to Bordeaux; Z "32" and "37" to La Pallice. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West were to have operational control in their respective areas. Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla was to be in command at sea. The code name for the operation was "Karin". Cruising disposition was in two divisions, sailing in groups at a distance of 6 to 7 miles apart. The Dunkirk barrier was to be passed at a fixed time. It was planned for an intermediate call to be made at Cherbourg.

The following report has been received on the execution of this operation:

Destroyers Z "23", "24", "32" and "37" of the Flotilla put in to Le Havre as it was no longer possible to reach Cherbourg during darkness. The passage from the Hook of Holland to Le Havre was continuously covered by shadowing planes beyond range. Enemy PT boats and fighter bombers attacked off Dunkirk and Boulogne without success. In the Straits of Dover, the second group successfully drove off four groups of two enemy PT boats each. One torpedo was evaded. Our vessels scored some definite hits without suffering casualties. During the night of 6 Mar. the Flotilla plans to proceed to Cherbourg or further as the situation permits. Destroyer Z "37" touched ground while mooring in fog. It is doubtful that she will be able to proceed with the others. (See teletype 0915).

Naval Staff has advised Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff accordingly.

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From a brief report from the 2nd Coast Patrol Force it appears that the enemy did not have advance knowledge of the destroyer movements. Although radar-carrying planes were used in the Dunkirk-Calais area, the fighter bomber attack was made, not on the destroyers, but on a motor minesweeper unit off Calais. Furthermore, as the enemy sent only PT boats against the destroyers, it is probable that he did not recognize the strength of our formation. Radio intelligence confirms the belief that the operation took the enemy by surprise and that the speed with which it was accomplished prevented the opportune commitment of stronger forces. According to the view of the 2nd Coast Patrol Force no enemy PT boats were in action off Boulogne. It is more likely that the destroyers fired on our own harbor defense boats. Our location service gave the enemy position on our routes so promptly that the unit was just warned in time. The approach and departure of an enemy force was not detected (see teletype 1240).

The 8th Destroyer Flotilla has taken note of this report and states that the presence of German harbor defense boats could not and should not have been expected. Off Boulogne the bridge of destroyer Z "23" was fired at with 2 cm. guns. Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla also thinks it probable that the destroyers were not recognized as such by the enemy. (see teletype 2357).

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### III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

#### 1. North Sea:

No special events.

#### 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

##### Enemy Situation:

During the day air reconnaissance was observed in the direction of the Skagerrak and the northern coast of Norway. Eight planes of the Iceland squadrons were observed on operation. At 0910 the QP convoy was in grid square AB 7364 on course 250°.

According to photographic reconnaissance there were in Kola Bay on 5 Mar: 2 Russian destroyers, 2 submarines, 2 tankers and 32 steamers, as well as 1 tanker in dock. On 6 Mar. 7 patrol boats were sighted between the Fybach Peninsula and Yokonga Bay, and 9 small steamers in Yokonga. Photographic reconnaissance on the same day showed the harbor area of Archangel up to the mouth of the Dwina to be ice-bound. Neither harbor vessels, ice-breakers nor a navigable channel were to be seen. The White Sea is ice-covered south of 67°.



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Own Situation:

The Norwegian motorship ENGOER sank in the entrance to Nord Fjord after striking a ground mine. The shipping lanes between Oralskaer and Sondrebotten are closed. On 4 and 5 Mar. enemy air raids were made on Petsamo but caused no damage. A Norwegian sea-rescue boat was ineffectively attacked by a plane off Baas Fjord. Escort Service was carried out according to plan.

Admiral, Northern Waters has advised Naval Staff, for information, of his report to High Command, Navy/Naval (Ship) Construction Division on the distribution of the tugs for naval forces in Northern Norway, which tugs have been operationally assigned to him. For copy see teletype 2210.

Group North has approved minelaying project "NW 13" of Naval Command, Norway.

Admiral, Northern Waters has postponed Operation "Saxonia" until further notice.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has given general approval for the permanent assignment of a seaplane for open water torpedo firing and has instructed the 5th Air Force to comply with the Navy's requests in this matter. Naval Staff has therefore given orders that Naval Command, Norway should provide immediately three modern minesweepers and four fishing vessels to be permanently assigned until the firing exercises are completed. The provision of destroyers or torpedo boats is cancelled (see teletype 1718).

Group North has issued orders for the SCHARNHORST's transfer to begin.

Naval Staff has issued some modifications to the operational order of Group North for bringing in the REGENSBURG. Copy as per 1/Sk1 I k 684/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

The REGENSBURG will not now receive orders at point "Sonate" but probably on 20 Mar. in grid square CD 32. She is ordered to make for point "Anton" not sooner than 26 Mar. and to proceed upon orders from Group North and in accordance with weather conditions. This measure has been taken in order to avoid a prolonged wait at one spot in the North Atlantic. The ship has also been ordered on no account to make a break-through if a continuous spell of clear weather appears probable. The REGENSBURG will be camouflaged as the CAMBRIDGE. It is planned to unload a part of the rubber in Norwegian waters by means of small boats, in order to make as sure as possible of this valuable cargo.

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The continuance of operations against the QP convoy has been much hindered by stormy southwest winds. On 7 Mar. at 0600 the submarines were scheduled to form a patrol line from grid square AB 7711 to AE 3313. However, they have reported that they will probably be unable to reach the position on account of the bad weather.

The 5th Air Force reports that at 1410 on 5 Mar. a bomb hit was scored on a steamer of 10,000 GRT, with a subsequent fire, and refers to a submarine report, according to which a steamer of 6,000 GRT was sunk at 1430. The planes have also reported that on the same day at 0930 and 1037 explosions occurred on a merchantman, which left the convoy and was set on fire by an escorting destroyer at 1049. Besides that the planes observed a torpedo hit on a merchantman at 1025.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to information received by German Ambassador Schnurre from the Swedish Foreign Minister, the reports of the unloading and reloading of the DICTO and LIONEL are untrue, so that it is thought likely that these two vessels will put to sea in the near future. Group North and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic have been informed.

##### 2. Own Situation:

The patrol line in the Skagerrak was occupied by four boats and the Hanstholm barrage gap by two boats. Escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan. Minelaying assignment "Karlchen" was also carried out according to plan. Gunboat K "3" and the ROLAND are en route from Kristiansand South to Frederikshavn and Copenhagen respectively.

In Kronstadt Bay enemy guns fired on our naval coastal batteries without success. Between Lissi Noss and Oranienbaum heavy truck traffic was observed. Battery Seiskaari fired 20 rounds on Glinki. Near Kolgampia, an enemy scout patrol was wiped out. The steamer FRIEDRICH ran aground near Surop Lighthouse.

With reference to Naval Staff's request (see War Diary, 27 Feb.) for the assignment of air forces for war operations in the Baltic during 1943, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff regrets that present obligations of the fighter formations will not permit assignment of the requested fighters. Commander in Chief, Air Force has no knowledge of frequent enemy air attacks in the area of Tallinn. Operation "Froschlauch" is provided for. Attacks



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on the enemy Fleet in Leningrad depend on the other tasks of the 1st Air Force and the formations available. For sea reconnaissance and anti-submarine operations in the Gulf of Finland it is intended to use one unit.

Group North has been informed accordingly by Naval Staff.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Merchant Marine Branch Report No. 4/43 contains information on Turkish overseas trade in the second half of 1942 and on the Turkish merchant fleet.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

A submarine sighting report was intercepted 400 miles northeast of Newfoundland.

2. Own Situation:

At 1445 U "405" contacted a convoy on course 60° in grid square AK 4452. The strength of the convoy, of which only five vessels have so far been sighted, is not yet known. Commanding Admiral, Submarines has sent out against this objective Groups "Wildfang" and "Burggraf", which are in the vicinity, as new Group "Raubgraf", and also a part of Group "Neuland" as new Group "Ostmark". In spite of poor visibility, snow and hail, contact was maintained with some interruptions.

At 0930 U "107" of Group "Robbe" intercepted a convoy on course 120° in grid square CG 8134. Contact was lost due to defense but was re-established at 1520 by U "410" which estimated the enemy's strength at about 25 steamers. Two steamers of 6,000-7,000 GRT were torpedoed and a third one probably torpedoed. A vessel of 6,000 GRT is believed to have been sunk. This success in the closely guarded sea area off St. Vincent is especially satisfactory.

U "172" sank the Norwegian motor vessel THORSTRAND (3,041 GRT) on course 290°, en route from Liverpool to St. Johns, in grid square CD 1675.

There are no reports of successes from the West Indies or from the Capetown boats. Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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Investigations by Naval Staff of the possibility of submarine operations in the Arabian Sea show that these would be feasible provided the submarines can be supplied with fuel, lubricants and food by a German supply ship from Japan approximately in the area east or southeast of Madagascar. Supply would be possible at about the end of April at the earliest.

Submarine Division, however, reports that, due to the lack of submarine tankers, it is impossible to send submarines to the Cape area at present. The above mentioned possibilities can therefore not be exploited for the time being.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 69 planes on operation in the west area and 13 in the Mediterranean. During defense against daylight raids, a Spitfire and three four-engined enemy planes were shot down by our fighters in the west area. Planes escorting the enemy formations raiding Lorient carried spare fuel containers which were jettisoned in the area of Brest. The attacks on Brest were made from altitudes of between 7,000 and 9,000 m.

Another reconnaissance by three FW 200 planes off the west coast of Portugal between 11° and 13° W is scheduled for 7 Mar.

During the night of 6 Mar. 15 of our bombers mined the Humber and the Thames estuary.

For information on the enemy daylight attacks on Lorient and Brest, see "Situation West Area". For further details on the Essen raid on 5 Mar. see "Daily Situation".

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Thirty miles south of Ischia an enemy submarine was attacked with four SC 250 bombs. A large oil trace was observed. Another submarine was attacked by the escort of convoy FROSINONE with seven SC 250 bombs and, according to the Air Force, was probably heavily damaged if not destroyed. The port of Beirut was reconnoitered.

### 3. Eastern Front:

On 5 Mar. our forces were extremely active, nearly 2,000 of them being out on operation in support of our attack in the area south of Kharkov-Krasnograd. The enemy lost 59 planes and we lost 4.



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Reports from the 5th Air Force are contained in "Situation Northern Waters."

Special Items:

Commander in Chief, Air Force plans to reorganize the Estonian-manned former special Buschmann Squadron into a Baltic Sea reconnaissance group composed as follows:

A sea reconnaissance squadron to perform all sea and coastal reconnaissance, convoy escort and submarine chase in the Gulf of Finland;

A land reconnaissance and liaison squadron to continue the police functions of the special Buschmann Squadron; and

A training and replacement squadron which will also perform sea-rescue service.

This reorganization eliminates the need for the establishment of a new sea reconnaissance squadron in the Gulf of Finland as demanded by Naval Staff. Commander in Chief, Air Force has asked Armed Forces High Command to approve this commitment of the Estonian volunteers.

The request throws light on the critical state of the Air Force. Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic is particularly pleased with the achievements of the Buschmann formation, whose crews did good work last year in spite of an extremely inadequate number of planes.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to an intelligence report, the FORMIDABLE took on planes and war material on 5 Mar. In addition, all destroyers took on supplies of food and ammunition. The Admiralty has reported the loss of the minelayer WELSHMAN.

No sighting reports have been received from the Western Mediterranean. Submarine positions were reported off Cape Milazzo in the northern outlet of the Straits of Messina on 3 Mar. and off Spezia, south of Naples and north of Cape Bon on 6 Mar.

There have been no sighting reports from the Eastern Mediterranean. According to radio intelligence, two British warships were ordered

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at 2100 to position 37°6' N, 4°8' probably E, where a collision had been reported. It was observed that air escort was furnished for British vessels in the Tripoli Gulf-of Syrtis area.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. An additional report of 2 Mar. 0230 states that an enemy destroyer of the JERVIS class and a steamer were torpedoed by an Italian submarine 50 miles northeast of Buerat.

No reports of successes by our submarines have come in.

Due to bad weather the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas were not out on operation. Minesweeping off the Tunisian coast was limited for the same reason.

Submarine-chaser "2208", which put to sea from Genoa on 5 Mar. at 1800, reported at 0330 that she had located a submarine 35 miles southwest of Spezia and, at 1235 after several attacks, observed heavy air escape. The attack is being continued.

At 1200 the Sousse mole battery was hit by a torpedo. The guns are capable of only limited operation. There were no losses.

During the night of 4 Mar. an enemy air attack was made on Naples. No damage is reported. On the afternoon of 4 Mar. the wreck of the MACEDONIA was torpedoed by an enemy submarine. Salvage work had been completed. On 3 Mar. two motor sailing vessels were sunk off Cape Milazzo by an enemy submarine.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West has reported the provisional organization to date of vessels requisitioned in Southern France. Copy as per 1/Sk1 7161/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

According to this, the 22nd Submarine-Chaser Flotilla consists of 19 vessels and Escort Flotilla, Mediterranean of 9 vessels. To the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla there have been added 2 motor yachts, 2 motorboats and 1 customs boat, 1 group equipped with cutting kite sweeps and consisting of 4 vessels, 2 groups of lobster boats consisting of 12 boats each and 1 group of minesweeping yawls, also consisting of 12 boats.

Three customs boats, 3 motorboats and 2 trawlers are provided for Admiral, Aegean Sea.

The 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla will retain the Toulon groups equipped with cutting kite sweeps and with towed coil gear (5 boats) and a tug with towed cylinder remote clearance gear. Three further vessels are scheduled for cutting kite sweeps.



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3. Sea Transport Situation:

The convoy of the motorship INES CORRADO (3 steamers) is en route to Tunisia and that of the FROSINONE (2 steamers, 1 tanker) is en route to Italy, as scheduled. War transports KT "13" and "14" have been en route from Palermo to Tunis without escort since 1300. In view of the weather they are going first to Trapani. In the forenoon the motorship OLBRINA arrived at Naples from Bizerta. The tanker LABOR, en route from Palermo to Bizerta, called at Trapani. On the afternoon of 5 Mar. 5 Siebel ferries and 4 infantry landing craft from Marsala arrived at Tunis. One Siebel ferry was sunk by a mine; her position has not yet been reported. Two naval landing craft arrived at Trapani; one became a total loss 33 miles north-west of Cape Bon after striking a mine; the crew was rescued.

The Spanish steamer BARTOLO was sunk by an enemy submarine at 1005 near Beau Duc. The Captain and the Engineer were taken prisoner. A submarine chase has been started from Marseilles.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

The Doro Channel has been re-opened. Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

Own Situation:

On account of bad weather no German or Italian PT boats were on operation. Check sweeps and minesweeping in the Strait of Kerch produced no results. Submarine-chase off the southern Crimean coast was discontinued owing to bad weather. Nine mines in our own barrage at the southern outlet of the Strait of Kerch were observed to explode, presumably due to drift ice.

The captured battery near Novorossisk, consisting of three 13 cm. guns, was blown up by order of the 73rd Infantry Division in view of enemy flanking threat and since the guns are not in firing readiness.

Convoy traffic was resumed according to plan. Two naval landing craft carrying lumber for engineer construction work sailed from Yalta to Theodosia. Two more naval landing craft put out from Kerch for Anapa with supplies. Ferry traffic across the Strait of

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Kerch was subjected to lively enemy air attack. Bombs were dropped on Kerch and on Taman. A Siebel ferry struck a mine near the fish salting plant and sank. Some of the crew and the troops on board were lost. Two naval landing craft were slightly damaged by bomb hits. Ice conditions in Taman Bay have not changed. Traffic off Kossa Chuchka had to be stopped on account of pack ice.

300 persons, 111 motorized and 457 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried across to the west; 21 naval landing craft were employed and made 46 crossings.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

U.S.A.:

According to Reuter, Secretary of the Navy Knox has declared that the whole of the U.S. Five-Oceans Fleet would be in active service before the end of 1945. Even if war losses were taken into account, the U.S. Fleet would then be four times as strong as it was in the fall of 1939.

A vast project for the establishment of U.S. bases in the Pacific for the post-war period was announced in the Congressional Naval Affairs Committee. Furthermore, Secretary of State Welles was prompted to make a statement to the press on the matter of bases, in order to correct the allegedly entirely mistaken idea that the Americans wished to retain bases in the Western Hemisphere occupied with the agreement of their rightful owners.

According to a Swedish press report from Washington, Ryti's declaration that Finland would continue the war has caused great disappointment.

Japan:

The Prime Minister declared before Parliament that the war must be decided this year. During this time the Japanese Government would mobilize all important sources of raw material in Greater East Asia.

Russia:

Stalin was proclaimed Marshal of the Soviet Union.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

Report by Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section on the most favorable conditions for outgoing blockade runner traffic.

a.) The only advantage of sailing during the March new moon period (10-15 Mar.) lies in utilizing the longer night (almost 12 hours). Until 15 Mar. we cannot count on having more than 15 FW 200 planes.

b.) Between 15 and 20 Mar. air reconnaissance by 20-25 FW 200 planes may be considered fairly adequate. The 8th Destroyer Flotilla may be sent out in safety. However, on account of the full moon on 22 Mar. only persistently bad weather can be used during this period, although such weather conditions are unfavorable for interception of enemy movements (see example of GERMANIA).

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c.) After 26 Mar. until the new moon on 4 Apr. the night is already almost an hour shorter than in the preceding month; this period, however, has the following advantages:

- 1.) For all concerned it is possible to make preparations without haste.
- 2.) Adequate air reconnaissance by about 30 FW 200 planes can be counted on.
- 3.) There is the possibility of combining the sailing and bringing in of blockade runners.

The fact that there are several of our vessels can, by splitting up the enemy forces, be of advantage to the incoming blockade runners, especially if these keep to the south as long as possible. Incoming vessels may be mistaken for outgoing vessels turning back to port and their special value remain undetected. Our own defense measures do not give any direct indication that incoming vessels are expected. The enemy's defense will be split.

On the other hand, there is the risk that the appearance of our destroyers may cause the enemy to employ especially strong forces.

Naval Staff proposes to arrange for sailing in accordance with the circumstances set out in c.)

Chief, Naval Staff approved this proposal, but on condition that the sailing plan is combined with only one of the two incoming vessels, while the second is to be brought in via the northern passage.

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Special Items:

Following the report of the two present incumbents, Chief, Naval Staff has approved the dissolution of the staff of the Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy and of Inspector (Sea). However, he considers it urgently advisable that the closest possible contact between the two branches of the forces on matters of common interest to naval and aerial warfare should be maintained by creation of a central office under Commander in Chief, Air Force, to deal with all personnel and material questions arising between Navy and Air Force.

In forwarding this approval Operations Division has submitted the request of Commander in Chief, Navy to the Minister for Air and Commander in Chief, Air Force, General Staff that special care be taken in selecting personnel for the office taking over the former



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tasks of the Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy and the Inspector (Sea).

The person charged with the care of common interests must be able, on the one hand, to identify himself fully with Naval Staff's operational views and, on the other hand, also to draw tactical conclusions for the Air Force from experiences gained in combat and to set them down in the form of directions, regulations, etc.

It is also requested that the position of liaison officer with Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division be re-established, as the Air Force officer previously appointed has in the meantime been detached.

For copy of memorandum l/Skl I l 6610/43 Gkdos. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. V.

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Situation 7 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

An intelligence report from Horta states that a British steamer is awaiting a convoy, which is to pass the Azores by 9 Mar.

According to another intelligence report, a large convoy of Brazilian troop transports, consisting of especially large vessels escorted by U.S. naval forces and believed to be sailing to North Africa, was reported on 6 Mar. off Angola. On the same day, a convoy of ten steamers making for Gibraltar passed Lagos (Southern Portugal).

On 7 Mar. a convoy of 1 tanker (12,000 GRT) and 6 steamers (3,000 GRT each) entered Reykjavik.

2. Own Situation:

No reports have been received from our vessels in foreign waters.

In view of enemy patrol activity, all vessels in foreign waters have been directed by Naval Staff's radiogram 1732, effective immediately, to remain south of a line running from 25° S, 60° E, via 32° S, 60° E, 40° S, 40° E, 45° S, 25° E, 45° S, 8° E to 11° S, 15° W.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Great Britain dated 7 Mar., the INDOMITABLE was in Liverpool on 4 Mar.

Photographic reconnaissance of the British south coast between Exmouth and Lyme Bay furnished no new information. No enemy sightings were made during reconnaissance west of the Portuguese coast.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

Group West has forwarded a report from Admiral, Atlantic Coast concerning enemy air attacks on Brest and Lorient on the afternoon of 6 Mar. Copy see teletype 0015.

A ground mine was cleared off the Gironde estuary.

#### Channel Coast:

On 6 Mar. a French fishing smack struck a mine and sank near Coxyde Bad.

In the early morning our batteries fired on targets located off Toquet at a range of 5,000-8,000 m.

At 0120 torpedo boats T "2" and T "5" entered Le Havre.

The 8th Destroyer Flotilla, minus Z "37", transferred during the night of 6 Mar. from Le Havre to Cherbourg. It is to proceed to La Pallice or Bordeaux on the night of 7 Mar. with flank escort by the 5th PT Boat Flotilla. On the same night the 2nd, 4th and 6th PT Boat Flotillas are to carry out torpedo operations against a northbound convoy off the east coast of England.

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## III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

### 1. North Sea:

Enemy mines are suspected on the shipping routes off the Frisian Islands. Six incursions were reported in this area during the evening.

Otherwise no special events.



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2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to a Finnish report from a diplomatic source in Portugal, the enemy operation planned against Norway is said to be already seriously jeopardized due to difficulties of transportation. It is said that preparations will be completed by the beginning of April. Simultaneously with the planned landing in Norway, a large-scale Russian offensive along the whole Finnish front is expected to begin.

A report from Stockholm, transmitted via the Foreign Office, states that the British are interested in Grip near Kristiansund North. It may be a question of a commando raid or a larger action.

The latter is unlikely.

On 6 Mar. reconnaissance activity over the central and southern North Sea was very brisk during the day but slight during the night.

Own Situation:

No special events in the area of Naval Command, Norway. So far Operation "Paderborn" has gone according to plan. The formation will pass through the Skagerrak during the night of 7 Mar.

There have been no reports on the QP convoy. The operations of our submarines were much hampered by persistently stormy weather. No reports have been received from the 5th Air Force on its operations.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Barrage gap Hanstholm is occupied by two patrol vessels and patrol line Arendal-Hirtshals by four. Escort service in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic was carried out according to plan. About 1700 an enemy reconnaissance plane flew in as far as 15 miles north of Skagen and the Skagerrak. Night passage through this route by the "Paderborn" formation, which stood on and off at the Danish side of the Kattegat during the day, was thus a fortunate measure.

Two ground mines were cleared, one west of Langeland and one southeast of Nyborg. South of Sandoe two mine explosions were observed. Northeast of Arcona two fishing smacks sank after explosions.

The steamer FRIEDRICH, which had run aground near Surop, has been towed off and has entered Tallinn.

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On 5 and 6 Mar. the village and the anti-aircraft gun emplacement at Lavansaari were attacked with 48 SC 50 bombs. Defense was put up by two fighters and fairly accurate heavy anti-aircraft fire.

Special Items:

Between 25 and 28 Feb. a representative of Operations Division held conferences with Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic and Admiral, Baltic States in Tallinn and with the Finnish Naval Staff in Helsinki on current war matters. For report of Operations Division, Operations Branch North see War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was brisk; 35 planes were observed. From the convoy operations area south of Greenland various submarine sighting reports were intercepted. From the Cape area, an unidentified U.S. steamer about 120 miles south-southwest of Port Elizabeth transmitted an SSS call. The steamer sank and the crew took to the lifeboats. It was evidently a successful action by one of our submarines.

2. Own Situation:

Operations against the convoy south of Greenland were greatly hampered by bad weather. With wind forces of up to northwest 10, contact was sometimes lost. The assigned patrol lines could not all be reached in time. Nevertheless, some results were obtained. U "230" sank a steamer of 5,000 GRT and U "591" an 8,000 GRT steamer carrying ammunition. Operations have become even more difficult because the enemy has apparently split up into several groups. The action is being continued, although it is doubtful whether the submarines of Group "Ostmark" can regain contact with the convoy in such bad weather.

Group "Raubgraf" reports that submarine U "638" unsuccessfully attacked an unaccompanied steamer of 5,000 GRT in grid square AJ 5897. Another fast, unaccompanied steamer on southwesterly course was chased by U "376" in grid square EE 1436. Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:



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In the west area 229 planes of the 3rd Air Force, including 173 fighters, were in action. Eighteen fighter-bombers attacked Eastbourne, where great damage to houses is reported. In the evening 37 bombers were sent out against Southampton. According to reports so far received, 29 of them reached their target.

In the afternoon several enemy formations penetrated the Dunkirk-Boulogne area. Our fighters made no contact with the enemy. In the evening a total of 54 enemy planes flew into German territory, 25 of them over the coastal waters of the Heligoland Bight to drop mines. Two of these were shot down. Four courier planes were sighted flying towards Sweden and two towards England. Twenty-one enemy planes were over Northwest France but made no attacks.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Convoy INES CORRADO was escorted throughout the day by 46 of our fighters. Three Boston planes were effectively fired on and driven off. In the Tunisian area 159 fighters and 18 FW 190 planes were employed as cover for fighter bomber and bomber formations. They shot down 9 Spitfires over the southern front.

Shortly after noon Sousse was attacked by enemy planes. In the evening 27 of our bombers were sent out to attack ships in Tripoli. According to reports so far received, the attack was successful. Southwest of Naples an enemy submarine was attacked by a Ju 88 plane; results were not observed.

## 3. Eastern Front:

The Trautloft fighter wing was again very successful in the Lake Ilmen area. Reconnaissance was flown in the Black Sea without special results.

### Special Items:

Distribution of minesweeping planes as on 28 Feb. 1943:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1.) 3rd Air Force:             | 8, 4 of them operational, stationed at Vannes, Cognac, Nantes, Biarritz.        |
| 2.) Air Force Command, Center: | 8, 4 of them operational, stationed at Jever and Copenhagen; 2 more on the way. |
| 3.) 4th Air Force:             | 2 in action from Kerch, a 3rd on the way.                                       |

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- 4.) Commanding General, Armed Forces,  
South: 9, 7 of them operational,  
based at Tunis and Bizerta;  
2 others in Germany for repair.

This gives a total of 32 minesweeping planes distributed, of which 17 are at present operational.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

During the night of 6 Mar. 3 steamers and 2 corvettes from the Atlantic entered Gibraltar. A convoy of 17 vessels, including 9 steamers and 3 tankers, escorted by 5 vessels, passed Tangier in the forenoon on easterly course. Two tankers and a destroyer entered Gibraltar. The other vessels proceeded into the Mediterranean. On the same morning 3 steamers with 2 escort vessels passed Tangier, also on easterly course. At 1800 Cape Spartel reported sighting a very large convoy on easterly course. A great intensification of radio traffic from Gibraltar to escorts and auxiliary vessels, observed by radio intelligence, is obviously connected with this convoy.

According to an intelligence report of 4 Mar., there is an increase of activity in Gibraltar similar to that at the time of the African action. The accumulation of relatively large quantities of gasoline at the airfield and preparations for the provisioning of large numbers of troops in transit is said to have been observed. According to an intelligence report from Portugal, a convoy with troops and supplies for North Africa is expected to sail in the middle of March from the west coast of England, mainly from Liverpool. It will reportedly carry 14,000 men in nine troop transports.

No further reports have been received from the Western Mediterranean. According to an intelligence report, during March air attacks on the south coast of France will be intensified, in order to disrupt the construction of defense installations.

On 6 Mar. a submarine was reported near Beau Duc and another north of San Vito, and on 7 Mar. one east of Sousse.

Exhaustive reconnaissance of the coastal waters between Sollum and Mersa Matruh on 7 Mar. produced no enemy sightings. According to radio intelligence, light British vessels are believed to be at sea in the area of Tobruk and Benghazi.

An intelligence report states that further heavy air attacks are to



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be expected in March against Southern Italy, especially Palermo, Messina and Naples.

According to an intelligence report from Bulgaria, from a Syrian source, the number of British submarines in the Mediterranean was increased during February. Two submarines, stationed in Beirut, operate regularly between the Greek islands. Others are stationed at Malta, Haifa, Tripoli and Benghazi.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines were reported in the operational area.

Submarine U "596" contacted a westbound convoy consisting of 25 steamers in grid square CH 8435 and scored one hit out of five torpedoes. U "77" reported a westbound convoy of 11-15 steamers at 2140 in CH 9465.

The 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas were not on operation due to bad weather. For the same reason, minesweeping had to be discontinued. The auxiliary minesweepers have returned to Palermo. On 4 and 5 Mar. a first moored mine check was made by Italian minesweepers in the Toulon area. The submarine chase near Beau Duc was unsuccessful and was discontinued.

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

The convoy consisting of the steamers CORRADO, BALZAC and HENRY ESTIERE, with five torpedo boats, was attacked by enemy planes at 0920 35 miles west of Marittimo. In spite of fighter escort by six German and six Italian planes, the motorship CORRADO (6,200 GRT) was set on fire. Steamers BALZAC (1,947 GRT) and HENRY ESTIERE (1,984 GRT) were sunk about 1245 while on further passage north of Cape Bon, presumably by mines. As enemy planes were attacking at the same time, there is also the possibility that they were hit by bombs. A torpedo boat sent from Bizerta to meet the steamers was sunk by a mine 5 miles south of the point where the ships went down. According to a position report from the Air Force, it is possible that the BALZAC, the ESTIERE and the torpedo boat were sunk by our own mines. Attempts are being made to tow in the motorship CORRADO. Other North African traffic was carried out according to plan.

## 4. Area Naval Group South:

### Aegean Sea:

No special reports have been received.

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Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Our air reconnaissance produced no results.

Own Situation:

Escort service was carried out according to plan. In accordance with a Fuehrer directive, the supply service Kerch-Anapa is to be increased. After unloading and reloading two naval landing craft are on their way back from Anapa.

There was only slight enemy air activity on 7 Mar., and 1,968 soldiers, 475 prisoners, 396 civilians, 2,218 horses, 100 motorized and 534 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried over to the west. Twenty-four naval landing craft and one lighter were used in 66 crossings.

It was impossible for PT boats to operate during the night of 7 Mar. owing to bad weather.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

According to a report from the Japanese liaison officer, the convoy bound for Lae consisted of 7 transports and was escorted by 8 destroyers. During the numerous enemy air attacks north of Lae on 2 Mar. 3 transports were sunk and 3 others were heavily damaged; 4 destroyers were also damaged. Three planes were lost and 25 enemy planes were shot down. Most of the troops on board were saved.



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Items of Political Importance.

Greece:

Diplomatic sources report that the resistance movement is growing. In Northern Greece a communistic band is coming to the fore. Attacks, which up to now had been made only on the Italians, are now also being made on German formations.

Arabia:

According to "Transocean" a treaty between Saudi-Arabia, Britain and the U.S.A., concluded in October 1942, has now been announced, under which the British and Americans are given the right to establish air bases in Saudi-Arabia.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. The report from Admiral, Atlantic Coast, forwarded by Group West, concerning the difficulties encountered in carrying out the naval anti-aircraft gun program, (see War Diary, 4 Feb. "Situation West Area") has led Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division to suggest that Commander in Chief, Navy take up the matter with Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff with a view to removing the obstacles raised by the Army offices. Commander in Chief, Navy stressed first that obviously neither High Command, Navy nor Group West have carried out the measures for putting into effect the Fuehrer directive of the end of January with the energy called for by the military importance of the matter. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff is responsible not only for setting forth operational requirements, but also for issuing orders to all offices to see that they are met and not undermined by ministerial bureaucracy.

At the suggestion of the recently appointed Chief, Naval Ordnance Division, Vice Admiral Backenkoehler, Commander in Chief, Navy has ordered that, instead of approaching Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, he will personally request Commanding General, Armed Forces, West (by teletype) to see that the obstacles to the expansion of air defense of the submarine bases be removed.

II. Report by Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch, PT Boat Section on the organization and numbers of light naval forces.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. The question of command in the Central Mediterranean is at present being discussed by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff. Chief, Naval Staff considers that more German experiences

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in escort service and in mine clearing should be made available to the Italians than heretofore. This would be possible by further intermixture of German personnel, especially German officers, in the Italian Navy. German Naval Command, Italy is to suggest how this can best be done with due regard to the Italian mentality. Considerations of prestige should be set aside, provided that the great common goal can be achieved. The necessary personnel can be sent from here. The aim must be for the German Navy, i.e. German Naval Command, Italy to gain as much influence as possible in the operational control and tactical execution of the convoys and their escort.

Besides this, close cooperation in leadership must also be established between German Naval Command, Italy and the Italian Admiralty. To transfer this function of cooperation to the level of Commanding General, Armed Forces, South/Italian Admiralty would be illogical and disadvantageous to Naval Staff. Subordination of the Italian Admiralty to German leadership in naval warfare is impossible. The only useful alternative is that Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy be given the position of German Chief of Staff in the Italian Admiralty. German Naval Command, Italy will retain its previous organizational position.

Under the Hitler-Mussolini agreement of 1941, the Chief of the former Liaison Staff, as German Admiral on the Italian Naval Staff, was to take a direct part in its activities. Therefore Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy already has some position in the Italian Admiralty. Before Chief, Naval Staff informs Commanding General, Armed Forces, South of this opinion and obtains the Fuehrer's permission to discuss the matter with the Italians, Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy is to report his own views on the subject.

Copy as per teletype 1/Skl Ia 7091/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

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IV. A report by Chief, Naval Staff to the Fuehrer on the use of Italian submarines as transports was submitted with letter 1/Skl I u op 712/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX.

The so far evasive and casual statements of the Italians made a re-examination of this question necessary. As a result of this examination (see War Diary, 6 Mar.) it is proposed:

- 1.) To convert the ten Italian submarines into transports. The Italian crews, already familiar with the boats, to be left aboard, since it would mean a long training period if they were taken over by German crews.



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- 2.) Ten German operational boats from the new building program to be delivered to the Italians as replacements for the ten Italian submarines converted for our benefit. These boats to be manned by Italian crews who will have to be trained by us.

V. Chief, Naval Staff approved Naval Staff's memorandum of 1 Mar. 1943 on the question of the steel allocation for the Navy. Copy No. 5 as per 1/Sk1 I b 642/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C a.

VI. The Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports that it is planned that Vice Admiral Nomura be relieved by Admiral Abe. In view of Nomura's excellent cooperation, Naval Staff deeply regrets this change, especially since Nomura could speak good German. Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that an unofficial request be submitted on behalf of the Navy that Nomura retain his post. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

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Special Items:

I. At 1940 the permanent representative of Commander in Chief, Navy at the Fuehrer Headquarters telephoned to say that the Fuehrer had ordered reports on the following matters to be made on the morning of 9 Mar.:

- 1.) Present distribution and action readiness of German PT boats and submarines in the Mediterranean.
- 2.) Present distribution of German submarine-chasers and their planned commitment; size of the vessels, armament and speed. When will the still outstanding vessels be ready for action?
- 3.) Similar information on auxiliary minesweepers.
- 4.) At which dockyards are these vessels repaired and made ready for action? Who superintends these dockyards and how many workers are employed there?
- 5.) When will the anti-aircraft corvettes be ready? What work is being done on them? How many workers are engaged on them? In which dockyards is the work being done?

Operations Division has ordered Quartermaster Division to make the necessary investigations immediately.

The Fuehrer's interest in these details indicates the great importance attached to the defense of supplies for Tunisia. The question of whether all naval establishments have done their utmost in this regard must be looked into.

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II. A report, based on captured British documents, concerning officers' training courses for landing operations at the "Middle East Training Center", has been compiled by Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Navies Branch. The information, gained from lecture notes for the period 20-25 Oct. 1941, gives an insight into the methods used to train officers of the three branches of the Armed Forces in the execution of combined operations, especially of landings. Details as per 1/Skl 7427/43 geh. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation 1943."

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Situation 8 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports.

2. Own Situation:

The REGENSBURG has been ordered by radiogram 2154, in special code "Regensburg", that the order which will be delivered by submarine at point "Reichsflagge" on 20 Mar. is to be studied immediately on receipt and that the submarine is to stand by, or a new rendezvous be arranged, so that answers to the various questions in the order may be transmitted by radiogram from the submarine.

Radiogram 1732 of 7 Mar. to all vessels in foreign waters has been elucidated by radiogram 2010, stating that the area north of the line indicated is not to be traversed. It is further ordered that Ascension Island be passed at a distance of at least 250 miles.

All vessels in foreign waters have been advised of enemy steamer movements in the South Atlantic by radiogram 1835.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

A special report from Rennes dated 8 Mar., received via the Intelligence Service, states that a British fleet consisting of numerous warships, transports and assault boats left port on the night of 5 Mar. for an unknown destination. It is alleged to be a large-scale operation.



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Other reports speak of an action against Lorient in the period between 6 and 16 Mar. According to radio deciphering, at 1341 a British home radio station broadcast the codeword "Famous" to all naval forces in the home area. This may have been connected with actual movements on which the above reports were based.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Two ELM/J mines were cleared off the Gironde estuary.

The 8th Destroyer Flotilla, comprising Z "23", Z "24" and Z "32", transferred according to plan and without special incident from Cherbourg to Bordeaux.

Channel Coast:

The 8th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reported a mine explosion in the sweeping gear northeast of Calais. On 7 Mar. three ELM/J mines were cleared south of Boulogne.

During the night of 7 Mar. the 2nd, 4th and 6th PT Boat Flotillas put out for torpedo operations on the southeast coast. No convoys were spotted. Two PT boats, S "114" and S "119", of the 6th Flotilla were chased by an enemy destroyer. During the chase the two boats collided and S "119" was heavily damaged but was able to proceed. On their return passage the two PT boats were attacked by three enemy motor gunboats and S "119" was so heavily damaged that she had to be blown up. The crew was rescued by S "114". The initiative and foresight of the Commander of S "114", Lt. Nitsche, is especially stressed in the brief report of Group West. For copy see teletype 1315.

In regard to the mine hit on PT boat S "70" in grid square 8426, upper left, during the night of 4 Mar. (see War Diary, 5 Mar.), Naval Staff has drawn the attention of Commander, PT Boats (with copy to Group West) to his War Diary of 15 May 1942 in which, due to an enemy report of drifting mines at 52° 44' N, 2° 44' E, PT boat flotillas were ordered to keep to a distance of five miles from this point. Commander, PT Boats reports in this regard that further radio intelligence had shown that it was not a question of a minefield such as to endanger PT boats but probably some detached drifting mines. His warning against mines of 15 May had therefore been cancelled. Furthermore, the position of mines revealed in charts captured from MGB "335" afforded no grounds for the establishment of PT boat danger zones and confirmed the accuracy of our own observations of May 1942.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

A harbor tug en route from Helder to the Elbe sprang a leak and was towed into the Jade. Two ELM/J mines were cleared off Ijmuiden, two off Ameland and seven more off Borkum, Juist, Norderney and Rotersand, three of them by a minesweeping plane.

Escort service was carried out according to plan.

Staff Officer, Wilhelmshaven has forwarded a report on the interrogation of the crew of TLC "381" which was sunk in the Channel on 27 Feb. by one of our PT boats. For copy see teletype 2213.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, there were four Russian submarines off the north coast of Norway on 7 Mar. In the afternoon very lively reconnaissance activity was detected over the North Sea. Six planes of the Iceland squadrons were observed. At 1351 Cleethorpes transmitted an unintelligible codeword to an unknown addressee (see "Enemy Situation West Area").

At 1200 our air reconnaissance reported a light cruiser 30 miles southeast of Jan Mayen and a torpedo boat 70 miles southeast of Jan Mayen on courses 210° and 200° respectively. At 1315 a FW 200 plane equipped with ship detection gear located ten vessels and a destroyer about 180 miles southeast of Jan Mayen. The ships evidently belonged to the QP convoy and were on course 210°.

Own Situation:

Enemy air activity was reported on 7 Mar. from the Bergen, Kristiansand South and Lister areas and on the afternoon of 8 Mar. from Trondheim.

Group North reports that, in view of the appearance of an increased number of enemy submarines in the area of Admiral, Arctic Coast and the shortage of escort forces, it is necessary to re-examine and reduce the number of compulsory incoming routes in Northern Norway (see teletype 1854).

Since the laying of "Bantos" barrages has been postponed on instructions of Naval Staff, for reasons of fuel oil, Group North has ordered that the LUETZOW be moved from Alta to Narvik as soon as possible, so that she may take part in Fleet exercises.



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Submarine Division has forwarded a report from a submarine stating that no defense or patrols had been encountered in the Iceland-Faroes area.

Group North reported at 0036 that, owing to weather conditions, the SCHARNHORST had been advised to take the skerries route (entrance Kors Fjord). At 0130 the formation passed Kristiansand South 2½ hours behind schedule. A report that, on 7 Mar. between 2020 and 2035 Stadtlandet observed heavy gunfire at sea west of Jervik and bright light in the same area at 2045 and 2210, evidently has no connection with Operation "Paderborn". Owing to stormy weather, the formation sailed to the north outside the skerries and reached approximately AF 5941 at 2200, where Admiral, Northern Waters assumed command. The IHN and the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla were sent to Bergen, having been damaged by heavy seas. So far the operation has called forth no enemy reaction.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy was briefly advised at 2200 by Naval Staff on the progress of the operation so far.

The submarine operation against the QP convoy was continued without contact being made. It is planned to terminate this operation on 11 Mar. at 22° W.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Naval Intelligence Division has compiled a report, based on the statements of prisoners, on the activity and operations of the Russian submarine S "7" in 1941 and until she was sunk in the Aaland Sea on 21 Oct. 1942. Copy as per 1/Sk1 7425/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

##### 2. Own Situation:

Throughout the day the patrol line in the Skagerrak was occupied by two boats, and by four during the night. Two boats occupied the Hanstholm barrage gap. Escort service and channel sweeps in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were carried out according to plan.

Target ship FREIBURG of the Torpedo Experimental Station struck a ground mine south of Hela but put in to Gdynia under her own power and without losses. A ground mine was cleared west of Falsterbo.

In the area of Admiral, Baltic States enemy activity continued as usual, without special incidents.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

1.) The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping estimates shipments for Mar. 1943 as follows:

The shipping space required for supplies to the Armed Forces and for maintenance of the war industries in Norway amounts, as in the previous month, to 405,000 tons.

For supplies to Finland 8,000 tons and for supplies and coal to the Baltic States 187,000 tons are required, as against 255,000 tons in the preceding month.

In German coastal traffic (coal excluded) a total of about 125,000 tons is to be shipped in both directions. Coastal coal traffic will amount to 260,000 tons, 60,000 tons of which are to be shipped from Rotterdam. The question of the extent to which transport traffic from Rotterdam is to be maintained is still under examination.

It is estimated that 175,000 tons of ore will be shipped from Oxeloesund during Mar.

2.) Brief Report No. 5/43 by Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Merchant Marine Branch contains information on : identification markings of Irish merchantmen; French vessels in the Antilles; Russian shipments via Karachi; the relative advantages of fast or slow merchantmen, etc.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

There was lively air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay, especially in the outer area.

2. Own Situation:

Contact with the convoy southeast of Greenland was maintained by several submarines. Operations are still hampered by heavy storms which abate only temporarily and which have cut off several steamers from the convoy. Four submarines were able to attack such unaccompanied vessels and sank one tanker and three steamers for a total of 23,000 GRT. The operation is being continued.

Further reports of success have not been received. Other reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.



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Special Items:

1.) In Feb. submarine losses unfortunately amounted to 17, that is 7.39% of the total on active service at the end of the month. The average monthly loss since the beginning of the war has thus risen to 4.99%.

On 1 Mar. 1943, 420 submarines were in commission. Of these 230 are on active service, 27 at the Submarine Acceptance Command, 104 on active service training and 59 at schools and experimental stations.

2.) The order of Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division concerning organization of the submarine arm, dated 6 Mar., is to be found as per 1/Skl 7065/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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VII. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

During the night of 7 Mar. Southampton and Portsmouth, as alternative target, were attacked. Reasonably good results are expected. Three of our planes failed to return. During the day the 3rd Air Force had 309 planes, 222 of them fighters, out on operation in the west area and 4 in the Mediterranean. During the night of 8 Mar. the convoy route between Dover and Margate was mined by 14 bombers. The enemy flew over the areas of Evreux and Rennes during the day. Our fighters shot down six enemy planes. Other enemy planes were shot down by anti-aircraft fire in the Rouen area. In the evening strong forces attacked the southwestern area of Germany, concentrating on Nuernberg.

Atlantic reconnaissance produced no results.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

Sixty-two of our planes provided escort for the LABOR and war transports KT "13" and KT "14". An attack was made by 41 enemy bombers with 65 fighters. Accurate bombing was prevented. There were heavy air battles in which 5 enemy planes were shot down, while we lost 4. Other planes on both sides were damaged by gunfire.

3. Eastern Front:

On 7 Mar. 83 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts. One of ours was lost.

For results of reconnaissance by the 5th Air Force see "Situation Northern Waters."

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Special Items:

In agreement with Naval Staff, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has issued the following instructions:

- 1.) The Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy is requested to transfer to Aalborg sections of the 1st Shipborne Squadron, 196th Group (including ground personnel), which are not required aboard ships. Upon arrival at Aalborg, they will be under the operational command of the 5th Air Force. There will be no change in regard to administrative command.
- 2.) The Squadron will perform coastal reconnaissance, convoy escort and submarine chase exclusively in the areas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North. Transfer of even a part of the Squadron is forbidden without the permission of Commander in Chief, Air Force. The Air Force General attached to Commander in Chief, Navy is authorized to recall any planes required aboard ships. The Navy's desires in regard to the Squadron's participation in exercises of the Baltic training formation are to be complied with as permitted by its other tasks.
- 3.) The 5th Air Force Command will report the arrival of and assumption of duty by the 1st Squadron, 196th Group, as well as the arrangements made with the competent Naval Command offices in regard to its employment.

Group North, North Sea and Baltic Stations and the Fleet Command have been informed by Naval Staff.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

In the Western Mediterranean eastbound convoy traffic has become heavier:

The convoy of 10 steamers which entered the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar on the forenoon of 7 Mar. was 46 miles east-northeast of Tres Forcas at 1830 on the same day, according to a report from one of our submarines.

The large convoy reported at 1800 on 7 Mar. off Cape Spartel consisted of 44 steamers and 21 warships. Seven of the steamers entered Gibraltar at 0030. The main convoy, with 55 vessels, was sighted at 1400 north of Cape Tres Forcas.

Another convoy of 8 large troop transports, escorted by 7 naval



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vessels, passed Ceuta at 1015 making for the Mediterranean. The transports had set their minesweeping gear.

Finally, 7 transports with 5 escort vessels entered Gibraltar at 0730 and a convoy of 11 steamers with 6 escort vessels at 1000.

At 1730 a convoy of 11 transports and 23 steamers with 9 escort vessels left Gibraltar for the Atlantic. At 1925 a large convoy of about 25 steamers was approaching the Straits of Gibraltar from the east. About 2200 one of our submarines detected a convoy of 11-15 steamers on west-southwesterly course 40 miles west of Cape Tenes. Two transports, with 2 escort vessels, also sailing west, were reported at 1145 27 miles east-northeast of Algiers.

The FORMIDABLE carried out taking-off and landing exercises in the Bay of Algeciras on the afternoon of 7 Mar.

According to an intelligence report, the transport ATHLONE CASTLE embarked 2,500 men, believed to be commandos and gunners, on 5 Mar. Her departure has not been ascertained with certainty.

The Italian tanker BORMIDA reported several submarines northeast of Gallo, near Palermo, at 0450.

In spite of exhaustive reconnaissance of the coastal waters between Sollum and Derna, no sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines are reported in the operational area.

During an attack on a convoy in CH 7598, submarine U "458" was heavily depth-charged and will have to put in to port. U "602" cannot enter Toulon since escort is impossible owing to bad weather. Further details concerning our submarines are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

PT boat operations were also impossible due to bad weather conditions. On 7 Mar. an enemy air attack was made on Sousse, during which the steamer SKOTTFOSS was damaged. Shelters and part of the anti-aircraft positions and ammunition were also destroyed. On 7 and 8 Mar. the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was sent out on rescue duties for the BALZAC, ESTIERE and torpedo boat CICLONE. The mines were probably ones laid by an enemy submarine in the traffic route between our barrages. Under present conditions it is unlikely that our vessels would strike our own mines.

While channel sweeping on 7 Mar. 2 miles west-northwest of Cape

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Zebib, the Italian minesweeper group reported an explosion in the sweeping gear. On the same day a plane swept an ELM/J mine northwest of Marsalla.

On 7 Mar. submarine-chaser "2208" reported the probable destruction of a submarine (wreckage) in the area southwest of Spezia.

Commander, Submarines, Italy reports that as from 1 Mar. Toulon can accommodate five submarines (see teletype 1900).

In War Diary, 18 Jan. 1943, the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla had requested provision of the Italian instructions for convoys and Italian signalbook for convoys in German. German Naval Command, Italy replied on 22 Feb. that the request would be followed up.

In Naval Staff's opinion such a request should not have been necessary in view of the operational experience already gained.

In reply to an enquiry of 8 Mar., German Naval Command, Italy reports that the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla has been provided with Italian instructions in German.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

No report on the arrival of war transports KT "13", KT "14" and tanker LABOR at Tunis and Bizerta has yet been received. The successful defense against an enemy air attack on these vessels is reported in "Aerial Warfare".

Otherwise nothing special to report.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

The Italian torpedo boat CASTEL-FIDARO arrived in Piraeus to join the forces of Admiral, Aegean Sea. An unsuccessful attempt was made to sabotage the Selinia searchlight station near Salamis. Three German sailors and the director of the Tsangli chromium mine near Volos were kidnapped by Greek bands, (see teletype 2005). Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

#### Black Sea:

#### Enemy Situation:

No special reports.

#### Own Situation:

PT boats were unable to operate due to bad weather. Ship



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"19" carried out submarine-chase on the south coast of the Crimea. Mine check in the Varna area produced no results.

Ferry traffic over the Strait of Kerch was undisturbed by the enemy and 26 naval landing craft made 66 crossings. The ice situation is unchanged. On 8 Mar. 2,276 soldiers, 285 prisoners, 189 civilians, 2,561 horses, 376 motorized and 712 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried to the west.

Between 6 Feb. and 7 Mar. the Navy alone ferried from east to west:

16,229 soldiers,  
2,483 prisoners,  
2,587 civilians,  
2,389 horse-drawn vehicles,  
903 motorized vehicles,  
9,591 horses.

Group South reports:

- 1.) After a conference with the Bulgarian War Minister at the Fuehrer Headquarters, a Bulgarian commission headed by Colonel Popoff discussed arms for Bulgaria with Armed Forces High Command. In regard to coastal artillery, Colonel Popoff informed the Bulgarian War Ministry that six 15.5 cm. batteries (captured French material) had already been allocated and shipped and seven more 15.5 cm. batteries had been suggested and promised by Germany.
- 2.) The Bulgarians therefore assigned the personnel to be trained for the first six batteries and detailed 2,500 Labor Service men to begin construction of the emplacements.
- 3.) As the batteries did not arrive, the War Ministry made enquiries of Colonel Rangloff, Chief of the Bulgarian Purchasing Commission in Berlin. He was told by Colonel Muench of Armed Forces High Command that only the following material was scheduled for Bulgaria: one 22 cm. L/35 Rheinmetall battery, one 10.5 cm. L/40 Skoda battery (originally intended for Jugoslavia) and three 10.5 cm. L/28 batteries, plus two batteries of Dutch 7.5 cm. field guns.
- 4.) If these seven batteries are scheduled, instead of the six plus seven 15.5 cm. reported by Colonel Popoff, all the preliminary work by Bulgaria will have been wasted, as the different calibers and number of batteries will call for different emplacements. The Bulgarian War Ministry therefore presumes that the seven batteries (7.5 cm., 10.5 cm., and 22 cm.) reported by Colonel Rangloff are the additional ones promised to Colonel Popoff, and that the six 15.5 cm. batteries previously allocated and reportedly already shipped will be delivered to Bulgaria.

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5.) The Bulgarians do not require 7.5 cm. batteries as they already have enough. It is proposed that they be replaced by 15.5 cm. batteries. Non-delivery of the first six 15.5 cm. batteries would entail a great loss of prestige. Furthermore, as the defense of the Thracian coast is of great importance in view of the development in the Aegean situation, it is requested that the allocation in accordance with the Bulgarian assumption set out in par. 4.) be recommended to Armed Forces High Command and that the Group be advised of the result.

Further steps will be taken by Quartermaster Division.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.



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Items of Political Importance.

Russia:

According to Reuter, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow stated at a press conference that, since his arrival in the U.S.S.R., he had been unable to find any information in the Russian press in regard to the scale of assistance given by the U.S. It seemed to him that the Soviets were trying to create the impression that they were waging the war alone.

The Vice President of the U.S.A. declared in a broadcast that 1943 or 1944 would decide whether the seed were sown for a World War No. 3. Such a war would certainly come if the Allies failed to stamp out the Prussian ideology in Germany, and it would probably come if the U.S.A. played foul with Russia. It was necessary for the western democracies and the U.S.S.R. to come to a satisfactory understanding before the end of the present war. If close confidence and cordial agreement were lacking between Russia and the U.S.A., there would be the serious probability that Russia and Germany would sooner or later make common cause together. A third World War would also be inevitable if Moscow were to return to the old ideology of world revolution or if British interests should again be sympathetic towards anti-Russian movements in Germany or other countries. Another cause of a third World War would be if the U.S.A. returned to isolationism.

Turkey:

The seventh Turkish National Assembly unanimously re-elected President Inoenue. It is a foregone conclusion that Prime Minister Saracoglu will be reinstated after the routine dissolution of the Cabinet.

Arabia:

Reuter denies the report of a treaty between Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Saudi-Arabia for the establishment of air bases in the latter.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Report by Rear Admiral Ruge:

1.) The enemy mine situation in the Central Mediterranean is less dangerous than it had at first seemed. After systematic channel sweeping and reconnaissance by the Italians, the barrages have been correctly plotted. The situation can be kept in hand in the future.

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The number of minesweepers and motor minesweepers is gradually increasing. From May 50 Italian motor minesweepers can be counted on.

2.) The Italian escort service is inefficient. It is inexpert in defensive movements and offensive action. It can be improved only by German example and intermixture of crews.

3.) It is not easy to find an organizational solution to this problem. First of all, a post must be found for Captain Bramsfeld. It would be a good thing if he were appointed German Chief of Staff to the Italian Admiralty at Trapani and also Commander of the German naval forces stationed there. Convoys are directed exclusively by the Italian Admiralty. The Admiral in Trapani has little authority.

Chief, Naval Staff commented that very little could be done to change this situation. It was therefore necessary that German Naval Command, Italy, which was directly in touch with the Italian Admiralty, should take a stronger hand. The number of vessels must be increased. At the request of Commander in Chief, Navy, the Reichsmarschall, who is now in Italy, is to bring pressure on the Italians to this end. The question of assigning German personnel to the escort services must be examined. German Naval Command must investigate how German personnel can best be distributed among the escort services and whether it would be wise to place German Naval Command under the jurisdiction of the Italian Admiralty. Furthermore, the new staff of the German Naval Command must be manned with suitable fresh personnel.

In regard to the above-mentioned efforts of the Reichsmarschall, Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy reports that, following further verbal and written approaches to the Italian Admiralty made by him and on the basis of a detailed conference with the Reichsmarschall on 6 Mar., the latter had discussions with Ambrosio and Riccardi on 8 Mar., during which he requested that all small vessels that can be requisitioned in the Italian area be put into service. The Reichsmarschall pointed out that work has not yet been started on the motor vessels which the Italians seized in the south of France, and demanded that they also be fitted out at once and that the two ex-French despatch boats and three torpedo boats, which are at present in Italian ports, also be employed. The Reichsmarschall offered the assistance of German personnel and will ask the Duce, at today's conference, to issue the necessary orders. Search for small vessels by German sea transport offices in the ports to which they have access has so far been negative.

II. Naval Staff proposes that, of the two next blockade runners expected home, the KARIN should come via the northern route and the PIETRO ORSEOLO via the Bay of Biscay. Chief, Naval Staff has concurred.



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Special Items:

I. Group North has been ordered (with copy to the Fleet) to carry out the transfer of the NUERNBERG to home waters at the next opportunity - April at the latest. In order to save fuel, the escort should consist as far as possible only of such destroyers and torpedo boats as have in any case to be returned to home waters. In addition, gunboats will be considered. The LUETZOW is to remain in the northern area for the time being. The decision as to how long her return is to be delayed will probably be taken at the end of Mar.

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Situation 9 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, a U.S. convoy which took war material for Russia to Iran in November is now on its way back to the U.S.A. carrying raw material. The ships will be loaded partly in Durban and partly in Matadi. Another (British) convoy, coming from India, is assembling in Lagos for the passage to England.

Submarine warnings were intercepted from the Persian Gulf and off Colombo.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has been informed, by radiogram 1842 in special code "Doggerbank", that armed enemy trawlers are patrolling off the whole of the Portuguese coast, generally at a distance of 5 to 15 miles, but in a few cases as far as 30 miles out. Groups of trawlers have been spotted off Oporto, the Berlenga Islands, Lisbon, Cape Espichel and Cape St. Vincent.

The DOGGERBANK has also been ordered, by radiogram 1231, not to take the neutral channel mentioned in radiogram 1202 of 5 Mar. before 18 Mar., because on 16 and 17 Mar. two eastbound convoys from the U.S.A. will pass through this zone and, in view of her slow speed, the DOGGERBANK must be behind them. Furthermore, the DOGGERBANK has been informed that camouflage to resemble the Spanish steamer MAR CANTABRICO, suggested on 6 Mar., is no longer feasible as she will be entering a Spanish port about 19 Mar. The ship has also been advised that, when camouflaging as a harmless, unaccompanied vessel, it must be kept in mind that neutrals sail on a straight course and show lights at night, which should not be too

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bright, and that enemy vessels steer zig-zag courses. Also that, if any other vessel is sighted, evasive movements should be made immediately.

The REGENSBURG has been ordered, by radiogram 2204, to sail from point "Reichsflagge" to new point "Anton". During her passage a strip of 100 miles east and west of the line running from point "Reichsflagge" to point "Anton" will be closed to our submarines.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

Mine-exploding vessels cleared one mine off Lorient and another off the Gironde estuary. The latter, up to Le Verdon inclusive, is closed due to suspicion of mines.

#### Channel Coast:

No special events.

### Special Items:

A difference of opinion, which will be settled by Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, arose between the 2nd Coast Patrol Force and the 8th Destroyer Flotilla in regard to the new use of radar interception aboard during the destroyers' westward passage. While the 2nd Coast Patrol Force claims that the radar interception sets gave no clear picture in the Channel area, as too many coastal direction-finding stations were picked up, the 8th Destroyer Flotilla states that there was no disturbance at all from such stations during its Channel passage and that, on the contrary, the radar interception on all destroyers gave a completely uniform picture. For the two opinions see teletypes 0040 and 1955.

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## III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

### 1. North Sea:

One ELM/J mine was cleared near Terschelling and one near Ameland. Five boats of the 28th Minesweeper Flotilla moved from



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Cuxhaven to the west. Convoys and channel sweeping have been carried out as planned. Defense positions were occupied according to plan. In Antwerp, fire broke out on the bow of patrol boat "208", presumably through a short circuit, but was extinguished.

Aerial mines are suspected on the convoy routes in the Borkum-Heligoland area. At noon enemy reconnaissance flights were observed over the North Sea as far as the Berlin area and back.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence there were three or four Russian submarines in the area of the north coast of Norway. A British vessel was located 120 miles north-northeast of the Faroes. There was considerable reconnaissance activity in the Central North Sea. At 2203 a U.S. steamer was sending SOS signals reporting that she had been torpedoed about 120 miles northeast of Glettingaens.

A German steamer reported that she had sighted a British submarine at 1100 on 7 Mar. at 58°23' N, 9° E, but had been unable to carry out an attack due to sudden fog coming up.

According to an intelligence report from a diplomatic source in Portugal, a large convoy with foodstuffs is to leave Glasgow and other ports for Murmansk in the near future.

### Own Situation:

The situation report from Admiral, Arctic Coast has not come in owing to line trouble. Escort service in the north and west coast areas was carried out according to plan.

Minelaying operation "Klein Erna" is to be carried out on 10 Mar.

Operation "Paderborn" was continued and accomplished according to plan. The SCHARNHORST, with destroyer Z "28", anchored in Bogen Bay in the afternoon.

Naval Staff appreciates the speed with which the task was performed, especially the Commander's decision not to enter the skerries and thus, by exploiting the bad weather, completing the operation as quickly as possible.

Group North has placed the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla in Trondheim at the disposal of the Commander of the TIRPITZ. It is planned to move TIRPITZ to Bogen Bay on 11 Mar. She cannot be moved on 10 Mar. due to lack of covering forces. The STEINBRINCK is to take part in the transfer. The BEITZEN is to remain in Trondheim.

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The LUETZOW will start her transfer from Alta Fjord to Bogen Bay on 10 Mar. at 1700. The codeword will be "Thueringen."

Our submarine operations against the QP convoy were hampered by heavy seas. Contact made with unaccompanied vessels on 7 Mar. in AA 8178 and on 9 Mar. in AE 3581 and 3822, on westerly course, did not lead to any success. In AE 2669, a double miss was fired at a fast unaccompanied vessel. From the reports of the submarines it would appear that, presumably because of the bad weather, the convoy has broken up into small groups or single vessels.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

The results of the interrogation of the Commander of the Russian submarine S "7", who was taken prisoner on 21 Oct. 1942, have been evaluated by Naval Intelligence Division. For results as per 1/Skl 7262/43 geh. see War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation 1943."

A submarine was sighted in AO 3394 (90 miles southeast of Arendal). See "Enemy Situation Norway".

##### 2. Own Situation:

At noon an enemy reconnaissance plane flew over the Western Baltic. An ELM/A mine was cleared off Gdynia by cracker sweeping gear. At noon two enemy reconnaissance planes were reported over Tallinn.

Otherwise no special events.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

There was lively reconnaissance activity over the Bay of Biscay by 30 planes. An unknown steamer reported from the North Atlantic that she tried to ram a submarine and that her starboard side and propellor had been damaged. No reports on this incident have yet been received from our submarines. Two submarine sighting reports south of Cape St. Vincent and one report of a submarine attack 150 miles north of Cayenne were intercepted.

##### 2. Own Situation:

Operations were successfully carried on against the convoy



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in AL in continued stormy weather. From among the convoy or detached unaccompanied vessels three steamers totalling 17,000 GRT were sunk and two more hits were scored. Contact was temporarily lost owing to heavy destroyer and air attacks. About 40 bombs were dropped on submarine U "560" within two hours. She suspects that the plane was using a new kind of underwater location as, before each bomb, location sounds similar to explosive soundings were observed. The operation continues.

Group "Robbe" has been ordered to withdraw from the danger area west of Gibraltar and has been allotted new operational areas in CF 35, 36, 14 and 15.

Group "Raubgraf" has been sent out against a southwest bound convoy which is expected on 10 Mar.

An outstanding success against an enemy convoy in EP 71-41 (130 miles northeast of Cayenne) is reported by submarine U "510" (Lt. Cdr. Karl Neitzel). From an air-escorted convoy consisting of 15 steamers with 7 escort vessels, detected on 8 Mar., the submarine sank no fewer than 7 large steamers for 49,000 GRT and torpedoed an eighth of 6,000 GRT.

In the Cape area, U "506" sank one steamer of 6,000 GRT on 7 Mar. off Capetown and the U.S. steamer PEARL MOOR (4,581 GRT) on 9 Mar. off Cape Agulhas. Due to collision with an unidentified object at periscope depth, the submarine's sky search periscope was damaged and she had to withdraw to the south for repairs.

The sinking of 11,000 GRT is also reported from the Mediterranean.

The day's results thus total over 80,000 GRT sunk. Further details of this successful day are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Naval Staff's instructions in regard to division of Route "Anton" into sectors "A"- "D" and closing of the sectors as from 10 Mar. have been issued as 1/Skl I u 717/43 Gkdos. Chfs. to Submarine Division. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 235 planes, including 161 fighters, on operation in the west area and 5 in the Mediterranean.

During the night of 8 Mar. 14 planes mined the Thames and the Downs.

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Twenty-six planes started out for an attack on Hull, where some large fires were observed. A nuisance raid was made by three planes on Portland; no results were observed.

During defense against daylight air raids in the west area, six enemy planes were shot down.

During the night of 9 Mar. 311 enemy planes flew over German territory. The center of attack was Munich. Nuisance raids were made against the Ruhr and on the Renault plant at Le Mans.

Supplementary statements concerning losses and damage caused by the attacks on Berlin, Essen and Nuernberg are contained in "Daily Situation."

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Operations in the area of the 2nd Air Force were hampered by bad weather. During the night of 9 Mar. enemy ships at Algiers were attacked by six bombers and six torpedo bombers. A bomb hit on a steamer was observed.

## 3. Eastern Front:

On 8 Mar. 15 enemy planes were destroyed and on 9 Mar. 44. No special reports have been received from the 5th Air Force.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The westbound convoy sighted at 1925 on 8 Mar. east of Gibraltar passed Ceuta between 1940 and 2040. Of this convoy 11 steamers entered Gibraltar; 24 steamers, 1 tanker and 7 escort vessels left the Mediterranean.

According to an Italian report, 6 medium-sized and 1 small vessels left Gibraltar during the night of 8 Mar., some presumably to the east and some to the west.

In the forenoon, 2 British auxiliary cruisers from the Mediterranean and a convoy of 7 steamers with 4 escort vessels from the west put in to Gibraltar. In spite of the lively shipping movements observed, tonnage in the ports of the Western Mediterranean has not increased, but has dropped in comparison with 3 Mar. The number of ships in Gibraltar itself has remained almost unchanged.

According to an analysis made by Naval Intelligence Division, there were about 183 merchant vessels, totalling about 950,000 GRT, in



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North African Mediterranean ports on 3 Mar. and 58 vessels totalling 350,000 GRT in Gibraltar.

On 9 Mar. there were 162 vessels in or en route to the Mediterranean ports east of Gibraltar and 56 vessels in Gibraltar. This analysis does not support the theory that the allegedly great activity in Gibraltar might indicate the launching of a new operation by the enemy. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; High Command, Army, Army General Staff and the Naval Liaison Officer attached to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff have been advised of the figures compiled by Naval Intelligence Division. Copy of the report l/Skl I m 7846/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

Great eastbound convoy activity was noted in the Western Mediterranean on 9 Mar. Our air reconnaissance reported that at 0740 the large eastbound convoy of 37 steamers with 12 escort vessels was 50 miles northeast of Oran and the 8 troop transports with 6 escort vessels were 60 miles northeast of Oran, also sailing east. Another part of the large convoy was sighted at 1215 12 miles north of Tenes and at 1900 one convoy 15 miles northwest of Tenes and another 10 miles north of Algiers. One of the convoys, consisting of 25 steamers, sailing east, was detected at 1845 in CH 8428 by one of our submarines and successfully attacked.

Submarines were sighted east of Cape San Vito and off Cape Palinoro (70 miles southeast of Naples).

No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

An intelligence report states that anti-aircraft gunners trained in Gibraltar are being transferred by air to Algiers and Tripoli. According to information from a British quartermaster, of 30 vessels which left Gibraltar on 22 Feb. 30 (?) were bound for Casablanca. All ports on the west coast of Morocco are said to be or to have been crammed with supply ships, allegedly for a large-scale operation against an unidentified target.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. Submarine U "596" sank two steamers totalling 11,000 GRT from a convoy in CH 8428. Three submarines have been ordered to occupy the area between CH 7811 and 9513 in a north-south strip of equal width. Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

On the evening of 8 Mar. five of our submarine-chasers left Naples for Palermo with an Italian convoy. An Italian minesweeper group

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cleared a mine on 8 Mar. 6 miles east of Bizerta. The auxiliary motor minesweepers are en route from Salerno to Capri.

In view of the destruction of and damage to vessels in Sousse, German Naval Command, Tunisia has requested that unloaded steamers be sent back as soon as possible.

German Naval Command, Italy is of the opinion that the transfer of a modern motor minesweeper flotilla to the Mediterranean via Seine-Saone has shown that it would also be feasible to transfer additional PT boat flotillas and has asked for the matter to be investigated.

The question of whether we can afford to withdraw PT boats from the Channel area must be carefully considered.

German Naval Command, Italy has replied to the Fuehrer's questions transmitted by Naval Staff on 8 Mar. Copy of teletype 1/Skl 7018/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV. Naval Staff has forwarded the statements to the permanent representative of Commander in Chief, Navy at Fuehrer Headquarters.

Vice Admiral Weichold reports the handing-over of his duties as Admiral, German Naval Command Italy to his successor.

Submarine-chaser "2205" left Marseilles for Genoa. It is planned for her to sail in company with submarine-chaser "2208" from Genoa to Naples.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

The tanker LABOR and war transports K "13" and "14" entered Bizerta and Tunis on the evening of 8 Mar. according to plan. At noon the LABOR was attacked by twelve enemy bombers (see War Diary, 8 Mar.) War transports K "13" and "14" successfully warded off the attack, evidently in cooperation with fighter escort. On the afternoon of 9 Mar. both transports again left Tunis and were ordered to anchor off the coast during the night and continue on to Italy in daylight.

Operations by naval landing craft and Siebel ferries were impossible due to bad weather.

A tanker left Marseilles for Genoa.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

Nothing special to report.



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Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

Own Situation:

At 1700 on 8 Mar. an enemy submarine unsuccessfully attacked the WOLGA-DON steamer convoy southwest of Cape Tarkhankutzki. Depth charges dropped by two Rumanian gunboats achieved no results.

Owing to bad weather operations by the 1st PT Boat Flotilla against enemy supply traffic between Tuapse and Ghelenjik had to be suspended.

In the afternoon three naval landing craft left Kerch for Anapa (4th Transport Unit).

During ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch naval landing craft MFP "371" was sunk with her crew north of the fish salting plant by striking a mine. Traffic to the fish salting plant was temporarily stopped. At 1930 minelaying was observed on the route to the fish salting plant. Operations by minesweeper plane and with cracker sweeping gear are planned for 10 Mar. Enemy air attacks on Kerch and the fish salting plant caused no naval damage. The ice situation is unchanged.

The following were ferried west: 2,870 soldiers, 359 prisoners, 556 civilians, 2,547 horses, 170 motorized and 703 horse-drawn vehicles etc. Due to mining of MFP "371", rough sea at Taman and the fish salting plant and to the fact that some naval landing craft are damaged and others are running to Anapa, the Navy's participation was limited.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

U.S.A./Russia:

The statement made by the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow (see War Diary, 9 Mar.) has led Under Secretary of State Welles to disassociate himself formally from the Ambassador's attitude and to emphasize the complete confidence and understanding obtaining between the Washington and Moscow Governments. He admits, however, that there is a difference of opinion concerning the need for a second front in Europe, and that history alone can decide whether the Russian or the American view is right.

According to Reuter, the U.S. Secretary for War has demanded an Army of 8,200,000 by the end of 1943. This figure includes an Air Force of 2,500,000 men and an auxiliary corps of 150,000 women. The Army will be organized as an offensive arm and will take advantage of a series of valuable opportunities in order to finish the war as soon as possible.

Great Britain:

On account of its fundamental importance, the U.S. Vice President's speech has received the greatest attention not only in the U.S.A. but also in England, since it concerns the creation of a new World Order by which Great Britain and America, as well as the Soviet Union, are similarly affected.

China:

The U.S. Ambassador in Chungking has been ordered to report in Washington, evidently in connection with the increasing difficulties with which Chiang Kai-Shek is threatened due to the lack of material aid from his Allies.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Report by Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament on the distribution of the Navy's iron quotas for the second quarter of 1943. Including the additional allocation of 40,000 tons arranged for by Commander in Chief, Navy, there is a total of 164,795 tons available as against a minimum requirement of 180,000 tons. The deficit thus amounts to about 16,000 tons. The available quantities of steel are, in general, sufficient to satisfy all major war requirements. Temporary postponements and delays in completion must be accepted. Some details of the proposals agreed between the offices will be modified by Commander in Chief, Navy. For instance, material for further construction of the French destroyer OPINIATRE and of our



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own torpedo recovery vessels is to be drawn from reserves.

Commander in Chief, Navy again stressed his willingness to come to a friendly understanding with the Reich Minister of Armament and Ammunition and instructed all offices to govern themselves accordingly.

II. Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament proposed that Commander in Chief, Navy should use his influence with the Reich Minister of Armament and Ammunition so as to supply the deficit of raw materials for the naval facilities actually available in order to step up submarine construction. This should also include intensification of torpedo construction and all projects of total priority for submarine warfare.

Commander in Chief, Navy concurred.

Chief, Naval (Ship) Construction Division was authorized to intensify submarine construction without restriction.

III. Naval Staff proposed that the following order be issued to Group North, the Fleet, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and Admiral, Northern Waters:

"Following reinforcement of the surface forces in Norway by the addition of the SCHARNHORST, possibilities for employing the vessels against enemy traffic in northern waters are to be resolutely exploited in conformity with the orders of Commander in Chief, Navy of 19 Feb. 1943. In order not to betray the operational plans prematurely to the enemy, it is advisable for the first action to be started from the Narvik area. Group North will submit a basic scheme for operations by the vessels against enemy traffic in northern waters, as well as a directive on the employment of naval forces in defense against enemy landings."

Chief, Naval Staff concurred.

Copy of teletype 1/Skl I a 737/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

IV. Spanish deliveries of lead to Germany, which are made exclusively by sea via Mediterranean ports, amount to 5,000 tons or 2.5% of German lead consumption and are therefore not of decisive war importance.

V. German Naval Command, Italy reported in detail on the demands made by the Reichsmarschall during his conference with Ambrosio and Riccardi on 8 Mar. Teletype as per 1/Skl 730/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

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The difficulty of maintaining supplies to Tunisia would have to be overcome by definite concentration. The escort problem could be fundamentally solved by assigning the defensive tasks to the Navy and the offensive tasks to the Air Force.

Germany had contributed by detaching considerable naval forces to the Mediterranean.

The Italian Navy must be required to:

- 1.) Transfer the whole matter of supply protection into the hands of a Chief in the Naples-Tunis area: Manfredi, with German Chief of Staff.
- 2.) Increase the exchange of experience by embarking experienced German naval officers on Italian escort vessels and Italian officers on German vessels.
- 3.) Assign personnel to gunnery training courses.
- 4.) Release the ex-French destroyers from Toulon for use as transports.
- 5.) Expedite the fitting out and employment as anti-submarine vessels of the French motorboats now in Riviera ports, which have been allotted to Italy. Similar use of the two French despatch boats and three French torpedo boats lying in Italian ports.
- 6.) Make use of even the oldest planes for direct escort. Similarly employ all small vessels that can be requisitioned. If personnel difficulties are encountered in Italy, Germany is ready to provide personnel.
- 7.) Lay mines on the east Tunisian coast. The Italians must urgently assign minelayers. Also, the minelayer CASTOR in Bizerta must be fitted out and perhaps delivered to the German Navy.
- 8.) Provide dockyard capacity (urgently necessary), priority of course being given to the Italian Navy.
- 9.) Provide fire-fighting parties for merchant vessels in case of hits.
- 10.) Improve supply facilities in Southern Italy and the area of Sicily by every available means. Small vessels to be used for this purpose, in order to relieve the railroads.

VI. Quartermaster General:

- a.) Armed Forces High Command has transmitted a request from the



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Bulgarian Navy: Only delivery of the requested minesweeping gear can be considered.

b.) Commander in Chief, Air Force has advised that the Air Force will have to use the remaining quota of 8,000 tons of iron per month itself, as it has been decided not only that the 60 Siebel ferries already under construction are to be completed but that a total of 100 ferries is to be built.

Chief, Naval Staff has ordered a reply to the effect that he is relying on the word of the Reichsmarschall and that furthermore the Reich Minister of Armament and Ammunition has already ordered that the quota be transferred to the Navy.

VII. Report by Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch, Reserve Ship Section on the situation of reserve warships, i.e. merchant vessels under the ensign (totalling 2,111 vessels).

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

VIII. The Italian High Command reports that on 8 Mar. the following order was handed to German Naval Command, Italy:

- 1.) The possibility of an enemy landing in Sardinia during March must be taken into account.
- 2.) Emergency bases are to be prepared for the transfer of the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas to Sardinia.
- 3.) The center for submarine operations will be the Western Mediterranean.
- 4.) The time required for 2.) and plans for 2.) and 3.) are to be reported.

At the same time German Naval Command, Italy reported having received the relevant order from Commanding General, Armed Forces, South.

The directive at first sounds strange, especially as the submarine operational center was long since designated by Naval Staff. However, under present relations, no formal exception can be taken to the manner of the order.

As it is not certain whether the operations of the PT boat flotillas will be executed in the best and most successful way from Sardinia, Naval Staff proposes to call the attention of German Naval Command, Italy to this matter and to ask for a report on operational plans.

Chief, Naval Staff concurred. A corresponding directive will be issued to Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy.

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Special Items:

I. Group West has advised Naval Staff for information of the request that the 3rd Air Force and Air Commander, Atlantic Coast should perform intensive air reconnaissance in connection with the sailing of the blockade runners in the second half of March and in April. Teletype as per 1/Skl 799/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

II. Group West has submitted a copy of the Group's order for Operation "Gisela". Copy as per 1/Skl 519/43 Gkdos. Chefs. is contained in File 1/Skl I opa, Operation "Gisela".

III. Naval Staff's attitude to Operation "Regenbogen" is set out in the "Final Report on the Engagement in Northern Waters on 31 Dec. 1942" compiled on 23 Jan. 1943 for the Fuehrer.

Group North and the Fleet Command view with general approval the performance of Admiral, Northern Waters, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and the Commander of the cruiser LUETZOW, with special consideration of the restrictions and the difficult sighting and observation conditions in the zone of operations. In order to establish the experience gained and so that it may be exploited in subsequent actions, the following points must, however, be clearly noted:

1.) The radiogram (No. 1648) of Admiral, Northern Waters to Commanding Admiral, Task Force, in which the directions given in the operational order concerning behavior in face of the enemy were modified and made stricter, must have imposed a severe strain on Commanding Admiral, Task Force and the commanders of the vessels during the action. This modification of the operational order was in itself unnecessary and was not contemplated by Naval Staff when reference was made by telephone to the restrictions still in force for commitment of the vessels. In any case, the form of the radiogram as selected by Admiral, Northern Waters ("..... not desired by the Fuehrer") was most unfortunate.

2.) In his final comments on Operation "Regenbogen" (War Diary, page 33 onwards) Commanding Admiral, Task Force states that he based his decisions on considerations made by him in connection with projected Operation "Silberstreif" on 20 Nov. and set forth in his operational order for that action. This operational order of 20 Nov. of Commanding Admiral, Task Force did not come to the knowledge of Naval Staff until after 31 Dec.; but even if it had been received beforehand, it would not have been rejected, because the views and plans in regard to the attack on the convoy as therein described conform perfectly with the experiences gained and the principles established, particularly in the course of repeated Fleet exercises. On 31 Dec. Commanding Admiral, Task Force deployed the formation according to these basic considerations of his own. By



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so doing, he successfully managed to keep the bulk of the enemy escort forces to the north of the convoy engaged in continuous battle with the HIPPER, thus creating the conditions for a successful attack on the now weakly defended steamers by the LUETZOW, which approached the convoy from the south about two hours later.

3.) The Commander of the cruiser LUETZOW failed to recognize this favorable situation and therefore did not exploit it. If, in view of the restrictions laid down, he had decided not to take his ship into the snow-storm that screened the convoy, he should at least have taken it upon himself to send his destroyers in to attack. A brief hint from Commanding Admiral, Task Force who, with the HIPPER, had drawn the bulk of the enemy escort forces, would have helped the Commander of LUETZOW to recognize this favorable situation and its possibilities for him.

4.) There is no question of a superiority of enemy forces. In fact, only the anticipated forces appeared, while it was an especially favorable circumstance that the two British cruisers from Kola Bay did not reach the scene of battle until dusk had fallen. The enemy achieved superiority only when the fighting strength of the cruiser HIPPER was reduced by a hit right at the beginning of the engagement.

5.) The briefing of the operational command during the operation and the report submitted on its completion must be objected to in several respects. Commanding Admiral, Task Force ought to have reported the appearance of the enemy cruisers much earlier. The radiogram from submarine U "354" gave an entirely wrong idea of the situation; it should not have been sent in this form. The first brief report on the operation should already have contained information on the performance of the task assigned, i.e. on the successes achieved and those not achieved.

These comments by Naval Staff have been transmitted to Group North and to the Fleet Command with the request that Admiral, Northern Waters, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and the Commanders concerned be informed.

A copy of Naval Staff's final report on the battle of 31 Dec. 1942 is attached.

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Situation 10 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

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2. Own Situation:

The REGENSBURG and KARIN have been instructed by radiogram 1955 that both vessels will embark a meteorologist to assist the Captain and that both will be equipped with a radar interception set and two operators.

The KARIN has been informed by radiogram 1003 in special code "Karin" that she is to sail back to Norway probably south or north of Iceland and that at point "Raumleiter" she is to meet a submarine which will deliver operational orders and charts.

The REGENSBURG has been advised by radiogram 0217, in special "Regensburg" code, in regard to the steamer ST. GOTTHARDT, which is sailing shortly from the U.S.A. and might be used for purposes of camouflage. The REGENSBURG has also been instructed that, when camouflaged as a neutral vessel at night, she should illuminate the national colors on her side in such a way as to dazzle observers from the outside. This effect has been observed several times by our submarines.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Atlantic Coast:

One ELM/J mine was cleared in BF 6868 and another 27 miles west-southwest of Lorient.

Two boats of the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla are to transfer from Nantes to Brest on 11 Mar.

Naval Staff's order to Group West in regard to combining the sailing of the four blockade runners with the bringing in of the PIETRO ORSEOLO has been issued by l/Skl I k 727/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

2. Channel Coast:

North of Dieppe, a UMA/K mine exploded in the sweeping gear. On route "Herz" in the Calais area five EFA mines were cleared; seven ELM/J mines were cleared on the diversionary route south of Boulogne.

Seven boats of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla, put in to Peter Port from Cherbourg.



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III. North Sea, Norway.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Interpretation of the air reconnaissance photographs shows 6 steamers in Dundee, plus 1 in the stocks and 1 destroyer in dock.

At Newcastle there was 1 passenger ship and 1 broken-up passenger ship. Also spotted: 38 steamers and 3 tankers totalling about 200,000 GRT, 2 heavy cruisers in dock, 1 light cruiser, 1 auxiliary aircraft carrier under construction, 6 destroyers and other small vessels.

At Sunderland there were 2 steamers, at Hartlepool 1 destroyer in dock, 8 steamers and 11 more steamers in the stocks.

In Sheerness 2 destroyers were observed; in the Thames estuary, 4 destroyers, 2 (probable) anti-aircraft cruisers, 5 steamers and 32 coastal vessels, as well as 80 boats.

Own Situation:

Air reconnaissance for light enemy forces reported off IJmuiden and Helder was unsuccessful. This was probably a mistaken report.

During an enemy PT boat attack on one of our convoys near point "Max 1", three PT boats were destroyed and two others set on fire. Fourteen prisoners were picked up. Details of the action are not yet available.

Escort service was otherwise carried out according to plan. One ELM/J mine was cleared off Norderney and another one off Borkum.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence there were four Russian submarines off the north Norwegian coast and two more at sea in the training area.

What were probably three destroyers were observed in the Murmansk area.

On 8 Mar. a destroyer and two other naval vessels left Polarnoys for Kola Bay to bring in a submarine.

A British vessel was located 100 miles east-northeast and another 20 miles northwest of the Faroes.

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Air activity was especially lively in the direction of Jutland to the west coast of southern Norway near Bergen.

On 8 Mar. our air reconnaissance reported an assembly of seven merchant vessels, including ships of up to 5,000 GRT, north of the Faroes. The report appears unreliable.

At 1642 our radio intelligence intercepted reports of the sinking of the U.S. steamer RICHARD BLAND (6,800 GRT) in AE 2829 after having been torpedoed.

Own Situation:

A Russian inertia contact mine was cut in the entrance to Sylte Fjord. Grid squares AC 8485 and 8428 were closed owing to mines.

Admiral, Arctic Coast's situation report has not come in due to line trouble.

Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Minelaying operation "Klein Erna" had to be further delayed due to weather conditions.

The transfer of LUETZOW, with the RIEDEL, Z "31" and BRUMMER, from Alta Fjord to Bogen Bay began at 1700.

The transfer of TIRPITZ, with the JACOBI and GALSTER and the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla, is to begin on 11 Mar.

In spite of great difficulties due to ice and weather conditions, operations against the PQ convoy were continued.

On 9 Mar. at 2200 submarine U "586" sank a steamer of 3,000 GRT in AE 3574. The submarine also fired ten misses at two other steamers. The submarines' return passage is to begin at 2000 via three position lines. For details see "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Naval Staff has informed Group North of the decision of Commander in Chief, Navy that blockade runner KARIN is to attempt the northern passage. Copy of order 1/Skl I k 718/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part V, Vol. II a.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Hirtshals-Arendal patrol line is occupied by two patrol boats.



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Escort service was carried out according to plan.

Seventeen vessels were engaged in channel sweeping. One mine was cleared east of Anholt and one in Kolding Fjord. About 30 enemy planes flew into the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic during the night of 10 Mar. No mine warning has been issued.

No special reports have been received from the area of Admiral, Baltic States.

Naval Staff has informed the Naval Attaché, Stockholm in regard to closing the Gulf of Bothnia by laying mine barrages. This matter has been discussed with the Finnish Naval Staff. Copy 1/Skl I Nord 6587/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively reconnaissance activity in the Bay of Biscay by 31 planes.

##### 2. Own Situation:

The operation against the convoy in AK was continued in stormy weather. Three vessels in the convoy, for 15,000 GRT, were sunk and four others for 26,000 GRT were torpedoed.

Operations against this convoy, carried out by Groups "Ostmark" and "Westmark", will be discontinued on 11 Mar.

Today's sinkings were achieved by submarines U "409", U "616" and U "229".

In BD 2268, submarine U "336" of Group "Neuland" spotted an east-bound convoy whose presence had been revealed by radio deciphering. In the course of the day a large number of this Group's submarines made contact with the convoy.

By 2126, submarine U "221" had already sunk three ammunition steamers totalling about 30,000 GRT from this convoy.

No success reports have been received from the other submarines in the North Atlantic.

Submarine U "580" sank an 8,000 GRT tanker and an 8,000 GRT ammunition ship from a convoy of six steamers in the West Indies. A second convoy of about 30 steamers was spotted by this submarine on the same day. However, contact was lost owing to strong defense.

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Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 257 planes out on operation, 8 of them in the Mediterranean. The attack carried out on Hull by 20 planes with Portland, Great Yarmouth and Grimsby as alternate targets, was described as a good success by the Air Force General Staff.

During the night of 10 Mar., 34 enemy planes flew over Reich territory. Five of these probably dropped mines in the eastern Baltic.

Nuisance raids were made on the Ruhr.

In Belgium and northern France, 38 enemy planes attacked traffic installations and probably mined the west coast.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

No special reports have been received.

### 3. Eastern Front:

On 9 Mar. 44 enemy planes were destroyed over the Army fronts.

On 10 Mar. the 5th Air Force reports that 22 enemy planes had been shot down in the Murmansk area.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to an intelligence report from Spain, the FORMIDABLE is expected to sail during the night of 10 Mar. or on 11 Mar.

German air reconnaissance reported that a fast convoy of three steamers with three destroyers entered Algiers on the afternoon of 9 Mar.

On the morning of 10 Mar., a convoy was ten miles north of Algiers.



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In the afternoon, six westbound destroyers were observed 26 miles east-northeast of Algiers.

One submarine was detected in the Adriatic south of Spalato.

No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

According to photographic interpretation, the harbors of Phalos and Simasol on Cyprus were vacant at 1400 on 10 Mar.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Four Italian submarines were in the operational area. No action reports have been received from our own submarines. Details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

During the night of 9 Mar. PT boat flotillas were unable to operate owing to weather conditions. For the same reason, the special mission of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla had to be discontinued on the afternoon of 9 Mar.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

German Naval Command, Italy attributes the sinking of the steamer HENRY ESTIER and the torpedo boat CYCLONE on 7 Mar. near Cape Bon to mine hits. The steamer BALZAC was sunk by a bomb.

Otherwise nothing special to report.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

An Italian source has informed the Naval Attaché, Istanbul that the Turkish Navy intends to carry out sweeping on the barrages off the Dardanelles. In Group South's opinion, this plan is incompatible with the German declaration on the Aegean Sea operational area.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was little shipping traffic off the east coast during the forenoon. Seven merchant vessels and several boats were observed in Ghelenjik, four PT boats in Sochi and one tanker in the roads.

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Own Situation:

On account of bad weather neither German nor Italian PT boats were on operation.

Admiral, Black Sea reports that 3,000 cbm of Diesel oil per month are required for naval vessels and 1,200 cbm mazout per month for the power plant at Sevastopol, as the naval landing craft and transports now in operation must be able to carry out repairs and dock in Sevastopol if necessary. The matter will be dealt with by Quartermaster Division.

No naval landing craft traffic in the Strait of Kerch was possible because of rough seas off the fish salting plant and Taman and because the channels were closed. Clearing operations by minesweeping planes were unsuccessful. Due to the bad weather, cracker sweeping gear could not be used.

Traffic to Kossa Chuchka by combined operations landing craft could be maintained only by bringing a tender back into service.

2,051 soldiers, 368 prisoners, 337 civilians, 1,318 horses, 226 motorized and 316 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried to the west. Three naval landing craft with supplies left Anapa for Kerch.

By directive of High Command, Navy/Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilisation Branch of 10 Mar. the establishment of a 5th Landing Flotilla has been ordered. The Flotilla is to be under the operational command of Admiral, Black Sea, and will be administered by him separately.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

Russia/U.S.A.:

The Russians reluctance to acknowledge Allied deliveries in the press is ascribed by American observers in Moscow to the three following factors:

- 1.) The Soviet Union does not wish her Allies to assume a "fraternal" attitude in sending material to Russia.
- 2.) Russia's main desire is for the U.S.A. and Great Britain to open a second land front in Europe.
- 3.) Deliveries have apparently not come up to the original estimates due to losses and other reasons.

Great Britain:

In the debate on the Navy estimates in the House of Commons, a Conservative member demanded that the Navy be given the same kind of priority as the Air Force. Other members pointed out that it was more important to destroy submarines than to make air raids on Germany.

In the House of Lords, Vansittart declared: "My only wish is to annihilate Germany as a military power once and for all. I would welcome the survival of Germany provided that it were an entirely different Germany, bearing no resemblance either in manner, substance or spirit to the second or third Reichs which have brought such immeasurable suffering upon mankind."

The Admiralty Parliamentary Secretary stated in the House of Commons that the Government would continue its policy of not publishing merchant shipping losses. It was to be expected that the number of German submarines would continually increase but losses and means of defense were also increasing. The Fleet Air Arm had a suitable priority as compared with the RAF. It was planned to construct more fast ships than had ever been built before.

An article in the "Observer" describes the submarine danger as the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a second front in Europe. Allied attempts to concentrate their forces were seriously delayed by sinkings of ships.

According to a statement by the Ministry of Economic Warfare on the importation of petroleum to Spain, a reliable system of quotas has been set up which will ensure supplies based strictly on Spain's own domestic requirements.

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Spain:

The Spanish Ambassador in Buenos Aires stated in an interview that a large proportion of the Spanish people was in favor of restoration. Franco is said to have hinted in one of his speeches that re-establishment of the monarchy might be possible on certain conditions but, under present circumstances could not be carried out.

North Africa:

The frontier between French and Spanish Morocco has been closed for several days.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Quartermaster General reported that General von Unruh will be unable to attend to his duties for two months owing to an automobile accident. It is planned to make a check-up in the North German coastal area on 21 Mar. Chief, Naval Staff recommended a postponement. Quartermaster Division will make further arrangements.

Quartermaster General further reported that the first naval landing craft (artillery) was ready for action on 7 Mar. and that the Air Force has so far provided no anti-aircraft reinforcement at the submarine bases in western France, evidently due to the air raids on Germany.

II. Report by Operations Division, Foreign Affairs Section suggesting that a letter be sent by Commander in Chief, Navy to the Spanish Naval Minister in order to lay emphasis on delivery of arms by the Navy and make the effect of this measure as lasting as possible. Commander in Chief, Navy concurred. Details are given in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

(In the margin note by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff: "The letter has been stopped and will be sent with certain modifications." Tr.N)

III. Chief, Naval(Ship)Construction Division reported on the reasons for the delay in provision of cupola armor for PT boats, which is due principally to priority for the "Tiger" program over naval deliveries.

Commander in Chief, Navy regards this as further proof of the need to re-organize the question of priorities for naval matters.

IV. On 9 Mar., a conference was held between Chief of Staff, Naval Staff and Vice Admiral Nomura and Rear Admiral Yokoi concerning the



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delivery of new German submarines to Japan. Minutes of the conference as per l/Skl I opa 739/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff reported on this subject and in particular of Japan's desire that the submarine to be transferred be taken to Japan by a German crew. Nomura plans to embark on this submarine as he has been recalled to Japan to take office as Admiral.

Chief, Naval Staff decided that delivery by a German crew was out of the question, and that the Japanese themselves must fetch the submarine.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff further reported that General Jodl has indicated via Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy that in dealings between the Japanese and Naval Staff no strategic problems should be discussed. Chief, Naval Staff intends to discuss this matter with General Jodl personally. Chief, Naval Staff considers that some frankness is necessary in discussions with Japanese officers.

V. The report by Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch, Reserve Ship Section on reserve warships was continued.

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Special Items.

I. Chief, Naval Staff has reported to the Fuehrer on the measures that have been ordered or are planned for the Mediterranean and on his intention to fly to Rome in order to make his first call on Admiral Riccardi. Before leaving, he plans to obtain the Fuehrer's orders concerning the measures intended in the Mediterranean. Teletype as per l/Skl I b 7262/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy has transmitted to Operations Division copy of a teletype from Commanding General, Armed Forces, South/Armed Forces Transport Section, Rome to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff and Supply and Transportation Office, Armed Forces Overseas. The message states that at a conference on 7 Mar. the Reichsmarschall promised to facilitate a construction program of at least 200 naval landing craft per quarter as well as numerous Siebel ferries ( transports as well as operational craft) by large-scale allocation of raw materials. The Reichsmarschall pointed out that the construction of small vessels and war transports, on a large scale along the lines of American production in series, is essential for prosecution of the war in the Mediterranean. The matter is to be discussed with the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping at Hamburg on 9 Mar.

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Naval Staff has instructed Quartermaster Division to make further arrangements.

III. The Naval Liaison Officer attached to Army General Staff, Operations Division has been informed of the meaning of the code-words "Paderborn" and "Rostock" by letter 1/Skl I a 747/43 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

IV. The reorganization of the Navy, ordered on 15 Feb., calls for new distribution of defense forces to the operational areas and new regulations on the subordination of these units. A corresponding order was issued on 2 Mar. by High Command, Navy/Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch. Copy as per 1/Skl 6492/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C d.

V. A summary of data on the enemy obtained by radio intelligence and deciphering from 1-7 Mar. is contained in Radio Monitoring Report No. 10/43 of Chief, Radio Monitoring Reports, Naval Communications Division.

Note: The designation OT 2 was used for the first time by a convoy on the central Atlantic route. In the Cape area convoys with the designations CN and NC have been detected for the first time. They are probably coastal convoys from and to Capetown. The ten-day schedule of the SC convoys has been confirmed.

"Task Force 37" has appeared as an additional covering unit on the central Atlantic convoy route.

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### Situation 11 Mar.

#### I. War in Foreign Waters.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

The cruisers MEMPHIS and MARBLEHEAD and the destroyer DAVIS put in to Montevideo at the end of Feb. A U.S. convoy of 25 vessels with troops, airmen and planes for Colombo is expected in Capetown. At the end of Feb. and middle of Mar. five transports with about 10,000 men are to leave Durban, apparently for India.

An agent's report enumerates the patrol vessels on the coast of South Africa, which include a number of Canadian corvettes and mine-sweepers. A converted U.S. cruiser, the CAROLINE, is operating in the shuttle service between Durban and Madagascar. The destroyer AMBUSCADE is reported to be in Port Elizabeth. About four escort vessels are said to be always stationed at Durban. However, their number is to be increased during the spring.



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According to an intelligence report from Canada via "Ostrov", all the Canadian destroyers, except two, are either in European waters or on convoy service, using the U.S. base of Placentia for supplies.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has transmitted to the DOGGERBANK by radiogram 2105 data on the Spanish steamer CASTILLO BELLVER which, according to dead reckoning, will pass the Azores on 16 Mar. and which might be used for camouflage purposes. By radiogram 1814 it is further suggested that DOGGERBANK take the neutral route even earlier, as on 12 Mar. an eastbound U.S. convoy with a speed of 11 knots will cross 40° W on 35° N and a second slow convoy will cross 40° W on 13 or 14 Mar. about 50 miles further south, also sailing east.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

The Military Attaché, Bern reports information from two different sources to the effect that the final preparations are being made for an immediate landing operation from the English southeast and south coasts. Group West, North Sea Station and Group North have been informed by Naval Staff.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

A mine explosion occurred at a depth of about 80 meters under the bow of torpedo boat T "9" in BF 6175. It was probably a ground mine. The boat suffered no vital damage. In the northern area there were 56 fishing vessels at sea, in the southern area 116. Two ELM/J mines were cleared off the Gironde estuary and one off Lorient.

Air Commander, Atlantic Coast plans to send eight planes out on reconnaissance on 12 Mar. between 41°30' and 54°30' N up to the range limit.

Channel Coast:

At 0250, while channel sweeping, minesweeper M "4620" was sunk by enemy PT boats at point "336". Twenty-eight of the crew were rescued; 29 are missing. No details have yet been received.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

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1. North Sea:

Four ground mines were cleared off Terschelling and Rotersand. Convoy escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan. Six boats of the 11th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla were sent to the Baltic Sea at the disposal of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic.

The workmen at the Wilton Dockyard in Rotterdam went on strike for several hours allegedly because of insufficient food.

The British Admiralty reports that a British PT boat was destroyed off the English east coast. No reports of our own have been received on this.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Radio intelligence again detected several Russian submarines off the north coast of Norway and Russian and British vessels in Kola Bay. Lively Russian air reconnaissance and ice-breaker activity was observed in the area of the Dwina estuary and the southern outlet of the Gorlo Strait. The British were active in air reconnaissance towards the southern North Sea and the Skagerrak. Air Force monitoring intercepted a notice to the Russian Arctic Fleet that a large convoy destined for Russia is escorted by the cruisers SHEFFIELD, BELFAST, CUMBERLAND, NORFOLK and a fifth unidentified cruiser.

According to an intelligence report, there were three large steamers and one heavy cruiser in Hval Fjord on 9 Mar. Air reconnaissance reported from the Faroes twelve merchant vessels of up to 5,000 GRT without escort and defense. They are evidently fishing trawlers.

Own Situation:

Admiral, Arctic Coast's situation report has still not been received owing to line trouble. It is reported that only a few enemy planes were in action over the north and west coast on 10 Mar. Escort service was carried out according to plan. Four stranded naval landing craft have been salvaged and towed to Vardoe. A fifth naval landing craft broke up.

The transfer of LUETZOW with destroyer Z "31" and the BRUMMER to Bogen Bay has been accomplished according to plan. According to a report from Group North, torpedo boat T "16" will have to dock for six weeks to repair a turbine. Repairs to the destroyer IHN will take two weeks. BEITZEN and STEINBRINCK require seven days for repair of sea damage and engine trouble.



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The transfer of TIRPITZ, probably with JACOBI, GALSTER and four boats of the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla, has begun. The formation anchored east of Mosjorn at 2000. It will proceed on at 1000 on 12 Mar.

Group North reports that the passage through the Denmark Strait has taken on a new aspect inasmuch as the attack on the QP convoy has shown that the ice on the Greenland coast has begun to move southwards owing to the recent storms. Heavy drift ice has been ascertained off the eastern exit of the Denmark Strait and on the east coast of Iceland. This knowledge is of importance in bringing through the blockade runners.

During the submarine operation against the QP convoy, U "255" succeeded in sinking a heavily armed steamer of about 7,000 GRT at 1636 on 10 Mar. in AE 2821. It is believed to have been the U.S. steamer RICHARD BLANT of 6,800 GRT.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to a report from Sweden, the situation of the DICTO and LIONEL was unchanged on 9 Mar. However, their sailing is said to be planned before the middle of the month.

##### 2. Own Situation:

Six vessels of the Skagerrak patrol have been assigned to escort duties.

During minelaying raids on the evening of 10 Mar. in the central and eastern Baltic Sea, an enemy plane was shot down off Sassnitz. by naval anti-aircraft guns.

Mines are suspected in Danzig Bay.

The Hirtshals-Arendal patrol line is occupied by three patrol boats and the Hanstholm barrage gap by two patrol boats.

Escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan. Mine-exploding vessel "172" cleared five ELM/J mines at Hertas Flach within 22 minutes.

Two more ELM/J mines were cleared, one off Pillau and the other north of Arcona.

Off Svenborg, the Danish motor sailing vessel INGER struck a mine and sank.

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While the Danish minesweeper SOERIDEREN was clearing mines between Nyborg and Korsoer at noon on 10 Mar., seven armed Danes who had hidden aboard attempted, with the assistance of three members of the crew, to seize the boat in order to sail to England. The Commander refused to comply but landed the ten men near Kullen in Sweden. The minesweeper put in to Copenhagen. The crew was interned on board by the Danish Navy. An investigation is taking place under Danish martial law. It is intended to leave the matter to the Danish Government for the time being.

Our naval batteries fired on sailing sleds at the mole of Leningrad. A framework over a motor barge which had been sunk on 27 Nov. 1942 was fired on and hit by Battery "Koenigsberg". The fire was returned from the Karelian coast.

With reference to the salvaging of a British moored mine dropped by a plane at Bizerta, pointed out by Naval Staff, Group North reports that the sudden appearance of such mines in the Baltic Sea, particularly in the submarine training area, would call for the establishment of prescribed routes in the central and eastern Baltic. Baltic Station has been instructed by Group North to make adequate precautionary preparations. Commanding Admiral, Submarines has also been asked to be prepared to equip all motor minesweepers and minesweepers of the submarine flotillas in the Baltic Sea with cutting kite sweeps. (See teletype 1004).

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was normal; 30 planes were observed. An SOS call was intercepted from a British steamer which had been torpedoed in the Yucatan Channel, probably by one of our submarines.

2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic, Groups "Ostmark" and "Westmark" were dissolved.

Further reports of successes in the action against the convoy in grid square AK have been received from Group "Neuland":

U "359" hit a steamer but had to break off pursuit owing to fuel shortage.

U "406" sank an 8,000 GRT tanker in AK 9862 with a spread of three (two "Fat" and one electric) torpedoes.



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U "757" sank the steamer WILLIAM P. PALMER of 7,602 GRT but was heavily damaged by the explosion and had to withdraw for repairs.

U "86" sank an 8,000 GRT tanker and scored two hits on an overlapping steamer.

U "336" probably sank a large freighter.

As it is to be presumed that the convoy will evade to the north, the submarines will be given new orders.

On 10 Mar., U "621" of Group "Raubgraf" scored a hit in AJ 9351 on an unaccompanied vessel of about 3,000 GRT and reported from AK 7174 a steamer of 6,000 GRT sinking.

Thus five more vessels from the attacked convoy, totalling more than 36,000 GRT, have been sunk and four others torpedoed.

There are no reports of submarine actions from the West Indies or South Africa.

Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

A total of 114 planes of the 3rd Air Force was in action, 13 of them in the Mediterranean. During the day, a surprise raid was made on Hastings by 27 fighter-bombers in two waves, from an altitude of about 20 m. It is regarded as very successful. Low-level attacks with machine guns were made by the planes on the unwarned population in the streets!

During the day the enemy successfully attacked ammunition trains in the area of Rennes. During the night of 11 Mar., 51 bombers were sent out, concentrating on Newcastle and Tynemouth. During the same night, 172 enemy planes flew into German-controlled territory, 153 of them entering the Reich. The attack was concentrated on Stuttgart. For damage and losses see "Daily Situation".

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

230 sorties are reported by Commanding General, Armed Forces, South. During the night of 11 Mar. 13 bombers were in action against Tripoli. During the same night, 15 bombers and 10 torpedo bombers attacked the harbor of Bone.

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An 8,000 GRT steamer was hit by two torpedoes, a 3,000 GRT steamer by one torpedo, and another 8,000 GRT steamer suffered two direct bomb hits. In addition, an explosion on a destroyer was observed.

The Italian Air Force reports having sunk a 15,000 GRT steamer and damaged a light cruiser and a steamer in an attack on an enemy convoy on the morning of 10 Mar. between Algiers and Bougie.

On the evening of 11 Mar. a German bomber formation was in action against ten enemy vessels off Cape Misurata. An action report has not yet come in.

### 3. Eastern Front:

On the afternoon of 11 Mar. a four-engined enemy plane flew from an unknown direction into the Black Sea area as far as Constantza. No bombs were dropped.

On 10 Mar. the 5th Air Force photographed the berths of the Lake Ladoga Fleet. Altogether 43 tugs, 1 paddle-steamer, 8 small steamers, 61 towed barges, 1 torpedo boat, 5 auxiliary gunboats, 7 patrol boats, 21 motor boats, 6 minesweepers, 2 floating docks, 1 railroad ferry and several fishing boats were identified. Defense was weak throughout the area.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The heavy Task Force, comprising NELSON, RODNEY, FORMIDABLE and eight destroyers, which left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean at 1420, returned to port during the night of 11 Mar.

According to an intelligence report from Spain, the Spanish Intelligence Service confirms preparations, and large-scale stock-piling of matériel and fuel at Gibraltar.

The Italian Intelligence Service reports from a source of unknown reliability that a great number of landing craft has recently been concentrated at Oran.

Considerable shipping was noted in the area east of Algiers. It was probably the last vessels of the large convoy putting into port.

A submarine was sighted near Palermo.

According to an intelligence report from Spain, the enemy submarine which sank the Spanish steamer BARTOLO on 6 Mar. put into Palomas on 9 Mar. and after disembarking the Captain and another member of the steamer's crew put out to sea again.



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Italian radio intelligence reports that a convoy is believed to be off Mersa Matruh.

No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

German Naval Command, Italy has submitted a report on interrogation of prisoners from the crew of the British MTB "262" as per 1/Sk1 7297/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation 1943."

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. No action reports have been received from our own submarines.

The 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas were unable to operate owing to weather conditions. During the night of 10 Mar., four boats of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla made an exploratory sweep from Bizerta. The six auxiliary motor minesweepers have been unable to continue their passage due to bad weather.

Group West has requested that suitable escort vessels be furnished immediately in view of the increasing danger to our shipping on the south coast of France from enemy submarines. At present only an emergency escort can be provided by men of the 2nd Air Division under training. Furthermore Group West reports that the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla in Marseilles is taking over all shipping escort on the south coast of France immediately. Group West has asked the 3rd Air Force to instruct the 2nd Air Division to place its forces at disposal for escort service as before until suitable escort vessels are available.

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

War transports KT "13" and KT "14" entered Trapani on the afternoon of 10 Mar. Small vessel traffic between Italy and Tunisia was carried out according to plan. There are seven empty steamers in Bizerta and four in Tunis.

En route from Naples to Palermo, the steamer ROSARIO (5,468 GRT) was sunk at 1625 on 10 Mar. by an enemy submarine near Cape Milazzo northwest of the Straits of Messina. On the same day a convoy from Naples to Palermo was also attacked by enemy planes. Details are still lacking.

## 4. Area Naval Group South:

### Aegean Sea:

Group South reports that up to 10 Mar., 2,700 cbm of fuel oil had been advanced to the Italians in the Piraeus. No further

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deliveries can be made to Italian vessels from the present stock of 3,000 cbm, which is required for our own vessels. According to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, the Italians refuse to return the fuel oil which has been made available to them.

Group South has asked for information as to whether, in case of an imminent penetration by the enemy, the bringing up also of German naval forces from the Central Mediterranean can be counted on:

- a.) if the Tunis bridgehead is still held, or
- b.) if the bridgehead is abandoned.

In Naval Staff's opinion, enemy penetration of the Aegean would not result in any relaxation of his pressure in the Western and Central Mediterranean. The vital importance of supplying Tunisia makes it impossible to withdraw the German escort forces which are already insufficient. If, contrary to expectation, the enemy appears to be concentrating exclusively on the Aegean area, further decisions will depend upon the development of the situation. What, if any, forces will be available for operation in the Aegean Sea if the Tunis bridgehead is abandoned, cannot yet be foreseen. Group South was advised accordingly by teletype 1/Skl I m 741/43 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

Commanding Admiral, Group South has submitted Instruction No. 1 of Group South on preparations for defense against an enemy penetration into the Aegean Sea / Dodecanese area. After examination by Naval Staff, the instruction will be forwarded, as agreed, to the Italian Admiralty to be issued as an order to Admirals, Dodecanese and Patras. Copy 1/Skl 675/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

The Daily Situation Report was not received owing to line trouble.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon, 2 merchant vessels and 1 patrol boat were sighted on southeasterly course and another merchant vessel on northwesterly course in the area of Ghelenjik. On the morning of 10 Mar. there were 8 steamers, 5 PT boats and 10 motor minesweepers in Ghelenjik.

Own Situation:

East of Theodosia a formation of naval landing craft was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine. Ship "19" was sent out on submarine chase. Owing to continuous bad weather, German



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and Italian PT boats were unable to operate during the night of 11 Mar.

Ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was carried on with special precautions. Naval landing craft proceeded in groups of four, with anti-ground mine escort by remote minesweepers. Traffic was greatly hampered by the weather. Combined operations ferry traffic was very difficult. Repeated enemy air attacks were made on Kerch, Taman and the fish salting plant. A total of 24 naval landing craft was employed.

2234 soldiers, 403 prisoners, 395 civilians, 39 wounded, 439 motorized and 366 horse-drawn vehicles and 1230 horses were ferried to the west.

Three naval landing craft are en route from Kerch to Anapa.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

U.S.A./Russia:

The incident created by the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow appears to have been smoothed over by a statement made by Ambassador Litvinov in Washington. Litvinov declared that the lend-lease goods delivered to Russia had been an enormous help and also that the Russian people were fully informed of their extent and were deeply grateful for them. The war materiél supplied by the U.S.A. had done good service in both the defensive and offensive operations of the Red Army.

The following statements were made concerning lend-lease deliveries: In the first year, 68% of all deliveries went to the British Isles. In the second year, 38% went to Great Britain, 29% to Russia, 15% to the Middle East and Africa, 14% to Australia, New Zealand, India and China and 4% to other countries. The total value of the material delivered under lend-lease to date amounts to 9.6 Million Dollars.

According to a statement by Sumner Welles, it is not at present planned for the U.S. Ambassador to return to Finland.

Great Britain:

The "Times" describes the "Bolshevist bogey" propaganda put out by the Germans as dangerous. Allied unity might be severely strained if the U.S.A. and Great Britain did not agree that Russia should have the same rights as the Allies after victory, and should herself determine the conditions for protection of her frontiers.

Russia:

Pravda and Ivestia declare in almost identical words that the Red Army is bearing the whole burden of the war alone because of the lack of a second front in Europe.

The "Neue Züricher Zeitung" has published a noteworthy article on the resurgence of the Pan-Slav propaganda which has given a great lift to Russian national feelings. This is said to be the result of the contempt shown during this war by the German State towards the Slavs, as a lower race. The question is whether Pan-Slavism has replaced Bolshevism or whether it is only designed to give it new energy.

On the part of Germany allowance for this question has already been made by government orders regarding the treatment of the populations in occupied eastern territories.



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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. The fact that successful enemy submarine activity has recently been developed off the south coast of France, has raised the question of whether a number of submarine chasers should not be left in this area. It had been planned to transfer all serviceable vessels to the Sicilian Channel. Naval Staff considers it advisable to leave 2 to 3 newly built vessels of this kind in southern France as they become available. Chief, Naval Staff approved.

II. In regard to air protection for the heavy forces in the Norwegian area, Naval Staff has sent the following teletype to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff:

"Naval Staff plans that the heavy and light vessels now assembled in the North Norwegian area shall resume the campaign against the Murmansk convoys at the first opportunity, after a short training period of the newly formed group in the Narvik area.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff is requested that, in case of an operation by the heavy vessels, the 5th Air Force be instructed to cooperate as closely as possible with Naval Group North in reconnaissance and also in combat, especially against heavy enemy vessels.

Naval Group North has been ordered to advise the 5th Air Force Command of the requirements arising from its plans and to maintain direct contact for the preparation of joint operations."

Chief, Naval Staff is in accord and will take the opportunity of discussing the matter with the Reichsmarschall. Group North has been informed accordingly by Naval Staff.

III. The Japanese have requested release to them of the torpedo duplex pistol. Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that, in view of the fact that the "Pi 2" is still in an experimental stage, this weapon cannot at present be released. The Japanese are to be told that the experiments made with these pistols have not been very satisfactory.

IV. Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy has submitted his comments in accordance with Naval Staff's instructions (see War Diary 9 Mar.). Copy as per 1/Skl 7335/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV. In regard to the position of Admiral, German Naval Command within the Italian Admiralty, he requests that he first be given time for practical duties and that basic changes of an organizational nature be postponed for the time being. Chief, Naval Staff will personally discuss this matter in Rome.

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Special Items.

I. After the Fuehrer had approved the proposal for employment of Italian submarines, the matter was taken up with Admiral Riccardi by personal letter from Chief, Naval Staff. Copy of this letter 1/Skl I b 766/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX.

II. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division has forwarded a copy of a paper submitted by Vice Admiral Nomura on 9 Mar. which, according to the Admiral, contains his own views on the war situation. A copy has been submitted to Chief, Operations Staff, Armed Forces High Command, at his request.

The statements contain nothing new for Naval Staff, Operations Division.

Entry has been made as per 1/Skl 768/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

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Situation 12 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

The Naval Attache, Tokyo reported on 10 Mar. that a most cordial welcome was accorded to the Commander and officers of Ship "28" by the Minister and Chief of Naval Staff in Tokyo.

Naval Staff has informed the DOGGERBANK by radiogram 0956 in regard to neutral traffic in the southern part of the North Atlantic, and, by radiogram 2141, on the passage of a fast and a slow U.S. convoy at 40° West on 12 and 13 Mar.

The Attaché, Tokyo has been advised by Naval Staff that the passage of submarine U "180" has been delayed and that she will not reach the rendezvous until 23 Apr. The submarine will wait there for three days and then, if the ship does not arrive, will proceed to the alternative rendezvous at dawn on 26 Apr. She will arrive there on the morning of 28 Apr. If the ship is missed again, the submarine has been ordered to send home a report on the morning of 1 May.

All vessels in foreign waters were informed by radiogram 1016 on



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the domestic political situation in Finland and on German deliveries of arms to Spain.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, the Admiralty retransmitted a report from the Free French headquarters that at daybreak on 12 Mar. a group of light French forces successfully attacked a small German convoy off the coast of Brittany (see teletype 2155).

Our radio intelligence in the Atlantic intercepted the following: at 1240 a convoy of 36 vessels with 1 heavy cruiser, 4 destroyers and 4 escorts, on course 200°, 240 miles northwest of Cape Finisterre; at 1530 40 merchant vessels with 3 destroyers and 5 escorts on course 20° 200 miles west-southwest of Cape Finisterre.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

An ELM/J mine was cleared by a mine-sweeping plane on 11 Mar. off St. Nazaire. On 12 Mar. three ELM/J mines were cleared west of Lorient and off Rochefort.

It is planned to move torpedo boats T "19", "12", "18", KONDOR and FALKE from Brest to La Pallice and Bordeaux. Exploratory sweeps will be made during the transfer.

Channel Coast:

Motor minesweeper R "74" sank at 1827 off Boulogne by striking a mine.

At noon 57 enemy Fortresses raided Rouen. In the Sotteville railroad station 30 to 40 wagons, one of them loaded with ship's ammunition, were destroyed.

The 18th Patrol Boat Flotilla and two steamers came under fire from an enemy long-range battery during the night of 11 Mar. while proceeding from Boulogne to Dunkirk. Fire was returned by our own batteries. Patrol Boat "1802" sustained damage and casualties from shell splinters. After being shadowed by an enemy plane from 0448 to 0525, the convoy was attacked by 12 enemy PT boats off Gravelines. The steamer DALILA was sunk by a torpedo. Twenty-six men are missing. Our defenses sank two enemy PT boats and set two others on fire. For report on the action of the 18th Patrol Boat Flotilla, see teletype 1430.

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For particulars on the sinking of minesweeper M "4620" on 11 Mar., see teletype 1030. (See also British Admiralty report on enemy situation).

Special Items.

With reference to Naval Staff's mention of enemy moored aerial mines off Bizerta, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West reports that such mines have not so far been found in his area and that therefore no experience has been gained in regard to defensive possibilities.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Patrol boat "1418" was attacked by two enemy fighters while entering the Hook of Holland. She suffered damage and casualties.

The clearing of one EIM/J mine off Ijmuiden and one off Helder by mine-sweeping plane is reported as of 10 Mar.

Escort service was carried through according to plan. The 25th Minesweeper Flotilla is en route from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe. The Flotilla has been placed at the disposal of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports on the PT boat engagements during the night of 9 Mar. as follows:

Three engagements took place. At 2314 on 9 Mar. two patrol boats off Terschelling were attacked by three MGB's. One of the patrol boats received a hit and suffered several casualties. The enemy turned off to the west under fire from our boats.

At 0107 on 10 Mar. the patrol group at position "Mainz", also off Terschelling, was engaged by six enemy PT boats. A torpedo track was outmaneuvered. Two enemy PT boats were set on fire. Only slight damage and casualties were caused to our boats.

The third engagement took place from 0125 to 0135, in AN 8311 off Terschelling, between three enemy PT boats and the minesweeping escort of one of our convoys. One PT boat was set on fire and probably sunk. During another brush from 0150 to 0155, a second PT boat was sunk by the intervention of our patrol boats. Fifteen survivors were rescued, including the Commander, whose notes confirm the sinking of the first-mentioned PT boat. In a separate action, a PT boat behind the convoy was set on fire and destroyed by harbor defense boat DB "04" and Harbor Defense Flotilla "Borkum".



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Altogether, three PT boats were certainly destroyed and two others set on fire. The cooperation between the enemy's planes and PT boats is worthy of note. For brief report see teletype 1608.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Radio intelligence detected three Russian submarines on the north coast of Norway and a fourth which was ordered back to Polarnoye. One British vessel was located 60 miles east of Langanes and another 80 miles west of Syderoey.

Our air reconnaissance sighted a submerging submarine 100 miles northeast of the Faroes and reported that 2 battleships, 1 aircraft carrier, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers and about 60 merchant vessels were seen in Scapa, possibly being convoys which had put in on account of bad weather.

Own Situation:

On 10 Mar. an unsuccessful enemy air attack was made on one of our convoys off the Arctic coast. On the same day, enemy air attacks caused slight damage in Petsamo and no damage in Kirkenes. Escort service was carried through according to plan on 10 and 11 Mar.

The TIRPITZ moved on to the north and completed her transfer shortly after midnight according to plan.

Minelaying operation "Klein Erna" has again been postponed due to bad weather.

The SCHARNHORST Command has submitted a brief report on the accomplishment of Operation "Paderborn". For copy see teletype 1400. In the Command's opinion, the fact that Skagen was passed after nightfall was a decisive factor in the success of the operation. Due to weather conditions, the weak enemy air reconnaissance did not pick up the formation either at Egersund or at Stadlandet. The plan to turn back into Kors Fjord in case of extremely bad weather in order to sail through the skerries was abandoned in order to avoid damage from sailing out into heavy seas. Putting into Trondheim Fjord was dropped for navigational reasons. In spite of very bad weather, only slight sea damage was suffered, and the vessel proved her efficiency, particularly that of her engines, at full speed.

Naval Command, Norway considers it necessary to investigate whether, as the principal anchorage for heavy ships, Alta Fjord should not be more strongly protected by transferring anti-aircraft batteries from Bogen Bay, although this would mean weakening the defenses here (see teletype 1630).

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Group North has forwarded a report from Admiral, West Norwegian Coast on the finding of connected drift-mines (see teletype 1855).

Weather operation "Holzauge" (Greenland) reported at 0128 by radiogram that the station had been discovered by three men. Leaving behind them a dog sled, their baggage and their diaries, the men made off presumably to Eskimonaes which it will take them at least two days to reach. An attempt is being made to capture the men,

As the station has a strong garrison of 18 men, it will undoubtedly be possible to overpower enemy stations.

Admiral, Northern Waters plans to carry out weather operation "Brausewetter" on 14 Mar. Escort will be provided by submarine U "378". The final decision will be made in accordance with the results of air reconnaissance ordered for 13 Mar. and ice reconnaissance to be made by submarine U "703" as well as by the Air Force.

During the night of 12 Mar., destroyer Z "31" will transfer from Narvik to Trondheim.

Group North has been ordered by Naval Staff to provide submarine positions for weather observation for operation "Segelhafen". Commanding Admiral, Submarines has ordered similar steps to be taken in the starting area.

The operation against the QP convoy has been terminated. Submarines U "255", "657" and "622" are returning to Narvik via the position lines ordered.

Naval Command, Norway has submitted a copy of a teletype from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Norway to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff and Supply and Transportation Office of the Armed Forces Overseas. This teletype dated 25 Feb. describes the extremely serious transport situation in the Norwegian area. Copy as per 1/Skl 7132/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI. The Commanding General considers it absolutely essential that all projects planned for Norway be immediately examined and adjusted to the decreased tonnage between Armed Forces High Command, the Minister of Armament and Ammunition and the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping. The Naval Command is investigating how much help can be provided by our own vessels in the locality, and whether it is possible to hold up any naval construction projects.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Hirtshals - Arendal patrol line is occupied by three patrol boats, and the Hanstholm barrage gap by two patrol boats. Escort



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service was carried out according to plan. Eighteen vessels of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were employed in channel sweeping. Near Kejlsnor one ELM/J mine was cleared.

Naval Staff has informed Group Baltic, Baltic Station, the Naval Liaison Staff, Finland and Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic that until further notice Finnish vessels in the Baltic Sea are not to be armed. No further arming is planned until the situation demands it and the Finns request it. Arming of German vessels will in general be maintained, although, in view of urgent requirements for weapons and personnel at other places, 2 cm guns must be dispensed with for the time being, so that the vessels will be equipped only with machine guns. For the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic the current regulations will remain in force.

Admiral, Baltic States reports that the 18th Army Corps has postponed the plans for the 3rd Air Force Field Corps to take the western part of the Oranienbaum pocket until after the end of the bad weather period. Until then operations on a small scale are to be carried out. Meanwhile, it is planned to improve the front in the southwest part of the pocket. Admiral, Baltic States has promised to provide the support of two companies of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion as flank protection in Koporya Bay and the Voronka mouth as requested by the 3rd Air Force Field Corps. The Naval Artillery Battalion is only to occupy these positions. Offensive operations by naval troops are not planned. It has been explicitly promised that they will be withdrawn after 8-10 days.

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#### V. Merchant Shipping.

Information on U.S. merchant shipbuilding is contained in "Foreign Merchant Shipping", Report No. 5, by Naval Intelligence Division. The report states that about nine to ten million GRT of new ships will be ready for service in 1943. Of the 2300 vessels already contracted for, two-thirds will be slow-speed Liberty ships and one third fast standard freighters, tankers and troopers. A change-over to a new type of Liberty ship and strong engines would prolong the building time and diminish the building capacity of the dockyards. Up to now there is no indication of the type having been already altered. Copy of the report in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI.

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#### VI. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay; 33 planes being observed mainly in the outer part of the Bay.

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2. Own Situation:

A new Group "Stuermer" consisting of 18 boats has been formed from the remaining boats of the "Ostmark" and "Westmark" Groups and four boats newly assigned and will proceed to the west in reconnaissance line AK 3563/AL 7215 at 2000 on 14 Mar.

The boats of Group "Neuland" were unable to regain contact with the incoming convoy in the southern part of AL. The Group has been ordered to move away to the west at daybreak on 13 Mar. if the enemy has not been contacted.

Submarine U "440" of this Group probably scored two hits on an unaccompanied vessel of 6,000 GRT.

Submarine U "468" of Group "Raubgraf" sank a tanker and, ten hours later, another tanker of the CADILLAC type (12,062 GRT) in AJ 9585. No action reports have been received from the other submarines in the North Atlantic.

Three submarines were sent out against the southbound convoy which had been intercepted in BE 9284 by our air reconnaissance. Group "Unverzagt" has been formed of six submarines in CD. Six submarines in CE are being formed into Group "Wohlgemut".

Near the Canaries, submarines U "43" and U "504" intercepted a convoy consisting of four steamers and three escort vessels on south-westerly course. Groups "Unverzagt" and "Wohlgemut" were sent out against a convoy which had been reported by submarine U "130" in CD 8273.

In the West Indies, submarine U "183" reports the sinking of a steamer of 7,000 GRT on 11 Mar. in the Yucatan Channel area.

Further reports are contained in the "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VII. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

During the night of 11 Mar., 51 of our planes were in action over Newcastle, 37 of them reaching the main target. Five planes were lost. Due to blinding by strong searchlights, it was difficult to observe results. The Air Force General Staff states that the attack was successful.

During the morning of 12 Mar., for a surprise attack on London, 110 planes were employed, of which 19 were fighter bombers, 16 close escort and 75 additional escort on return. The surprise was



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apparently successful. Anti-aircraft defense over the target was weak. The result of the attack on blocks of houses and persons is said to have been especially good. A very strong balloon barrage was observed over the City of London. Our own formation lost only two planes.

Altogether about 400 planes were in action during the day, 317 of them fighters. For results of the Atlantic reconnaissance by the 3rd Group, 40th Bomber Wing, see "Situation West Area".

During the day, two enemy Mosquito planes flew over the Eger-Bayreuth area. The planes' speed was measured as 600 km/h. Our own fighters made no contact with strong enemy fighter formations which flew into the Dieppe and Ypres areas. Railroad installations were again attacked in the Rouen area. Five of the attacking planes were shot down. In the area of Liege, a coking plant was damaged by enemy attacks. During the night of 12 Mar., the attack on Newcastle was repeated by 40 planes. During the same night, 258 enemy planes flew over Reich territory. The center of attack was the Ruhr area, most of the bombs being dropped on Essen and Bottrop. For damage see "Daily Situation". At Bottrop the hydrogenation plants were hit; 18 enemy planes were shot down.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

The 3rd Air Force reports having shot down five enemy planes during alerts and escort flights. The Italian Air Force reports a successful operation by eight torpedo bombers against a convoy off Bone on 11 Mar.

During the night of 12 Mar. twelve of our bombers and one torpedo bomber were in action against shipping targets in the harbor area of Bone.

## 3. Eastern Front:

Forty enemy planes were destroyed over the Army fronts. For results of reconnaissance by the 5th Air Force see "Situation Northern Waters".

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## VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to an intelligence report from Spain, 2 large transports and 4 steamers with 5 escort vessels passed Tangier at 0745 on easterly course. Due to fog, the strength of the formation could not be ascertained definitely. About noon, 2 French transports

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and 1 steamer with a U.S. destroyer entered Gibraltar from an unidentified direction.

About 1730, the heavy task force consisting of the RODNEY, NELSON, FORMIDABLE and 10 destroyers again left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean. According to a report from a reliable agent, a convoy is to leave Gibraltar for Malta on 15 Mar. with parachutist formations, supplies, war material and fuel. According to another agent, there are only six to eight naval landing craft of the DIEPPE class at present in Gibraltar.

Lively convoy traffic was observed by our air reconnaissance off the Algerian coast. For details see "Daily Situation". Twenty-six vessels, totalling 160,000 to 200,000 GRT, were sighted in Bone. One heavy cruiser and several destroyers were sighted on the roads.

There was one submarine north of Cape San Vito.

No sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. No action reports have been received from our own submarines.

During the night of 11 Mar., the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla carried out a minelaying operation off Philippeville, with the 7th PT Boat Flotilla as support group off Bone. During the night of 12 Mar., the two Flotillas were again on operation and this time had an engagement with enemy destroyers. At 2306 the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla reported having certainly sunk one destroyer and probably a second. Hits by gunfire caused casualties on PT boat S "158".

The 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla anchored off Zembra in the evening, having accomplished the planned exploratory sweep. In the forenoon, the boats had been attacked without success by twelve enemy bombers and 30 fighters 50 miles northwest of Zembra.

Submarine chasers "2203" and "2210" report successful attacks on a submarine near Cape Milazzo. After four onslaughts the enemy submarine was probably destroyed.

On 11 Mar., submarine chasers "2201", "2202" and "2204" put in to Palermo. The boats have been ordered to carry out a submarine hunt in the area of Cape San Vito. On the evening of 12 Mar., submarine chaser "2208" left Spezia for submarine chase and passage to Naples. On the evening of 11 Mar., submarine chaser "2205" put in to Genoa with the tanker VENDEMIARE.



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The Italian minesweeper group "Bizerta" cleared seven mines from an established barrage in the Bizerta area. The six auxiliary motor minesweepers entered Milazzo on the afternoon of 12 Mar.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

Convoy CARAIBE, ESTEREL left Naples for Tunis on the evening of 11 Mar. and joined the tanker STEROPE, coming from Messina, west of Milazzo. At 2150, ten miles west of Cape Gallo, tanker STEROPE was hit by an aerial torpedo and is being towed to Palermo. About 2225, west of Cape San Vito, the steamer ESTEREL was torpedoed by an enemy submarine and is being towed to Trapani. The tanker STEROPE was carrying 4,000 tons of German fuel and the steamer ESTEREL 358 tons of ammunition, 820 tons of coal, 393 tons of provisions and 39 vehicles.

The motorship convoy MANZONI-ROSELLI left Naples for Bizerta on the morning of 12 Mar.

In the forenoon, eight naval landing craft from Naples entered Bizerta.

According to a report from Group West, the Swedish steamer EMBLA (1,040 GRT) en route from Marseilles to Lisbon has been overdue since 2230 on 10 Mar. She may have been sunk by an enemy submarine. If so, she would be the third steamer to fall a victim to enemy submarines since 6 Mar.

In view of the repeated shipping losses in traffic to Spain, Naval Staff has instructed the Naval Attaché, Madrid, German Naval Command, Italy, Group West and Chief, Supply and Transport, Rome to consider the possibility of shifting courses wholly or partially away from the coast. (See teletype 1717.)

Measures for submarine chase are being prepared.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Admiral, Aegean reports to Group South that no unanimity has so far been achieved at the conferences in Rome concerning the putting in of Swedish vessels to ports under our control. In view of the operational situation and the barrage and minelaying operations planned, Admiral, Aegean considers that the ships should be permitted to touch at only one island, namely Santorini, and requests a decision to this effect. (See teletype 2015.)

Group South concurs in the Admiral's view.

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Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

During the night of 11 Mar., probably four Russian PT boats entered the Strait of Kerch and made an unsuccessful torpedo attack on the harbor of Kamysh Burun. Results of our naval and anti-aircraft battery defense were not observed.

Own Situation:

On the west coast planes attacked a northbound convoy near Cape Burnas. Details are not yet available. An unsuccessful submarine attack was made on a naval landing craft convoy off Cape Chauda, east of Theodosia. Ship "19" has been sent out on submarine chase. Three other submarines were located 50 and 70 miles southeast of Theodosia.

In the afternoon, four boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla left Ivanbaba, two boats to operate northwest and two southeast of Tuapse. Four Italian PT boats left Theodosia for operations in the area Ghelenjik-Myschako.

In the ferry traffic over the Strait of Kerch, there was an enemy air attack on the harbor of Temriuk in the forenoon; casualties were caused. In the evening enemy air activity was observed over the east coast of Kerch. Three enemy planes were shot down by our night fighters. The ferry traffic from Taman and the fish salting plant was carried out in groups of four naval landing craft each, headed by minesweepers. On 13 Mar. the groups will be reduced to two boats each, in order to increase efficiency. It is further planned to send a landing craft to Sennaya for the first time. Mine clearing on the Pavlovski barrage has been completed. During the night of 11 Mar., six naval landing craft were stationed to observe minelaying.

2,942 soldiers, 911 prisoners, 600 civilians, 2,580 horses, 110 motorized and 679 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried to the west.

Group South remarks that continuance of the Kerch operation makes it necessary for ten junior officers, midshipmen or warrant officers to be assigned immediately as group leaders for the naval landing craft, as the present boat commanders alone are not equal to their task. (See teletype 1640.)

Three naval landing craft have left Kerch for the 6th transport to Anapa.



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The Naval Liaison Officer attached to High Command, Army has forwarded the Quartermaster General's request that Group South should use all tugs and tonnage available in the northern harbors of the Sea of Azov in accordance with the following priorities:

- 1.) All suitable tugs, lighters etc. to be sent to the Kuban.
- 2.) If it is necessary to reinforce the tugs and lighters operating between the Crimea and the Taman peninsula, the boats are to be used there.
- 3.) The remaining tonnage can be placed at the disposal of Army Group South for traffic between its area and Azov harbors.

Other convoy traffic in the Black Sea proceeded without special incident.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

Following an invitation from the U.S. Government, Foreign Minister Eden has arrived in Washington in order to investigate the best methods of convening the United Nations for the discussion of questions arising from the war. This formula is the cloak concealing the obviously burning question actually to be discussed, i.e., the relations of the Anglo-Saxons with their Russian ally.

According to a Swedish press report, Air Minister Sinclair's statement that Germany has strong bomber formations available in the west area came as a shock to the British people.

Portugal:

In a secret statement to the deputies, Salazar said that Portuguese foreign policy was still determined by three constant factors: the alliance with Great Britain, the block between Spain and Portugal and friendship with Brazil. Relations with Great Britain had improved and those with Germany were extremely correct. It was to be assumed that the Allies would attempt to increase their pressure on Portugal in order to obtain new bases in the Atlantic.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

No special reports or decisions.

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Special Items.

I. According to an intelligence report from a diplomatic source in Portugal, the number of ships sunk by German submarines during the months of December, January and February was one third less than the new constructions delivered by the dockyards of Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada during the same period.

High authorities of the enemy powers have received top secret orders that the impression that shipping losses are the Allies' sorest point is nonetheless to be maintained and even strengthened

- 1.) as regards the home population, for internal political reasons, and
- 2.) as regards Russia.



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II. The Military Attaché, Bern has transmitted a report from a hitherto reliable agent to the effect that landing operations on a very large scale on both sides of the Gironde estuary and an operation in North Jutland are planned to take place simultaneously in the second half of March. Feint actions would be carried out on the coast east and southeast of Perpignan.

III. Naval Intelligence Division has advised Groups West, North, South, German Naval Command, Italy with copies to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff and Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division as follows:

Reports that large-scale actions by the Western Powers are to begin in the middle of March have recently increased. France and the Western Mediterranean are mainly mentioned as zones of operation.

Direct observation indicates no actual preparations out of the ordinary. In Algerian ports there are landing craft and one million GRT of shipping, part of which it may be planned to put into action. Active preparations for the speedy commitment of troops from the British Isles are reported.

Overall evaluation of intelligence leads to no definite conclusions. It is assumed that reports are put out by the enemy in order to camouflage his real operational intentions. In any case, in view of the season and the general war situation, new operations may be expected in the near future and may take the form of surprise attacks on areas other than those mentioned or at different points simultaneously. The mopping-up of Tunisia must not be regarded as a prerequisite for further operations in the Mediterranean.

Copy as per 1/Skl 7709/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, "Enemy Situation Reports of Naval Intelligence Division."

IV. Naval Intelligence Division reports on warship construction in the U.S.A. in Brief Reports on the Enemy Situation No. 3/43. Copy as per 1/Skl 8064/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XVII.

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Situation 13 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Spain, Port Etienne (West Africa) has announced that there are mines in Bahia del Galgo between 20° 45' N, 20° 55' N and 17° W to the coast.

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2. Own Situation:

The KARIN has received the following order by radiogram 1721 (special code "Karin") :

"Submarine rendezvous at "Raumleiter" on 26 Mar. Then go through operational order delivered, answering questions contained therein by submarine's radio. The submarine is to remain that long with the ship or to rendezvous again after a certain time as arranged."

The KARIN and the REGENSBURG have been advised by radiogram 1008 of the special recognition signal for the meeting with the submarine.

Information on the enemy situation has been issued to all vessels in foreign waters by radiogram 1207.

The Naval Attache, Tokyo reports that his proposal to assign German officers from Ship "10" to Japanese aircraft carriers has been welcomed by the Japanese. However, it would be difficult to put this plan into effect as all the aircraft carriers are said to be in operation.

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo has been advised by radiogram 1/Skl I opa 7529/43 Gkdos. in regard to the present commitments of German naval warfare and the enemy balance of shipping. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

At 0927 our air reconnaissance spotted a convoy sailing north in BE 9814 consisting of 32 merchant vessels with 1 cruiser, 6 destroyers, 9 escort vessels and 1 Sunderland, and at 0900, 2 steamers with 2 escort vessels on southerly course in CG 1168. The stern of one steamer was damaged, probably by our attack on 12 Mar.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 1530 on 12 Mar., the northbound convoy was attacked by one of our planes in CG 1276. A 250 kg. bomb fell 15 m from the side of an 8,000 GRT steamer. One FW 200 plane is missing.



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In view of the prospective employment of the PW 200 planes in connection with blockade runner traffic, every loss is of consideration. The too great exposure of planes to attack during reconnaissance operations should be avoided.

On 12 Mar. two ELM/J mines were cleared off Point St. Catherine, one off Lorient, and one off Quiberon Bay; on 13 Mar., three ELM/J mines were cleared off Lorient.

Channel Coast:

According to a report from the 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, code security was not endangered by the loss of motor minesweeper R "74" on 12 Mar. (See teletype 1100.)

The 4th PT Boat Flotilla transferred to Boulogne.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was a southbound convoy of 38 steamers with 5 escort vessels northwest of Cromer and a convoy of 10 steamers with 3 escort vessels on easterly course near Portland.

According to radio intelligence, MTB "624" reported at 0320: "position north of Helder, three hits, operation group safe and undamaged."

Own Situation:

The steamers LIEGE and HERMOD of convoy "1071" were sunk by mines in AN 6979 lower right and AN 8313 respectively. Two ELM/J mines were cleared north of Terschelling by a minesweeper of this convoy. Otherwise, escort and minesweeping services were carried out according to plan. At 1905 on 12 Mar. an enemy fighter was shot down near Schouwen by boats of the Rhine Flotilla.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

About 100 miles southwest of the Faeroes, our air reconnaissance sighted 1 destroyer on course 50° and a convoy

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consisting of 5 steamers with 2 escorts on course 300°. Reconnaissance of the northern North Sea as far as the coast of Scotland and in the area southeast of Jan Mayen led to no enemy sightings.

Photographic reconnaissance of Scapa on 12 Mar. was not carried out because of bad visibility.

No reports have been received from the Barents Sea.

Own Situation:

On 12 Mar. ten enemy planes were reported in the Petsamo area but they made no attacks.

Escort service proceeded without special incident.

Minelaying operation "Klein Erna" was again delayed due to weather conditions.

Group North has placed the BRUMMER operationally at the disposal of Naval Command, Norway for the performance of minelaying operation "NW 15". The Group has concurred in the plans for barrage "6A" ("NW 22") and has asked for Naval Staff's approval of operations "NW 16", "17", "19 - 28" and allotment of the necessary mines.

Admiral Kumnetz has assumed duty as Commanding Admiral, Task Force in the TIRPITZ.

Naval Staff has ordered Group North to wipe out Eskimonaes for the safety of the "Holzauge" meteorological station. The fact that weather reports may temporarily cease is accepted. (See teletype 1111.) Group North has given corresponding orders to "Holzauge". (See teletype 1236.)

Group North and others have commented on the brief report of the SCHARNHORST Command in regard to Operation "Paderborn" as follows:

The Commander's decision, based on assessment of the situation and the erroneous advice of his own meteorological office on board, led to a tactically difficult situation and to casualties and considerable material losses among the covering forces, which were regrettable but which the swift performance of Operation "Paderborn" has fully justified. Due to the development of the weather, pulling into Kors Fjord would certainly have resulted in a delay of three to four days and discovery by the enemy with consequent air attack.

For copy of comments see teletype 1359.



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Commander, Submarines, Norway has submitted a brief report on the operation against the QP convoy from 2 to 10 Mar. Altogether four steamers totalling 27,000 GRT were sunk. Group North's comment stresses the excellent performance of the submarines under difficult conditions and the Air Force support. Copy of teletype as per 1/Skl 7476/43 and 7548/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IIa.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Six boats were on patrol in the Skagerrak. At 1600 five heavily laden steamers were reported east of Vinga; two of them resembled the DICTO and the LIONEL. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic therefore ordered gunboat K "3" to stand by; patrol lines were arranged from AO 4444 to AO 3633 and the 1st Squadron, 196th Group, out on reconnaissance, was informed.

Patrol boat "1707" ran aground and put into Frederikshavn on 12 Mar. Escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan.

A mine exploded at a distance of 20 m in the net of a Danish fishing cutter three miles north of Funen. One ELM/J mine was cleared off Hela.

Three TB 7's were observed for the first time over Kronstadt Bay. The enemy battery on Seiskari unsuccessfully fired 59 rounds at the battery position and village of Glinki. Our planes dropped 20 SC 50 bombs on the harbor of Lavansaari. Group North has no objection to the employment of two companies of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion merely as flank protection at Cernovo.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has approved Naval Staff's request for an Air Force Liaison Officer to be attached to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic for the operational period 1943. The 5th Air Force has been ordered to assign a suitable officer, possibly one in need of a period of recuperation, in direct agreement with Naval Staff. Group North will be advised by Naval Staff.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has refused the assignment of fighter planes for naval barrage projects in the Gulf of Finland in view of commitments on other fronts. Naval Staff has called the attention of Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff to the following:

a.) For execution of the planned barrage operations and the necessary preliminary minesweeping, the following forces will be employed:

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2 large minelayers,  
1 netlayer,  
2 small mine carriers,  
8 coastal motor sailing vessels as mine carriers,  
2 minesweepers (parent ships for sweeping launches),  
14 modern minesweepers,  
50 auxiliary minesweepers,  
18 motor minesweepers,  
24 naval landing craft as auxiliary minelayers,  
6 heavy gun carriers as escort ships,  
14 escort boats and patrol boats as cover against enemy submarines.

These 141 vessels, some loaded with mines and irreplaceable net material, are at present based mainly on Tallinn and Baltic Port. This area is being stocked with 10,000 sea mines of all kinds.

b.) Systematic execution of the barrage projects is essential to prevent the breaking out of Russian naval forces, especially of Russian submarines. The latter is of the utmost importance for the transport of troops and material to Finland and the Baltic countries, as well as for the export of iron ore from Sweden and for all sea traffic in the Baltic.

The light naval forces available are entirely insufficient to give adequate protection to this vast sea traffic if a large number of Russian submarines should succeed in breaking out.

Since the Eastern Baltic is our only submarine training and testing ground, it is obvious that the training program would be jeopardized by the breaking out of Russian forces and submarines to the extent that submarine warfare might be brought to a standstill.

Naval Staff has requested that further consideration be given to its wishes. Copy of letter 1/Skl I L 769/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

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#### V. Merchant Shipping.

According to information from the Naval Attaché, Lisbon, the British radio reported that the German steamers BRAUNFELS, DRACHENFELS and EHRENFELS lying at Goa had been set on fire. The German Embassy has obtained confirmation of this report from the authorities, with the additional information that the vessels are alleged to have been set on fire by their own crews. The reason is attributed to serious differences between the crews. Some of the men planned to leave the steamers and others wanted to take them to Singapore.



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Naval Staff has asked the Foreign Office to obtain and submit further particulars on the events and the condition of the ships.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was lively, 39 planes being observed. According to an intelligence report of 12 Mar. from Lisbon, a convoy of about 45 vessels left Trinidad on 27 Feb. for an unknown destination.

2. Own Situation:

Two large groups of submarines will be formed in the North Atlantic on 14 and 15 Mar. Group "Stuermer", consisting of 19 submarines, has been ordered to proceed on course 240° on 14 Mar. at 2000 from patrol line AK 3563 - AL 7215.

After cessation of the Group "Neuland" operations, eleven submarines will operate as Group "Draenger" south of Group "Stuermer", from AL 4887 to BE 1255. This Group is to proceed on 15 Mar. at 0800 on course 260°.

On 13 Mar. at noon, submarine U "603", from Group "Raubgraf", reported a convoy in AJ 6747 on southerly course. The Group is taking action against this enemy force. Contact was maintained until midnight.

On 12 Mar. submarine U "653" sank an unaccompanied steamer of 4,000 GRT on southwesterly course in AJ 9154.

Southwest of the Azores, contact by Group "Unverzagt" with the enemy, which had been lost, was re-established by submarine U "513" at 1455. Four other submarines also made contact during the day but were driven off again. One of these submarines, U "172", reports sinking the steamer SAGEBRUSH (5,565 GRT) in CD 6825.

Groups "Unverzagt" and "Wohlgemut" have been ordered to discontinue their search for the convoy in time to form a patrol line from CD 6385 over CE 4743 to DE 7414 at 0900 on 14 Mar.

In the area of the Canary Islands, submarine U "43" sank a combined passenger-freighter of the Blue Star Line (6,000 GRT) on 3 Mar. in DF 9329.

Submarine U "107" gained contact with the southbound convoy which had been spotted by our air reconnaissance in CD. The submarine

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heard six hits and observed that a four-masted ammunition ship blew up. It is believed that two steamers for 12,000 GRT were sunk.

From the South Atlantic, submarine U "68" reports sinking two steamers totalling 15,500 GRT from a convoy in EC 5299.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 290 planes out on operation, including 209 fighters, in the west area and 17 in the Mediterranean. Six enemy planes were shot down by fighters. During the night of 13 Mar. the Thames and the Dungeness area were mined. Nine bombers attacked Brighton.

During this night, 118 enemy planes flew over German territory, 30 of them as far as Warsaw. Their assignment was probably to mine the Baltic Sea coasts. Ten planes flew over the Heligoland Bight and the remainder into the Air Force Area Western France, probably also on minelaying. Two planes were shot down by fighters.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

A dusk attack was made on the harbor of Bone by six JU 88 planes. Eighteen planes from a strong enemy formation attempting an attack on one of our airfields were shot down by one of our fighter formations. During the night of 13 Mar., nine JU 88 planes were in action against shipping in the harbor of Bone. Eight JU 88 planes set out to attack Tripoli.

### 3. Eastern Front:

During the night of 12 Mar. 38 bombers attacked the town and harbor of Murmansk.

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## VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to a report dated 10 Mar. from the Naval Attaché, Madrid, the Spanish Naval Information Division states that the greatest activity in all sectors is going on in Gibraltar. The same observations have been made as in the second half of October.



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A new operation is evidently being prepared, to start probably in about two weeks. The Spanish Navy does not envisage a threat to its own territory.

According to an intelligence report from a diplomatic source in Portugal, the British and Americans hope to have definitely defeated the German troops in North Africa by the beginning of May. Assembly of warships and merchantmen in Gibraltar and in the North African ports for an attack on Southern France and Italy is said to be planned for this time. The final decision as to the withdrawal of the main offensive to the Western Mediterranean is said to depend on attainment of the targets set in Tunis.

At 1136 the heavy task force was 35 miles northwest of Oran on easterly course. Submarines were sighted 80 miles south of Toulon, 11 miles south of Marseilles and 20 miles northwest of Brindisi.

In the Eastern Mediterranean only light convoy traffic was noted. According to an intelligence report of 7 Mar., an African flotilla of 32 small vessels is assembled in Haifa ready to sail to Tripoli. The crews are wearing civilian clothes and have false documents; the guns are well camouflaged. Every vessel, including the lifeboats, is equipped with two to three radio sets. The vessels are to perform anti-submarine operations.

According to another intelligence report of 13 Mar., a reliable agent reports considerable traffic between Syrian ports and Cyprus, especially during the hours of darkness. This traffic has not been confirmed by our air reconnaissance.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Three Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. Two submarines have put out from Pola for the Western Mediterranean and one from Salamis for the Eastern Mediterranean. They have been assigned grid squares CO 46, 49, 54 and 55 as operational areas.

At 0240, the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reported that it was attacked by enemy PT boats while anchored off Zembra. Motor Minesweeper R "10" was set on fire by gunfire and suffered casualties. The boat has been towed off to Bizerta. Before casting anchor off Zembra, the Flotilla had made an exploratory sweep and had furnished anti-aircraft and anti-submarine escort for a convoy to Bizerta. A preliminary report on the engagement involving the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas has been made by German Naval Command, Tunisia. For copy see teletype 1545. The report states that the 7th PT Boat Flotilla torpedoed a destroyer and sank her with a finishing shot in CJ 7661. Four destroyers were in sight and other explosions were heard. A second destroyer may therefore have been torpedoed. In

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CJ 7663, the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla attacked three destroyers, sinking one certainly and probably two of them. PT boat S "158" was chased. Afterwards she picked up a survivor of the destroyer LIGHTNING at the place of sinking. On its return passage the 7th Flotilla again contacted destroyers and attacked them but failed to score any hits. Casualties were caused by shell fragments. From the size of sighted vessels' shadows, it is not unlikely that of the two vessels sunk and two probably sunk one may have been a cruiser, since, from prisoners' statements, the enemy forces operating against our convoys comprised cruisers and destroyers.

The preliminary brief report of German Naval Command, Tunisia has been forwarded to: Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; High Command, Army, Naval Liaison Officer with Army General Staff; Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer; Commander, PT Boats. For copy see teletype 1719.

This satisfactory action by the PT boat flotillas was accomplished at the cost of slight material damage and few casualties.

Commander in Chief, Navy has commended the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas.

At 0936 two tugs close in to the coast off Cape Morgiou (near Cassis) were sunk by gunfire from an enemy submarine.

Group West reports that, in reply to an enquiry, Commanding General, Armed Forces, West has stated that the 50,000 GRT of shipping being held in readiness at Marseilles for special task "Balearics" are no longer needed and may therefore be returned to merchant traffic. Supply and Transport Office, Marseilles will make the necessary arrangements.

Of the vessels which Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West has reported requisitioned in harbors of southern France, three motor yachts are to be left as small submarine chasers with the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla by order of Naval Staff. The remaining two boats of minesweeper group M "6021" to M "6024" are to be turned over to German Naval Command, Italy, six large submarine chasers "2211" to "2216" to the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla, and steam trawlers CIVENCHI and ALCYON to Admiral, Aegean. Nine vessels remain with the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla for clearing moored mines. Seven of these are also suitable for ground mine clearance. Priority fitting out of the vessels of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla must not delay preparation of the vessels allotted to German Naval Command, Italy.

In regard to the raising of the sunken French warships in Toulon, Chief, Fleet Branch, Quartermaster Division, comments that from his own knowledge of the local situation, the Italians are very



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interested in the speedy salvaging of all vessels allotted to them and are urging the Commander of the Arsenal to help them with his equipment. They also asked for assistance from the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping during his visit to Rome. However, the offer of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping to place a German salvage firm at their disposal was declined by the Italians. In Naval Staff's opinion the decision on repairs to raised ships should not be left to the Arsenal Commander, Toulon, especially since the Italians are inclined to invoke the authority of the Italian High Command for their purposes. Therefore the Commander of the Arsenal must be given stronger support from high authorities.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

The tanker STEROPE and the motorship ESTEREL entered Palermo and Trapani, respectively, under their own power. The convoy MANZONI - ROSELLI which had temporarily put in to Olbia because of the enemy situation, proceeded on its passage to Bizerta in the afternoon accompanied by two torpedo boats.

No other reports of importance have been received.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Convoy traffic was delayed by bad weather.

Black Sea:

The 1st PT Boat Flotilla's operation off Tuapse was successful. The two southerly boats torpedoed a 7,000 GRT tanker which was escorted by gunboats. According to air reconnaissance the tanker was afterwards seen burning. In the afternoon, four boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla put out again for operations into the same sea area. During the night of 12 Mar. Italian PT boats in the Ghelenjik area encountered no shipping except for strong enemy PT boat patrols. No results were observed from an exchange of machine-gun fire with enemy PT boats.

Submarine U "24" has been ordered to leave Constantza for the operational area on 14 Mar.

In the forenoon an enemy submarine made an unsuccessful attack on the convoy of the steamer BUDAPEST east of Tarkhanskutski. Depth charge attacks by naval landing craft were unsuccessful.

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The coastal road and battery southwest of Novorossisk came under intensified enemy gunfire which was returned. Continuous air attacks were made on Anapa. Casualties were caused but damage was slight. An enemy PT boat ran aground north of Anapa and was destroyed by naval and Army anti-aircraft gunfire. The crew was taken prisoner.

In the ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch, two Siebel ferries and two combined operations landing craft were damaged by enemy air attack. Three enemy planes were shot down by anti-aircraft guns. 24 naval landing craft made 46 crossings and transferred 2,523 soldiers, 418 prisoners, 346 civilians, 2,620 horses, 363 motorized and 530 horse-drawn vehicles, etc.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports that during a conversation with the Chief of Naval Staff, reference was made to the great importance of New Guinea. Only by complete occupation of that island and the consequent control of the Torres Strait, can the stability of the Japanese southern area be assured. Japan is making every effort to achieve this aim this year, taking advantage of the commitment of U.S. forces in North Africa and of Russia's present neutrality. The enemy air attack on the Lae convoy on 2 Mar. had caused heavy damage and casualties; 4,000 men were drowned. All Japanese positions on the north coast are being connected by roads in order to bring up reinforcements without danger. The Americans were extremely good at building airfields in a minimum of time. The Japanese Armed Forces would heartily welcome information in regard to German experience in building airfields.



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Items of Political Importance.

The "Times" writes of Eden's trip to Washington that, in a certain sense, this visit completes a triad. Churchill's talks in Washington had aimed mainly at the solution of strategic questions, Lyttelton's visit was made in connection with production problems and Eden would now deal with political matters. His visit coincided with a turning-point in the war and, in the interest of a fair solution of international problems, it was therefore most important for Anglo-American relations to be clearly defined. One of the matters that would probably be dealt with was the political future of French North Africa and of France herself. Russia would be kept informed on the nature and progress of the discussions. Stalin had assented to the Washington talks.

As the Foreign Office Russian affairs expert was on Eden's staff, the Russian problem would also come under review. Eden himself had declared to the Washington press that the stage for discussion on the future frontiers between the various countries had not yet been reached. There was still a long road to travel before this matter could be settled.

According to an Exchange report, Japan has so far raised no objections to the shipment of war material on Russian vessels to Siberian harbors.

According to a Reuter report Smuts has declared that the spirit of irresponsibility in regard to the U.S.S.R. seems to extend to America also. South Africa would have to pay dearly for this attitude.

The Swiss Embassy in Sofia has advised all Swiss nationals in Bulgaria to send their wives and children home as soon as possible.

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Chief, Naval Staff.

Chief, Naval Staff has left to report to the Fuehrer at Headquarters; after that, he will fly to Rome. He is accompanied by Chief, Operations Division, Quartermaster General and Deputy to Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division.

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Special Items:

I. On the instructions of Naval Staff (see War Diary 11 Mar.), German Naval Command, Italy has submitted the following information:

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1. For the establishment of bases for PT boat flotillas in the Sardinian area, it is generally planned to set up as widespread a network of bases as possible against enemy landings. Therefore, first of all Porto Vesme and secondly, Porto Conte, as an alternative base, are being prepared.

2. It is unlikely that PT boat flotillas can be used for direct defense against first enemy landings, as the enemy's center of operations is unknown. Continuous air reconnaissance will be necessary.

3. The subsequent disruption of the enemy's sea communications after landing cannot be accomplished adequately from Bizerta or Sicily for reasons of distance. Jumping-off bases must therefore be established in southwest and northwest Sardinia.

4. It is planned to transfer the PT boat flotillas only if there appears to be danger of an enemy landing or if there is a possibility of additional operations against enemy communications. Teletype correspondence with German Naval Command as per l/Skl 734,752 and 776/43 Gkdos. Chefs., in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. By order of Commander in Chief, Navy dated 13 Mar., the Commanding Admiral of Naval Group South is to rank equally with the Commanding General of an Army Group effective immediately.

III. The completion of Ship "5" has been delayed not only by difficulties in procuring material, but also because armament offices have called for modifications and installations as late as 1943, that is, almost a year later than the original date fixed for completion. The completion date has been considerably postponed by the requirement that the main and auxiliary radio offices be interchanged and by the circuit diagrams for the gunnery switch station just submitted.

Furthermore, at the end of February it was found that the height of the deck is not sufficient for installation of the 15 cm. rapid firing guns, incorrect data having been submitted at the time of preparatory construction work. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division has been requested by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff to institute immediate investigations as to who is responsible for the ship's construction and which office should have prevented the occurrence of the blunders which have caused the delay. The question of responsibility must be definitely cleared up. Copy of letter l/Skl 7410/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

IV. The Foreign Office has forwarded a telegram dated 12 Mar. from the German Consul General in Tangier which, on the basis of regular reports from the Military Attaché on the landing of troops and



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material in North Africa, draws the conclusion that the Anglo-American forces in French North Africa appear to be considerably stronger than would be necessary for a general attack on Tunisia. As, in addition, special landing troops have also recently arrived via Gibraltar and Casablanca and construction and transfer of landing craft has been frequently established, the German and Italian offices in Tangier have come to the conclusion that large-scale landing operations are being prepared on the Mediterranean coast of French North Africa. The Spanish High Commissioner, General Orgaz, has also come to the same conclusion. Furthermore, Englishmen are said to have stated that they had to undertake an attack on Europe in the not too distant future. The Italian Consul General has reported to Rome that he anticipates a landing on Sardinia. The Spanish are making every effort to prevent Spain from being drawn into the coming events in any way.

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Situation 14 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

The REGENSBURG and KARIN have been ordered by radiogram 0057 to make for the rendezvous with the submarine according to orders and to wait within a ten mile radius until nightfall. If the meeting is not accomplished, another attempt is to be made next day at the same time. The ships are not to use radio as the submarine has orders to report whether or not the meeting has taken place and Naval Staff will then take further measures.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

The High Command of the Norwegian Navy in London announced on 13 Mar. the loss of the minesweeper HARSTADT which was sunk in a British Channel convoy during our PT boat attack on the night of 27 Feb.

At 0957 our reconnaissance spotted a destroyer 380 miles west-southwest of Brest and at 1005, 40 miles west thereof, a convoy of 50 merchantmen with probably 8 escort vessels on northerly course.

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A short time after noon, 4 transports, 1 destroyer and 4 escort vessels on northerly course were sighted and attacked about 300 miles west of Cape Finisterre.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

An ELM/J mine was cleared off Lorient.

Channel Coast:

On 13 Mar., the 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared three EFA and two ELM/A mines off Boulogne. One ATE mine was shot up.

During the night of 13 Mar., five boats of the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla laid mines in a narrow belt off Orfordnes according to plan and unobserved by the enemy. For brief report see teletype 1115. Otherwise no special events.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, reports that the loss of the steamers LIEGE and HERMOD was indisputably caused by torpedoes from enemy PT boats.

Escort and patrol services were carried out according to plan. One ELM/J mine was cleared near Terschelling and another near Neuwerk.

During the night of 13 Mar., about ten enemy planes flew over the Heligoland Bight to lay mines north of the Frisian Islands and in the area of Heligoland. On the evening of 14 Mar., five enemy incursions were reported in the area north of Terschelling, obviously in search of a convoy.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a Russian plane reported a German submarine north of Tromsø and gave information about the expected sailing of freighters from there. On 13 Mar., one of our planes sighted and attacked a submarine 25 miles north of Tanahorn.



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On 14 Mar., our air reconnaissance reported ten steamers of up to 5,000 GRT and six patrol boats west of Swinoe. It seems uncertain whether it was a convoy or a fishing flotilla.

On 13 Mar., there were eleven steamers in Yokonga, a coastal vessel and a motor boat in Motovski Bay. There were two steamers on easterly course southwest of the Kildin Islands.

Own Situation:

Enemy planes attacked Kirkenes on 12 Mar. and Petsamo on 13 Mar. without special results.

At 2250 on 14 Mar., one of our convoys lying in Floroe was attacked, presumably by enemy PT boats. The steamer OPTIMA (1,249 GRT) was sunk. The enemy escaped by the northeastern outlet. Otherwise escort service was carried out according to plan.

Admiral, Northern Waters reports no special incidents.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

During the night of 13 Mar., there were ten incursions by 15 enemy planes. Mines are suspected in the Baltic Sea entrances. Channels were temporarily closed. The incursions went as far as Danzig Bay. An enemy plane was shot down at Roenne by naval anti-aircraft fire. Also during the night of 14 Mar., minelaying raids were made over the northern part of the Great Belt and the southern part of the Kattegat and the Sound. One mine was cleared northeast of Anholt and one in the Little Belt. The Hirtshals - Arendal patrol line was occupied by four patrol boats, the Hanstholm barrage gap by one patrol boat. Escort service was carried out according to plan.

Enemy planes attacked Peipia and Stremenje with incendiary and high-explosive bombs. Our air forces attacked the harbor of Lavansaari and the Lavansaari - Seivisaari isthmus. Five hundred vehicles were counted in truck traffic between Lissi Noss - Kronstadt and Oranienbaum.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was very strong, 67 planes being detected. Submarine sighting reports were intercepted from the Bay of Biscay and in the area of convoy operations.

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An unidentified U.S. steamer sent out an SSS signal after having been torpedoed about 360 miles southwest of Cape Palmas. It was probably a successful Italian action.

2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic, contact with the convoy south of Greenland was not regained by Group "Raubgraf" in spite of a long search. A number of boats of this Group suffered damage, partly from bombing. The operation was discontinued at 1900. The remaining nine boats of the Group have been assigned to the new patrol line from AJ 9945 to BC 3566 as of 1600 on 15 Mar.

At noon the southbound convoy in CG was again spotted by submarine U "107". The submarine reports that on the basis of life-boats and wreckage, she probably sank three steamers on 13 Mar. Operations against the convoy have been discontinued.

Eight submarines newly assigned to the North Atlantic have been ordered to proceed to AK 83.

Submarine U "513" regained contact with the convoy west of the Azores. Three submarines maintained contact with this convoy throughout the day.

A 6,000 GRT steamer and the U.S. steamer ARYAN (6,452 GRT) were sunk in the Cape area by submarine U "160" on 8 Mar. and 11 Mar. respectively. It is planned to supply the submarines in this area in the lower third of DG.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 92 planes, including 46 fighters, in action in the West area and 20 in the Mediterranean. Six fighters attacked a point on the south coast. During the day three Spitfires were certainly and two others probably shot down in defense actions against strong enemy fighter groups that attempted to attack our airfields.

A steamer of 10,000 - 12,000 GRT in the transport convoy 300 miles west of Cape Finisterre was probably damaged by our attack. An attack on Sunderland is to be made by 45 bombers on the night of



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14 Mar. During last night 21 enemy planes flew over Germany. Besides the minelaying missions already reported, nuisance raids in the Ruhr area and flights to drop agents in Bohemia are reported. Four courier planes to Sweden and two to England were also observed. Two of these planes were shot down in the Munich area by anti-aircraft guns.

Air Commander, Atlantic Coast plans to carry out air reconnaissance to the west between 42° and 45° N. with six planes.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

During the night of 14 Mar., ten torpedo bombers were sent out against the eastbound convoy near Bone. No results were observed.

3. Eastern Front:

Over the Army fronts 46 enemy planes were shot down on 13 Mar. and 64 on 14 Mar. Six of our planes were lost. During the night of 14 Mar., the 5th Air Force sent out five bombers against Murmansk and Rosta.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

In the forenoon one minelayer of the ADVENTURE class and two destroyers from the Mediterranean entered Gibraltar. Three destroyers put out towards the Mediterranean. In the afternoon, a convoy of 2 transports, 2 tankers, and 17 U.S. steamers, mostly in ballast, left Gibraltar for the Atlantic. This convoy was joined by another from the Mediterranean consisting of 12 steamers and 1 tanker, all in ballast.

No reports have been received today on the heavy task force in the Western Mediterranean. Lively convoy traffic was observed off the Algerian coast.

Submarines were sighted off Cape Gallo and off Cape Spartivento.

A convoy of 8 steamers with 8 escort vessels was reported in the Eastern Mediterranean 35 miles northwest of Derna on westerly course. Photographic interpretation showed 9 steamers, 1 destroyer and other smaller vessels in Tobruk on 13 Mar.

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2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

There were three Italian submarines in the operational area. No special reports have been received from our own submarines.

German Naval Command, Italy reports that, according to prisoners' statements, two cruisers and two destroyers were in the enemy formations engaged by the PT boat flotillas. On 14 Mar., the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas were not on operation. In view of the phase of the moon, minelaying operations by the PT boat flotillas will not be possible up to 27 Mar. inclusive.

All available Italian mine defense forces have been sent out to check-sweep for moored and magnetic mines on the convoy routes to Zembretta. No clearances have been reported. The six auxiliary minesweepers entered Naples in the afternoon. Minesweeper M "6024" is en route from Civitavecchia to Naples.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

At 0245 the motorship CARAIBE was set on fire by an aerial torpedo hit. The ship sank with 779 tons of German ammunition, 584 tons of provisions, 30 motor vehicles and five guns. At 1000, enemy submarines sank the steamer PEGLI six miles west of Cape Gallo, and at 1210, the steamer COSENZA three miles east of Cape Spartivento. The motorship ROSELLI-MANZONI convoy is proceeding according to plan. Small vessel traffic between Sicily and Tunisia was carried out according to plan and without special incident.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

No special incidents.

Black Sea:

According to air reconnaissance, the tanker which was torpedoed near Tuapse during the night of 12 Mar. was stranded and burning in the afternoon one mile southeast of Tuapse.

During the night of 13 Mar., the 1st PT Boat Flotilla sighted no enemy forces in the operational area and returned to Ivanbaba.

Three naval landing craft left Kerch for the 7th Anapa transport according to plan.



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Enemy air attacks were made on Temriuk and Kamysh Burun. An Air Force ammunition dump was hit.

In the ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch, naval landing craft F "136" was sunk by a mine although the channel is checked every day. Period delay mines have probably been used. Due to freshening winds, loading and unloading at the fish salting plant and at Taman was impossible after 1100. 16 landing craft made 17 crossings and transferred to the west 2,603 soldiers, 554 prisoners, 464 civilians, 496 motorized and 516 horse-drawn vehicles as well as 2,062 horses etc.

Submarine U "24" left Constantza for operations.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

In regard to Eden's visit to Washington, the "Times" writes: There can be no security in Western Europe so long as there is insecurity in Eastern Europe. Security there cannot, however, be established without the military might of Russia. The view that it is impossible to wipe out the German nation or to destroy the German State is correct and is supported by the authority of Stalin. The security of Europe depends on the united and continuous vigilance of Great Britain and Russia; if one of these two countries should fall, domination of Europe would again become inevitable. It is therefore urgent that British diplomacy should work continually towards strengthening confidence between Great Britain and Russia until complete understanding between the two countries has been achieved. Its other tasks will be to convince the U.S.A. of British and Russian common interest in European security and to suggest the ways and means by which it may be realized. European security cannot be established by the proclamation of general principles, by the acceptance of hypothetical obligations, or by the creation of any machinery of international cooperation and consultation. Nor can it be created by an organization based on the principle of national independence, because this would mean the division of Europe into 20 small states.

The problem can only be solved if the Great Powers make use of their military and economic power to bring about a union. Russia's achievements in this war have proved that she is entitled to be represented therein. Further press reports state that at Washington, post-war problems, particularly that of cooperation with Russia, were much to the fore. A United Nations conference on post-war problems is planned.

According to Radio Algiers, Giraud has declared that he is acting as a trustee under the law of the French Republic. An approach between Giraud and de Gaulle is evident.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

I. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff ordered that Group West be directed to obtain assurance from Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, if not already done, that PW 200 planes on long-range reconnaissance be forbidden to attack.

II. Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division gave particulars of the report of Naval Command, Norway on the protection of the railroad communication planned from Fauske to Narvik. Naval Command, Norway has proposed the additional protection of Folda Fiord by one modern 15 cm naval battery near Kierringoey and one on the



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southern part of the Leiranger Peninsula, as well as closing of the narrowest part of Vest Fiord, protection of Tyss Fiord and of the entrance to Ofot Fiord by a modern 15 cm battery at Tranoe, another at Tysnes, and a third on Baroey. It is estimated that the railroad will take four years to build. Therefore, Naval Command, Norway believes that it will be possible to provide material and personnel for the batteries. Quartermaster Division will be responsible for this matter.

The Todt Organization has inquired whether it will be possible to provide sufficient protection for the ferry traffic to Narvik. Operations Division believes that the submarine threat between Kjelshavn - Skarberget and Kjelshavn - Narvik can be regarded as slight. It will be possible to restrict this threat still further by the use of mines and net barrages as well as submarine-chasers. The possibility of enemy forces entering Folda Fiord or Sagn Fiord and of enemy landings in the area Bodoe - Leiranger can be met by extending the fortifications and by increased establishment of coastal batteries. The air threat requires special consideration. Adequate anti-aircraft protection and preparation of reserve ferry-boats is therefore necessary. In case of emergency, naval landing-craft can be used between Kjelshavn and Skarberget, this being taken into consideration in harbor work. Under these conditions there is no objection to laying the track to Kjelshavn and setting up ferry traffic from Kjelshavn to Narvik. In order to facilitate construction work, the railroad terminus could be located further up on Tyss Fiord if technically practicable. Extension of the ferry route can in any case be accepted.

III. Chief, Officer Personnel Department reports that Group South has released Commander Wegener now attached to Special Staff "Scheurlen", making him immediately available. As this officer was assigned by special instructions of the Fuehrer, Chief of Staff, Naval Staff has ordered that the naval adjutant should first sound out the Fuehrer.

IV. Chief, Fleet Branch, Quartermaster Division reports that the permanent representative of Commander in Chief, Navy, at Fuehrer Headquarters - Rear Admiral Voss - has forwarded an order from the Fuehrer that more PT boats are to be transferred to the Mediterranean in addition to motor minesweepers.

In the opinion of Operations Division, a decision on this question must be suspended for the time being for the following reasons:

1.) The transfer depends on whether the investigation produces positive results and on setting up of the new transfer route planned (Seine - Saône).

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2.) When these results have been received, it must be decided how many Kuhlemeyer cars can be taken from the Elbe - Danube traffic for the Seine - Saône traffic.

3.) Motor minesweepers are most urgently needed in the Mediterranean. In view of the small number of Kuhlemeyer cars available, each PT boat transferred means that a motor minesweeper must be left.

4.) As there are at present barely 20 PT boats in the Channel ready for action, and as, in the near future, more PT boats are to be delivered to the Spaniards, and as, furthermore, other PT boats are to be transferred to the Black Sea, it is necessary that possibilities of employment and transfer of these vessels be carefully examined before the Fuehrer can be informed that the further transfer of PT boats to the Mediterranean is possible. This examination will be carried out by Operations Division, Fleet Operations Section.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff concurs. Copy of order as per 1/Skl 7651/43 Gkdos. to Quartermaster Division in War Diary, Part C, Vol.d.

V. According to further information from Quartermaster Division, Commanding General, Armed Forces, West has replied in the affirmative to Commander in Chief, Navy's request for assistance with anti-aircraft expansion at the submarine bases on the French west coast. The work will be done at the expense of the 7th Army Command.

VI. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff dealt with the question of the delay to Ship "5" as per letter to Quartermaster Division of 14 Mar. (See War Diary, 14 Mar.)

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Special Items:

I. The General Naval Administration Bureau, Judge Advocate's Office has forwarded the final report of the investigator in the proceedings concerning shipping losses on the Kolberg and Memel barrages. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III. Operations Division agrees with the proposal that suspension of the proceedings be recommended to Commander in Chief, Navy as court martial proceedings against one or more persons is neither militarily desirable nor juridically necessary and cannot atone for the losses suffered. Rather, as a whole, operational commands in the Baltic area, that is Group North, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and Baltic Station were unequal to the task of protecting our own harbors by defensive mine barrages and at the same time guaranteeing safe transit for our own shipping.



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II. New directives have been formulated for the conduct of operations against merchant shipping, incorporating intervening changes that have taken place. Copy of the order 1/Skl I ia 6999/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V. Appendix: "Directives on the Conduct of War against Merchant Shipping."

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Situation 15 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

According to an agent's report, a U.S. formation consisting of 1 heavy and 2 light cruisers with 6 destroyers called at Dakar at the beginning of March.

A convoy allegedly consisting of 44 steamers and 8 tankers is said to have passed Bermuda on 13 Mar. bound for Dakar.

South Atlantic:

In February, 67 ships were repaired in Capetown, 15 in Port Elizabeth, 23 in East London; Durban was also working to capacity. Docking demands could not always be met.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has informed the KARIN by radiogram 2338 (in special code "Karin") that the submarine assigned to meet her has had to delay sailing and will be 170 miles east of point "Raumleiter", where the rendezvous is to take place, at earliest on 26 Mar.

The DOGGERBANK has been given the following instructions by radiogram 1412 (in special code "Doggerbank"):

1.) Naval Staff assumes that DOGGERBANK will enter the neutral route north of the Maraala Bank about 17 Mar., or possibly later.

2.) 100 miles north and south of the neutral route to Lisbon and from there to the north submarines have been forbidden to attack outside route "Anton" as from 16 Mar. until further notice.

3.) West of Portugal it is believed that there will be good clearance from all convoys sailing to Gibraltar. According to schedule, one ten-knot convoy and one seven-knot convoy will leave Gibraltar to the north on 22 Mar.

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4.) Naval Staff will retain control as far as about the latitude of Vigo.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

Photographic interpretation of Portsmouth shows, as compared with 7 Mar., the addition of 1 heavy cruiser, 1 steamer, 1 tanker, 23 barges and landing craft and the departure of 2 destroyers, 12 PT boats, 23 harbor and coastal vessels and 60 smaller boats. Our air reconnaissance spotted 10 vessels on southeasterly course east of the Isle of Wight and 1 destroyer on westerly course east of Falmouth. Southeast of Falmouth near the coast there were 10 steamers on northerly course.

The report transmitted by the Military Attaché, Bern (see War Diary 13 Mar. Special Items II) has been set out as follows by Foreign Affairs Intelligence Division and forwarded by Naval Staff to Group West and Admiral, Denmark:

1.) A reliable agent, who, among other things, gave us timely warning of the Dieppe action and the Berlin attacks, reports:

In the second half of March, probably between the 15th and 20th, a landing attempt on a major scale, similar to the Dieppe action, is planned in the area Ile d'Oleron - Gironde estuary and south of it as far as Landes. (Note by the reporting office: i.e. the Arcachon area).

A simultaneous action is to be carried out in North Jutland and a parallel feint maneuver in the area Port Vendres - Perpignan as far as Rivesaltes.

2.) A second source, with connections in the British Intelligence Service, speaks of actions in preparation against the Gironde estuary and North Jutland. No date is specified.

The reporting office does not regard this information as a deception but takes it seriously.

From captured British material, Naval Intelligence Division has obtained information as to the number of refugees who escaped from Axis territory to Great Britain, and the routes used, between January and October 1941. Copy of the report as per 1/Skl 7738/43 geh. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.



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2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

No special incidents.

Channel Coast:

On 14 Mar. one ELM/J mine was cleared off Dunkirk.

Special Items:

During February 1943, escort was provided in the area of Group West for 112 submarines and for 282 merchant vessels totaling 185,000 GRT. Seven enemy air attacks, one PT boat attack and one submarine attack were made on the convoys. One patrol boat was sunk by submarine attack. Twenty-seven ground mines and fifteen moored mines were cleared. Three enemy planes were shot down. Group West notes:

- 1.) Revival of enemy surface force activity off the French coast in the Channel, using gaps in the flanking barrages.
- 2.) Renewal of attack by enemy submarines on the ore traffic off Bilbao.
- 3.) Heavy air raids on Lorient, St. Nazaire and Brest resulted in the stoppage of dockyard activity at the two former places and necessitated evacuation of the ports by our forces in order to avoid further losses.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to our air reconnaissance, five PT boats were halfway between Texel and Yarmouth on easterly course at 1935. At midnight on 15 Mar., radio intelligence intercepted a report from MTB "88" that one of our convoys, with one destroyer and one unidentified auxiliary ship, was 14 miles northwest of Terschelling on course 20°. About the same time, MTB "34" reported two of our auxiliary ships about 13 miles west of the Hague on course 35°.

Own Situation:

After a successful search for some pilots who had crashed into the sea, minesweeper M "3420" and a tug were attacked by enemy

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fighter planes. Five men were injured. At 1655, a group of the 34th Minesweeper Flotilla was attacked by one British bomber and one fighter and suffered casualties. All boats were damaged and are out of operational readiness. During the night of 15 Mar., convoy 1075 was attacked by enemy PT boats in AN 8236. The result is not yet known. Near Heligoland, Rotersand, Terschelling and Schiermonikoog a total of five ELM/J mines was cleared, one of them by a minesweeping plane. Otherwise, escort and patrol services were carried out according to plan.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

In the Murmansk area, six Russian destroyers were picked up by radio intelligence. Reconnaissance over the North Sea was slight, by the Iceland squadrons normal, with six planes in operation. Subsequent interpretation of photographic reconnaissance of 12 Mar. showed 24 steamers totalling 130,000 GRT in the sea area between Murmansk and Kolaknie and one tanker of 9,300 GRT in dock.

Own Situation:

On 14 Mar., Russian batteries fired 193 rounds at one of our convoys en route to Petsamo without causing any damage. Our batteries returned fire with 72 rounds. Escort service was carried out according to plan.

A stranded British PT boat flying the Norwegian flag was captured off Floroe. Search is being made for the crew. Admiral, West Norwegian Coast reports that it was the Norwegian MTB "631" and that a second MTB probably picked up the crew after attacking the steamer OPTIMA (see War Diary, 14 Mar.).

For statements of Admiral, West Norwegian Coast concerning connected drift mines on the skerries route, see teletype 1815.

Naval Command, Norway reports that it is essential that Hammerfest, as a submarine base, should have anti-aircraft protection. As this has been refused by the 5th Air Force, it has asked if it would be possible to withdraw two heavy and one light anti-aircraft batteries from the Aas Fjord defenses. It is planned to use two naval landing craft (artillery) as interim defense.

In regard to the protection of Alta Fiord, Naval Command, Norway has been directed by Group North to examine the possibility of transferring medium and light anti-aircraft batteries to Alta in addition to the heavy battery "Thetis", although it could happen that part or all of them would have to be returned at short notice to Bergen Bay.



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In addition, the Group pointed out the great urgency of equipping the second and third net enclosures in Alta Fiord with mooring buoys and bollards. (See teletype 1201).

Admiral, Northern Waters reports that minelaying operation "Klein Erna" has been further postponed. Meteorological operation "Brausewetter" was also delayed for 24 hours and did not begin until 2325.

For the bringing in of the REGENSBURG and KARIN, the REGENSBURG has been given the special code "Karin" by radiogram from Naval Staff. As from 16 Mar., both ships will be able to work according to radio directive "Himalaya" with special code "Karin". For the "Karin" alone, the special code "Karin" in code "Tibet" will be used.

Group North was informed accordingly by order 1/Skl I k 775/43 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

During the day the Hirtshals - Arendal patrol line was occupied by four patrol boats and during the night by five patrol boats. The Hanstholm barrage gap was occupied by one patrol boat. One ELM/J mine was cleared at each of the following points: near Samsøe, west and east of Anholt and west of Hela. An ELM/A mine exploded west of Samsøe. Escort service in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic, was carried out according to plan.

A company of Cossacks, fighting on our side on the coast of Kronstadt Bay, mutinied on the night of 14 Mar. Three ringleaders escaped. From 0300 the enemy carried out intensive bombardment and attack on Peterhof. At the request of the Army, Battery Strelna put up a barrage from 0535 until 0558. The battery area was hit several times by enemy gunfire from Kronstadt and the Karelian coast, but little damage was done. Our planes dropped 29 SC 50 bombs on the battery on the north coast and on Lavansaari harbor. Defense consisted of heavy anti-aircraft guns and two fighters.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively air reconnaissance was carried out in the Bay of Biscay, 36 planes being observed. The SSS signal on 14 Mar. from the area southwest of Freetown came from the troop transport EMPRESS of CANADA en route to Freetown, which was sunk by an Italian submarine.

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2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic, no action reports have been received from Group "Raubgraf". The Group has been ordered to occupy patrol line AK 7791 - BD 1485 at 1000 on 16 Mar. Submarines U "757" (unable to dive) and U "359" have been advised that they will be picked up by our torpedo boats in BF 7366 at 1400 on 17 Mar.

Submarine U "415" has reported no defenses and no patrols in the Iceland passage.

Group "Unverzagt" maintained contact with the convoy in CF throughout the day. Submarine U "524" reported that the rear vessel in the convoy (of 6,000 GRT) was sunk by under-water attack at 2100 in CE 5326. The convoy is strongly protected and consists of more than 40 vessels, including tankers.

No action reports have been received from the southern boats. In the Mediterranean one 8,000 GRT steamer was sunk. Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Submarine Division has been ordered that, due to the homeward passage of the DOGGERBANK, submarine attacks are to be stopped from 16 Mar. in an area 100 miles on either side of the line from ED 88 via CG 49 and CG 25 to the north as far as Cape Ortegal.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The attack on Sunderland by 45 planes during the night of 14 Mar. was made in favorable weather conditions against the harbor, dockyards and the part of the town south of the river Wear. The Air Force General Staff states that the result of the attack was relatively very good. During the day, the 3rd Air Force had 137 planes, including 59 fighters, operating in the west area and 9 planes on submarine chase and reconnaissance in the Mediterranean. In the afternoon 20 enemy Bostons attacked the St. Brioux airfield with 90 high explosive bombs, causing some damage to the landing field. During the night of 15 Mar., 32 of our bombers set out to attack Grimsby. There was only slight enemy air activity over German territory during last night.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

Three enemy planes were shot down in the Tunisian area. The Italian Air Force reports that a 12,000 GRT steamer in an enemy



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convoy off Bone was heavily damaged on the morning of 14 Mar. by torpedo bomber attack. In the evening, 17 of our bombers and two waves of seven torpedo bombers each were in action against the lively convoy traffic in the southern Gulf of Sidra. Action reports have not yet been received. The Italian air reconnaissance of the area around Cyprus produced no sighting reports.

3. Eastern Front:

Reconnaissance was flown in the Black Sea. The 5th Air Force reports no special incidents from northern waters and the Barents Sea.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

A minelaying cruiser of the ADVENTURE class left Gibraltar to the west on the evening of 14 Mar. On the morning of 15 Mar. 1 transport and 1 steamer with 2 destroyers and 1 corvette put in to Gibraltar from the Mediterranean. At noon, a convoy of 8 loaded U.S. steamers with 2 destroyers and 3 corvettes entered the port from the Atlantic. Vessels in Gibraltar at noon were as follows: 1 DIDO cruiser in dock, 1 minelayer, 3 auxiliary cruisers, 9 destroyers, 14 corvettes, 2 cable layers, 4 transports, 63 steamers and 8 tankers, as well as 180 planes.

No reports have been received on the heavy group in the Western Mediterranean.

There was active convoy traffic off the Algerian coast. At noon, a large westbound convoy was reported and attacked by one of our submarines 40 miles east-northeast of Algiers and at 1845 25 miles northeast of Cape Tenes.

During the morning our air reconnaissance spotted a large westbound convoy in the Gulf of Sidra. It consisted of 6 steamers and 4 tankers with 8 escort vessels, and was about 120 miles west of Benghazi. At last sighting, this convoy was 75 miles east of Cape Misurata at 1410. In the forenoon, 2 steamers with 2 escort vessels and 4 other small ships on westerly course, and 1 destroyer, 1 patrol vessel and 3 other unidentified vessels on easterly course were sighted in the area of Mersa Matruh.

There was one submarine 60 miles southwest of Elba and another 26 miles west of Ostia.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were in the operational area.

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At 1845, submarine U "380" sank an 8,000 GRT steamer from a west-bound convoy in CH 8374.

Submarines U "561" and U "431" passed through the Straits of Messina en route to the Western Mediterranean.

During the night of 13 Mar., two PT boats were on patrol off the north Tunisian coast. There are at present only two PT boats of the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla ready for action in Bizerta. PT boats S "153" and S "154" will move from Empedocle to Bizerta during the night of 15 Mar.

On 14 Mar., three boats of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla performed minesweeping escort duties. On 13 Mar., one mine was cleared from a known barrage northwest of Zebib. Six auxiliary motor minesweepers put in to Trapani. On the evening of 14 Mar., submarine chasers "2204" and "2201" left Messina for submarine chase off Cape Spartivento. Later, the boats were ordered to Palermo to tow motor minesweepers R "12" and R "13" to Messina. On 14 Mar., submarine chasers "2202", "2203" and "2210" put in to Naples from Palermo. Submarine chasers "2205" and "2208" entered the same port from Genoa.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, has requested that the yacht L'INCOMPRISE, scheduled for the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla, be attached to the submarine chase group of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla in order to increase the defensive power of that escort group.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

Five Italian destroyers landed German troops in Tunis during the morning. War transports KT "5" and KT "6" are en route from Palermo to Trapani. They are to proceed to Tunis. Eight steamers and two tankers are on return passage from Bizerta and Tunis to Naples and Palermo. Two naval landing craft announced from Sousse, which were to escort two steamers on their return passage, have not yet arrived in Bizerta.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

The netlayer PIRAEUS has completed her special mission. A patrol boat sank in the harbor of Chania after an engine explosion. Escort traffic was carried out according to plan.

#### Black Sea:

#### Enemy Situation:



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Air reconnaissance reported at noon 1 destroyer and 1 merchantman on southeasterly course west of Sochi and another destroyer northwest of Poti, also on southeasterly course. In Poti there were 1 battleship and 2 heavy cruisers, one of them in dock. In Batum there was a 4,000 GRT steamer, a passenger ship of 9,000 GRT and four 7,000 GRT tankers on the roads. In Tuapse, besides light naval forces, there were 9 steamers totalling 9,000 GRT and one 7,000 GRT tanker on the roads which had been set on fire by the 1st PT Boat Flotilla. Two other steamers, totalling 1,800 GRT were detected in Ghelenjik.

Own Situation:

Due to weather conditions, there was no PT boat or escort activity. The Kerch - Taman traffic was also stopped. On the Yenikale - Kossa Chuchka route, traffic was maintained by means of combined operations landing craft and Siebel ferries.

Naval landing craft MFP "475", which had been sent out on the night of 13 Mar. for observation of aerial mines, was sunk by a mine when weighing anchor three miles north of the fish salting plant. Six men were killed. Mine check was not possible owing to bad weather. Combined operations landing craft and Siebel ferries transferred to the west: 1,175 soldiers, 94 prisoners, 477 civilians, 674 horses, 201 motorized and 549 horse-drawn vehicles, etc.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

In a declaration to the foreign press, not published in Germany, Goebbels stated that the New Order for Europe was to be built up essentially on a basis of free will and not on dictatorship. The Reich desired to maintain the individual characters of the European nations. National Socialism was not an export. This statement has aroused great interest in the foreign press and some skeptical comment.

In regard to Eden's visit to Washington, Secretary of State Hull told the press that the most important item in the talks was the establishment of perfect understanding in regard to prosecution of the war and the need to solve the major post-war problems. These questions would have to be solved by far-reaching exchange of information, Russia and China being included within the given limits.

According to a diplomatic report, public feeling in Finland is beginning to calm down. The new Prime Minister has stressed the similarity of the political situations of Finland and Germany in regard to the Bolshevist threat.

The already noted approach between de Gaulle and Giraud is evinced by the arrival in Algiers and Morocco of several Government members who up to now had strongly opposed de Gaulle.

The Turkish Prime Minister stated in an interview that the policy of his government towards the Arabic countries was identical to that of the British. According to "Transocean", British Air Marshal Douglas, who is in Ankara, has been discussing primarily matters of ground organization and the stock-piling of fuel, ammunition and spare parts.

Another "Transocean" report states that the departure of the Swiss colony from Bulgaria has not taken place.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

I. Chief, Fleet Branch, Quartermaster Division, reports that the Staff of the German Commander, Convoys, Mediterranean, whose position is now under discussion in Rome, will be assigned from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West. The crews for the ex-French torpedo boats and despatch boats requested by the Italians will be taken from torpedo boats in dock.

II. The Naval Attaché reports that receipt may be expected of an official Japanese request for the German IX D type submarine which



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is to be given to Japan to be delivered by a German crew, and that Admiral Nomura desires to travel in this submarine. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff pointed out that Chief, Naval Staff does not plan to make a German submarine crew available for this purpose.

III. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff also called attention to the fact that the information on naval warfare put out by the radio news for foreign countries leaves much to be desired. The Naval Liaison Officer recently attached to the Ministry of Propaganda is to convey Naval Staff's opinion to the Minister. The Administrative Staff of Commander in Chief, Navy remarked that all attempts so far made by the Navy through Armed Forces High Command, Press to bring about a reorganisation in the radio news have been in vain.

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Special Items:

I. From the final report of Group North on naval warfare in the Baltic, 1942, Chief, Naval Staff concludes that both the naval forces under Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic and his subordinate group commanders and commanders, and the formations of Admiral, Baltic States successfully accomplished their important tasks. They did this with limited means and by indefatigable activity, straining personnel and material to the utmost, and in the face of sometimes strong resistance. Chief, Naval Staff has fully acknowledged these achievements in his letter l/Skl I a 7518/43 geh. to Group North, Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, Admiral, Baltic States and the Naval Liaison Staff, Finland. In this he expresses his confidence that the 1943 Baltic naval war, now beginning, which will doubtless be just as hard as the previous campaigns, will be prosecuted with the same energy and resolution by the commanders and forces involved in cooperation with the other branches of the Armed Forces.

Copy of this letter in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

II. From an order of Naval Staff concerning operations by naval forces in northern waters (see War Diary, 10 Mar.), Group North understands that the forces are to remain in Narvik until the first mission has taken place or until other circumstances warrant a change in plans. On 11 Mar. the Group reported that whenever an opportunity for reasonable operation should arise, a proposal to go into action would be made to Chief, Naval Staff. Group North hopes that increased air reconnaissance will make it possible to gain timely information and it plans to suggest thrusts from Narvik during the present exercise period, if opportunity should arise. However, the Group is of the opinion that convoy attack and defense against landings may be more successful from the Alta

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area where, due to the short approach, a sudden thrust will have the best chance of achieving tactical surprise especially since the assembly of the Task Force is bound to come to the knowledge of the enemy. Until the end of March, however, operations can be made only from Narvik.

Fundamentally Group North is entirely right. However, it will be necessary to expand the air defenses of Alta Fiord. According to Air Force Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section, two Hampdon squadrons were moved to the Murmansk area in the fall of 1942. After training Russian crews, the British crews were withdrawn. In February, a torpedo plane was shot down and the radio operator was taken prisoner. According to his statement there are seven crews in the torpedo squadron. The airfield for this squadron is Varlamovo, 18 km northeast of Murmansk. It is not known whether the 2nd squadron is also stationed there. No other reports have been received. The transfer of torpedo planes to Murmansk by direct flight is entirely possible.

Admiral, Northern Waters, agrees with the Group's views regarding Alta as a jumping-off base and further reports:

1. The Bear Island - North Cape line is the nearest point at which submarines can contact convoys and, since their number is still limited, they will have to be stationed on that line. According to recent experience, even air reconnaissance in favorable conditions can only pick up convoys west of this line comparatively rarely at this season. There is therefore great danger that, when operating from the Narvik area, valuable time may be lost.

2. Attempts must be made to attack convoys separated from a heavy enemy group (which generally avoids coming too close to our air bases) at 20° and eastwards with the shortest approach and return passage.

3. Operation from the Narvik area entails prolonging the approach by at least 350 miles, with a correspondingly great reduction of the destroyers' combat endurance for attacks on the convoys.

4. It would therefore be advisable to move the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force to Kaa Fiord as soon as possible in order to jump off from there against a convoy which is expected towards the end of March. It is estimated that it can be ready to transfer by 22 Mar.



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5. There is nothing to choose between the two areas regarding enemy air reconnaissance to detect the formation, but it will be more difficult for enemy agents to detect it in the Alta area.

Group North concurs in these views and proposes that the Task Force be transferred to Alta after 22 Mar., if no opportunity for action from the Narvik area has presented itself by that date.

Naval Staff will recommend this proposal to Chief, Naval Staff upon his return from Rome. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff has telephoned his approval to Commanding Admiral, Group North.

III. The Naval Liaison Officer attached to High Command Army, Army General Staff has transmitted to Chief of Staff, Naval Staff a list of problems at present pending on naval and land warfare that he considers should form the basis for discussions at a personal meeting suggested between Chief of Staff, Naval Staff and Chief, Army General Staff.

The following are regarded as most important by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff:

1. Warfare on Lake Ladoga,
2. Warfare in the Mediterranean,
3. Warfare in the Black Sea.

Items 1. and 2. are already being dealt with.

Two problems arise from item 3.:

a. Provision of gunboats, submarine chasers and mine-layers for the present campaign.

b. Preparation of a combined operation against the Caucasian coast with the aim of repeating by sea the 1942 summer campaign which failed to achieve the desired results by land. This will mean that transport space, escort forces and means for attacking the coast must be provided.

In regard to 3 a.): There are no new requirements beyond the current ones.

In regard to 3 b.): The possibility of carrying out the proposed plan must be investigated. Group South is to undertake examination of the question in the form of a study.

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IV. Quartermaster Division has defined its attitude towards the Italian demands forwarded by Armed Forces High Command and delivered by General Warlimont (see War Diary, 5 Mar.), and has advised Armed Forces High Command accordingly. Copy as per 1/Skl I c 7486/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

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Situation 16 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the DOGGERBANK:

a. by radiogram 1001: that the slow convoy reported on 12 Mar. has been driven off to the north by our submarines. On 15 Mar. it was north-northwest of the Azores. On the evening of 14 Mar. the fast convoy proceeding at 13.3 knots was at 25° W.

b. by radiogram 1105: on the positions of neutrals on 12 Mar. at 2400 CET.

c. on the weather forecast for 16 Mar.

Information on the repair situation in South African ports during February was forwarded by radiogram 2017 to all ships in foreign waters.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1142 Air Commander, Atlantic Coast reported 3 steamers of from 500 to 1,000 GRT each 140 miles southwest of Lorient on course 330°. At 1800, 8 small steamers with escort vessels were sighted entering Dartmouth and a similar number entering Plymouth. Southwest of Portland, there were 6 steamers sailing west preceded by 3 minesweepers.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:



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At 1600, the torpedo boats T "12", "18" and "23" left La Pallice to bring in submarine U "757".

Destroyers Z "23", "24" and "32" have moved to Royan roads ready to support the task of the 2nd Torpedo Boat Flotilla. Five planes of the 3rd Group, 40th Bomber Wing will carry out armed reconnaissance for Group West on 17 Mar. between 4° and 44° 30' N to the limit of their range. On 17 Mar., from 1230, 2-3 planes of the 3rd Squadron, 123rd Coastal Patrol Group will stand by to escort U "757" in the Bay of Biscay.

According to order from Naval Staff, Group West has submitted a proposal for sending out four blockade-runners. Copy as per 1/Skl I k 787/43 Gkdos. Chfs. with comments of Operations Division, see War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

It is not planned to provide a submarine escort for PIETRO ORSEOLO as her speed is sufficiently high. Naval Staff proposes that, at the latitude of point "Venezia", PIETRO ORSEOLO shall proceed east and make for the rendezvous with the destroyers during the night before X day + 3. Twenty-four hours after leaving point "Venezia", control of PIETRO ORSEOLO will be taken over by Group West.

Channel Coast:

The 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared one moored mine and 2 EFA mines from the barrage south of Boulogne.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio deciphering, the trawler MORAVIA struck a mine and sank near Harwich at 1300 on 15 Mar.

Own Situation:

At 0016, convoy 1075 was attacked by enemy PT boats in AN 8236. The steamers MARIE TOST and AGNETE were sunk. One PT boat was set on fire.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports that since four steamers have already been sunk by enemy PT boats, he has ordered that convoys will use the route between buoy L 1 and the Hook only between 0400 and 2200, and will put into Helder or Borkum if necessary. This will probably entail delay in convoy traffic.

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Since, however, the enemy will try to make up for the obstruction to his PT boat actions by increased air and mine offensives, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North considers that the detachment to the Baltic, as ordered, of the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla, of half a motor minesweeper flotilla and of the anti-aircraft vessels "25" and "26", in addition to the loss of six patrol boats will have disastrous consequences. (See teletype 1312).

The units in question were withdrawn from the area of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic during the winter lull in Baltic operations.

A telephone cable was cut by Dutch saboteurs near the Helder anti-aircraft battery.

A total of twelve ELM/J mines was cleared ahead of convoys. Otherwise escort service was carried out according to plan.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence four Russian submarines were at sea off the north coast of Norway. Normal reconnaissance activity over the North Sea; little activity by the Iceland squadrons. Our submarines report no defenses or patrol between Iceland and the Faroes between 11 and 14 Mar.

Group North's Report on the Enemy Situation No. 28 contains the supplementary information that the auxiliary aircraft carrier DASHER was also assigned as escort for PQ 22 or is to be used for future escort duties between Great Britain and Murmansk. On the subject of landings, Group North states in this report: Reports on a large-scale action by the Western Powers to begin after the middle of March have recently increased in number. Norway and Jutland in addition to France and the Mediterranean are mentioned as areas of action.

Over-all evaluation of information received leads to no definite conclusions, especially since it is to be assumed that intelligence spread by the enemy is designed to conceal his actual intentions.

Own Situation:

Enemy air raids were made on Kirkenes on 14 Mar. and on Petsamo on 14 and 15 Mar. without damage. Escort service was carried out according to plan.



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Naval Command, Norway reports that the action readiness of the 28 cm battery Kiberg is reduced as, in spite of protest, Baltic Station has detached the only battery officer who has done a long-range artillery course.

The Naval Command's opinion would appear to be an over-statement.

Group North has no objection to the withdrawal of two heavy and one light anti-aircraft batteries from the Aas Fiord area to Alta. However, Group North points out that it may become necessary to reinforce Aas Fiord if the situation should unexpectedly change.

Referring to the successful enemy PT boat action against the convoy on 14 Mar. and the so-far unsuccessful search for the enemy PT boat, Naval Command, Norway emphasizes the weakness due to insufficiency of escort forces. Reinforcement of the area of Admiral, West Norwegian Coast from the area of the Naval Command is not possible. The Naval Command therefore requests additional assignment now of at least one motor minesweeper flotilla or one modern minesweeper flotilla and six Fieseler Storch planes to patrol the more remote coastal area since, with increased enemy PT boat activity, there is a threat of our own coastal traffic and the important spring fishing being brought to a standstill. (See teletype 1310).

Operation "Brausewetter" (installation of meteorological equipment on Bear Island by weathership COBURG, escorted by submarine U "378") is at present proceeding according to plan.

Submarines U "255", U "622" and U "657" have entered Narvik.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Hirtshals - Arendal patrol line is occupied by four patrol boats, the Hanstholm gap by two patrol boats. Escort service was hampered by fog. Sixteen vessels and three minesweeping planes were employed on channel check sweeps in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. One mine was cleared off Aarhus Bay, one west of Samsoe and one east of Anholt. In the evening, six enemy planes passed over Central Jutland and the Kattegat to the northeast. Mines are not suspected.

At 1622, Commander, Minelayers put to sea from Kristiansand South with the OSTMARK, gunboat K "3" and two minesweepers for mine-laying assignment "Klein Erna". One of the motor fishing smacks operating for the Intelligence Service off Gothenburg was captured within Swedish territorial waters by a Swedish patrol boat.

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Admiral, Denmark reports that the ten mutineers landed in Sweden by the Danish minesweeper SOERIDDEREN have been interned for the time being. The Danish Government has requested extradition. The Navy Ministry has ordered that all Danish naval cutters in ports not under military control are to remove an essential part of their engines and hand it over on land. (See teletype 1645).

The forces of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic are transferring in formation from the Western Baltic to the east. For details see teletype 1035. The 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept the Polish mine area off Hela; no mines were found.

Quartermaster Division has ordered the PRINZ EUGEN to berth at Gdynia and ADMIRAL SCHEER at Swinemunde.

Throughout the day on 15 Mar. there was lively enemy air activity over Kronstadt Bay and heavy truck traffic between Lissi Noss and Oranienbaum. Enemy guns at Seiskari again bombarded the Glinki area. Our planes dropped 19 SC 50 bombs on the harbor of Lavan-saari. Owing to strong defense no results were observed. During the night, considerable enemy air activity was observed in the western part of the Gulf of Finland.

On 22 Feb. Group North pointed out the need for Armed Forces High Command and other branches of the Armed Forces to take consideration of the fundamental fact that the Navy is not responsible for operations in rivers and inland waters or in a position to carry them out. The Navy is able only to provide assistance, for instance, on Lake Ladoga.

Naval Staff cannot but concur in the opinion of the Group Command that the Navy has not the forces to perform this kind of task, desirable as it might be. Armed Forces High Command has been requested to decide in accordance with the proposal of Group North with reference to Lake Ladoga.

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## V. Submarine Warfare.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

Moderate air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay, only 13 planes being observed. In the North Atlantic, in the area of the convoy operations, signals from several torpedoed steamers were intercepted. The Dutch steamer STAD HARLEM (4,518 GRT) reported that she was sinking after a heavy collision and that there was a submarine in the vicinity. Submarine sighting reports were picked up from Biscay, the area west of Spain, off Pernambuco and near Cuba.



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2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic boats of Group "Raubgraf" and from the northern section of Group "Stuermer" were sent out against a convoy sailing on course 70° which had been detected at 0825 in BD 1491 by submarine U "653". Contact was made by numerous boats. At 2200, Group DRAENGER was also ordered into action against the convoy, which it should be able to reach by the afternoon of 17 Mar. The first report of success was made by submarine U "603" which torpedoed one 5,000 GRT steamer at 2300 in BD 1539 and probably scored a second hit. Other successes during the night of 16 Mar. are reported by submarine U "435" which scored a "Fat" torpedo hit on a 7,000 GRT tanker and by submarine U "91" which sank one 10,000 GRT steamer and one 8,000 GRT steamer. Submarine U "758" reports sinking three steamers and one tanker, totalling 25,000 GRT.

Contact with the convoy was maintained in the Azores area. Reports of success have not yet been received though attacks have been observed and reported. At noon, the convoy was in CG 6269 on course 110° and at 1800 in CE 6623. The boats report that defense was at times strong.

Incoming submarine U "757", which is unable to dive, and escort submarine U "359" were attacked several times by enemy planes in BE 9281, but without success.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

The final report on the action against convoy No. 16 from 10 to 13 Mar., southeast of Greenland, has been given to the Naval Adjutant for information of the Fuehrer. Copy as per 1/Skl I u 804/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Our air raid on Grimsby on the night of 15 Mar., when 32 planes were over the target, is regarded as having been only moderately successful due to poor visibility. Two planes were lost.

During the day the 3rd Air Force had 88 planes on operation in the area around England and 5 in the Mediterranean.

In the afternoon, 15 Mosquito planes made very low altitude

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attacks on the railroad station and yards at Paderborn, causing slight damage to houses.

During the night of 16 Mar., a total of only seven enemy incursions was reported, five of them over the Baltic Sea entrances into Poland, probably for the purpose of dropping agents. These flights are possibly connected with the escapes from the officers' prisoner-of-war camp near Hohensalza [?].

2. Mediterranean Theater:

It is reported that three aerial torpedo hits were scored on two steamers and bombs were dropped during an attack on the enemy convoy east of Cape Misurata. On leaving, the planes observed three steamers on fire.

3. Eastern Front:

Over the Army fronts, 65 enemy planes were shot down on 14 Mar. and 56 on 15 Mar.; we lost three planes altogether.

The 5th Air Force reports that 14 bombers were in action against the town and harbor of Murmansk on the night of 15 Mar.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

A cruiser of the CAIRO class from the Mediterranean and a convoy of 6 steamers from the Atlantic put in to Gibraltar. One convoy of 13 steamers left for the Mediterranean and another, consisting of 30 steamers and 1 transport with 7 escort vessels, for the Atlantic.

No reports have been received concerning the heavy formation.

At noon, a westbound convoy was detected and attacked by one of our submarines 45 miles west of Cape Tenes.

Submarines were sighted 16 miles southeast of Marseilles and near Cattaro.

Photographs show 17 steamers totalling 105,000 GRT, 2 destroyers, and some small vessels in Tripoli. The port must therefore be in full working order. There were 2 steamers and 8 small vessels in Tobruk. In the evening, there were 10 steamers with 10 escort vessels on course 330°, 110 miles south-southeast of Malta.



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No sighting reports have been received from the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean. Our reconnaissance was hampered by fighter defense.

On 15 Mar. Liaison Officer, Rome reported that recent air reconnaissance of the Syrian and Palestinian coasts and of Cyprus has revealed a complete absence of ships and landing craft in the ports. The various reports of concentration of invasion craft are thus unconfirmed and are attributed by the Liaison Officer, Rome to enemy propaganda.

Naval Intelligence Station, Istanbul reports on 16 Mar. that on 18 or 19 Mar. a convoy of 15 steamers from Egypt is expected in Beirut and Tripoli (Syria). During the week of 7 to 12 Mar. 400 Liberator planes arrived in Syria.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. At noon submarine U "77" reported having torpedoed two steamers of 2,000 - 5,000 GRT from a westbound convoy in CH 8473. Submarine U "431" sighted a submarine in CJ 7532, but her request for permission to attack was refused as it might have been an Italian submarine. In the Western Mediterranean four of our submarines are on operation between CH 7574 and 9276.

PT boats S "153" and S "154" have arrived in Bizerta. PT boats S "156", "157" and "158" are to transfer this evening from Bizerta to Augusta for engine overhaul. PT boats S "30" and S "59" arrived in Naples on 14 Mar. for repairs.

On the afternoon of 14 Mar., submarine chaser "2200", escorting war transports KT "2" and KT "14" from Palermo to Naples, attacked a submarine, probably with success, ten miles east of Stromboli. This would be the fourth success of 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla.

Submarine chaser "2207" had to break off her chase in the Capri area due to breakdown of the echo-ranging set and put in to Naples.

Check sweeping of the coastal routes in the Tunis - Bizerta area has been continued by all available boats according to plan.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

No important events.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

According to an Italian report, there was an enemy submarine between Rhodes and Symi at 1720.

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Three Swedish supply ships left Piraeus for Canada.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance observed little shipping off Tuapse, Gagry and Poti. Submarine U "24" reports that no shipping has been sighted off the Turkish Black Sea Coast.

Own Situation:

German and Italian PT boats were not on operation on account of bad weather. For the same reason convoy traffic and minesweeping were stopped.

Submarine U "19" has left Constantza for the operational area.

As weather conditions had not improved, there was no ferry traffic between Kerch and Taman fish salting plant.

Limited traffic was maintained between Yenikale and Kossa Chuchka; 830 persons, 114 motorized and 61 horse-drawn vehicles, 240 horses, etc. were ferried to the west.

Group South reports on the present state of naval landing craft as follows:

In the Kerch traffic: 40 naval landing craft, 17 operational, 10 only partly operational and 13 non-operational.

In Yalta: 2 naval landing craft for lumber transport.

In Sevastopol: 3 naval landing craft operational, 1 non-operational.

In Varna: 9 out of operation, 14 on the way down the Danube to Varna to be equipped for the Black Sea. Date of operational readiness cannot yet be estimated.

Rejection of the request for ten more naval landing craft makes it impossible to carry out the traffic Taman, Kerch to the northern shore of the Sea of Azov as planned.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.



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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In the session of the House of Commons on 16 Mar., Churchill turned down a proposal calling for the appointment of a single Commander in Chief for all three Armed Services in Great Britain. He declared that the successful cooperation and close liaison between the Army and Air Force, which had been achieved in the Middle East, should serve as an example for operations under British command at other places.

In reply to a question, Churchill declared himself satisfied with the present organization for combatting the submarine threat.

Other questions were asked in regard to Spanish oil imports from America.

In commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, many communist mass meetings were held last Sunday in Great Britain, especially in London.

In spite of incessant pressure from the British communist party, the Labor Party has steadfastly refused to admit it into its ranks.

According to Reuter, a conference on submarine defense has been held between the U.S.A., Great Britain and Canada. In connection with the question of a second front in Europe and the keeping open of the North Atlantic lines of communication, this conference is considered as being of the greatest importance.

From various sources it is reported that Eden is trying to bring about a Four Power Pact between Great Britain, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and China, to be known as the "Charter of Nations."

North Africa:

Giraud has ordered that all busts and portraits of Petain are to be removed. All decrees are now issued only in the name of the French Republic. Giraud has invited de Gaulle to a discussion. Radio Algiers broadcast a bitter attack on Admiral Robert in Martinique because of his pro-German attitude.

U.S.A.:

Simultaneously with Eden's discussions with Hull, four prominent senators put forward a five-point program for the post-war policy of the U.S.A., and proposed an immediate conference of the United Nations. This step is evidently intended to prevent the Senate from sabotaging the Government's post-war policy as it did after World War I.

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Australia:

According to Reuter, the Prime Minister has stated that no proposals have been made to him on the subject of U.S. bases in Australia.

Turkey:

At Mersina, 788 German and Italian military personnel and 75 civilians, who had fallen into British hands in Saudi Arabia, were exchanged through the intermediary of the Turkish crescent (equivalent of Red Cross, Tr. N.) against British merchant officers.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

No special reports or decisions.

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Situation 17 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

The REGENSBURG and the KARIN received orders by radiogram 2204 that the rendezvous will be at 1600 mean local time.

By radiogram 0037, Naval Staff has transmitted to Ship "28" the awarding of war decorations (German Cross in gold to five officers.)

The DOGGERBANK has received the following orders by radiogram 0126 in special code "Doggerbank":

1.) If, due to the local situation, a break through to the north from the neutral route appears impossible, the only thing to do will be to put in to a Spanish port as, in a Portuguese port, neither ship nor cargo could be touched by Germany until the end of the war. It might perhaps be possible to get the cargo away from a Spanish port. If it is impossible to reach a port in northwest Spain, the emergency solution of making for the Bay of Cadiz, in spite of enemy patrols on the approach to Gibraltar, might offer some prospects.



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2.) In neutral harbors, the ship should appear as a normal merchant vessel but in no case as an auxiliary warship. Auxiliary warships are required to leave port within 24 hours or be interned.

3.) If captured by the enemy on the high seas, DOGGERBANK will remain as an auxiliary warship, in order to avoid the enemy treating the crew as pirates when the Capetown operation becomes known.

The DOGGERBANK has also received the weather report for 17 Mar. by radiogram 1117 and information as to the convoy situation on 14 and 16 Mar. by radiogram 1731. Naval Staff understands that the convoys that left Gibraltar on 14 and 16 Mar. will separate into sections for Great Britain and for the U.S.A. The sections for England will presumably pass 38° N on about 15° W on 17 and 19 Mar.; the U. S. sections will sail west on either 34° or 30° 31° N and will pass the longitude of Madeira on 18 and 20 Mar. The convoy reported on 12 Mar. will be at 38°50' N, 23° W on the morning of 17 Mar. The Gibraltar convoy was at 52°20' N, 13° W on the morning of 17 Mar. and according to dead reckoning, will pass 40° N on 21 Mar., sailing south.

The DOGGERBANK has been further informed, by radiogram 1715, that our submarines have successfully attacked a slow convoy en route to Gibraltar which was 160 miles east-northeast of Sao Miguel on 17 Mar. According to previous experience, enemy reconnaissance behind the convoy for the rescue of survivors and the protection of stragglers will be especially intense. DOGGERBANK has therefore been ordered not to pass the action area before 20 Mar. and, if necessary, to stand on and off and wait throughout the nights of 17 and 18 Mar.

All vessels in foreign waters were advised by radiogram 2355 that, according to dead reckoning, an enemy convoy will be at 20°30' N, 37°30' W on course to Trinidad on the morning of 17 Mar.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was a hospital ship about 200 miles west-southwest of Finisterre on southerly course at 1500. South thereof two destroyers were sighted at 1440, also on a southerly course.

According to radio intelligence, there was lively minesweeping activity on 14 Mar. in the sea area of Harwich and some mines

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were cleared. Twenty-eight survivors were saved when the minesweeper MORAVIA was sunk on 14 Mar. The scheduled fast convoy RESSAULT entered the Thames on the same day eight hours late.

These results are without a doubt due to the 3rd Air Force's mining operations on 13 Mar.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

No enemy forces were sighted during long-range reconnaissance on 16 Mar. In EE 9491 a Boeing Fortress was unsuccessfully engaged. Protective reconnaissance by twelve JU 88 planes in the Bay of Biscay was also unsuccessful.

Channel Coast:

At 1910 on 17 Mar., motor minesweepers R "177" and R "40" struck mines four miles southwest of Boulogne. The bow of R "40" was torn off. There were few casualties. Both vessels were under-slung and brought in. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West suspects mines Mark XIX with grass line. (A special device against our shallow-draught vessels, by which the underneath mines are detonated by means of the line floating at the level of the propeller.) The mines were probably dropped by the formation located at 1659 from Le Touquet in BF 3532 on course northeast. After 1802, Gris Nez located several enemy targets near Ramsgate on course 288°.

Commander, PT Boats reports on the operational readiness of the PT boat forces in the west area as follows:

- 1.) Of four PT boat flotillas with a standard strength of 40 vessels, only 14 boats are at present operational, the other boats having been lost or suffered damage in action or otherwise.
- 2.) A gradual addition of 18 new or repaired boats is expected by 15 April. In the same period, we must reckon with a reduction in currently operational boats which, from the experience of recent months, may be considerable.
- 3.) The announced withdrawal of six boats for a foreign power as well as the reinforcement of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla in the southeast area will again be made at the expense of the west area flotillas and will involve a great aggravation of the present catastrophic situation of operational readiness.

As notification has been issued that the need to effect this transfer cannot be avoided, it is requested that withdrawal of the 8th



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PT Boat Flotilla from the northern area as soon as possible to reinforce the west area be investigated.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, ML "102" sighted our formation off Ijmuiden on the night of 17 Mar. ML "102" was probably in company with ML "105" and MTB "34". MGB "85" reported engine trouble 45 miles west-southwest of Helder. PT boats were detected south of Ijmuiden making off westward. During the night of 16 Mar. unidentified targets were detected two miles off the coast between the Hook of Holland and Scheveningen on north-north-easterly course at a speed of 30 knots.

Own Situation:

For detailed report of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North on the sinking of the steamers AGNETE and TOFT and the setting on fire of an enemy PT boat, see "Daily Situation". Complete destruction of the PT boat was not carried through, as further attacks on our convoy were anticipated. (See teletype 0855).

Altogether 15 ELM/J mines were cleared by minesweepers and patrol boats between Ijmuiden and Langeoog.

At 1320 on 16 Mar. the German motorship DOROTHEA (119 GRT) was sunk by a mine in the Elbe estuary.

The Elbe - Hook convoy entered Helder during darkness. Otherwise, escort and patrol service was carried out according to plan.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, there were four Russian submarines in the area of the Norwegian Arctic coast. One submarine entered Polarnoye and two carried out trials at sea. Later, one of these put out into the Barents Sea.

Our air reconnaissance on 16 Mar. of the Jan Mayen area, the western Skagerrak and the inshore waters of the Norwegian west coast produced no results. Photographic reconnaissance of Scapa had to be discontinued on account of bad weather.

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A press correspondent of a Swedish paper reports from New York that the whole German Fleet, including the TIRPITZ, GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST and two aircraft carriers, is now assembling in northern Norway. The plan is said to be to attack Allied sea routes in the North Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean and also to forestall any attempt by the Allies to establish a second front in Scandinavia.

"It is believed that Doenitz intends to have a naval force in these waters strong enough to face the British Home Fleet. The SCHARNHORST and the GNEISENAU have been extensively converted since they escaped from France. Their eleven-inch guns have been replaced by twelve-inch guns. Admiral Kumetz will probably command the Fleet under Admiral Ciliax as Commander in Chief."

Own Situation:

On 16 Mar., five enemy planes were reported in the area of Petsamo. No attacks were made. On the same day at 1300 our eastbound convoy was attacked off Festerneset (AC 8413) by enemy planes which dropped seven aerial torpedoes, all of which missed the targets. At 1544 on 16 Mar., the steamer JOHANNISBERGER was attacked by a submarine south of Kyberg. The steamer sank off Varanger Fiord at 1935. The crew was rescued. At 1700, a submarine alarm was reported off Sylte Fiord. At 2145 submarine chase was discontinued because of a snowstorm and because the hydrophone gave no results. At 0725 on 17 Mar. the eastbound convoy was attacked by a submarine near Nordkyn; five torpedoes were fired and missed the targets.

Escort service was otherwise carried out according to plan.

Minelaying operation "Klein Erna" was discontinued due to heavy fog and one boat breaking down.

Group North sees no possibility of assigning further escort forces to Naval Command, Norway. In view of the enemy situation off the Dutch coast, and having given up several flotillas to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, further weakening of the forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North cannot be tolerated. In accordance with Naval Staff's orders, the 9th and 30th Minesweeper Flotillas, which will be established at the end of March, are to be additionally assigned to Naval Command, Norway. Group North supports the request for six Fieseler Storch planes. (See teletype 1847).

The telephone conversation between Commanding Admiral, Group North and Chief of Staff, Naval Staff in regard to the transfer of naval forces to Alta Fiord has been confirmed by teletype 1/Skl I a 812/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.



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After agreement by telephone between Commanding Admiral, Group North and Chief of Staff, Naval Staff in regard to NUERNBERG and LUETZOW, Group North has been informed as follows (copy to the Fleet):

1.) Subject to the final decision of Commander in Chief, Navy, which is expected at the beginning of next week, the NUERNBERG must be available for use as a training ship on 1 July, which means that she must return during the first half of June at the latest. Transfer in April had been ordered from here with a view to the season, in order to avoid endangering the ship unnecessarily by having her return in the lightest month. In any case, the Group considered it inappropriate to employ the light cruisers. Submit views at once on the question of NUERNBERG'S transfer in June in view of the short nights.

2.) The decision on LUETZOW will probably not be made before the end of March.

Copy as per teletype 1/Skl I a 813/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C d.

Admiral, Northern Waters reports no special events. Six submarines have been ordered to occupy attack areas in AB 63, 66 and 69.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Skagerrak was patrolled throughout the day by four boats. During the night, the boats were engaged in escort service. Channel sweeping and escort service were carried out according to plan.

A ground mine was cleared off Gdynia. There was brisk enemy air activity against coastal positions in the area of Admiral, Baltic States. Our planes again attacked Lavansaari with 19 SC 50 bombs. Due to defense, no results were observed.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay, 38 planes being observed. Several submarine sighting reports were made by planes in the areas of the convoy operation.

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2. Own Situation:

Groups "Raubgraf" and "Stuermer" continued to maintain contact with the convoy in the central North Atlantic. It is possible that the enemy force has split up or that two different convoys are concerned, as the contact reports came from a northerly and from a southerly area. Further gratifying successes were reported concerning altogether eight vessels for 41,500 GRT, including four damaged ships which had already been reported as torpedoed. These successes are due to submarines U "435", U "600", U "91", U "384", U "603", U "665", U "228", U "616" and U "338". According to original reports the convoy consisted of at least 40 vessels. Its escort has been reported several times to be weak.

Contact was maintained with the convoy in the Azores area. The enemy brought up air escort which made the operation more difficult. Six more ships for a total of 45,000 GRT have been sunk from this convoy. This success is due to submarines U "172", U "167" and U "103". During the night of 17 Mar. contact was lost. The enemy defense was strong. Operations are being continued.

No action reports have been received from the other submarines in the North Atlantic or those in the South Atlantic.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

U "531" has been assigned to lay weather buoys and will leave Kiel on about 1 Apr.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 36 planes out on operation in the west area and 15 in the Mediterranean.

Eighty miles north-northwest of Texel a JU 88 forced a Danish radio-equipped fishing cutter to turn about. The 3rd Group, 40th Bomber Wing plans to send out six planes on 18 Mar. for armed reconnaissance between 40° and 45° N to the range limit.

During the day on 17 Mar. eight Blenheim planes flew over Norwegian coastal territory southwest of Stavanger. No attacks have been reported. Our fighters made no contacts. During the night of 17 Mar., only five incursions were made into Western France,



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without attacks. Our own planes flew no night missions. Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, is of the opinion that the enemy has suspended raids during the bright moon period in order to avoid successful night fighter action. Our own Air Force will also avoid moonlight nights.

It may also be possible that the enemy is holding back in order to keep the Air Force at readiness for a major operation.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

A delayed report states that a 10,000 GRT steamer was sunk west of Algiers on the night of 13 Mar. by one of our planes which made an emergency landing on the water off the Spanish coast. On 17 Mar. our Air Force was actively engaged on the southern Tunisian front against assemblies of troops and vehicles.

Strong forces flew seven sorties for the escort of convoy TOMASEO. A low-level attack on this convoy by twelve enemy planes was beaten off by our fighters. Four of the attackers were shot down. The convoy was undamaged.

## 3. Eastern Front:

On 16 Mar., 44 enemy planes were reported shot down over the Army fronts. Reconnaissance was flown in the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. For reports see "Daily Situation."

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The convoy which left Gibraltar for the Atlantic on 16 Mar. consisted of 33 steamers, 1 transport and 7 escort vessels. The CAIRO class cruiser which entered Gibraltar from the Mediterranean on the same day left in the course of the day to the east. At noon on 17 Mar., the MALAYA with three destroyers put in to Gibraltar from the Atlantic. This battleship was formerly attached to the Gibraltar Station and has now obviously returned after repair and overhaul.

Only slight convoy traffic was detected off the Algerian coast. At 1040 an eastbound convoy of 11 - 15 steamers was sighted by one of our submarines in CH 7686. This was evidently the formation which left Gibraltar on the forenoon of 16 Mar.

Submarines were sighted north of Cape San Vito and south of Capri.

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No further reports have been received on the convoy of 10 vessels with 10 escorts which was 135 miles northeast of Tripoli making for Malta on the evening of 16 Mar. No reconnaissance has been made of Malta to establish the whereabouts of these vessels.

No sightings were made during a reconnaissance of coastal waters between Derna and Sollum, which however, was not exhaustive.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

No action reports have been received from our submarines.

PT boat S "57" will transfer from Empedocle to Bizerta during the night of 17 Mar. Motor minesweepers R "12" and R "13", towed by an Italian steamer, left Palermo for Naples. Submarine chasers "2201" to "2204" left Messina for submarine chase in the Straits of Messina. Minesweeper M "6022" is en route to Trapani and minesweeper M "6024" is en route to Gaeta. The minesweeper group "Tunis" checked the convoy routes off the coast without finding mines. Six auxiliary motor minesweepers are in Trapani preparing to transfer.

With reference to the PT boat engagement on 12 Mar., German Naval Command, Italy reports that prisoners' statements confirm the belief that, besides the destroyer LIGHTNING torpedoed by S "158", a cruiser was torpedoed by S "156". This belief is further confirmed by air reconnaissance of Bone at noon on 13 Mar., which reported only one destroyer. In addition, two cruisers and two destroyers were reported by air reconnaissance on westerly course north of Bougaroni. Unfortunately their speed was not given. It is quite possible that they included a damaged cruiser. (See teletype 2015).

The dependent mine barrages off the south and north entrances of Marseilles are reported to be ready for operation.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

War transports KT "5" and KT "6" entered Tunis on the evening of 16 Mar. On the morning of 17 Mar., two destroyers landed German troops in Tunis from Palermo. At noon, nine naval landing craft from Trapani entered Bizerta. On 16 Mar., two Siebel ferries were sunk by enemy air attack en route from Marsala to Tunis. On 17 Mar., the small vessel traffic from Sicily to Tunisia was carried out according to plan.

4. Area Naval Group South:



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Aegean Sea:

Nothing special to report.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was rather active convoy traffic off the east coast. Off Ghelenjik and Tuapse and in Sukhum, as well as south of Gagry, a total of five escorted merchant vessels was observed. According to an intelligence report, 34 fast landing craft, 5 torpedo boats, 3 tankers, 4 submarines, 2 destroyers and 4 transports with landing troops were under way from Batum to Tuapse in the afternoon. A landing on the Taman peninsula or the Crimea is allegedly in view. Naval Staff informed Group South and Admiral, Black Sea by teletype.

Own Situation:

While on a submarine chase south of Tarshanskutski, Ship "19" was attacked by an enemy submarine with two torpedoes which missed. Anti-submarine action was made difficult by heavy seas and trouble with the location gear.

During the night of 17 Mar., the 1st PT Boat Flotilla will have two boats in operation northwest and two southeast of Tuapse and two Italian PT boats each off Myschako and Ghelenjik.

Following an improvement in the weather, ferry traffic from Kerch to the fish salting plant was fully resumed. On account of rough sea, mooring at Taman and at the fish salting plant was possible only with the aid of tugs. Traffic to Kossa Chuchka is still greatly hampered by drift ice. Enemy air activity was brisk. Mooring places and single vessels making the crossing were bombed and machine-gunned. One plane was certainly shot down and another one probably. It is also possible that aerial mines were dropped. One mine was cleared by a plane. About 3,000 persons, 1,107 horses, 850 motorized and 323 horse-drawn vehicles were transferred to the west.

Three naval landing craft put to sea from Kerch for the 8th Anapa transport.

Naval Staff has replied in teletype 1/Skl I m 7922/43 Gkdos. to the inquiry of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, as to the extent to which troop evacuation from the Taman-Kerch area to the north coast of the Sea of Azov can be undertaken

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immediately after the ice breaks up and without impairing the ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch and supplies to the Crimea by sea from the west. For copy of teletype see War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV. a.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

According to an Allied report, three Japanese transports were attacked near the Aru Islands by Allied planes. The U.S.A. Navy Department states that U.S. submarines have sunk four vessels in the Pacific and damaged three others.



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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In the House of Commons on 17 Mar., Churchill confirmed the declaration made by the Colonial Secretary on 5 Mar. and remarked that the Government was convinced that Great Britain must remain solely responsible for the administration of the British colonies.

In addition, Churchill expressed the Government's lively satisfaction at Giraud's speech, particularly his refusal to recognize the 1940 Armistice treaty and his rejection of the authority of Vichy. It appeared that now no fundamental questions any longer divided the two French groups. The U.S. State Department has officially announced the U.S. Government's full agreement with Churchill's statement.

Spain:

At the opening of the Cortes, Franco turned his attack openly against the Bolshevist threat to Europe which is just now so serious.

According to a diplomatic report, Sumner Welles claims that when the American guarantee was given in November 1942, the Spanish Government had offered an unqualified assurance that it would continue its policy of neutrality and would defend itself against any armed aggression. On the other hand, Foreign Minister Jordana states that no such Spanish assurance had ever been requested or given.

Turkey:

In the course of a lengthy speech before the National Assembly, the Prime Minister made the following remarks on foreign policy:

"We have ordered our relations with allied and friendly countries within the framework of existing treaties. Special reference is made to the Anglo-Turkish alliance. Since the Adana conference, we have come to know and like Churchill still better; everywhere we have found the outstretched hands of British statesmen with Churchill at their head. It is our conviction that Anglo-Turkish friendship is not dictated by military interests alone. It has been born of the vital needs of both powers."

According to the text of the report received - so far, however, only from a British source - neither Turkish-German nor Turkish-Russian relations were dealt with in the speech.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

I. Report of Chief, Fleet Branch, Quartermaster Division:

a.) According to telephonic advice from Rear Admiral Machens, the Italians will turn over to us 3 ex-French torpedo boats from Bizerta, now at Spezia (these are probably BOMBARDE, LA POMONE, and L'IPHIGENIE) as well as 1 gunboat (YSER) which, however, is not yet operational and 2 more torpedo boats in Toulon (LA BAYONNAISE, BALISTE) which are to be raised.

The Italians will retain the despatch boats from Bizerta and four minesweepers from Toulon.

Quartermaster Division has issued preliminary orders.

b.) A reconnaissance of the route to be used for the transfer of large motor minesweepers and other boats to the Mediterranean has shown that it will be usable in four to six weeks. Naval (Ship) Construction Division believes that, besides the motor minesweepers, it will be possible to transfer up to 25 naval landing craft a month, after further possibilities of using Kuhlmeier wagons, etc. have been ascertained with the State Railroad.

It remains to decide whether, in addition to those scheduled (lying in Hamburg), six more should now be disassembled for transfer by rail.

Further steps will be taken by Quartermaster Division.

II. The Naval Attaché reports that the Swedish Government is to sound out the Foreign Office in regard to reopening the Gothenburg traffic.

The matter is already under discussion between Operations Division and the Foreign Office. Further details are contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reports that an attempt is being made to establish a volunteer legion of British prisoners of war, evidently to fight Bolshevist Russia. Further details are not yet known.

IV. Chief of Staff, Naval Staff has protested against the premature dissemination abroad by "Transocean" of a special communique on the sinking of 92,000 GRT of shipping. The matter will be further investigated by Commander in Chief, Navy, Administrative Staff. The figure mentioned can only have been obtained from the Armed Forces High Command Situation Report and indeed, most probably from Fuehrer Headquarters.



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Chief of Staff, Naval Staff and accompanying officers, left Rome at 0800 for the Fuehrer Headquarters to report to the Fuehrer on the results of the Rome talks. He returned to Berlin in the evening.

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Special Items.

I. Group North has advised Admiral, Northern Waters, and the 5th Air Force, with copy to Naval Staff and Naval Command, in regard to the bringing in of the blockade runners through the northern passage. The Group's operational orders for bringing in the REGENSBURG and the KARIN were enclosed with the note.

This procedure does not conform with the Fuehrer's basic orders on security. The operational orders contain plans and orders for sea areas in which the addressees have no concern. Naval Staff has therefore ordered Group North to take immediate steps to see that the operational orders are communicated exclusively to the Admirals and Chiefs of Staff of the Commands concerned and are destroyed after preparation of essential working extracts. Copy of the teletype as per 1/Skl 799/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

II. According to a report from the Naval Ordnance Division, Torpedo Branch, Commander in Chief, Air Force and the Reich Air Minister have promised the immediate delivery of 40 F 5 b torpedoes for use on light PT boats.

III. In compliance with the Fuehrer's order on the expansion of defenses in Norway and the west area, similar to the West Wall, Quartermaster Division has made available eight more triple-mount torpedo tube units for the purpose of setting up torpedo batteries. Due to the varying nature of the coast, a uniform type of torpedo battery is out of the question. The following are possibilities:

- a.) Ideal battery installed in rock caves.
- b.) Torpedo batteries under cover of shelters - only in urgent exceptions.
- c.) Camouflaged position.
- d.) Mobile or floating battery.
- e.) Single firing tubes to be sunk down.

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Naval Staff has requested Group West, Naval Command, Norway, North Sea and Baltic Stations (with copy to Group North) to make another exhaustive examination of conditions in the individual areas and the local circumstances regarding number, position and type of construction of the batteries still considered necessary.

IV. Enemy Situation Report No. 6/43 by Naval Intelligence Division was submitted to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff on 15 Mar. Copy as per 1/Skl 8009/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Reports on Enemy Situation, Naval Intelligence Division." The overall situation is assessed as follows:

"Reports that large-scale actions by the Western Powers are to begin in mid-March have recently increased. France and the Western Mediterranean are mainly mentioned as zones of operation.

Direct observations indicate no definite preparations out of the ordinary. In Algerian ports there are landing craft and about one million GRT of shipping, part of which it might be planned to put into action. Active preparations for the speedy commitment of troops from the British Isles are reported.

Overall evaluation of intelligence received leads to no definite conclusions. It is assumed that reports are put out by the enemy in order to camouflage real intentions in regard to definite actions. In any case, in view of the season and the general war situation, new operations may be expected in the near future and may take the form of surprise attacks also on areas other than those mentioned or at different points simultaneously. The mopping-up of Tunisia must not be regarded as a prerequisite for further actions in the Mediterranean."

V. A summary of intelligence on the enemy acquired by radio deciphering and radio intelligence between 8 and 14 Mar. is contained in Special Radio Monitoring Report No. 11/43.

Notes: In mid-March there were in the Atlantic:

On the northern route	eastbound	4 convoys
	westbound	5 convoys
In the central Atlantic	eastbound	2 convoys
	westbound	1 convoy
On the northern route	northbound	2 convoys
	southbound	2 convoys

The heavy task force from Gibraltar is believed to be in Oran.



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Most valuable sailing instructions for convoys HX 229, UGS 6 and UGF 6 were intercepted in time for purposes of submarine attack. For route chart see Appendix 6.

Appendix 5 gives a survey of Russian submarine movements in northern waters detected by radio intelligence from 1 to 28 Feb.

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Situation 18 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

According to an intelligence report from Spain, an important diplomatic source received information from the U.S.A. on the afternoon of 17 Mar., that a convoy, the size of which is still unknown, left there on 14 Mar. Escort consists of 22 large vessels. The composition of the convoy is said to be indicative of landing operations. The diplomatic recipient in Madrid forwarded the information to his opposite number in Lisbon for thorough investigation. Checking by our Intelligence Service is not possible.

According to a U.S. agent's report of 4 Mar., 60,000 - 70,000 troops were again concentrated in February, as in January, at embarkation points in the area of North Carolina (Wilmington) and in and around Aberdeen, Baltimore and St. Julians Creek. It is allegedly certain that a whole armored corps, including seven motorized divisions, is to be shipped. The assembly of formations, which have previously been embarked singly, is no longer to be done overseas but in the U.S.A. The earliest embarkation date is said to be the third week in March.

South Atlantic:

According to reports from Lourenço Marques, a convoy of twelve steamers carrying planes and bombs, some consigned to China, left Capetown on 8 Mar. in the direction of India. Another convoy is to leave Capetown on 25 Mar. taking planes and pilots to Haifa.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain intelligence from South Africa due to the Allies' intensive "Careless talk about ships costs lives" campaign.

Indian Ocean:

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On 16 Feb., a large convoy with troop transports was reported off Lourenço Marques. On 15 Feb. the cruiser ORION was reported in Bombay, and several convoy escort vessels in Ceylon. On 10 Feb., the U.S. cruiser DETROIT was in Calcutta; two mine-sweeper flotillas have been in Trichnopoly since 9 Feb.

According to Foreign Office information from Lourenço Marques, two British and one Norwegian steamers have been sunk in the last ten days between Capetown and Durban. It is rumored that the Allies intend to occupy Lourenço Marques if the sinkings continue in this area. Numerous ships with provisions are allegedly bound for Spain and Turkish ports where an action is said to be imminent.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has transmitted to DOGGERBANK:

- a.) by radiogram 1224, weather forecast for 18 Mar.
- b.) by radiogram 1546, position of the convoy as in radiogram 1715 of 17 Mar.: on the morning of 18 Mar. it was at 38° N, 19° W, making for Gibraltar.
- c.) by radiogram 1658, positions of neutrals at 2400 CET, 16 Mar.

The REGENSBURG and KARIN have been informed (in joint special code) by radiogram 1758 that the meteorologist for REGENSBURG could not be provided in time. The submarine is carrying only operational orders and charts. The submarine assigned to meet the KARIN has a meteorologist on board.

All vessels in foreign waters have been advised of the route of the steamer HARBERTON by radiogram 1002. The steamer left Capetown on 5 Feb. and was to coal in Rio on 21 Feb., after which she was to sail for England.

At the request of Naval Staff, the Naval Attache, Tokyo reports on the physical condition of the Commander of Ship "28" as follows:

1.) Ruckteschell has requested relief. His health is obviously impaired and he had several breakdowns during the voyage due to intestine trouble so that temporary delegation of command was necessary. The ship's surgeon attributes his condition to overwrought nerves. For restoration of his health extended leave will be necessary.

2.) I propose that command of the MICHEL (Ship "28") be given to Gumprich, and R. placed at the disposal of the Naval Attache. Change of command on 23 Mar.



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3.) Resignation grieves R. very much. I suggest telegram of consolation from Commander in Chief, Navy, upon change of command.

Chief, Naval Staff approves the suggestion.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to report of the Intelligence Station at Angers of 18 Mar., an agent of the Vichy Government has learned from a special commissioner of the secret Post and Telegram Service, that the British Fleet left Scapa Flow on 10 Mar. in order to join up with American and de Gaulle vessels. Informed military circles in Vichy expect an Anglo-American landing in Spain and Portugal among other places on 26 Mar. Neither the Spanish nor Portuguese government can be counted on to offer serious resistance.

At 1330, our air reconnaissance sighted one destroyer on course 210° about 600 miles west-northwest of Finisterre and at 1200 and 1400, two submarine chasers of about 600 tons, one 240 miles west and the other 240 miles west-southwest of Finisterre on course 10° and 330° respectively. Both of them were attacked without results being observed.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

On 17 Mar. one ELM/J mine was cleared off Brest. On the evening of 16 Mar. the torpedo boats put in with submarine U "757". At the same time the 8th Destroyer Flotilla returned to Bordeaux.

Operations Division has decided, at the request of Naval (Ship) Construction Division, that the hitherto required repair capacity for heavy vessels in Brest need not be maintained. The capacity for destroyers and torpedo boats must be maintained to the same extent as hitherto.

#### Channel Coast:

Transfer of destroyer Z "37" (after changing propellers) to Bordeaux and of torpedo boats T "2" and T "5" to La Pallice and Brest respectively, is planned for the night of 18 Mar.

In regard to the mine damage to motor minesweepers R "40" and R "177" on 17 Mar., Commander, 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reports that the behavior of commanders and crews of the damaged

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boats was outstanding and that the motor minesweepers were indestructible. Operations will for the most part only be possible now in calm sea in order to bring in the damaged boats. (See teletype 1845).

In view of the heavy losses of PT boats in the Channel, the Fleet Command requests that the question of delivering six PT boats to a foreign power be re-examined. The Fleet considers that the 8th PT Boat Flotilla would be more usefully employed in the Channel than if it were left in the northern area for defense tasks, especially during the summer, and urges that the Flotilla be withdrawn about the end of April. (See teletype 1700).

Five boats of the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla and S "112" transferred from IJmuiden to Ostend; S "91" and S "39" transferred from Boulogne to Cherbourg.

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### III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

#### 1. North Sea:

##### Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance reported: At 0620, southeast of Harwich, 15 to 20 steamers stationary; at 1430, 18 steamers entering the Thames; at 1436, northeast of Harwich, 23 steamers of up to approximately 4,000 GRT and several others of up to 10,000 GRT on course northeast. At 1415, 6 destroyers, 1 tanker (10,000 GRT), 18 minesweepers, 30 harbor and coastal vessels and numerous smaller vessels were observed in the mouth of the Stour.

##### Own Situation:

Seventeen ELM/J mines were cleared between IJmuiden and Juist by a minesweeper flotilla, a minesweeping plane, mine-exploding vessels and escorts. The 9th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and the 32nd Minesweeper Flotilla discontinued their operations on account of the weather. Mine-exploding vessel "148" and two boats of the 28th Minesweeper Flotilla will transfer on 19 Mar. to Kiel. Escort service was carried out according to plan.

From 1420, 70-90 four-engined U.S. planes entered the Bremen area flying towards Heligoland, Cuxhaven. Main target of attack was the Vulkan shipyard at Vegesack. Up to the present, six planes are reported to have been shot down by our fighters. The power station was destroyed and the model joinery and one assembly shop heavily damaged; the foundry was slightly damaged. One submarine



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capsized on the slipway. Thirteen others were undamaged. The Schwerdt - Dordenflath yard was 80% destroyed. For further damage see "Daily Situation of the Air Force General Staff."

2. Norway / Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence one of the four Russian submarines operating off the Norwegian Arctic coast is returning to Polarnoye. In the area of Kola Bay and the Rybachi Peninsula there were PT boats and other small vessels at sea, probably on exercises. Five ice-breakers were operating in the area White Sea - Gorlo Strait. One British vessel was detected in the Murmansk area.

Lively radio telephony traffic has been observed in the Firth of Forth, since the morning of 18 Mar. Many reports of incoming and outgoing vessels were heard; it was evidently foggy.

According to visual reconnaissance on 17 Mar., the number of vessels in Scapa Flow was unchanged from 12 Mar.

According to Foreign Office information from Stockholm, it is reported that a convoy of unknown strength is sailing from Canada to Iceland and Russia on 17 Mar. According to a report from Portugal, the departure of a PQ convoy from Belfast is being prepared for 20 Mar.

The Intelligence Service reports via Spain, from a diplomatic source in Aberdeen as of 28 Feb., the concentration of invasion troops at places on the east and north coasts of Scotland for operations in Norway. Scottish, U.S., Canadian and New Zealand formations of all services are involved. A military air base with eight hangars has been established at Macduff west of Fraserburgh. Submarine-chasers are stationed in the harbors of Cromarty and Dornoch on the Moray Firth. Both places are fortified with anti-aircraft batteries.

Own Situation:

On 17 Mar. two enemy planes flew into the Petsamo area but did not attack. On the afternoon of the same day, eight British bombers were reported near Stavanger.

Escort service has been carried out according to plan. On 17 Mar. the STEINBRINCK entered Bogen Bay on schedule.

A net barrage has been laid in each of the passages west and east of Flatoey.

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Valuable secret material has been captured from the British PT boat "631" salvaged near Floroe. According to a preliminary report from Admiral, West Norwegian Coast, it contains recognition signals and signals data, tactical orders for PT boats and detailed charts on hiding places and approach routes. Entries in the log book and on the charts furnish valuable information on the organization of enemy PT boat raids. Further evaluation is being made. (See teletype 1815).

Minelaying assignment "Klein Erna" has been resumed.

After escorting weather ship COBURG as far as the ice boundary for operation "Brauswetter", submarine U "378" has now left.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Arendal - Hirtshals patrol line is occupied by two boats, the Hanstholm gap by one. Escort service in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic was carried out according to plan. Group North has placed mine-exploding vessel "148" of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North at the disposal of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic, all of whose mine-exploding vessels are at present non-operational.

The Finnish steamer TAURIS was damaged by a mine ten miles north of Prerov and towed in to Warnemuende. Part of the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is employed on clearing the "Wartburg" barrage.

The situation in Kronstadt Bay is unchanged. Leave steamer MUERO ran aground near Hangoe and was towed in there with heavy damage to the bottom.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay, was very active, 55 planes being detected. A submarine warning was issued 640 miles northwest of Mossamedes, evidently due to the appearance of an Italian submarine.

##### 2. Own Situation:

Radio deciphering has revealed that the convoy sections engaged in the North Atlantic by Groups "Raubgraf" and "Stuermer"



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were two different convoys, an SC and an HX convoy. In spite of heavy long-range and close escort and air cover, three vessels totalling 20,738 GRT were sunk from the two convoys. The successful submarines were U "221", U "305" and U "338". The operation will be continued until the afternoon of 19 Mar. Altogether 24 vessels from both convoys have been reported sunk up to the present. Engagement of the convoy in the area east of the Azores by Group "Unverzagt" was especially difficult due to very strong defense, good visibility and calm sea. Only a few boats succeeded in closing in for attack. One 7,000 GRT steamer was sunk by submarine U "521" and one probable hit on the massed ships was reported by submarine U "558".

Of the other boats in the North Atlantic, submarine U "621" reported at 2005 a convoy sailing south in BE 6134 and maintained contact for submarines in the vicinity.

No action reports have been received from the boats in the south.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

For purposes of publication we have 210,000 GRT and several torpedoings. In view of uncertainty on enemy information as to losses in the North Atlantic convoys, the usual publication of about 100,000 GRT of shipping sunk will not be made this time.

In reply to an inquiry from Operations Division, Submarine Division reports:

The Arabian Sea is considered to be an especially favorable area of operations as regards traffic and defenses. However, the southwest monsoon, which blows from May to November, makes submarine operations impossible during that period. The possibility of performing such an operation from about the beginning of November is under consideration.

For the submarines now assigned for the sea area around South Africa it is proposed:

1.) To extend the operational area up to the line grid square LJ 81 left upper corner, LM 81 left upper corner, JN 81, JK 82 and there to go into operation.

2.) To supply the submarines during the period from 25 May to 30 June 1943 in the area of grid square KS 50. This will require:

8 x 250 cbm fuel oil and 8 x 30 days' provision for 56 men each. It is not yet possible to establish supply position and time of rendezvous.

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The decision depends on approval of the extended operational area. Operations Division proposes that the area be extended to the north as far as 0° in order to open the area off Mombasa but that the eastern limit should not be set as far as 70° E, but on a line from 20° S, 70° E to 0°, 65° E, so that the Japanese may have more space for their Indian operations. Submarine Division agrees with this proposal. After the end of March until further notice none of our ships will be in the western part of the Indian Ocean.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Fifty-one planes of the 3rd Air Force were operating in the west area and 14 in the Mediterranean. Five fighter-bombers dropped five SC 250 bombs on Kingswear. A bomber attacked the railroad station at Great Yarmouth. For 19 Mar. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast plans reconnaissance by seven planes between 43° and 46° 30' N, up to range limit.

During the night of 18 Mar. seven bombers were sent out against Great Yarmouth and 34 against Norwich.

Five enemy planes made a successful daylight raid on Maaslouis with high-explosive and incendiary bombs. In the afternoon, two reconnaissance planes flew in as far as Bromberg and Marburg. For the raid on Bremen - Vegesack, see "Situation North Sea."

During the night of 18 Mar. two enemy planes flew in from the east into the area of Bialystock and Litznannstadt. One was evidently a captured H 111 plane with valid recognition lights.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

No reports have been received on our own operations. Between 1845 and 1855 about 15 Liberator planes at 7,000 to 7,500 m altitude approached Naples. However, the enemy was driven off by German anti-aircraft fire and all bombs were dropped into the sea. One plane was reported to have crashed near Capri.

### 3. Eastern Front:

Over the Army fronts 61 enemy planes were shot down on 17 Mar. and 59 on 18 Mar.



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Reconnaissance was flown in the Black Sea. For results of reconnaissance by the 5th Air Force, see "Situation Norway/Northern Waters."

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

A convoy consisting of 1 transport and 13 steamers, most of them in ballast, entered Gibraltar from the Mediterranean on the evening of 17 Mar. At 0730 Cape Spartel reported sighting 1 (probable) warship, 1 transport and 3 freighters with 3 escort vessels en route to the Mediterranean. At 1215 2 French transports, 1 steamer and 1 (probable) large French destroyer entered Gibraltar from an unidentified direction. Intelligence Service, Spain believes this to be the convoy reported off Cape Spartel. One cruiser of the FIJI class put in to Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

Intelligence Center, Spain reports that a convoy of 5 - 6 large transports (10,000 - 20,000 GRT) and about 7 tankers or freighters of 8,000 - 10,000 GRT with 3 destroyers and 2 gunboats came into sight between 1900 and 2000 making for Gibraltar from the west. According to an Italian report, this convoy was reinforced by 2 destroyers from Gibraltar and proceeded on towards the Mediterranean.

An intelligence report from Spain states that among the vessels that arrived on 9 Mar. were two special ships for landing operations (BEATRIX type as used in Dieppe). Twelve landing craft reported in Gibraltar in January sailed in small groups into the Mediterranean during the second half of February.

No reports have been received on the heavy formation. Our air reconnaissance noted more lively shipping activity off the Algerian Coast.

There was a submarine east of Brindisi.

A destroyer on southeasterly course 40 miles east of Derna was spotted during an exploratory reconnaissance in the Eastern Mediterranean.

### 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were reported in the operational area. On 16 Mar. submarine U "593" unsuccessfully attacked an eastbound convoy and a cruiser of the London class and on 18 Mar.

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she sank two steamers of 4,000 GRT each from an eastbound convoy of three steamers in CO 5811.

PT boats S "156", "157" and "158" put in to Augusta from Bizerta on the afternoon of 17 Mar. On the morning of 18 Mar. PT boat S "57" arrived at Bizerta from Empedocle. There were no PT boat operations.

On 16 and 17 Mar. five Italian motor minesweepers cleared a total of 14 mines on the routes in the Bizerta area.

On 17 Mar. there were no operations of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla from Bizerta. Motor minesweepers R "12" and R "13" have been towed to Naples. Six auxiliary motor minesweepers checked the sea area five miles northwest of Marettimo without result for mines which were said to have been located by echo-ranging. Submarine-chasers "2201" - "2204" have been ordered to escort the convoy ZEILA to Messina. Submarine-chasers "2203", "2205" and "2207" are on submarine hunt in the Capri area, after which they will perform escort service to Palermo.

Group West reports that the dependent mine barrage in the harbor entrance at Sète is now operational.

German Naval Command, Italy has urgently requested that the yacht L'INCOMPRISE be left with the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla as the other boats are too slow and this is the most suitable vessel for fast escort duties. Naval Staff has decided regarding the proposal of Commanding Admiral, Defenses West (see War Diary, 15 Mar.), that after further investigation the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla cannot be reduced at present in favor of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla. Submarine chaser "2216" (L'INCOMPRISE) will therefore remain with the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla.

When all assigned vessels have been fitted up, this Flotilla will comprise 16 boats. In comparison with the tasks assigned, this number is very small. The three small submarine chasers remaining on the south coast of France cannot serve as more than a slight deterrent to the enemy. This fact would not be greatly altered by the assignment of a fourth boat. It must, however, be considered that the traffic on the south coast of France is of entirely secondary importance in comparison to that in the Sicilian Channel.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

The convoy TOMASEO/FOSCARINI is en route from Messina to Bizerta. War transports KT "5" and KI "6" are sailing from Tunis to Palermo where they are expected during the evening.



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At 1115 on 17 Mar., the tanker DEVOLI (3,300 GRT) was sunk by an enemy submarine five miles west-northwest of Cape San Vito, and at 1220 the steamer FORLI (1,525 GRT) was sunk 38 miles south of Naples. Small vessel traffic between Sicily and Tunisia was carried out according to plan. Another ship has sailed from Marseilles for Genoa.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

During the night of 17 Mar. the "BULGARIA", the "DRACHE" and torpedo boat CALATAFIMI performed their special mission (probably minelaying) according to plan. Convoy traffic was hampered by bad weather.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was great shipping activity off the coast in the Ghelenjik area during the morning. Two convoys, consisting of one to two vessels with numerous light escorts, were sighted, one sailing northwest and one southeast.

The 7,000 GRT tanker which was torpedoed near Tuapse on the night of 12 Mar. has been towed in there still on fire.

Own Situation:

During the night of 17 Mar., the 1st PT Boat Flotilla torpedoed a 500 GRT lighter in the Tuapse area. No other shipping was encountered. During the same night, Italian PT boats sighted no enemy vessels in the Ghelenjik area. On account of weather conditions, no PT boat operations are planned for the night of 18 Mar.

Ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch to the fish salting plant was undisturbed and the weather was at first favorable. Later, a temporary detour to Taman was made necessary by freshening winds with consequent loss of time and reduced performance.

About 4,700 persons, 350 motorized and 518 horse-drawn vehicles and other war material were ferried to the west.

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Minelaying was observed during the night of 17 Mar. on the route Pavlovski - Cape Takil. The route has been closed. Minesweeping operations have been ordered.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.



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Items of Political Importance.

France:

General Giraud has announced that French Guiana has put itself under his command and joined the Allies.

According to a diplomatic report, the British and Americans are making strenuous efforts to effect a union of the dissident French camps, evidently desiring such a political success which they could use to their benefit in the hoped-for development of the military situation in the Western Mediterranean.

Great Britain:

The House of Commons has approved the Government's proposals for the reform of the Diplomatic Service.

Ireland:

According to a diplomatic report, the Dublin Foreign Ministry regards Ireland's international situation with confidence. An Anglo-American attack is no longer feared. Even the inclusion of Ireland in Germany's operational plans is no longer considered likely. The attitude of the U.S.A. is favorably influenced by Roosevelt's consideration for the Irish votes in his fourth presidential campaign.

Russia:

From the fall of Charkov, the "New York Times" deduces that the Russians will not be able to win the war alone. Germany's downfall can be brought about only by the concentrated power of all the Allies.

U.S.A.:

Roosevelt has established a Permanent Advisory Committee for post-war questions.

In a statement on 15 Mar., the American Legion (Union of veterans of the World War) stressed the close relations between the Legion and the French people and promised that soon hundreds of thousands of Americans would again stand on French soil.

Spain:

In the opinion of diplomatic circles in Madrid, Franco's speech at the opening of the Cortes clearly indicates Spain's desire to act as mediator between the Axis Powers and the Democracies.

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Spanish press comments, authoritatively inspired are along the same lines.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. A statement on the course of the German-Italian naval discussions of 14 to 17 Mar. 1943 and on the agreement reached between the German and Italian Navies on 17 Mar. 1943, as well as the protocol on the discussions with the Italian Admiralty on 16 Mar. 1943, has been prepared as per 1/Skl I b 832/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copies in War Diary, Part C, Appendix to Vol. XIV "German-Italian Naval Discussions in Rome, March 1943." An additional copy of the protocol of 16 Mar. and of the agreement of 17 Mar. 1943 is contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. After a report by Chief, Naval Intelligence Division, Chief, Foreign Affairs, Intelligence Division reported to Chief, Armed Forces High Command that a large-scale enemy attack, probably on Sicily, Corsica and Sardinia, may be expected in the near future.

According to Chief, Naval Staff, the Fuehrer evinced no alarm on this point at the conference on 18 Mar.

Chief, Naval Intelligence Division gave a short evaluation of intelligence for the period 8 to 15 Mar. in accordance with memorandum of conference of 15 Mar. Copy in War Diary, Part C, file "Data on Enemy Situation."

From further consultation with Naval Intelligence Division, it is understood that it would be possible for the enemy to transport 300,000 to 400,000 men without having to restrict his other military requirements to any great extent.

These favorable figures have been reached by the acquisition of about 600,000 GRT of shipping from the French North African possessions and about 500,000 GRT of excess new constructions. In addition, about 800,000 GRT of coastal shipping had not been taken into account in previous estimates.

Chief, Naval Staff pointed out that all these estimates, however indispensable they may be to Naval Staff and Army General Staff, are based sometimes on vague data. As the food situation in Great Britain is factually unknown, the possibility of withdrawing shipping from the supply traffic remains an entirely open question.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. Report of Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:



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a.) Commander, Submarines, Italy has been ordered to shift the operational areas in the Eastern Mediterranean in such a way as to simulate an increased number of submarines. Chief, Naval Staff, remarked that, in any case, a few more submarines will have to stay in the Eastern Mediterranean for the time being, as new Commanders are coming up who cannot be sent at once into the difficult conditions of the Western Mediterranean.

b.) In regard to the request of Group North and Commanding Admiral, Task Force that the latter's formation be strengthened by the addition of light forces and postponement of NUERNBERG's return home (as per memorandum 1/Skl I op 837/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.), Naval Staff, with the approval of Chief, Naval Staff, has decided as follows:

1.) NUERNBERG will be transferred home as soon as the destroyers to be transferred to Norway by order of Naval Staff have joined the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force.

2.) Until then, NUERNBERG may take part in operations.

3.) BEITZEN, GREIF and JAGUAR are assigned as escort for NUERNBERG on her return passage.

4.) Fuel oil for the transfer of the destroyers to Norway and NUERNBERG's return will be provided for in the April allotment.

c.) Group North has requested the 5th Air Force to patrol the Denmark Strait and the waters around Iceland. The 5th Air Force has at present six FW 200 planes which would have sufficient range for the mission requested, but only one is operational. The withdrawal of FW 200 planes from the Atlantic coast is out of the question as long as the blockade-running season lasts.

d.) Chief, Naval Staff concurs in Naval Staff's objection to the issue of operational orders to Admiral, Northern Waters and the 5th Air Force by Group North. (See War Diary, 18 Mar.)

e.) The present ice situation in the Denmark Strait is cause for some concern. Discreet submarine reconnaissance has been ordered. The enemy must not be alerted.

f.) The Naval Liaison Officer attached to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Division, has reported that the command of the projected operations against Great Britain has been taken over by former General, Bombers, Lt. Col. Pelz, who will be operationally in charge of three bomber wings and the fighter-bombers. The 9th Air Corps will therefore no longer figure.

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g.) Armed Forces High Command has asked for Naval Staff's views on the Italian Admiralty's request for 18,000 additional tons of fuel oil for Fleet operations against any enemy attack on the Tyrrhenian Islands.

On the occasion of the Rome conference, Chief, Naval Staff warmly welcomed the Duce's plan to commit the whole Fleet in this event and termed it both strategically and tactically practical and promising. Chief, Naval Staff promised that the question of fuel oil delivery should be looked into. No direct promise was given. This attitude of Chief, Naval Staff must be taken into consideration in the comments to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, even if the Navy's possibilities of procuring the oil should necessitate a negative reply. The possibility of recourse to Rumanian oil must be brought to the attention of Armed Forces High Command.

IV. Report by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff on the transfer of the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force from Bogen Bay to Alta Fiord in accordance with memo in War Diary of 16 Mar. Chief, Naval Staff concurred.

The following decision has been sent to Group North (information copy to Fleet):

Commander in Chief, Navy has approved the transfer of the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force to Alta. The NUERNBERG, GREIF and JAGUAR will remain in Bogen Bay. The NUERNBERG may take part in operations if they arise before her transfer home.

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Special Items:

I. In view of the Fuehrer's order that PT boats, as well as motor minesweepers, are to be transferred to the Mediterranean, Chief, Naval Staff asked the Fuehrer if the 8th PT Boat Flotilla might be withdrawn from Norway for this purpose. The Fuehrer rejected the suggestion and indicated the PT boats in the Channel.

A decision on this question can still be postponed because the transfer of motor minesweepers and naval landing craft to the Mediterranean, which will take several months, is more urgent.

II. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division, submitted a report from the Chief of Security Police dated 19 Mar. That, according to a captured Canadian pilot, a large-scale British landing is planned for 21 Mar. in Brittany (the Bay of Brieux) and in the area of Vannes and that strong formations of parachute troops are to be used.



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III. According to radio deciphering, the French Admiral Robert made a situation report on 17 Mar. to the Vichy Secretariat of the Navy, explaining the increasing difficulty of his position in the West Indies. Copy as per 1/Skl 7998/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

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Situation 19 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio deciphering, London advised Cairo on 9 Mar. that in view of requirements for operation AL, two loading cranes destined for Bombay and the Persian Gulf respectively had been sent to the Middle East. The change was regretted, but the Middle East requirements were urgent. Copy of deciphering as per 1/Skl 8101/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

The reference to operation AL may be a break in the enemy's otherwise carefully maintained secrecy which gives at least a hint of activities of an urgent nature in the Middle East.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has received from Naval Staff the following information and orders:

a.) by radiogram 2307:

1.) Three to four of our destroyers will meet DOGGERBANK at a position 38' south and 1°38' west of "Davit".

2.) If the destroyers are not met, she will proceed along the limit of territorial waters to the east as far as a point 18' south and 6°2' east of "Davit". There she will be picked up by escort forces.

3.) If this rendezvous too should fail, she will stand on and off on zigzag courses as far as 25 miles to the west of the point as in 2.), reporting her position by short signal or radiogram. While awaiting further radio orders, she will in no case cross the 50 m. line to the east.

4.) Code name to be used to destroyers, escort forces and own signal stations will be REIHER.

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5.) After meeting the destroyers, the orders of the Commander of the destroyer flotilla will be followed.

b.) by radiogram 1055: Weather report for 19 Mar.

c.) by radiogram 1708: Position of the CASTILLO BELLVER on 19 Mar. in the forenoon, 38° N, 27° W.

All radiograms were sent in special code "Doggerbank".

The REGENSBURG has been informed by radiogram 1753 (in special code "Regensburg") that the submarine has been unexpectedly delayed and will not reach the rendezvous before 21 Mar.

Information on enemy recognition signals between warships and merchant vessels has been forwarded to all vessels in foreign waters by radiogram 2359.

Special Item:

A photograph of the scuttling of the GRAF SPEE, taken by an English eye witness, has been received from an Alsatian reservist who served in the French Navy. The picture is contained in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report of 26 Feb., received via Portugal from a diplomatic source in Cardiff, Worcester is an important railroad junction for the transport of war material to Bristol and Swansea. The junction yards are full of war material. Concentration and training of expeditionary forces is going on near Exeter in the Taunton and Tiverton valleys.

Reconnaissance planes of Air Commander, Atlantic Coast sighted: at noon 2 vessels, probably submarine chasers, on course 330° about 260 miles west of Bordeaux; one 1,000 GRT steamer painted black and without neutrality markings, on southerly course, about 60 miles north of Cape Ortegal; 2 similar ships about 220 miles west-northwest of Cape Ortegal flying a white flag with a red sphere on the aftermast, both on northerly course; 1 destroyer and 4 corvettes, on southerly course 60 miles north of the above-mentioned position; at 1650 a convoy of 55 steamers of from 5,000 to 10,000 GRT, 1 cruiser of the LONDON class, 3 destroyers and 4 corvettes, proceeding at 10 knots, on southerly course about 260 miles northwest of Cape Ortegal. Radio intelligence detected a British vessel about 350 miles west of Cape Ortegal.



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An intelligence report states that the battleship NELSON or RODNEY was observed in the late afternoon 50 miles south of Lisbon on southerly course, speed 18 knots. According to another intelligence report, the Irish steamer CITY OF DUBLIN sank with the whole crew after striking a mine.

The last definite observation of the RODNEY and NELSON was on 12 Mar. at Gibraltar after which they sailed for the Mediterranean. While the possibility that one or both of the ships may have later turned back through the Straits of Gibraltar unobserved cannot be excluded, it is unlikely in view of the continuous check maintained.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Torpedo boat T "5" put in to Brest at noon. Destroyer Z "37" and torpedo boat T "2" anchored in Royan roads at 1930.

Group West has requested Air Commander, Atlantic Coast to make a reconnaissance on 20 Mar. of the sea area Cape Villano - 13° W / 0888 - 23° W / 3889 - 24° W / 8135 - 24° W / 9582 - Cape Villano.

Group West has requested that DOGGERBANK be advised by radio that she will be met at 0800 German standard time on 23 Mar. at 43°10' N, 9°30' W by three or four destroyers with special orders. Naval Staff has pointed out to the Group that it will probably be impossible to fix the date and time of meeting, as the DOGGERBANK cannot increase her speed any further and, since she will probably have to avoid convoy KMS 11, she will probably have to delay her arrival at the rendezvous. Naval Staff proposes that the position of the blockade runner be established by air reconnaissance as soon as possible and rendezvous with the destroyers set by dead reckoning. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl 825/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

Group West submitted operational orders for:

- a.) Incoming of DOGGERBANK. (Code words "Bornholm" and "Juergen").

Code name for DOGGERBANK - "REIHER".

Meeting by the 8th Destroyer Flotilla at 9°30' W, 43°10' N is scheduled.

- b.) Bringing in PIETRO ORSEOLO.

(Code word "Anke").

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Meeting by the 8th Destroyer Flotilla at 43°20' N, 15° W is scheduled.

- c.) Escort of outgoing blockade runners by destroyers and torpedo boats.

(Code word "Elisabeth").

Code names are:

for ALSTERUFER - PAVILLON

for HIMALAYA - SACCO

for PORTLAND - LANDWEHR

for OSORNO - QUERFURT

The 8th Destroyer Flotilla reported its plans in regard to Group West's operational order for bringing in the DOGGERBANK.

The Flotilla plans to transfer two vessels to Le Verdon and two to Royan on 20 Mar., and to put out for the rendezvous at 0400 on 22 Mar.

Channel Coast:

The 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reports that code security was not compromised when motor minesweeper R "40" was damaged on 17 Mar. The code chest with five cylinders was lost. Secret documents were thrown overboard in canisters at a depth of 45 meters. (See teletype 1515).

In the evening, targets were located and fired at off Étapes.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Three fishing cutters with Danish markings, on westerly course, were stopped at 0750 100 miles north of Texel by our air reconnaissance and forced to turn east.

Own Situation:

Three ELM/J mines were cleared near Ameland and Juist.



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A harbor defense boat was attacked off the Hook of Holland by two enemy planes and slightly damaged. Escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan.

With reference to the enemy air attack on Vegesack on 18 Mar., North Sea Station reports that the management of the shipyard estimates about 100 men killed and as many wounded. Two submarine engines were destroyed. Submarines afloat were not damaged. The submarines on the slipways suffered only slight damage with the exception of VEG "52" which turned over. The management of the shipyard hopes to have the engine construction workshop in working order by the beginning of next week; the ship-building yard somewhat later because some of the power cables are destroyed. The work of the Warship Construction Acquaintance Detachment (North) is continuing. It is not anticipated that the submarine program will be much delayed.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, three Russian destroyers were carrying out firing exercises. Moderate air reconnaissance over the North Sea and none by the Iceland squadrons was reported. Five steamers which entered Reykjavik on 15 Mar. left again in ballast on 17 Mar.

### Own Situation:

On 17 Mar. batteries on the Rybachi Peninsula fired 246 rounds at an eastbound convoy and at Battery Romanov. A barracks was destroyed. A hit on the searchlight by the answering fire was observed. During a low-level attack on Petsamo airfield on 18 Mar., three men were slightly injured. Material damage was insignificant.

In the area of the Arctic coast 26 vessels were escorted north and 2 south, in the area of the north coast 13 north and 2 south, in the area of the west coast 9 north and 17 south.

On 17 Mar. in Bodoe, the torpedo supply steamer ANNA REHDER damaged the depot ship CARL PETERS and PT boats S "118" and "108" berthed alongside. S "118" had to dock in Harstad. S "108" is provisionally ready for torpedo-firing practice.

Group North plans to place gunboat K "3" at the disposal of Naval Command, Norway for escort service on the Arctic coast as the early assignment of two torpedo boats of Commanding Admiral, Task Force as planned, is out of the question for the present. The Group has asked Naval Staff if there is any objection to the plan

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for operations against blockade runners out of Gothenburg which, in the Group's opinion, are considered possible by using forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic and strengthening the mine barrages. (See teletype 1728).

Naval Command, Norway reports that the mine danger zone northwest of Landegode, recently reported free, has again been closed due to suspected mines. (See teletype 1700).

Minelaying assignment "Klein Erna" was again broken off at C125 on account of the weather.

On 18 Mar. the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force carried out exercises in Ofot and West Fiords according to plan.

On 18 Mar. weather ship COBURG carried out operation "Brausewetter" at 74°30' N, 17°32' E according to plan. On her return passage she became jammed in ice in AB 6335. Pilot service by plane and subsequent meeting with submarine U "378" has been arranged for 20 Mar.

Five submarines south of Bear Island have been ordered to be in reconnaissance line AB 6135 - 6671 at 0600 on 20 Mar., and at 1000 on 21 Mar. are to reach position line I from AB 5545 - 5979, which will then be extended by a sixth boat in AB 8325.

Group North has been informed by Naval Staff that the decision on REGENSBURG's eastward passage will probably be made on 26 Mar. in accordance with submarine reports on the ice conditions in the Denmark Strait. Command will be subsequently taken over by Group North according to order from Naval Staff. For teletype 1/Skl I k 855/43 Gkdos. Chfs. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

No special reports have been received from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. The forces' activities were carried out according to plan.

Clearing operations on the "Wartburg" barrage were discontinued on account of bad weather. Aerial mines are suspected in the roads and port of Tallinn as enemy planes were located by radio.

The harbor, mole and ships in Lavansaari were attacked by our planes. The fuel depot is believed to have been hit. There was defense by heavy anti-aircraft guns. The enemy trained heavy harassing fire on the coastal area of Kronstadt Bay. Enemy air attacks on the Kolgampya Peninsula caused no damage.



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Naval Staff has approved the assignment of mine-exploding vessel "148" from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

Naval Staff has instructed Group North, (with copy to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, Admiral, Baltic States, Naval Liaison Staff, Helsinki and Baltic Station) that, due to accommodation difficulties in Libau, an early change in the Tallinn - Helsinki furlough traffic is desirable. (See teletype 1818).

Group North reports that its request for fighter protection for barrage operations in the Gulf of Finland (see War Diary, 7 Mar.) was not a matter of routine requirement but of a unique opportunity of employing means which would not again be available to closing the Gulf of Finland, the most effective accomplishment of which was of basic interest to all three Services and to German economy and should therefore be given special protection. In consideration of this point of view, the Group requests that Commander in Chief, Air Force be persuaded to provide fighter protection, even if only consisting of a flight (about 5 planes, Tr. N.)

The matter will be followed up by Naval Staff.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was reported to be only moderate.

The British Admiralty has announced that a battle, lasting three days and three nights, took place between a convoy formation and German submarines in the Atlantic. At least three German submarines were probably sunk and numerous others heavily damaged. The convoy suffered some losses. British, American and Free French warships took part in the battle. They were supported by Liberator, Sunderland and Catalina planes as well as by Flying Fortresses from the operational bases in Iceland, Ireland and the islands west of Great Britain. 49 survivors from a submarine are said to have been rescued.

According to the "Daily Mail", the first of the new anti-submarine vessels, up to now on the secret list, has been commissioned. Much is expected from this new type, and in particular that submarine location will be much more effective than by previous methods.

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The location gear is said to work in such a way that it is no longer possible for a submarine, once registered on the apparatus, to shake off pursuit. It can now also be established with certainty whether a submarine has sunk. On the convoy service, the ship can reportedly use her radio apparatus without fear that the enemy can identify her position. She carries many more guns than has been customary and is extremely fast and manuevrable. Mass production of the new type is said to have already begun.

## 2. Own Situation:

From the North Atlantic, further reports have been received of the successful operation by Groups "Raubgraf" and "Stuermer" against the two convoys. Eight vessels for 43,000 GRT and one D class destroyer were sunk and one vessel was torpedoed. Total sinkings thus amount to 32 vessels and one destroyer. Contact was further maintained by some of the submarines. The defense, however, has decidedly increased. The operation is to be discontinued on the morning of 20 Mar.

Submarines U "66", "663", "608", "441", "527" and "333" participated in today's successful actions. On their return passage the submarines have been ordered to look out for damaged ships and stragglers on the convoy route.

The operation of Group "Unverzagt" was discontinued after seven days, during which eight vessels were sunk. The submarines have been ordered to withdraw to the west.

Of the other submarines in the North Atlantic, U "665" reports that after having been located by a hospital ship, probably the SOLACES, she was pursued in BE 1932 by three submarine chasers.

Contact with the Gibraltar convoy in BE was maintained until 1730 by submarine U "621".

No action reports have been received from the boats in the south.

Further reports are contained in "Supplements to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Eighty-six planes of the 3rd Air Force were out on operation in the west area and eight in the Mediterranean. No special reports of success have been received for today. For reconnaissance information, see "Enemy Situations West Area and North Sea."



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The reported attack on Norwich is evaluated as good and that on Great Yarmouth as satisfactory.

Reconnaissance off the west coast of Portugal as far as 18° W is scheduled for 20 Mar.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

Because of weather conditions, operations over the Army fronts were limited. On 18 Mar., Italian torpedo bombers sank two steamers totalling 10,000 GRT and heavily damaged a third on the Bone roads. During the night of 19 Mar., 21 bombers were sent out against the port of Tripoli. Nineteen planes reached the target and dropped 72 LT 750 aerial torpedoes. Three or four burning vessels were observed as the planes flew off.

3. Eastern Front:

During sorties against shipping off the Caucasian coast, one 800 GRT steamer was sunk and another steamer of the same size was damaged. During the night of 18 Mar., eleven bombers attacked the port and shipping off Tuapse. Fourteen aerial mines were dropped at Ghelenjik.

No special reports have been received from the 5th Air Force.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

On the evening of 18 Mar. and the morning of 19 Mar. an increased number of light vessels was observed to be putting out from Gibraltar. Detailed observation was not possible because of poor visibility. On the morning of 18 Mar. a cable layer left the harbor for the Atlantic. At 1300 the MALAYA, 2 cruisers, one of them in dock, 2 special landing operation ships (referred to in previous reports as auxiliary cruisers), and 1 auxiliary cruiser in dock, could be made out in port. Other ships were not reported due to poor visibility.

No reports have come in on the heavy formation.

Livelier convoy movements were observed off the Algerian coast. At 0941 there were 8 merchant ships with 6 escort vessels 30 miles north-northeast of Bougie on easterly course; at 1318, they were 23 miles north-northeast of Jijelli. At 1035, 14 merchant vessels and several destroyers were reported 45 miles west of Oran on easterly course, evidently the convoy that passed Cape Spartel at 1850 on 18 Mar.

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At 0020 there was a submarine 50 miles south-southeast of Cagliari.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, only slight shipping was reported. A medium-sized steamer sailing northeast was 30 miles south of Limasol at 0830. According to radio intelligence, the British steamer TALMA, carrying Italian naval prisoners to be exchanged, was unsuccessfully bombed at 0845. The steamer was south of Mersina.

The Intelligence Service reports via "Ostrov" the statement of a British major passing through Lisbon that the greater part of the small shipping previously employed had been withdrawn from the supply service for the 8th and 9th Armies since the occupation of Tripoli. Transshipment for supplies in the Red Sea harbors was stopped even after the occupation of Tobruk, as there was scarcely any air threat in the Eastern Mediterranean. Ships now go from the Red Sea direct to Tripoli without transshipment in Egypt. Most of the small ships released had been laid up and were being overhauled in Nile ports. The fact that nowadays shipping traffic, consisting entirely of large vessels, is going on practically unmolested along the coast of Cyrenaica, was said by the major to be an amazing thing and topic of conversation No. 1 for the Cairo transport officers. A great difficulty, in the agent's view, was the meat supply for the 8th, 9th and 10th Armies, as there were no more cattle in the occupied territory and the Indian deliveries had fallen off badly.

Another intelligence report of 11 Mar., from London via Spain, states that the British have brought 87 PT boats to the North African harbors, 30 of which have been detached to Malta.

New anti-submarine nets have been laid in Algiers.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area.

At 1046 on 18 Mar., submarine U "431" scored a hit on a convoy of two steamers with three destroyers in CH 9289 but sinking could not be observed because of the defense. As attack possibilities were restricted by the weather, submarine U "593" put in to Salamis for a short replenishment.

If the weather is favorable, a PT boat operation against the east-bound enemy convoy is planned for the night of 19 Mar. On 18 Mar. an ELM/J mine was cleared by a minesweeping plane in the area of Marsala. Minesweepers M "6022" and M "6024" reached Trapani and Naples respectively on their way south. They are to proceed on 21 Mar. Further auxiliary motor minesweepers and minesweepers from Southern France are to be ready to sail on 22 Mar.



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On 18 Mar. a 2,551 ton vessel was unloaded in one day at Ferryville, constituting a record.

The Naval Attache, Madrid reports that the crew of the Spanish steamer SEBASTIAN has refused to put to sea because of submarine danger. This is the second case of the kind.

Commanding General, Armed Forces, South reports that the Italian High Command has issued orders to the Italian Navy (with copies to the Italian Army and Air Force) for the event of an enemy landing in Sardinia. Summary of the contents:

1.) If the enemy attacks Sardinia, all-out commitment of all naval forces with the restriction that heavy ships are to operate only within range of our fighter planes and avoid night combats as far as possible.

2.) Maddalena is to be prepared as the operational base for heavy vessels.

3.) The destroyers are to be concentrated. Therefore the possibility of using destroyers as troop transports and minelayers will be limited.

4.) Transfer of PT boats and assault boats to Sardinia. Arrangement with German Naval Command, Italy for the employment of German PT boats. Preparation of additional assault boats to be expedited.

5.) Commitment of all available submarines, with operational center in the Western Mediterranean.

6.) 18,000 tons of oil for the Fleet to be requested of German Armed Forces High Command.

7.) Instructions for increased cooperation with the Air Force, with the purpose of spotting enemy operations promptly.

Armed Forces High Command reports that the Fuehrer has decided that an operation to reinforce the defenses of the Balearic Islands by German forces be discarded in its present form as examination has shown it to be impracticable. If it should come to negotiations with Spain, it might be possible to go into the question again in more favorable circumstances. The shipping originally prepared for the transport of the 999th Division is therefore to be held in southern French ports until further notice.

The return of this tonnage to the merchant fleet is therefore not to be considered.

Group West and Quartermaster Division have been informed.

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Quartermaster Division advises that, under the arrangements made between the Deputy of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping in the Mediterranean and Vice Admiral Ruge, the following are provided for: The ILE DE BAUTE and the GOUVERNEUR GENERAL TIRMANN to be night fighter direction ships, the KITA and the BELLAIN D'ESNAMBUC to be minelayers and the ALICE ROBERT, FELIX HENRY, PASQUAL PAOLI and CYRNOS to be anti-aircraft corvettes.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

War transports KT "5" and KT "6" entered Palermo on the evening of 18 Mar. During the night of 18 Mar. two destroyers en route to Tunis with German troops turned about and returned to Palermo because one had damaged her rudder. The convoy TOMASEO put in temporarily to Trapani because of engine trouble on a destroyer. It is planned for it to proceed on the morning of 20 Mar. During the night of 18 Mar. three naval landing craft arrived at Trapani from Bizerta. Six more naval landing craft are overdue. A search is underway. Another ship has put out from Marseilles for Genoa.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

According to an Italian report, a submarine was sighted north of Mios. Three German seamen were killed by the explosion while shooting up a floating mine. Escort traffic in the Aegean Sea was halted by bad weather.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, there were three destroyers in the sea area of Tuapse during the morning. Air reconnaissance reported great shipping activity off the east coast. Twelve small vessels were sighted off Ghelenjik, also a convoy consisting of 1(4,000 GRT) steamer with 1 destroyer and 4 motor minesweepers sailing south from Tuapse and 1 southbound merchant vessel, 3(7,000 GRT) tankers and 1(9,000 GRT) transport north of Batum.

During the night of 18 Mar. our planes dropped aerial mines in the harbor entrance at Ghelenjik. In the early morning, several enemy PT boats and heavy underwater explosions were observed in the target area.

Own Situation:



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No German or Italian boats were on operation during the night of 19 Mar. on account of bad weather.

During the night of 18 Mar., the 8th naval landing craft transport, which was returning from Anapa to Kerch and had anchored off Shelesni Rog, was attacked by enemy PT boats without success. The 9th Anapa transport did not put to sea due to weather conditions. Sea convoys and lumber transport off the Crimean coast as well as minesweeping operations also had to be postponed because of the weather.

During an enemy air attack on the naval battery near the fish salting plant, one gun was put out of action and an ammunition dump was destroyed. One of our planes crashed southeast of Kossa Chuchka.

Ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch is now possible only by full commitment of vessels and mooring jetties. Damage has increased greatly. Traffic must be restricted on 20 Mar. for jetty repair. On 19 Mar. about 3,500 persons, about 300 motorized and 475 horse-drawn vehicles, 1,750 horses and other war material were transferred to the west.

After conferring with Commanding General, Army Group A on the Army Group's plans regarding the Taman bridgehead, Commanding Admiral, Group South reports that even if the Novorossisk port installations were thoroughly destroyed, the Russians could soon get the base into working order again. This will mean that the enemy will be closer to our supply lines. This disadvantage can only be counteracted by the available offensive facilities, the PT boats and submarines to a very limited extent. Commanding General, Army Group A has drawn the Fuehrer's attention to this fact in a personal report. In spite of this, the narrowing of the Gotenkopf bridgehead has been decided on.\* Commanding Admiral, Group South considers it necessary that the Navy should again demand escort for our convoys from the Air Force and that the Air Force should undertake offensive operations against the Caucasian harbors towards the destruction of the Russian Fleet.

Relevant teletype as per 1/Skl 826/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

According to the latest information received by Naval Intelligence Division, the Russian merchant fleet in the Black Sea amounts to 31 freighters for 48,654 GRT and 9 tankers for 49,401 GRT. Of these 40 ships totalling 98,055 GRT, 23 freighters for 33,355 GRT and 5 tankers for 23,917 GRT, that is, a total of 28 vessels for 57,252 GRT are stated to be operational.

\* Marginal note by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff: "The decision is not yet final."

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There are also available 7 naval transports for 23,732 GRT and 16 former merchant vessels for 11,679 GRT now used for war purposes, mainly as minesweepers, as well as 3 ice-breakers and 2 tugs. Thus the enemy will presumably have a total of 56 operational vessels, amounting to 95,634 GRT, available for landing operations.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

In regard to the situation in the Pacific, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division has forwarded the 57th issue of an American weekly report on world political and military events dated 4 Mar., 1943. It deals with U.S. policy concerning the defense of Australia. According to this report, it appears that the centre of operations for 1943 lies in Europe and Africa, so that for the present, it is intended to avoid tying down strong land forces in the South Pacific area.

Photostat of the report as per 1/Skl 8378/43 geheim in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.



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Items of Political Importance.

Severe criticism of the repeated announcements made by Allied statesmen on post-war problems has led the British Embassy in Bern to state that the Allies have resolved not to begin work on the conclusion of peace unprepared. It is said that the phase of coordination and formulation has been attained.

The deeper reason for the preoccupation with such matters may lie, however, in the fact that, as shown by experience, war aims are the more important for the stability of coalitions during war the greater the tension in the coalition and the more danger there is that the several partners strive towards special war aims, thus threatening to weaken the striking power of the military and political prosecution of the war. Since Russians are especially inscrutable in this respect, the Western Powers are desperately engaged in finding a formula which will bring all the Allies into line and at the same time serve as an inspiration for the fighting nations.

According to a diplomatic report, well-informed neutral circles believe that, for the British, the question of an invasion of Western Europe is uppermost, while U.S. interest is concentrated on operations in the Mediterranean. It is thought probable that the settling of this cardinal point is the main object of the Washington conference, political points of view probably being of decisive importance.

Another diplomatic report states that it is believed in Turkish circles that, during Eden's visit to Washington, one of the main items will be the setting up of a joint Anglo-American basis for diplomatic negotiations with Moscow. It is said that the British hope to be able to bring the Russians around to their point of view, if necessary, by threatening not to open a second front until the matter of Russian territorial claims has been cleared up.

Speculations as to Allied offensive plans have appeared in the Swedish press. It is thought possible that the Allies will attempt attacks at several places, though these would be only feints for the purpose of splitting our forces. The Allies would hardly have the forces or ability for a serious attempt to invade the European fortress at two points.

France:

General Catroux has proclaimed the restoration of the constitution of the Lebanon Republic. According to British reports, this

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concludes the General's mission in Syria and there is nothing now to prevent his leaving for Algiers. It is said that General de Gaulle intends to accept Giraud's invitation to come to Algiers as soon as General Catroux has arrived there.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division on the strength of the Russian Black Sea merchant fleet in accordance with the summary of Naval Intelligence Division (see War Diary, 19 Mar.).

Further report on our own merchant shipping losses in Feb., 1943. Graphs showing the losses as per 1/Skl I E 7305/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Own Ship Losses in 1943."

These show that the submarine threat in northern waters is increasing greatly. The use of boats of the 3rd and 4th Torpedo Boat Flotillas to strengthen defense must be considered.

Supplementary report on the change of command on Ship "28" in accordance with memorandum in War Diary of 18 Mar. A telegram from Chief, Naval Staff to Captain von Ruckteschall has been sent by radiogram 1846. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

II. Report by Chief, Naval Communications Division:

a.) On instructions from Minister Speer, Professor Koester will deliver a lecture, to a restricted audience, on magnetic measuring methods in anti-torpedo and anti-submarine defense. There is no objection on the part of the Navy, provided the choice of audience and the subject remain restricted. Chief, Naval Staff has instructed Naval Ordnance Division to follow up the matter.

b.) By way of experiment, Chief, Naval Communications Division plans to equip ten submarines with radio decoys carried by balloons. Fifty more of these devices are being manufactured. The measure is under consideration not only for submarines but also for blockade runners. Chief, Naval Staff concurs and regards all measures that may serve to increase submarine safety as especially urgent. Such measures are: Screening of conning towers, decoys and swift change of wave length in order to combat radar interferences.

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division presented a report in regard to an enemy landing near Brioux in Brittany, said to be planned for 21 Mar. as per copy in War Diary, 19 Mar. He also



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presented a report from the Spanish Consul in Cardiff forwarded by the Naval Attaché, Madrid on the situation of enemy tonnage. The writer states that the shipping deficiency has now reached its peak. Shipping circles in Cardiff are of the opinion that current new ship construction in the U.S.A. and Great Britain does not yet represent an adequate replacement for the unexpected and startling losses due to sinkings and damage as well as to the gradual decentralization of industry and the increase in war requirements. The reduction of imports will make even bread rationing inevitable. The victorious campaigns in Cyrenaica and Russia and any which may possibly be in prospect, cannot compensate for the unquestionable seriousness of the situation. Heavy or even slight damage to vessels assumes great importance as, due to lack of dockyard capacity, they can sometimes not be repaired and thus add to the total loss. The situation is not expected to ease before the summer when the effects of the new large-scale construction in Great Britain and the U.S.A. will be felt.

There is undoubtedly a considerable amount of local color in this report.

With the arrival of the MALAYA in Gibraltar on 17 Mar., the task force there has again reached the strength observed at the time of the North African operation in Nov. 1942. There are assumed to be 3 battleships, 1 aircraft carrier and 2 auxiliary aircraft carriers. Convoy traffic in the Atlantic at present shows no unusual symptoms but is continuing on the normal scale. However, from the reinforcement of Task Force H it may be concluded that heavy convoy escort is being built up for imminent actions in the Western Mediterranean. The tonnage deficiency of about 300,000 GRT, which was observed up to 18 Mar., has meanwhile been reduced by 120,000 GRT. The special landing craft PRINCESS BEATRIX and QUEEN EMMA, lying in Gibraltar, are fitted to carry eight to ten assault boats and 450 men each.

IV. Chief, Organization and Mobilization Branch, Quartermaster Division reported on the status of the reorganization of the Navy. The decree of 25 Feb. has been only partially put into effect, but the remainder has not been cancelled. Baltic Station has not yet been made independent nor has Group North been abolished. In view of the development of the situation, it would seem advisable to examine whether abolishing Group North should still be carried through. No agreement has yet been reached within Naval Staff concerning organizational possibilities. There is a question of retaining the Group and merging its command with the Fleet. In this case it must be decided whether this office should restrict itself to control of naval forces or whether it should also assume the coastal tasks from the areas of North Sea and Baltic Stations and of Naval Command, Norway. Another solution would be

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to dissolve the Group and place the naval forces outside the area of the coastal waters directly under Naval Staff. In such case, it would be advisable for Admiral, Northern Waters to remain and the Fleet, as a training formation, only to have administrative tasks.

If Group North is retained as a part of the Fleet, there arises the further question of whether Naval Command, Norway will be able to control communications in the northern area from Oslo. Admiral Ciliax considers they should be conducted by the Group. Chief, Naval Communications Division states that although the technical difficulties of communications are great, they are not insurmountable.

Chief, Naval Staff is of the opinion that the Group should be retained as long as operations by the heavy ships are required. A merging of the Group Admiral's personnel with that of Commanding Admiral, Fleet is desirable. North Sea and Baltic Stations should remain independently in charge of coastal waters. It remains to be investigated how this question will affect Naval Command, Norway. The positions of Admiral, Northern Waters and of Commander, Submarines, Norway will also have to be clearly established. Chief, Naval Staff is not in favor of Commander, Submarines having merely administrative control. The most important aspect of the war in northern waters is submarine warfare, which goes on all the time, while surface operations are more occasional. Perhaps the solution may lie in a merging of the areas of Admiral, Northern Waters and Commander, Submarines.

Chief, Naval Staff has ordered Naval Staff to submit a new proposal on the whole subject in the near future. If necessary another discussion will be held with Admiral Schniewind before coming to a decision.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

V. Report by Auxiliary Cruiser Section, Operations Division on the current status of arrangements for the bringing in and out of blockade runners in accordance with memoranda in the War Diaries of the last few days.

Chief, Naval Staff approved the arrangements made and the directions issued. A summary by Operations Division of the various statements on overseas operations by auxiliary cruisers and auxiliary warships has been entered as per 1/Skl 841/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

VI. Chief, Naval Staff approved the proposal of Chief of Staff, Naval Staff that, in view of the possibility of enemy landing attempts in our territory, an order of the day should be issued by



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Chief, Naval Staff to the Navy coastal defense personnel. A corresponding order 1/Skl I a 8629/43 geh. is contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. X.

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Special Items.

I. On the subject of naval landing craft, Naval Staff has informed Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, (with copy to Army General Staff, Naval Liaison Officer, and Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer) as follows:

1.) Beginning in May, it is planned to make a first transfer to the Mediterranean of 46 naval landing craft, i.e. 20 new boats, 10 from training flotillas of Admiral, Landing Craft and Bases, 10 so far held for Norway and 6 so far held for the Black Sea.

2.) The establishment of naval landing craft in Norway, at present 81, will therefore not be increased for the present.

3.) Apart from the 14 naval landing craft now in transit from Germany no other naval landing craft will be sent to the Black Sea. The Black Sea establishment can therefore only be augmented by new construction in the southeast area.

II. On 16 Mar., acting under instructions, the Naval Liaison Officer attached to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, delivered the following reply of Commander in Chief, Air Force to Naval Staff's request for assistance from the 5th Air Force for Group North in the planned naval operations against convoys in northern waters (see War Diary, 11 Mar.):

The use of heavy formations against enemy convoy escorts places the campaign against convoys on an entirely different base. Up to the present it had been the order of Armed Forces High Command that, with the exception of aircraft carriers, warships were, if possible, not to be attacked in order to avoid unnecessary losses. The attack was to be concentrated on merchant vessels.

By the use of our heavy formations, as now planned, the combat of escort forces will in the future be the main objective. Destruction of the steamers will then be a sequel to the prior elimination of the escort. If Naval Staff is in agreement with the above statements, a new basic order must be obtained from Armed Forces High Command.

As of 18 Mar., Group North reports the answer made by the 5th Air Force to the detailed requests submitted. It states:

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1.) The requested reconnaissance will be made as allowed by the weak forces available. Maintenance of contact with one or more groups of ships in the sea area Iceland - east of Jan Mayen - will depend on the weather and on the number of planes available.

2.) The use of bombers as reconnaissance planes is not possible as they are under express orders from Commander in Chief, Air Force to combat convoys (aircraft carriers or merchant vessels).

3.) An attack against a heavy group by inadequate forces does not hold out prospects of operational success and furthermore would require an express order from Commander in Chief, Air Force.

4.) Direct cooperation between Admiral, Northern Waters and Air Commanders, consistent with basic instructions of the 5th Air Force, is approved.

Group North comments:

In spite of continuously good cooperation with the 5th Air Force, this answer again demonstrates the handicap imposed on our naval warfare by the lack of a naval or Navy-controlled Air Force. Warfare by surface forces and submarines against the vastly superior enemy sea powers who have all the resources of a Fleet at their disposal can achieve the expected optimum success only if the weapons of naval warfare, of which planes are an indispensable part, are sent out and put into operation as one. Group North therefore urges that, especially in the present phase of the war when the character of naval warfare is becoming increasingly decisive, a concentration of naval arms and control be brought about. As a first step, the Group requests that, in view of the importance of surface force and submarine operations against the Russian traffic, the establishment of the 5th Air Force be increased to conform with the new commitments; that the restrictions imposed by Commander in Chief, Air Force with regard to operations and targets be canceled; and finally, that the commitment of air forces in joint operations should be in accordance with the Navy's requirements.

Naval Staff's view on the subject has been forwarded via the Naval Liaison Officer to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff as follows:

1.) The aim of joint warfare on enemy convoys is the destruction of merchant vessels; this will therefore also remain the basic objective of Air Force operations.

2.) In joint operations, however, there may arise tactical and operational situations which make it necessary for the planes available to concentrate their attack on heavy enemy forces,



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providing close or remote escort for the convoy, in order to achieve the greater joint success against the merchant ships. If, by seizing favorable tactical opportunities, bombers and torpedo bombers prevent the heavy escort group from proceeding, it would already constitute a decisive success.

3.) Bomber attacks on the convoy's close escort (heavy and light cruisers and destroyers) may possibly furnish tactical relief for our surface forces combatting enemy merchant vessels. However, dissipation of air strength in such actions must definitely be avoided.

4.) Joint warfare, as outlined above, calls for the closest cooperation by the relative Air Commander with Admiral, Northern Waters. Naval Staff requests that the 5th Air Force be instructed to authorize this.

Since successful joint operations are dependent on a wide knowledge of the enemy situation, it is requested that, if insufficient reconnaissance planes are available, the 5th Air Force be ordered to use bombers also for reconnaissance purposes.

Group North has been simultaneously informed of these views with the comment that, as already emphasized on 11 Mar., operations by naval forces must not again be made dependent upon an increase of the Air Force in northern waters, which would require a Fuehrer decision. The Group's arguments are in general approved. However, it must be taken into consideration that Air Force strength is being strained. Due to the general war situation, Naval Staff has requested intensification of air operations in the Mediterranean and the west area and is therefore not in a position to ask Commander in Chief, Air Force also for an increase in the 5th Air Force. Furthermore, it must be considered that the Fuehrer's agreement to transfer of SCHARNHORST and to operations by the vessels was not combined with any proposal for an increase of the 5th Air Force. Therefore it is not now possible to contend that such an increase is a necessary condition for commitment of the vessels.

III. On 8 Mar., the Fuehrer issued a service regulation for Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, superseding all previous relative orders and decrees. Section I reads as follows:

Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, who is likewise the senior German officer in Italy, will represent the German Armed Forces at the Headquarters of the Royal Italian Armed Forces in all questions concerning the conduct of war in the Central and Western Mediterranean.

In regard to the functions of Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, Section II states:

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1.) He will represent my intentions in regard to the Central Mediterranean campaign with the Duce and the High Command and will ensure German influence on the operations, as justified by the preponderance of the German land and air forces fighting in the Mediterranean area.

2.) He will be responsible for the execution of those of my instructions and directions that do not, in accordance with Section I, have to be issued by the Italian High Command. Within the scope of these two functions, Commanding General, Armed Forces, South will also be over Army Group Africa.

3.) In close cooperation with the Italian High Command, he will be in charge of all supplies for German troops in the Central and Western Mediterranean.

4.) He will conduct the aerial war in the Mediterranean under the guidance of the Duce and the directions of Commander in Chief, Air Force, in close liaison with the Italian Air Force.

5.) He will be responsible for the uniform control of the communications service, intelligence, propaganda and troop welfare, as well as the medical service and military law and he will act as advocate of the Armed Forces in connection with the Reich political representative in Tunis.

6.) He will report on all matters as per 1.) to 5.) and on important matters of organization to Armed Forces High Command; on matters concerning the Air Force he will report direct to Commander in Chief, Air Force.

Subordinated to Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, under section III will be, among others: the German Naval Command, with the restriction that the general guiding principles of naval warfare in the Mediterranean are issued by Naval Staff.

This does not affect the administrative subordination of troops which do not belong to the Air Force.

IV. In a personal letter to the Deputy General in charge of construction economy, Reichsminister Speer, on the subject of iron quotas for naval construction for the second quarter of 1943, Commander in Chief, Navy has stated that the quota assigned of only 8,100 tons, as against the required 28,500 tons, will inevitably result in the complete collapse of the Navy's construction economy program. He has therefore proposed a discussion on the matter, to be preceded by a preliminary consultation between Chief, Naval Ordnance Division, Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament and competent representatives of the Deputy General.

The preliminary discussion is proposed for 24 Mar.



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V. On 19 Mar., Shipping and Transport Branch, Quartermaster Division, confirmed to the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping and his branches the agreed limitation of functions between the Navy's sea transport organization and the Reich Commissioner in the Mediterranean. Copy of the order as per 1/Skl 8673/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI.

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Situation 26 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has advised DOGGERBANK:

a.) by radiogram 0915 on the position of the enemy convoy reported on 17 Mar. by radiogram 1731: at 0800 on 20 Mar., its position was 42°20' N, 15° W, course south. A destroyer was sighted at 2300 on 19 Mar. east of Terceira on southeasterly course.

b.) by radiogram 1143 on weather forecast for 20 Mar.

c.) by radiogram 1922 that the rendezvous with the destroyers will be arranged in accordance with the results of daily air reconnaissance to be made of the sea area west of Portugal up to about 18° W, as from 20 Mar.

d.) by radiogram 2331 on the following sightings: at 1400 German standard time, 2 vessels and 9 escorts at 42°20' N, 15°20' W, on course 180°, speed 12 knots; at 1500, a southbound convoy of 55 vessels at 42°40' N, 15°30' W, speed 8 knots; at 1500, 3 destroyers on course 210° at 41° N, 15° W. Comment: the convoy is thus proceeding at a slower speed than was previously assumed.

All radiograms were sent in special code "Doggerbank."

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance by Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, there were: at 1400, 2 ships with 9 escort vessels in CG 1958, course 180°, speed 12 knots; at 1520, a convoy of 38

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ships with 11 escort vessels in CG 1411, course 360°, speed 8 knots; at 1445, a convoy of 20 ships with 5 escort vessels in CG 4567, course 360°, speed 7 knots; at 1442, a convoy of 55 ships with 9 escort vessels in CF 3337, course 180°, speed 8 knots; at 1505, 3 destroyers in CH 1478, course 210°.

According to an intelligence report of 17 Mar., the Home Fleet has been assembled in the Bristol Channel.

Another intelligence report, from Portugal, states that a convoy with war material for North Africa is expected to leave ports on the Bristol Channel between 29 and 31 Mar. Another convoy for North Africa is expected to leave Glasgow on 6 Apr.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Torpedo boat T "2" transferred from Royan to La Pallice. The 8th Destroyer Flotilla has arrived on schedule in Le Verdon and Royan roads preparatory to sailing to pick up the DOGGERBANK.

Channel Coast:

No special events.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Six ground mines were cleared, one by a minesweeping plane, on convoy routes between Baltrum and Ameland. The steamer HERAKLES (5,100 GRT), of the Elbe - Ems traffic, struck a ground mine north of Borkum and put in there under her own power.

Escort and patrol services were carried out according to plan. At 0615, a Liberator flew over the area Borkum - Leer - Emden. At Leer two houses were completely destroyed by bombs which also caused other damage and casualties.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Russian reconnaissance reported destroyers in And Fiord. Air reconnaissance was observed only in the afternoon over the northern North Sea and in the direction Skagerrak - Bergen. Two planes of the Iceland squadrons were noted.



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According to information from the Finnish Military Attaché in Stockholm, there are 14 ice-breakers in the area Murmansk - Kola Peninsula - Archangel; the route to Archangel is to be kept open the whole winter. The Russians are said to have sent strong reinforcements to the Rybachi Peninsula, Murmansk and Kandalaksha.

Own Situation:

On the morning of 18 Mar., 50 rounds were fired from the Rybachi Peninsula, without effect, on the Petsamo Fiord entrance and the battery area Cape Romanov and Nurmansetti. On 18 and 19 Mar., 15 bombs were dropped on Petsamo without causing any damage. In the areas of the Arctic north and west coasts of Norway, 18 vessels were escorted north and 17 south.

Naval Staff has no objection to the transfer of gunboat K "3" to Naval Command, Norway for the purpose of reinforcing the Arctic coast escort forces. Naval Staff's order to the contrary has been cancelled.

The formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force carried out exercises in West Fiord according to plan. On the afternoon of 19 Mar., destroyer Z "31" and torpedo boats T "20" and T "21" left Trondheim to transfer to Bogen Bay as planned. At 1300 on 19 Mar., the COBURG was in AB 3998. Rendezvous with submarine U "378" has not yet been possible due to heavy ice. In the evening, submarine U "703" was released from the patrol line and detached on ice reconnaissance to the southwest up to 13° W. This longitude is to be reached by 0800 on 24 Mar. Reports are to be transmitted at 0°, 7° and 13° W.

A patrol line of six submarines is to proceed southwest, passing position line II, AB 7296 - 7969, at 2000 on 22 Mar.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The patrol lines in the Skagerrak and the Hanstholm gap were occupied by five patrol boats. Fifteen vessels and one minesweeping plane were employed on channel sweeping in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. One of two British courier planes en route to Sweden was shot down by a night fighter northeast of Skagen and sank in 120 m. of water. At the request of Air Force, Operations Staff, the Naval Salvage Command is investigating the possibility of raising it. One ELM/J mine was cleared by a minesweeping plane. Minelayer OSTMARK is en route to the south, minelayer SKAGERRAK to the north.

The Aarhus - Oslo leave transport has been delayed until 22 Mar. due to lack of escort.

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The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has expressed a wish that the ban on merchant traffic through the Skagerrak by night, which was established because of the blockade runners in Gothenburg, be lifted. Preliminary inquiries by Operations Division have shown that this ban, by delaying the turnover of shipping, is equivalent to the continuous laying-up of five of our ships, totalling 15,000 GRT, capable of carrying 120,000 tons of cargo per year to and from Norway. On the other hand, the DICTO and LIONEL represent a tonnage of 11,000 GRT. Operations Division has called the Reich Commissioner's attention to the fact that the lifting of the ban would affect the interests of naval warfare to a considerable extent and has asked for figures on the advantages of lifting it.

The 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla carried out clearing operations west of Memel. Netlayer "VI" with three net tenders and three work boats is in Baltic Port where also is the motor ship IRBEN. Motor ship KAISER is at Libau. The 24th Landing Flotilla is transferring from Gdynia to Talinn.

There was only slight gunfire in Kronstadt Bay. Channels have evidently been cut in Kronstadt harbor. During the night and in the morning hours, enemy air activity was observed over Narva Bay, Hungerburg and Tytersaari. The village of Lavansaari was attacked by our planes. Two 17 cm Army batteries have been withdrawn from the coastal area near Peterhof.

Commander in Chief, Air Force reported on 18 Mar. that, after re-examination of the matter, he finds himself unable to modify his views, as indicated on 4 Mar., in regard to the detachment of fighter forces to protect the naval mining operations in the entire Gulf of Finland. Group North has been advised accordingly.

In view of the importance of this decision which might cause serious setbacks in the execution of naval operations in the Gulf of Finland, all the correspondence on this matter between Group North and Commander in Chief, Air Force will be brought to the attention of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy. Group North's attitude in this matter, as set out on 19 Mar., also derives from this new decision of Commander in Chief, Air Force.

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## V. Submarine Warfare.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

There was only slight air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay up to the afternoon. Various reports from planes were intercepted from the eastern North Atlantic, the area near Havana, Haiti and Pernambuco.



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Brief Enemy Situation Report No. 4/43 by Naval Intelligence Division contains information on the communique published on 16 Mar. by the Navy Department in Washington and the Air Ministry and Admiralty in London on the conference between American, British and Canadian officers of all branches of the Armed Forces on anti-submarine measures. Copy of the report as per 1/Sk1 8809/43 geh. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation." The same report contains a Reuter account of the convoy battle in the North Atlantic.

## 2. Own Situation:

The two convoy operations in the Atlantic have been concluded. Some of the submarines have been formed into the new Groups "Seewolf" and "Seeteufel" in the North Atlantic. "Seewolf", with 18 boats, will be disposed from AK 4179 to 3D 1348 in order to intercept a northeast bound convoy expected on 25 Mar. At 0800 on 22 Mar., Group "Seeteufel", with twelve boats, will await a westbound convoy in patrol line from AD 8769 to AK 3867.

A large number (17) of the submarines of the former Groups "Raubgraf", "Stuermer" and "Draenger", some of which have been supplied by submarine U "463", is on return passage.

Submarine U "232" discontinued her operation against the south-bound Gibraltar convoy. Submarine U "191" is to reconnoitre the western ice limit in the Denmark Strait from AE 2233. The results will be reported by 26 Mar. from the area south of the latitude of AD 87. In addition, observations of air and sea patrols and location findings will be reported. The boat has orders that her presence must in no way be revealed and she is therefore forbidden to attack any vessels except troop transports and warships from cruisers upwards.

No action reports have been received from boats in the south.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Thirty-four planes of the 3rd Air Force were operating in the west area and ten in the Mediterranean. Besides the already reported reconnaissance results in the Eastern Atlantic and the early morning attack on Leer by one plane, an afternoon attack by 15 enemy planes on the railroad repair plant at Louvain

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is reported to have caused heavy damage. Slight damage was caused at the Anvers airfield and to Army equipment plants and the railroad tracks in this area.

A supplementary report on the daylight attack on Vegesack states that our fighters made very early contact, southwest of Heligoland, with the enemy approaching in five waves. The fact that, even so, only seven planes were shot down is attributed to the extraordinarily great fighting power of the attacking planes and their skilful battle formation and tactics. The small daytime losses, as compared with those suffered at night, suggest the possibility that the enemy may shift his attack activities to the hours of daylight, at least in coastal areas.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

The attack on Tripoli on the evening of 19 Mar., during which 72 LT 350 aerial torpedoes were dropped, is considered by the Air Force General Staff to have been a great success. The planes flew over the brightly lighted harbor with its numerous illuminated vessels at an altitude of 200 meters. The enemy defense was taken completely by surprise. It is probable that only one plane was lost over the harbor.

Due to weather conditions, activities were limited on 20 Mar. While out on convoy escort, our Me 109 fighter formation shot down five planes of an approaching enemy formation. Enemy bombing attacks were unsuccessful.

In comparison with the second half of December 1942, the 2nd Air Force has noted a considerable increase between 1 - 15 Mar. 1943 in the number of enemy planes stationed in the vicinity of the Tunisian front. The number of planes noted has risen from 412 to 1,070.

## 3. Eastern Front:

The number of enemy planes shot down over the Army fronts on 19 Mar. amounted to 66. The 5th Air Force reports that the White Sea is free of ice with the exception of the Gulf of Kandalaksha and the Bays of Onega and Dwina. The Gorlo Strait is entirely ice-bound from 56°30' N.

On the eastern front the enemy intensified his harassing attacks on our railroad installations near the front and the attacks on airfields. Partisan supply flights and some raids on our main defense line were also carried out. Night attacks were concentrated on the area of the Central Army Group.



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Our own Air Force is also gradually shifting its main attack to targets in the enemy hinterland. Thus a slow resumption of operational aerial warfare is taking place. For some days, continuous attacks on important enemy railroad junctions and armament plants have been carried out. Near the front auxiliary planes are also used for this purpose.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to an intelligence report from Spain from a British source in Tangier, dated 19 Mar., a British Fleet formation from England is expected to arrive in Gibraltar during the night of 19 Mar. Together with naval forces already in Gibraltar, the formation will reportedly put out during the night of 22 Mar. to support landing operations on the Tunisian coast.

On the afternoon of 19 Mar., 3 U.S. LCT's left Gibraltar with 3 escort boats towards the Mediterranean. During the morning of 20 Mar., 3 destroyers and 1 corvette, 1 large transport and 2 British auxiliary aircraft carriers with 1 destroyer, 2 corvettes and 1 escort vessel entered Gibraltar from the west. During the same morning, 3 U.S. destroyers left the harbor towards the Atlantic. According to an Italian report, there were 5 transports, 8 tankers and 48 freighters in port on 19 Mar.

According to Italian radio intelligence, the heavy task force was probably in the Oran area on 20 Mar.

Convoy traffic along the Algerian coast was normal. At 1125, our air reconnaissance sighted 8 merchant vessels with 7 escorts on easterly course northeast of Philippeville. At 1750, one of our submarines spotted a westbound convoy 50 miles northwest of Cape Tenes.

Incomplete reconnaissance of the coastal waters between Tobruk and Cyrene was flown. At 0730, there was 1 freighter with 3 destroyers and 1 escort vessel on westerly course 25 miles north-northwest of Tobruk.

The intelligence substation at Athens reported on 19 Mar. that there was no indication of unusually heavy shipping in Syrian - Palestine harbors. Counter-inquiries also gave negative results. Only the reports on the assembly of small vessels and the construction and assembly of landing craft in Port Said and Alexandria have gained probability though nothing reliable is known in the Naval Intelligence Office, Istanbul in regard to large-scale concentration of landing craft.

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2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. At 1730, Submarine U "380" reported a westbound convoy in CH 8193.

Due to weather conditions, the six operational German PT boats in Bizerta were not in action. During the night of 19 Mar., three boats of the 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla left Bizerta to pick up and provide anti-submarine escort for the convoy TOMASEO. Submarine chasers "2201", "2204" and "2203", "2205" were on submarine chase near Crotona and in the Capri area.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

At 1800, convoy TOMASEO entered Bizerta. During the enemy attack already reported by the Air Force, only a few casualties occurred. The return convoy ROSELLI is to sail from Bizerta with two motorships on the night of 20 Mar.

On the evening of 19 Mar., German Naval Command, Tunisia reported from Bizerta: "Port situation dead; no ships."

On 20 Mar., two destroyers landed German troops in Tunis. The six missing naval landing craft entered Trapani on the morning of 20 Mar.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Convoys were delayed for 24 hours on account of the weather. Only one steamer entered Candia on schedule.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

Own Situation:

Due to continuous bad weather, no minesweepers or PT boats were sent out, nor could the Crimea convoys, Anapa transports or minesweeping be resumed.

The Kerch - Taman traffic was maintained to a limited extent until 1045. Combined operations landing craft could operate only on the short run between Yenikale and Kossa Chuchka which is sheltered



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from the wind. About 2,200 persons, 1,818 horses, 117 motorized and 430 horse-drawn vehicles and other war material were ferried across.

Since, in the future there will be no air transport of supplies across the Strait of Kerch to the east, the Army Group has requested that more supplies be carried to the east by the Navy. Daily requirements are 200 tons for Kossa Chuchka, 300 tons for Sennaya, 400 tons for Taman and 250 tons for Anapa. Engineering equipment, lumber and rocks for the Taman airfield are also required. Due to the loading work necessary on the Kerch side, the round trip for naval landing craft will be considerably prolonged and the westbound transport capacity will diminish.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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Items of Political Importance.

According to the United Press, a Turkish delegation arrived at General Eisenhower's Headquarters on 19 Mar. for discussions with the Allied Army Chiefs.

No other reports of any consequence have been received.

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Special Items.

I. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has drawn up a report on the enemy situation (the eastern front excepted) as at mid-March. On the basis of information furnished by Naval Staff and Army General Staff, the report states that the enemy's military preparations to date are such as already to make possible major landing operations. It is estimated that there are 8 armored divisions, 27 infantry divisions and 2 - 3 airborne divisions in Britain, most of which can be used for landings. Two to three armored divisions and 12 - 13 infantry divisions are available for a large-scale operation starting direct from North America. The sea transport situation alone indicates that equipment for an Army of 350,000 - 400,000 men can be shipped in the 3.4 million GRT of immediately available freight space. The available troop transports (about 2.2 million GRT) are sufficient for a like number of troops with personal equipment.

In French North Africa, there are estimated to be 14 - 15 British or U.S. infantry and armored divisions. There are also parts of an airborne division and of five Free French divisions.

The bulk of the British 8th Army is for the time being tied down on the Mareth position.

No sure proof has yet been obtained as to the objective of a landing operation in the Mediterranean. A landing on the Italian islands, Sardinia in particular, in support of the Tunisian attack must be reckoned with. The reported concentration of airborne troops in Malta may point to an operation against Sicily. A landing on the south coast of France is considered unlikely, at least without a prior occupation of Sardinia. At the moment, there are no indications of operations against the Iberian Peninsula, Spanish Morocco and the Balearic Islands. However, the danger of an operation against Portugal, and especially against the Azores, cannot be ignored.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, after withdrawal of the 8th Army, it is estimated that there will be in the Egyptian - Syrian area



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half an armored division, 2 infantry divisions, 2 brigades and 1 - 2 armored brigades; in the Levant, 3 - 6 infantry divisions, 1 - 2 independent brigades, 2 - 3 rifle brigades, 5 - 10 armored battalions and 2 mixed U.S. brigades. This gives a total of 5 - 8 infantry divisions, 3 - 5 independent divisions, 2 - 5 rifle brigades, 7 - 12 armored battalions and 2 mixed U.S. brigades. The fighting quality of these units is considered generally poor. No assembly of shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean ports, particularly in Cyprus, has been noted. The construction of landing craft, however, indicates plans for a later date. Besides the Peloponnesos, the Island of Rhodes continues to be an enticing objective for the enemy. It is the opinion of the Operations Staff of Armed Forces High Command that, as long as the Sicilian Channel remains closed, large-scale operations in the Eastern Mediterranean are highly improbable.

In Western Europe, the elimination of our submarine bases will remain the enemy's most important objective. It is from this point of view that all landing attempts in North and West France - possibly with a diversion in Southern France - must be judged at present. The intention to establish a second front on French territory might take second place or follow only on a successful landing for the destruction of the submarine bases. Therefore, an operation against the Atlantic and Channel coasts must still be reckoned with. Airborne troops would certainly be used. It is noteworthy that, so far, aerial mines have not been dropped in Seine Bay.

In Northern Europe, operations in Norway are still not to be excluded. The necessary special troops are being held in readiness in the British Isles. Those sections of the coast which would permit of the speediest penetration towards Sweden are possible main targets of attack.

For the time being, the Danish coast can be regarded as threatened only by local operations with limited objectives.

The Army General Staff's assessment of the general enemy situation on the fronts under Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, which partly forms the basis for the latter's report, is contained in "Report on Enemy Situation, No. 6/43, Section Foreign Armies West." Copy of this report, with comment by Naval Intelligence Division, as per 1/Skl 8834/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, "Enemy Situation Reports, Naval Intelligence Division."

The General Staff's assessment of the overall situation corresponds in general to that of Naval Staff. Naval Staff suspects enemy plans for large-scale landings, most probably in Sicily / Sardinia, as a part of the Tunisian campaign. If this plan is

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successful, supplies to Tunis will collapse and Tunis will thus fall into the hands of the enemy. It is probable that landings with, in the first place, limited objectives on the north and south coasts of France may be made at the same time in order to split up the Axis air forces.

From reports so far received, an enemy landing in the Aegean Sea is less probable at the present time.

II. The disposition of destroyers and torpedo boats is outlined in a note 1/Skl I op 820/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. d.

The following orders, based on this note, were issued to Groups North and West, the Fleet and Commander, Destroyers on 19 Mar.:

1.) The transfer of destroyers from the west area to Norway, as per order of 19 Feb. 1943, will probably take place at the beginning of April. Destroyer Z "25" will also move to Norway after having been made operationally ready.

2.) Additional destroyers will be continually assigned to the northern area as they come into operational readiness at home.

3.) After transfer of the destroyers to Norway as in 1.), the JAGUAR and the GREIF will be transferred home at the earliest opportunity (return of the NUERNBERG) and subsequently to the west area. Boats of the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla becoming operational, will be assigned to the north. Ultimate distribution of torpedo boat flotillas as follows:

2nd, 4th, 5th Torpedo Boat Flotillas                      west area.

3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla                                      north area.

III. Group North has concurred in the Fleet's suggestion that the 8th PT Boat Flotilla be withdrawn from the north area and proposes that the Flotilla carry out operations from Hammerfest until the end of April and then transfer to the west area. Naval Staff has ruled as follows:

For the time being, the Fuehrer rejects the proposal of Commander in Chief, Navy to withdraw the 8th PT Boat Flotilla from Norway. This decision is based on the view that PT boats represent an essential strengthening of the defensive force in the Bodoe - Narvik area which the Fuehrer does not yet deem it advisable to abandon. Group North's map exercise came to the same conclusion. In the area of Hammerfest PT boats cannot do justice to this task, as from there, timely intervention in case of enemy



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landings cannot be guaranteed either in the Bodoe - Narvik area or in the Kirkenes - Petsamo area. According to previous experience in northern waters, the prospect of operations against convoys is too limited. Therefore, the 8th PT Boat Flotilla will remain in the area Bodoe - Narvik, with main base Bodoe.

Copy of corresponding teletype as per 1/Skl 854/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

IV. Order OKM/Skl Qu A I 5700/43 geh. on the evaluation of war experiences and setting up of regulations as per 1/Skl 8672/43 geh. is contained in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

Drastic steps were necessary in this regard since, besides the still valid tactical regulations, some of which are entirely obsolete, a large number of tactical orders, war experiences, leaflets, instructions, etc., have been issued. This made it extremely difficult to establish a clear view with regard to tactical principles. All administrative and operational commands concerned are asked to cooperate with Quartermaster Division, Naval Staff in working out the new Regulations for Naval Warfare.

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Situation 21 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has informed the DOGGERBANK:

a.) by radiogram 0248, on positions of neutrals on 17 and 18 Mar.

b.) by radiogram 1203, on weather situation.

c.) by radiogram 1251, on the position of the convoy reported on 20 Mar. by radiogram 2331. According to radio deciphering, it was at 43°20' N, 15° W, course 180°, speed six knots, at 1537 on 20 Mar. According to dead reckoning, Naval Staff expects the convoy to be at 39° N, 13° W at noon on 22 Mar. and at 37° N, 11° W at noon on 23 Mar. Naval Staff recommends passing behind the convoy, if necessary evading to the north.

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d.) by radiogram 1316, on further air reconnaissance findings on 20 Mar.:

1.) at 1520, 38 vessels, 11 escorts, speed 8 knots, course north, at  $42^{\circ}$  N,  $15^{\circ}$  W.

2.) at 1445, 20 vessels, 5 escorts, 3 destroyers, speed 8 knots, course north, at  $39^{\circ}$  N,  $13^{\circ}$  W.

Due to strong air defense, our submarines will not attack these convoys. After they pass, normal enemy air reconnaissance may therefore be anticipated.

e.) At 1409 on 21 Mar., according to our air reconnaissance, there was a convoy of 50 vessels and 8 escorts, speed 8 knots, course  $180^{\circ}$ , at  $40^{\circ}10'$  N,  $12^{\circ}30'$  W. A second convoy of 2 ships with 10 escorts, course  $160^{\circ}$ , speed 18 - 23 knots, was at  $38^{\circ}25'$  N,  $12^{\circ}$  W at 1440. (See radiogram 1803).

The REGENSBURG has been instructed, by radiogram 1649, that after having met the submarine and delivered the reports specified in the operational order, she is to proceed to point "Anton" arriving not prior to 1800 on 26 Mar. The further route will be decided on 26 Mar.

REGENSBURG and KARIN have been advised that weather reports will be issued daily for the area  $58^{\circ}$  -  $69^{\circ}$  N,  $40^{\circ}$  -  $10^{\circ}$  W. (See radiogram 2019).

The Attaché, Tokyo has been informed, by radiogram 2035, that Commander in Chief, Navy approves the proposal on the change of command for Ship "28". The order of Commander in Chief, Navy to Ship "28", to be issued to the crew when the change of command takes place, has been sent by radiogram 1002. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

At 1630 our air reconnaissance spotted a convoy of 40 merchant vessels with 3 destroyers and 5 escort vessels on course due north about 320 miles west of Cape Ortegal and at 1409 a convoy of 58 merchant ships with 7 escort vessels, speed 8 knots, course  $180^{\circ}$ , about 180 miles west of Oporto. The convoy was attacked. At 1440, 2 merchant vessels and 10 escorts on course  $160^{\circ}$  were sighted and attacked 130 miles west of Lisbon.



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2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 0100 on 19 Mar., a French trawler was unsuccessfully bombed and machine-gunned by enemy planes south of the Gironde estuary.

Naval Group West has informed the Air Commander, Atlantic Coast that Naval Staff estimates the position of the REIHER as approximately 37° N, 19°20' W at 1200 on 21 Mar. Her position at noon on 22 Mar. is, therefore, expected to be approximately on the line 39°30' N, 16° W - 37°50' N, 15° W.

Channel Coast:

Near Boulogne an EFA mine was cleared on 20 Mar., from barrage "Herz 234 - 236", and on 19 Mar. three EFA mines and one antenna mine.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

On 20 Mar. an ELM/J mine was cleared by a mine-exploding vessel north of Spiekeroog. On 21 Mar. two ELM/J mines were cleared southwest of IJmuiden. During an air raid alert on 20 Mar., four men on minesweeper M "3200" were slightly wounded by our own anti-aircraft fire. Escort and patrol services were carried out according to plan.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, Russian reconnaissance reported a westbound convoy, probably in Tana Fiord, and three steamers and eight escort vessels sailing west to northwest, east of North Cape. Air activity over the North Sea was brisk; six planes of the Iceland squadrons were sighted.

According to photographic reconnaissance, there were 2 ice-breakers, including the JOSEF STALIN, 12 steamers and 2 tankers for a total of 84,700 GRT in Molotovsk harbor on 19 Mar.

At 1751 a submarine was sighted near Nordkyn.

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Own Situation:

Escort service was carried out according to plan. No reports have been received from Admiral, Arctic Coast.

In regard to the 8th PT Boat Flotilla see "Special Items III."

In reply to inquiry, the BEITZEN has reported to Group North that the condition of the destroyer's engines makes it possible for her to operate until the end of April, so that her transfer to the north can be carried out.

Admiral, Northern Waters reports that the exercises by Commanding Admiral, Task Force in Ofot and West Fiords have been concluded.

Submarine U "378" picked up weather ship COBURG in AB 6324.

Submarine U "703" has reported the course of the ice border from AB 5513 via 5518, 5541, 5544, 5466, 5469, 5493, to 5495 and further west as far as 4687.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

No special reports have been received from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

While sweeping the "Wartburg" barrage, one EMC mine was cleared. The 11th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla has been assigned to clear the entrance to Talinn.

Group North reports that the Finns are not in favor of the Talinn-Helsinki furlough traffic, since large transit camps have been established in Turku and Hangoe. In view of the danger of floating mines frozen in the ice, furlough traffic between Talinn and Hangoe is not yet possible and, as long as operations "Walross" and "Nashorn" continue, is undesirable. Furlough traffic on Route 96 and on through the Finnish skerries is inadvisable for nautical reasons on account of the size of the furlough steamers. The Group, therefore, proposes that the direct route between Talinn and Hangoe be used for furlough traffic as soon as the planned channel has been created in cooperation with the Finns. (See teletype 1404).

Batteries at Seiskari fired on the area of Glinki without causing damage. Our planes dropped 29 SC 50 bombs on the airfield and village of Lavansaari. During the night of 20 Mar., there was brisk enemy air activity over the western Gulf of Finland.



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Helsinki was attacked. On the morning of 21 Mar. enemy reconnaissance planes flew over the sea area of Talinn. Parts of the 24th Landing Flotilla have entered Talinn.

Admiral, Baltic States had requested the 1st Air Force to attack and destroy the base and port installations on Seiskari. The 1st Air Force replied that an attack on Seiskari would entail dissipation of the few available bomber forces and was not at present justifiable. Moreover, Seiskari could be effectively destroyed only by strong forces. The 1st Air Force proposed that the Baltic reconnaissance squadron make additional harassing attacks on the Seiskari harbor installations and on the supply traffic to the islands.

Admiral, Baltic States thereupon repeated his request and proposed that the port installations at Lavansaari and Seiskari be destroyed and the great concentrations of shipping which are to be expected there after the ice breaks up be attacked to the extent consistent with the planes then available for such operations. The Baltic reconnaissance squadron is already making continuous bombing attacks on Lavansaari and Seiskari. However, results have so far been limited, as the sights are not adjusted. Admiral, Baltic States urgently requests that this be remedied.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Very active air reconnaissance with 54 planes was reported in the Bay of Biscay.

##### 2. Own Situation:

Chief, Naval Staff has expressed his thanks and acknowledgment to the boats of Groups "Raubgraf" and "Stuermer" for their action against the convoy which was the greatest success achieved to date.

No special action reports have been received. Details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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#### VI. Aerial Warfare.

##### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

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The 3rd Air Force had 42 planes out on operation in the west area and 12 in the Mediterranean. For reconnaissance reports of Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, see "Situation West Area."

Enemy air raid activity was limited. Isolated planes were observed over Bodoe and in the coastal areas of Narvik, Aalesund and Egersund. Four courier planes flew through the Skagerrak to Sweden and one to England.

In Western France a fighter-direction station and railroad installations near Morlaix were strafed on the night of 20 Mar.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

In regard to the successful action at Tripoli with type "350" aerial torpedoes, photographic reconnaissance showed 1 steamer sunk, 2 steamers half submerged, 1 steamer burned out, 2 freighters and 1 escort vessel damaged.

Twenty-two dive bombers and 19 fighter-bombers were sent out against enemy tank and motor vehicle concentrations in the Tunisian area. In the area of the Mareth position, 41 bombers were engaged in support of the Army defensive battles.

During the night of 21 Mar., 20 planes with type "350" aerial torpedoes were sent out against the port of Algiers. During the night of 20 Mar., enemy planes attacked port installations in the Naples area. Only slight damage was done.

## 3. Eastern Front:

Over the Army fronts 36 enemy planes were shot down, five of them by anti-aircraft fire. During the night of 19 Mar., Ghelenjik harbor was again mined with twelve aerial mines.

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# VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

## 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

At 1630 a convoy of 12 steamers and 4 tankers with 5 escort vessels, coming from the Atlantic, passed Ceuta on course to the Mediterranean. One of the steamers put in to Gibraltar. All vessels carried full deck cargoes of plane fuselages. At 2315 41 large vessels, including probably 5 transports, passed Tangier on easterly course. Shortly after midnight on 21 Mar., Ceuta reported 8 large vessels, probably transports, with (presumably) 5 destroyers en route to the Mediterranean.



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No reports have been received on the heavy task force. There was little convoy traffic off the Algerian coast.

There was a submarine 40 miles east of Palermo. About 2250, a vessel, presumably a destroyer, and five torpedo boats on westerly course were sighted 20 miles northeast of Gabes. These vessels later fired on Gabes. The British Admiralty has announced the loss of the destroyer LIGHTNING.

No special sighting reports have been received from the Eastern Mediterranean.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. No action reports have been received from our submarines. Flank escort for one of our convoys by PT boats and motor minesweepers out of Bizerta on the evening of 21 Mar. had to be discontinued on account of bad weather. The Italian motor minesweeper group carried out check sweeping according to plan. The transfer to the Mediterranean of motor minesweepers R "3" and R "4" began at Kiel on 20 Mar.

The Armistice Commission (Navy), [orig. trans.: "Armistice Commission, Naval Officer, France"] requests information as to whether it is true, as stated by the Italian Admiralty, that, under a decision of 18 Mar., the CHAMOIS, CURIEUSE, DEDAIGNEUSE and IMPETUEUSE have been allotted to the Italian Navy and the YSER, BALISTE and BAYONNAISE to the German Navy. It is hardly likely that BALISTE can be raised in the near future.

Naval Staff has replied that the statements correspond with the agreements arrived at in the German-Italian discussions in Rome on 18 Mar.

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

War transports KT "5", KT "6" and KT "13" put in to Trapani at noon en route to Tunis.

The convoy of the motorships OMBRINA and MONTI with three torpedo boats is en route from Naples to Bizerta. The steamer FOGGIA continued on towards Sousse from Trapani. She will be accompanied by a second steamer as far as Pantellaria.

The convoy of the motorships ROSELLI and MANZONI, returning from Bizerta to Naples, was attacked by enemy planes during the night of 21 Mar. near Capri. Motorship MANZONI (4,200 GRT) was sunk by aerial torpedoes and probably also bombs.

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An Italian naval landing craft became a total loss while en route from Trapani to Bizerta due to an internal explosion.

A motorboat en route from Marsala to Tunis was lost by enemy action. Details are not known.

Another vessel sailed from Marseilles to Italy. Thus three vessels are now at sea on transfer.

In regard to the sinking of the tug CHRIB and the lighter LABIL-LON on 13 Mar. between Marseilles and La Ciotat by enemy submarine gunfire, Group West now reports that the crews consisted of Frenchmen, some of whom were killed and wounded.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Convoy service was again delayed on account of bad weather. It is reported that the torpedo boat CALATAFIMI will be non-operational for seven weeks.

Admiral, Aegean Sea reports that the Swedish steamer BARDALAND is to sail from Salonika for Canada on 22 Mar., proceeding through the Aegean as far as Cape Rosso from where, after meeting the Swedish steamer FENRIS from Smyrna, the regular Mediterranean routes will be followed. The ships will report their position every four hours. For details see teletype 1135.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Four submarines were detected by radio intelligence in the central and western parts of the Black Sea. No large vessels were observed on 20 and 21 Mar. Air reconnaissance reported one steamer on northwesterly course off Ochemchiri.

Own Situation:

Due to northeast wind, force 8 - 9, German and Italian PT boats were not sent out. All convoy traffic and the Strait of Kerch ferry traffic was discontinued.

At Novorossisk there was lively gunfire on both sides and brisk enemy air activity, with high-explosive and incendiary bomb attacks. The east harbor was fired on by the enemy. Five parachutists were captured north of Anapa; others temporarily escaped.



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According to prisoners' statements, orders were given to attack demolition blocks with time fuses to naval landing craft in Anapa and Taman.

Admiral Fricke took over his duties as Commanding Admiral, Naval Group South.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.

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IX. Army Situation.

The expected 8th Army attack on the Mareth position has begun. The enemy scored preliminary successes against Italian units. The situation is strained but well in hand.

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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In a broadcast on 21 Mar. Churchill said:

"If, today, I turn from the progress of the war to deal with some post-war problems and domestic matters, it is because I hope in this way to simplify political differences and to make it possible for all our political forces to devote themselves to the main objectives."

On the war situation, Churchill declared:

"While speaking with every reservation, I can imagine that some time next year - though it may just as well be the year after that - we shall be able to beat Hitler. His defeat will be the culminating point of the war; immediately thereafter, we must turn to the overpowering of Japan. However, even after termination of the war in Europe, some demobilization would take place, together with a regrouping of forces. It is at this moment that the joint plans of the Allies for the shaping of post-war Europe must come into effect under the leadership of the Great Powers (British Empire, U.S.A. and Soviet Union). The guilty States must then be permanently disarmed, the main culprits and their accomplices brought to justice, the conquered and occupied countries given back their material resources and art treasures. To avoid a general famine in the destroyed territories will be a very difficult task.

"As to future organizations it is possible to imagine the formation of a Council of Europe and a Council of Asia with the aid of the United Nations and perhaps later of all the nations. The first Council must take the form of a real union and must create a High Court of Justice for the settlement of disputes. The small nations must form groups of states so that the Council of Europe would be built up of a Council of the Great Powers and of the State Unions."

For further contents of the speech see "Political Survey", No. 68, Par. 2.

France:

According to the U.S. Information Bureau, the French naval authorities in Washington have announced that 22 freighters and nine passenger steamers totalling more than 200,000 GRT have joined the Allied shipping pool under the French flag.



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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Quartermaster General reported that Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has rejected the request of Commanding General, Armed Forces, West that protection of the Channel Islands be transferred to the Navy.

II. Chief, Naval Staff had a conference with the Reichsmarschall on 21 Mar. mainly on the three following points:

1.) Construction of Siebel ferries: Assumption of Siebel ferry construction by the Navy rejected.

2.) Attention was called to the necessity for joint action against convoys in northern waters. Commitment of the forces of the 5th Air Force in the northern area in agreement with the tasks of naval warfare in that area.

3.) Long-range Atlantic reconnaissance: Chief, Naval Staff gained the impression that Commander in Chief, Air Force has taken all steps to set up long-range reconnaissance to the extent requested by us. Among other things, Commander in Chief, Air Force has ordered priority to be given to the Messerschmidt long-range reconnaissance plane. Chief, Naval Staff does not intend to submit any further requests to Commander in Chief, Air Force as he is of the opinion that everything possible is being done in that direction at present.

In regard to the construction of Siebel ferries, the Minister for Air and Commander in Chief, Air Force advised that Commanding General, Armed Forces, South had demanded 100 Siebel ferries for urgent operations in the Mediterranean. The Minister for Air thereupon arranged with the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping and Staatsrat Blohm, without including the Navy:

1.) That construction of the 40 Siebel ferries ordered by the Air Force be continued by the Navy, the Air Force to give every assistance that the Navy might require.

2.) That the Navy will construct an additional 60 Siebel ferries, for which the Air Force will hand over its whole quota of 13,500 tons of iron. This comprises about 5,500 tons for 40 ferries.

3.) That the Navy will also construct 70 naval landing craft in the Mediterranean area with its own quota.

4.) That further desires concerning the construction of Siebel ferries are to be addressed to High Command, Navy. Quotas will be kept in readiness by High Command, Navy.

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These arrangements, which were immediately rejected by Chief, Naval (Ship) Construction Division, led Commander in Chief, Navy to send a personal teletype to the Minister for Air and Commander in Chief, Air Force, Field Marshal Milch, with copies to Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, the Adjutant's Office of the Reichsmarschall, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping and Staatsrat Blohm in the following terms:

"I am not in a position to take over construction of Siebel ferries as I have not sufficient available manpower. If Siebel ferry construction is to be continued, it must be done by the Air Force. I would appreciate it if, concerning agreements on the transfer of work to the Navy, representatives of the Navy were also invited to participate.

In detail:

as to 1.) and 2.): According to agreements reached between the representatives of Commander in Chief, Air Force and High Command, Navy (conference with Quartermaster General, Naval Staff, Admiral Krancke, on 4 Mar. 1943) the Navy had declared itself ready to take over the 40 Siebel ferries ordered as in 1.) upon their completion.

"It was agreed that construction would not be continued and that the remaining quota of about 8,000 tons was to be placed at the disposal of the Navy for small vessels for the Mediterranean.

as to 3.): Agreed.

as to 4.): I request that the quota of 8,500 tons be allotted to me. I ordered the construction of artillery motor lighters as, unlike naval landing craft, these vessels can be carried by train and can be constructed in Germany."

As previously reported, Commander in Chief, Navy also personally presented this point of view to the Reichsmarschall on 21 Mar.

The matter will be followed up by Quartermaster Division.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. Report of Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

a.) The Foreign Office has received new information on the situation in Martinique. Using the supply of food stuffs as a lever, the U.S.A. have renewed the request that the French vessels be assigned to the South American trade in the service of American shipping. Laval's proposal that German agreement be obtained has been rejected - they would rather have the ships destroyed. In



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these circumstances, the continuation of negotiations, via the French, with the Americans concerning the exchange of Lt. (j.g.) V.D. Borne no longer appear justifiable.

Chief, Naval Staff concurs. Details are contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

b.) German Naval Command, Italy has submitted - as did Italian High Command (see War Diary, 19 Mar.) - a summary of instructions from this office to the Italian Admiralty concerning the commitment of German and Italian naval forces in case of an enemy landing attempt on Sardinia. In addition to the points already known, the following are mentioned: New disposition of Italian Fleet forces, urgent completion of ex-French destroyers, new disposition of Italian PT boats and assault craft and increase in the number of special weapons.

German Naval Command comments that the restrictions ordered for the employment of the Fleet forces clearly reveal knowledge of Italian inadequacy and by encumbering the operations carry the germ of failure. A possible transfer of our own PT boat flotillas to Sardinia will not take place before the actual beginning of an enemy action.

In the opinion of Naval Staff, the guiding tactical principles laid down by the Italian High Command may be considered fully justified, even though they restrict freedom of action to some extent.

c.) In regard to the question of whether the Italian Admiralty should be further pressed to strengthen the Sicily barrages, Chief, Naval Staff has decided in the negative. The destroyers must not now be withdrawn from their naval and troop transport duties; the eastern barrages are actually of little value and for the western barrages, new water depth soundings are required.

d.) Commanding General, Armed Forces, Norway has been instructed by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff to draw up a study on the possible effects of a Swedish action on the side of the enemy. Naval Staff has ordered Naval Command, Norway to place the necessary material for this task at the disposal of the Commanding General.

e.) Concerning the Fuehrer's instruction to drop the Balearics action as per memorandum in War Diary of 19 Mar.

f.) Commanding Admiral, Task Force has ordered that the transfer of the Task Force to Alta should begin on the evening of 23 Mar.

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g.) In regard to the request of Group North/Fleet as to operations by the 8th PT Boat Flotilla out of Hammerfest, as per memorandum in War Diary of 21 Mar., Chief, Naval Staff decided on the proposal of Naval Staff, that the Flotilla is to remain in Bodoe, since the prospects of success are estimated as slight and, by the Fuehrer's instruction, the Flotilla is committed to defense against landings.

h.) Commanding Admiral, Group South expressed his views on the report made by Commander, 30th Submarine Flotilla to Chief, Naval Staff in regard to employment of the submarines in the Black Sea, taking the opportunity to correct some erroneous statements and comments made by the Commander of the Flotilla.

i.) The Naval Liaison Officer attached to High Command, Army, Army General Staff will make a verbal report on plans in regard to the eastern front. Execution of the old task "Nordlicht", planned for the second half of the summer, is of importance to the Navy. Units of the 4th Air Force have been withdrawn to the north for defense against enemy thrusts on the Baltic coast.

k.) Copies of the German-Italian naval discussions and conferences at the Fuehrer Headquarters are to be supplemented, with regard to the conference on 18 Mar., by the permanent representative of Commander in Chief, Navy at the Fuehrer Headquarters. The Fuehrer has approved the steel memorandum submitted to him by Naval Staff and has passed it for information to Field Marshal von Manstein.

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Special Items.

I. In connection with intensification of the submarine program, Operations Division has requested Quartermaster Division to increase the construction of light naval forces. Copy of letter 1/Skl I op 8122/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

II. A short evaluation of intelligence from 15 to 21 Feb., as conference data for Chief, Naval Intelligence Division, has been noted in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation."

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division has drawn up basic principles on the ascertainment of transport tonnage and the necessary covering vessels for landing operations. These have been issued to the naval commands and Commanding Admirals, the Naval Liaison Officers to other branches of the Armed Forces and to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff and Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division. Copy as per 1/Skl 8553/43 geh. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.



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Situation 22 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports have been received.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has informed the DOGGERBANK:

a.) by radiogram 1233: on weather conditions.

b.) by radiogram 1356: air reconnaissance sightings of neutral ships on 20 Mar.

c.) by radiogram 1544: on the position, according to dead reckoning, of the large convoy reported which, at noon on 22 Mar., was at 37°30' N, 11°30' W, speed 7 - 8 knots; and on the northbound convoy which will not obstruct DOGGERBANK and may turn west to the U.S.A. on 39° N.

d.) by radiogram 1641: on positions of neutrals on 19 and 20 Mar., and finally

e.) by radiogram 1612: on the detection by our air reconnaissance at 1300 of 2 light cruisers, 1 destroyer and 2 merchant vessels at 49°40' N, 13°55' W, course 160°, high speed.

Weather report was sent to the REGENSBURG and KARIN by radiogram 2048.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been instructed as follows by radiogram 1205:

1.) Proceed so as to reach point "Venezia" not earlier than 26 Mar. From this point proceed via new points "Antonio" and "Benito."

2.) "Antonio" is 40' to the north and 18°20' to the east of "Venezia." "Benito" is 2°20' to the north and 23° to the east of "Venezia."

3.) From point "Venezia" proceed at high speed so as to reach point "Benito" at about 1500 German standard time on the appointed day. There you will be met by three or four destroyers which will bring instructions for your further passage.

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4.) In case the rendezvous with the destroyers does not materialize, continue to a point 1°10' to the north and 4° to the east of point "Benito." From there, make course to Cape Ortegale and proceed eastwards inside territorial waters.

Radiogram 0008 has been sent to Ship "28" for the new Commander, Captain Gumprich:

1.) Greetings from Naval Staff upon assumption of command.

2.) You are ordered to establish time required in dock and then to report plans and hold preliminary discussions on them with the Japanese. Naval Staff thinks that operations in the Pacific Ocean should be successful but adequate data is not available. An operation of six to eight months' duration is planned. Whether it will be possible to return home next winter cannot yet be foreseen. Naval Staff will endeavour to bring back Ship "28" in Nov./Dec. 1943. Copy of radiogram as per l/Skl I k 867/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to our air reconnaissance, there were 2 small cruisers, 1 destroyer and 2 merchant vessels proceeding at high speed on course 160° at 49°40' N, 13°55' W, at 1309.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

On 21 Mar. one ELM/J mine was cleared off Lorient by a minesweeping plane. On 20 Mar. there were 50 fishing vessels at sea in the northern area and 131 in the southern area. About 50 to 80 enemy planes attacked St. Nazaire between 2115 and 2235. Cables were damaged. The tanker HERMANN v. SALZEN was set on fire and the dry dock was heavily damaged. One tug received a direct hit. Workers' quarters were burnt out. Part of the passenger railroad station is on fire. The locks were not damaged. Two planes were shot down.

#### Channel Coast:

No special events.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

The Elbe - Hook convoy repulsed three PT boat attacks. The Hook - Flbe convoy put in to Helder during the night. One steamer was damaged in the roads by collision. Minesweeping was partially hampered by bad weather. The patrol positions "Worms" and "Mainz" were united at position "Mainz" off Terschelling in view of PT boat danger.

At 1408, two enemy bomber formations with 80 to 100 machines flew over the coast north of Terschelling, and from 1459 to 1513 attacked Wilhelmshaven from the southwest in three waves at an altitude of 7,000 - 8,000 m.

Naval anti-aircraft guns definitely shot down one plane over the Jade and probably a second one.

Damage in Wilhelmshaven, both to the city and the dock area, was severe. For details see "Daily Situation" and teletypes 1855 and 2040.

North Sea Station has requested that the HIPPER and SCHEER be withdrawn.

It will be difficult to accommodate these vessels elsewhere without endangering other essential installations or vessels. The matter will be investigated by Quartermaster Division.

Naval anti-aircraft guns kept up fire against eight enemy planes near Scheveningen from 1354 to 1402 and observed hits. At 1450 the 1st Squadron, 201st Group in Camperduin was bombed and strafed with some casualties.

Since it is not possible to employ the 1st Shipborne Squadron, 196th Group in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, Group North has forwarded a request from North Sea Station that, in special cases, planes be made available for coastal defense, in case of enemy landings, enemy minelaying operations, etc.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a Russian plane reported one of our westbound convoys in the area of Sylte Fiord. At 1800 Rosyth informed naval vessels that exercise "Hermann" would start at 2000.

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Photographic reconnaissance of Scapa at 1710 from an altitude of 10,000 m showed: between Flotta and Fara, 2 battleships, 3 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser, 15 (probable) barges; north of Cava, 1 destroyer; in Scapa Bay, 1 destroyer; between Fara and Hoy, 15 destroyers, 1 destroyer depot-ship, 1 floating dock, 1 freighter (5,000 GRT); in the southern part of Wide Firth, 10 coastal steamers; off Long Hope, the IREN (IRON?, Tr. N.), DUKE and 5 steamers. In three other sections no vessels could be detected.

From this it may be concluded that there is no unusual amount of merchant vessels or transports.

Own Situation:

Ice reconnaissance by the 5th Air Force revealed light drift ice south of Bear Island; on the northwest coast of the island, the ice seems to be dispersing considerably. From Bear Island to South Cape there is heavy pack ice. On the west coast of Spitsbergen there is a zone of drift ice about 15 km wide. The entrances to Bell Sound and Ice Fiord are free of ice.

At 1752 on 21 Mar., one of our convoys near Nordkyn was attacked by an enemy submarine which fired six misses, and at 1000 on 22 Mar., there was a submarine attack northwest of Tanahorn with two torpedoes which missed. Submarine chase has started at both places. At 0400 On 22 Mar., enemy planes in the Aalesund area dropped four bombs on the northern roads without damaging any vessels. Escort service was carried out according to plan. At 0130 the COBURG was released from anti-submarine escort in the Lopphavet declared area.

All times have been advanced two hours for Operation "Silesia."

Naval Command, Norway considers it urgently necessary to seal off Kamoey Fiord by a mine barrage, since even after the planned establishment of a 10.5 cm Army coastal battery near Nordmannsset, the protection of Mageroey will be inadequate. For details, see teletype 1150.

Group North has informed Naval Staff of its proposal to Naval Command, Norway that the entrance at Fugloey be blocked by a barrage, as Commanding Admiral, Task Force and the Fleet do not approve barrages "FS 1 - 2." (See teletype 1743).

Group North has ordered the immediate transfer of BEITZEN to Narvik and then to Alta, and has authorized her to operate in northern waters until the date of NUERNBERG's return trip about the end of April.

Naval Staff's decision in regard to the objections of Commander,



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Destroyers to the re-employment of BEITZEN, on which the above instructions of Group North are based, is outlined in order 1/Sk1 I op 853/43 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy of note and corresponding teletype to the Fleet, Commander, Destroyers and Group North in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

No special reports have been received from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

Off Tallinn and Surop the 11th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared one Russian L 2 mine. Further sweeping of the "Wartburg" barrage was carried out.

Our battery positions in the Glinki area came under fire from Seiskari. Slight material damage and casualties were caused. Our air attacks were again directed against Lavansaari. During the night of 21 Mar. there was considerable enemy air activity over the western part of the Gulf of Finland, bombs being dropped in the coastal area. No damage was caused.

Group North has forwarded the result of the conference between Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic and the 1st Air Force on 20 Mar.:

1.) Fighter cover will be assigned for net-laying operations. The 1st Air Force will assign a signals officer for fighter communication.

2.) Plans for "Froschlauch" have been completed. Date not yet fixed. Target areas "A" and "B", 400 mines each; "F", 200 mines; before beginning operation, the commander of the mine-laying formation will call on Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic to discuss the setting of the mines.

3.) Heavy air attacks on the Leningrad yards, with submarines as main targets, may be made but are not yet definite.

4.) "Walfang" preparations are being made with one German and one Finnish base as last year.

5.) Squadron "Buschmann" is to receive from the 1st Air Force twelve Arado 196 planes to be flown by Esthonians. Eastward reconnaissance limit will be extended to the line Seiskari - Cape Kolgampya. The Squadron is to cooperate with Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, according to whose orders reconnaissance is to be flown.

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6.) The 1st Air Force desires that a Naval Liaison Officer be assigned as soon as possible. The Air Force Personnel Department has not so far appointed an Air Force Liaison Officer to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic.

7.) The tactical operations by bombers and fighters will be ordered by the 1st Air Commander, Colonel Rieckhoff. One radio detachment each will be allotted to the 1st Air Force and to the 1st Air Commander.

8.) Support by means of nuisance raids will be furnished for minelaying operations if forces are available.

9.) The limit between the German and Finnish air zones may be crossed in combat operations. If known, the 1st Air Force will be informed by Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic.

10.) "Froschlaich" target areas will be controlled by German and Finnish coastal observation posts.

Group North requests immediate assignment of a Naval Liaison Officer to the 1st Air Force and of an Air Force Liaison Officer to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic and that heavy air attacks on Leningrad and Kronstadt be again demanded of Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Great air reconnaissance activity in the Bay of Biscay with 55 planes. In the evening, Freetown repeated an SOS call from a position 280 miles south of Cape Palmas (Liberia). It may be a successful Italian action.

2. Own Situation:

No special action reports have been received from the submarine groups in the Atlantic.

Submarine U "161" has been detached for the rendezvous with PIETRO ORSEOLO in CD 3733 on 26 Mar. The submarine is to report on the condition of the vessel and other important details from a position 150 miles west of the rendezvous.

Section "D" of Route "Anton" has been temporarily opened for attack on unaccompanied vessels until 24 Mar.



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Details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Thirty-nine planes of the 3rd Air Force were sent out against England and 14 were on operation in the Mediterranean.

In the North Sea, west of 4° E, three Danish fishing cutters were again sighted on westerly course.

The Air Force so far reports four enemy planes shot down in the attack on Wilhelmshaven. What was obviously the same enemy formation attacked Masslouis without causing special damage. In regard to the evening attack on St. Nazaire, see "Situation West Area."

2. Mediterranean Theater:

No report has yet come in on the results of the operation against Algiers. Our planes were heavily committed in support of the Army in the Tunisian area. Eight enemy planes were shot down. About 1400, Palermo was attacked by 24 four-engined enemy planes. Two planes were shot down by anti-aircraft fire. Damage reports have not yet been received. During the night of 22 Mar., small enemy air forces attacked Naples.

3. Eastern Front:

The only report received from the 5th Air Force is the result of the photographic reconnaissance of Scapa. (See "Situation Norway").

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The report from Intelligence Center, Spain on the sighting of 41 eastbound vessels on the evening of 21 Mar. near Tangier, has been corrected. There were only about 11 large vessels. A British auxiliary cruiser from this convoy put in to Gibraltar. During the night of 21 Mar., a cruiser of the FIJI class left Gibraltar, direction unknown. On the morning of 22 Mar., a convoy

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of 18 steamers with 3 escort vessels entered Gibraltar from the Mediterranean. Torpedo nets were laid as far as ten miles south-east of Europa Point. One side of the net was hoisted within two minutes. The number of vessels in port at Gibraltar could not be definitely established due to poor visibility.

Italian radio intelligence reports that the RODNEY and NELSON and one carrier are at sea, probably as cover for convoys coming from the west. During the course of the day, our air reconnaissance detected three eastbound convoys, one consisting of 12 and the other two of 7 vessels each.

Submarines were reported near Cape Gallo and near Messina.

Photographic reconnaissance of Tripoli shows, besides the results of the air attack already reported, one 10,000 GRT steamer, 3 7,000 GRT steamers and 3 smaller steamers in the port. Off the harbor, 1 large and 4 small steamers, 13 landing craft and 1 submarine were spotted. An ARETHUSA class cruiser and two destroyers, on course 40°, were sighted by our air reconnaissance off Benghazi on 22 Mar. One steamer was north of Derna and two escort vessels northwest of Tobruk, all sailing east.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. New operational areas in CH 82, 83, 75 and 76 have been assigned to our submarines in the Western Mediterranean. No action reports have been received.

PT boats and motor minesweepers were not sent out. On 20 Mar., the Italians swept and secured four mines from the known enemy barrage southeast of Marettimo and cleared two further mines on 21 Mar. east of Bizerta. Submarine-chasers "2203" and "2207" arrived at Naples. At 1600, a heavy enemy air attack was made on the port and town of Palermo. Details have not yet been received.

The Arsenal Commander, Toulon has reported that between 5 Dec. 1942 and 15 Mar. 1943 Naval Construction Office, Toulon salvaged 30 vessels, including 4 submarines, 2 submarine-chasers, 1 gunboat, 1 patrol boat and some tugs.

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

The convoy OMBRINA-MONTI, which was unsuccessfully attacked by torpedo bombers on the night of 21 Mar. east of Cape Carbonara, was again attacked at 1400, 18 miles east of Bizerta, by a strong enemy bomber formation. Motorship MONTI (3,200 GRT) was sunk and the OMBRINA was damaged, possibly by mines, but



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continued her passage and put in to Bizerta at 1800. With the MONTI, German cargo comprising 364 tons of fuel and mixed cargo, 8 motor vehicles and 11 guns was lost. At 1510 on 21 Mar., the tanker GIORGIO (4,487 GRT) was sunk by an enemy submarine 40 miles east of Palermo. Three destroyers landed German troops in Tunis. In the afternoon war transports KT "5", KT "6" and KT "13" entered Tunis. In the afternoon the steamer FOGGIA arrived at Sousse from Trapani. Motorship ROSELLI reached Naples from Bizerta during the night of 21 Mar.

It is now reported that at 2100 a plane crashed on a motor boat en route to Marsalla from Tunis and sank her. Traffic by small vessels between Sicily and Tunisia proceeded according to plan on 22 Mar.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Two Italian PT boats ran aground on 21 Mar. near Palaeo-Chora. The Swedish supply ship BARDALAND left Salonika for Canada. Convoys were again delayed on account of bad weather.

The first ex-French merchant vessel assigned to the Black Sea area, the steamer BIRGIT (1,971 GRT), arrived at Istanbul on 20 Mar. and is awaiting escort.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was little shipping off the east coast.

Own Situation:

An unsuccessful submarine attack, with four misses, was made on three naval landing craft at anchor off Cape Chauda. The submarine, which surfaced after the attack, was fired upon. One hit was observed. The spot where the submarine submerged was depth charged. No success was observed.

Owing to bad weather, no German or Italian PT boats were sent out during the night of 22 Mar. In the afternoon, three naval landing craft left Kerch for the 9th Anapa transport.

As the wind had dropped, ferry traffic to Taman and the fish salting plant was resumed by 22 naval landing craft, but had to be stopped again at 1600 because of rough seas at Taman. A lighter off Taman was set on fire by a low-level enemy attack.

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The cargo of ammunition exploded. Seven men were killed. An oil barge was damaged. Naval landing craft supply traffic concentrated mainly on transport to the east. In this direction 1,721 soldiers, various vehicles, 1,264 tons of supplies and 461 tons of ammunition were transferred. About 2,200 persons, 1,138 horses, 140 motorized and 752 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried over to the west.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.



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Items of Political Importance.

According to agency reports from Washington, Eden's visit has led to the unification of Anglo-Saxon policy towards France. Both Governments will support Giraud's military leadership as a basis for the unity it is hoped to achieve. De Gaulle's cooperation is welcomed; however, he has been told that attempts to establish himself as the sole leader of the French would not be supported. The U.S. press has expressed apprehension in regard to the inclusion of Russia in the task of the new organization of Europe.

Canadians of French descent have obtained exemption from mobilization for operations outside Canada.

In Turkey, the transfer of the Greek Government in Exile from London to Cairo is regarded as an indication of imminent actions in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is recalled that the Negus too was brought to East Africa when the British offensive against Abyssinia was opened.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Discussion on the intensification of the submarine program. Requirements made so far for dockyard and works capacity and for quotas have been based on a monthly production of 25 submarines. According to the statements of Naval (Ship) Construction Division, this target will be reached in the course of the year 1943, and, in addition, the construction of type XX transport submarines will be increased to a monthly delivery of three boats. The change to type VII C 42 will entail an additional burden on the dockyards owing to increase in the day's work by 20 to 30%.

For the purpose of examining the possibility of a further increase, Naval (Ship) Construction Division proposes to start from the following basis:

Attempts must be made to achieve an average completion of 27 submarines per month by the end of 1943.

In the first half of 1944 attempts must be made to maintain this performance in spite of the production of type XX and the change-over to type VII C 42.

From August 1944 the delivery of type XX boats will begin and, in addition, attempts must be made to achieve a monthly production of 27 boats in the second half of 1944 and the first half of 1945. In the second half of the year, completion can gradually be increased to an average of 30 boats as the type XX program, at

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present scheduled for 36 boats, decreases. In 1946 a monthly completion of 30 boats would then be maintained. Within this submarine program, Naval Staff has requested production of three torpedo boats and 24 minesweepers (three flotillas) per year. (See War Diary, 22 Mar.) This request is an addition to the minimum emergency requirement of light naval forces as acknowledged in May 1942.

On this basis, the Bureau of Naval Armament has calculated that the increased demand for German labor as the program develops will amount, in the course of time, to 3,000 for new construction and 8,000 for repairs. This is on the assumption that (after deducting a certain loss quota) an increase of 60% in the submarines always on operation will produce a maximum of simultaneous repair requirements for 180 boats, equivalent to 40% of the operational establishment. This calculation also takes into account an increase of bunkers by 143 new constructions in the west area and 38 in Norway.

The premise for this calculation is the elimination of the present deficit of 11,000 workers.

In regard to raw materials, here also the existing deficit of 15,000 tons of iron per month for ship construction must be filled. Requirements of this material for the above planned programs amount to 10,000 tons per month (4,200 tons for submarines, 6,000 tons for torpedo boats and minesweepers). Requirements of iron for torpedo tubes and torpedoes are relatively small. A special bottle neck, however, is lead, stocks of which are swiftly exhausted.

Besides the program set forth above, it is, at the same time, urgently necessary to see that imperative demands in connection with the protection of transports in the Tunisian traffic, Norway, and the Channel are fulfilled. In view of the experiences in the Africa supply service and the incalculable consequences which would result from interruption of the Mediterranean or Norwegian supplies, no more time must be lost. Provision of the vessels which are indispensable for these tasks is of the highest importance. Quartermaster Division, therefore, demands 15,000 tons of naval construction iron per month for additional new construction of 70 naval landing craft and 30 multi-purpose boats per quarter.

This gives, therefore, a total requirement of 40,000 tons of iron for naval construction per month, to be authorized by Minister Speer.

Commander in Chief, Navy has decided that the above demands in regard to labor and iron should be made. Furthermore, equal



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priority for submarine construction and tank production and the required amount of 28,000 tons of construction iron for the second quarter of 1943 (see War Diary, 20 Mar.) are to be requested.

A conference with Minister Speer was held on the same day. The demanded assignment of a number to the submarine program, i.e., equality of submarine construction and the tank program, was granted. On the matter of labor, the Minister expressed himself favorably. 20,000 tons of construction iron were granted; covering of the remaining 8,000 tons is being examined. The Fuehrer will be approached at an early date, by means of a joint report from Commander in Chief, Navy and Minister Speer, in regard to the requirement of 40,000 tons of naval construction iron per month. Chief, Naval Staff is determined to intensify not only the submarine program, but also the program for patrol and escort vessels. He is convinced that the Fuehrer will fully comprehend the anxiety over the threat of a catastrophe in the matter of supplies.

For the report to the Fuehrer, Naval Staff is instructed to prepare text and charts of all sea transport and supply commitments, such as to comprise and substantiate all demands that will arise and must be met in connection with the Navy's escort tasks.

II. On 17 Mar., Group North / Commanding Admiral, Fleet submitted, for information, instructions issued to Commanding Admiral, Task Force, Admiral, Northern Waters and the 5th Air Force for operations in the northern area, with copies to the Fleet, Naval Command, Norway and Commander, Destroyers. Copy as per 1/Skl 827/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in Files 1/Skl I op VIII, 1, Vol. 3, page 166/186.

Chief, Naval Staff and Naval Staff agree that, on the decisive matter of the combat functions of the naval forces, this instruction does not conform with the intentions unmistakably expressed in Naval Staff's order in regard to surface force operations issued on 19 Feb. 1943 and the supplementary order of 10 Mar. 1943. In accordance with these orders and on the basis of oral instructions given by Chief, Naval Staff to Commanding Admiral, Fleet, Commanding Admiral, Task Force and Admiral, Northern Waters, there was no longer expected to be any doubt that the primary task of the Fleet forces in the northern area was, at present, to be to seek combat against enemy traffic to Russia and that this function was not to be overshadowed or prejudiced by the secondary one of defense against possible enemy landings.

It is disappointing to find that Group North's instructions, on the other hand, envisage the protection of Norway and Northern Finland from enemy landings as the primary task and support of submarines and the Air Force in operations against enemy shipping in northern waters, when these begin, as only secondary.

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Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that Group North be instructed to supplement or correct its instructions to conform with Naval Staff's views.

III. Chief, Operations Division reports that German Naval Command, Italy has requested that the destroyer HERMES be withdrawn from the Aegean Sea and assigned to the Tunisian patrol and escort service. This request can be granted only if the destroyer can be replaced by one or two Italian destroyers or torpedo boats. Chief, Naval Staff concurs. Admiral Ruge is charged with clearing up the question of replacement with the Italian Admiralty.

According to further information from Admiral Ruge, the equipment of Italian destroyers and torpedo boats with German anti-aircraft guns, particularly 2 cm four-barreled guns, is an urgent necessity. Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that everything be done to meet this demand, even at the expense of the weapons promised to the Spanish Navy. However undesirable it may be as regards the Spaniards, the Spanish deliveries of 2 cm four-barreled guns will have to be delayed and, possibly, compensated for by an increased number of 3.7 cm anti-aircraft guns taken from the submarines.

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Special Items.

I. North Sea Station has reported that, according to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, out of the 699 mines of West Wall barrages "6", "7", "8" and 560 mines of barrages "9", "10", "11" laid in July 1942, 45 and 91 respectively have been washed ashore in the last 2 - 3 months alone. Numerous other EMC mines have doubtless drifted ashore from the Southwest Wall barrages. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North has therefore proposed that the existing barrages be extended by additional barrages ("SW 15-17"). North Sea Station Command requests basic approval of the plan and estimates the number of mines required as 1372 for barrages "SW 12-17" and 1297 for barrages "4c", "5b", "9a", and "14a". It is planned to use EMC and UMB type mines with various anti-sweeping devices and plentiful explosive and cutting floats. In view of the danger of landings which, the Station feels, threatens the southern part of the Dutch coast, it has requested that the mines required for barrages "SW 12-17" be prepared.

Naval Staff has decided that, due to shortage of material, it is not at present possible to fix the mines for the entire plan and has given general approval for barrages "14a", "SW 12" and "13" as, in assessing the landing threat, these appear the most urgent.

Group West has been advised that barrages "SW 12" and "13" are approved and has been requested to submit proposals for reinforcement to be continued to the southwest.



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II. Instructions to Group South in regard to the proposal of the Naval Attaché, Istanbul have been forwarded by teletype 1/Skl II 8802/43 geh. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX. The Naval Attaché suggested that the steamers to be transferred to the Black Sea be loaded with chromium ore.

III. The examination made by Operations Division, as promised by Chief, Naval Staff during the German/Italian naval discussions in Rome, as to the possibility of delivering to the Italians an additional 18,000 tons of fuel oil for Fleet operations in case of a landing on Sardinia, again showed that 11,500 tons, over and above current deliveries could be provided for immediate shipment on the following conditions (which, however, are impracticable):

a.) Abandonment of the plans for transfer of light forces in April.

b.) Curtailment of operations by naval forces in Norway during the first half of April.

c.) Abandonment of project to bring fuel oil stocks in Norway up to security standard of 25,000 tons.

On the basis of this report, Chief, Naval Staff has decided that any additional delivery of fuel oil to Italy is out of the question since the above conditions cannot be accepted.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff had already received a similar report some days ago. The new examination was made in order to exhaust all possibilities of support by the German Navy in view of the strained situation in Tunisia.

Naval Staff assumes that Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has forwarded a corresponding report to the Italian Admiralty.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff has ordered that the advisability of distributing the oil for Norway among several tankers be investigated.

IV. The Naval Attaché, Rome has forwarded the following extracts from a report by the Italian Naval Attaché, Lisbon on an interview with a well-informed member of the Spanish Embassy in London:

1.) It is the generally held opinion in authoritative circles in London that the war is already won. They are less optimistic in regard to its duration and think it may be long. However, it is the general conviction that, from the political as well as the military aspect, time is on the side, if not of the Allies, at least of Great Britain.

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2.) Food Situation: There is certainly no abundance, but the rations are quite adequate for the normal daily need.

3.) The submarine war is the topic of the day. The general tendency is one of confidence that the Admiralty will find sufficient and effective means for successfully combating German submarines and that new American shipbuilding will gradually outstep the loss of merchant vessels.

4.) Anglo-American relations:

A certain embarrassment is evident in regard to British relations with the U.S.A. Little satisfaction is derived from the American argumentation which clearly gives to understand that:

a.) It was solely thanks to American help that Great Britain came through the years 1940/41.

b.) The present prospect of an Allied victory is 90% due to the American war effort. As a whole, however, the present lack of harmony is of no great import. The conviction prevails that, at the proper moment, expert British diplomacy will succeed in gaining the upper hand of the diplomatically inexperienced Americans. British policy will not attempt to handle all the political "dynamite" until the Peace Conference is held.

5.) Anglo-Russian relations:

With the increasing successes of the Red Army, a certain apprehension has arisen that the Bolshevist threat, as a political and world doctrine, is getting uncomfortably near to Great Britain. It is felt, however, that Bolshevism has turned over a new leaf and has lost much of its seductive poison and that nowadays it is much more moderate than it was. Proof of this is seen in the fact that many ex-Czarist officers who had been living in England have recently joined the Red Army. On the other hand, Russia's military efforts to expand her power towards the west arouse the fear that she might emerge from the war as the most powerful nation in Europe. This would undermine the British idea of "Great Britain as a factor of safety for Europe." Churchill, however, discards such ideas with the remark: First win the war, then - perhaps - discuss it.

Russia is not in favor of a British infiltration in the Balkans. On the other hand, Great Britain would like, when the time comes, to use Turkey as a jumping-off base for her own plans in the Balkans. The right moment for this would be if the Russian military successes in the east were to assume a "revolutionary character." With respect to this British policy in the southeast, Churchill is satisfied with Turkey's present attitude. Turkey has been chosen to act some day as a "parachute."



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6.) Anglo-French relations:

On the basis of the unfortunate experiences of recent months, it has become the conviction that neither with de Gaulle nor with Giraud can a situation such as Great Britain would like be restored in France. De Gaulle's aspiration to be treated as England's equal is not regarded with favor. Giraud is certainly held in high personal esteem, but only as a soldier. The present trend in authoritative British circles is towards restoration of the monarchy in France as the ultimate solution.

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Situation 23 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from South American diplomatic circles forwarded by an agent of unknown reliability, a U.S. formation of 1 heavy and 2 light cruisers and 4 submarines entered Dakar on 10 Mar. After refuelling, the formation put to sea again to the north.

2. Own Situation:

By radiogram 1102, the DOGGERBANK has been instructed to exchange recognition signals with our planes only if there are no other planes or vessels in the vicinity.

By radiogram 1500, the position given in radiogram 1622 of 22 Mar. was corrected to read 40° N, 13°40' W.

By radiogram 1413, the weather report for 23 Mar. was forwarded to the DOGGERBANK. Near the coast conditions of visibility and cloud are very changeable.

Cancelling the instructions to the KARIN contained in radiogram 2338 of 15 Mar., the ship's rendezvous with one of our submarines not earlier than 26 Mar. is changed to a point 1°30' to the north and 4' to the east of point "Raumleiter." (See radiogram 0849).

The REGENSBURG and KARIN received weather report for 23 Mar. by radiogram 1622.

In addition, the REGENSBURG has been instructed by radiogram 2152 as follows:

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1.) The position lines of enemy convoys, whose exact locations are unknown, have been estimated by Naval Staff at 0800 on 24 Mar. to be:

a.) Convoy SC 123, from grid square AJ 56 via 93 to BD 11, easterly course, 7 knots.

b.) Convoy ONS 1 from grid square AD 98 via AK 17, 51 and 59, westerly course, 7 knots.

c.) Convoy ON 2 from grid square AE 78 via AL 27 to AL 57, westerly course, 8 knots.

2.) The submarine has not so far reported the rendezvous. Naval Staff presumes that ship and submarine are still together.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO received the following instructions by radiogram 0823:

1.) Rendezvous with German submarine is planned to take place at point "Venezia."

2.) The following reports are to be given to the submarine which will later forward them by radiogram to Naval Staff:

a.) Maximum continuous speed,

b.) Condition of engines,

c.) Other reports or questions which might be of importance to Naval Staff.

3.) Departure from "Venezia" to depend on enemy situation and weather conditions in the Bay of Biscay. Therefore, it may be necessary to wait in the area around "Venezia" until the general situation warrants release of sailing orders.

All vessels in foreign waters were informed by radiogram 1849 that our own planes, types FW 200 and Ju 88 and enemy planes, types Sunderland, Whitley, Catalina, Consolidated and Boeing may be encountered in and to the west of the Bay of Biscay.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report based on a report



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from the Swiss Consulate in Glasgow, large sections of the British Fleet, especially light vessels, have been assembled since the beginning of March in Firth of Forth.

Reconnaissance by Air Commander, Atlantic Coast produced no results.

Reuter reports that Admiral Tovey has handed over command of the Home Fleet to Vice Admiral Fraser and has been appointed Commander in Chief, Nore. Vice Admiral Willis has taken over command of Group "H" (Gibraltar). Other changes have been made in high positions of the Admiralty.

Political circles in Stockholm attribute great significance to the assumption of the Nore command by Tovey (who is not only one of the most outstanding Admirals but also enjoys Churchill's special confidence) since the Nore is the point of departure for large-scale operations in the southern North Sea.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Mine-exploding vessels cleared six ELM/J mines off La Pallice.

Group West has requested Air Commander, Atlantic Coast to continue reconnaissance for the DOGGERBANK on 23 Mar. as heretofore, starting as early as possible. She is presumed to be off the coast between Lisbon and Cape Villano.

An enemy air attack was made on Nantes at 1544. The St. Joseph locomotive works were set on fire. For supplementary report on the enemy air attack on the evening of 22 Mar. on St. Nazaire, see teletypes 0925 and 1253. Accurate anti-aircraft fire forced most of the attacking planes, numbering about 80, to drop their bombs into the Loire and on the town suburbs without taking aim. Three enemy planes were observed to be shot down. Military damage was insignificant.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Three ELM/J mines were cleared off Scheweningen and north of Terschelling. Escort and patrol services of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North were carried out according to plan. An enemy plane was shot down near Terschelling by a patrol boat. Three British

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were rescued from a rubber dinghy. Danish fishing cutters which, in the last few days were again found west of the declared area, were fired on, by order of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North. In the future they will be bombed, as it is suspected that, for special recompense, vessels traverse the declared area with nets in order to explore channels through the mines for the British. (See teletype 1116).

Supplementary statements on the damage to Wilhelmshaven caused by the heavy enemy air raid on 22 Mar., have been made by North Sea Station in teletype 0930. Three of the attackers were shot down by fighters and two by naval anti-aircraft fire.

In the area of North Sea Station "attention for coastal section" was ordered from 2250 on 22 Mar., and "alert for coast alarm" from 0122 to 0630. Reasons are not yet known.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, there were four submarines on exercises at sea in the Kola Bay area. At noon one submarine put out from Polarnoye into the Barents Sea.

Air activity over the central and northern North Sea was normal.

The master photographic report on Scapa Flow of 22 Mar. (see teletype 1559) does not add any significant information to the preliminary report. (See War Diary, 22 Mar.).

A report received by the Italian Intelligence Service, through various channels, alleges that the U.S. Admiral Standley has reported from Moscow to the Navy Department, Washington that a German Fleet consisting of the TIRPITZ, LUETZOW, PRINZ EUGEN with numerous smaller vessels and long-range torpedo-planes is concentrated in north Norwegian ports. It is evidently the intention to collaborate with the submarines to destroy the five Russian convoys. Admiral Moore reported to the British Admiralty that, on instructions from the Navy Department and from Admiral Leahy on behalf of the President, Admiral King has requested the British to take immediate steps to reinforce the convoy escort by armored ships and carriers, in order to avoid the threatened total destruction of the convoys with their 170 ships totalling 788,000 GRT and vast quantities of war material.

The present escort, especially of the first convoy which is already under way, is said to be very weak. The protection of the second and third convoys might still be improved during their passage and the fourth and fifth convoys would be protected by U.S. vessels even before departure.



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It would appear necessary to obtain details as to the authenticity of this report which might be a "plant" for the purpose of misleading our northern waters strategy.

Own Situation:

On the morning of 21 Mar., enemy batteries fired 23 rounds without effect on one of our westbound convoys near Petsamo. The fire was returned by our batteries. On the same day, Submarine Chaser Group 1111 reported an enemy submarine probably destroyed north of Nordkyn. Enemy air activity was observed in the areas of Petsamo and Vardoe. Escort service was carried out according to plan. In the area of the north and Arctic coasts, 22 vessels were escorted north and 13 south. Seven vessels sailed without escort.

On 19 Mar., a stable horizontal barrage was laid in the western auxiliary channel near Flatoey.

At 0115, 15 men, presumably landed by a PT boat, attacked our Army post at the Burskoey/Harreidos bridge. The bridge was not damaged. Search was unsuccessful. On 22 Mar., an unidentified fishing cutter was bombed by our planes about 80 miles west of the entrance to Folda Fiord. The cutter answered with rifle fire. At 1020 on 23 Mar. the cutter was again spotted and Admiral, North Norwegian Coast sent out two minesweepers to capture her. The Air Force reports that the minesweepers opened fire and then seized the cutter and brought her in. This has not yet been confirmed by naval sources.

In the west coast area 8 vessels were escorted north and 8 south.

Admiral, Northern Waters reports departure of the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force from Bogen Bay to Alta at 2300. It will proceed outside the skerries. At 0600 the BEITZEN left Trondheim for Narvik.

Submarine U "703" reported the further course of the ice border and replied, in answer to an enquiry, that the passage north of Jan Mayen was practicable for convoys.

Seven submarines in the reconnaissance line were ordered to proceed at 0600 on 23 Mar. on course 335° at 6 knots and to be in patrol line AA 9631 - AB 7795 by 0300 on 24 Mar.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

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Escort and patrol service in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic was carried out according to plan and without incident.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that the Tallinn - Surop search sweep has been terminated. The transfer of the minesweeper formations to the east is going according to plan. The laying of the "Nashorn" barrages will be started on 24 Mar.

Admiral, Baltic States reports from Kronstadt Bay that no special incidents occurred up to the morning of 23 Mar. Our planes carried out an attack on a battery position on Seiskari. A new airfield is being built at Seiskari. On the evening of 22 Mar. Army coastal battery "509" was unsuccessfully attacked with 15 medium and heavy bombs. During the night there was brisk enemy air activity in the sea area of Tytersaari towards the west. In the evening and during the night of 22 Mar., Tallinn was attacked in several waves. Railroad stations, Todt Organization stores and the Volta plant were hit. Military damage was slight.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay by 41 planes.

##### 2. Own Situation:

No action reports have come in from the North Atlantic. Submarine U "665", which was expected at La Pallice on 23 Mar., has been reported overdue. Two flights of four Ju 88 planes will be sent out to look for her on 24 Mar.

On Route "Anton", section "A" is to be closed from 25 Mar. to 1 Apr. inclusive. Thus the whole Route is closed for attacks on unaccompanied vessels. On 22 Mar., a submarine shot down a four-engined Halifax plane in the western Bay of Biscay. One survivor was taken prisoner.

Of the boats in the south, submarine U "516" reports on 20 Mar. from the Cape area, the sinking of a U.S. "C" type steamer (7,000 GRT) en route from Capetown to Bahia with oil fruits.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Naval Staff has informed the Japanese Naval Attaché, Berlin that it is planned for our submarines to operate in the Indian Ocean



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on both sides of Madagascar, in the sea area of Mombassa and of the Seychelles and has requested the agreement of the Japanese Naval Staff to the extension of our operational area to the north up to 0° and west of the line 0°, 65° E to 20° S, 70° E. Copy of letter 1/Skl I opa 880/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

During the night of 22 Mar., 44 of our bombers attacked Hartlepool. The raid was hampered by bad weather and can have had only a nuisance effect. On 22 Mar. two of four Ju 88 planes, operating in the Biscay area for Commanding Admiral, Submarines, were probably shot down by enemy planes. On 23 Mar. 12 Ju 88's in three flights operating for Commanding Admiral, Submarines shot down one Boeing Fortress and one Liberator. One of our planes was totally lost when it hit the water in a dive attack.

During the day 207 planes of the 3rd Air Force were on operation in the west and 10 in the Mediterranean.

An attack on Nantes was made by 12 Mosquito planes between 1500 and 1610. For details and damage see "Daily Situation."

During the night of 23 Mar., flights by ten enemy planes were reported in the area of the West Frisian Islands and three into the area of Juist, Emden, Hanover and Lingen. Two of these planes were shot down near Terschelling, one by anti-aircraft fire and one by a patrol boat. At 2200, a plane flew over Wilhelmshaven at a great altitude, probably on a nuisance raid. About midnight, strafing attacks were made on freight trains near Bramstedt and in the Oldenburg - Bremen area. No damage was done. Three courier planes flew from Sweden to England. In Belgium, Northern and Southern France, a total of 33 incursions, without attack, was reported.

Sixty-six of our night fighters were sent out but did not contact the enemy.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

During the night of 22 Mar., two steamers of 8,000 GRT each were heavily damaged by aerial torpedo, one near Cape Tenes and the other on the Oran roads.

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Over the Army fronts in Tunisia, dive bombers, heavy fighters and fighter bombers were on operation. Our fighters shot down three planes in Northern Tunisia. In the southern and central sectors, six enemy planes were shot down. For details see "Daily Situation."

Two Ju 88 planes on close escort with our convoy CEILA OLU, observed the sinking of one of the escort vessels by submarine attack near Cape Spartivento and dropped four bombs on the submarine's presumed position.

Eighteen Me 109 planes performed nine missions for the escort of another convoy and fired at a Beaufighter plane.

The Italian Air Force reports that one 10,000 GRT steamer was sunk and another large one was torpedoed on the Algiers roads by seven torpedo bombers on 22 Mar.

On the evening of 23 Mar., 13 of our bombers and torpedo bombers set out against an enemy convoy east of Djellies. Thirteen more bombers were sent out on night operations over the Army fronts.

### 3. Eastern Front:

On 23 Mar., 28 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts.

During the night of 23 Mar., the harbor of Molotovsk (35 km west of Archangel) was attacked by eight bombers. Hits were observed on railroad yards and tracks.

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## VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

### 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

At 1745 on 22 Mar., a convoy of 3 freighters, and at 1230 on 23 Mar., a British auxiliary cruiser of the ULSTER MONARCH type with one destroyer left Gibraltar for the Atlantic. On the afternoon of the same day, 3 French freighters, 1 cable layer, 24 U.S. landing craft and 2 destroyers arrived from the Atlantic. A number of small vessels and escort boats and another destroyer also put in during the day.

In the forenoon, a convoy of 3 French transports, 2 of them with colored troops aboard, and 1 French steamer left for the Mediterranean. There was nothing special to note regarding ships in the harbor at 1400.



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Convoy movements in the Western Mediterranean were lively. East-bound and westbound convoys of up to eight vessels were spotted off the Algerian coast.

According to an intelligence report from Tangier via Spain, the MAIDSTONE is in Algiers with about six submarines.

In the forenoon, there was considerable convoy traffic off the Egyptian coast. Nine steamers with 2 destroyers and 2 escort vessels were sighted northeast of Sollum, and 3 steamers with 2 destroyers and 2 escort vessels west of Alexandria, both convoys on a westerly course.

The Naval Intelligence Station, Istanbul reports that the alleged appearance of seaplane tenders or carriers in Syrian harbors has not been confirmed.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were in the operational area. No reports have been received from our submarines.

Our PT boats and motor minesweepers were not sent out. Minesweeper M "6022" and the six auxiliary motor minesweepers are en route from Trapani to Bizerta. Their arrival in Bizerta has not yet been reported.

In the opinion of German Naval Command, Italy the fact that the motorship OMBRINA struck a mine in the Bizerta area indicates that the convoy route has recently been mined from the air.

The Italian motor minesweeper group from Bizerta cleared a mine off Cape Zebib.

At noon, 15 Liberators attacked Messina from a great altitude. Hits were scored on the harbor and on railroad installations. A fuel train was set on fire. A full report on the damage in Palermo on 22 Mar. has been received. The steamer VOLTA (1,189 GRT) received a direct hit and has completely disappeared. The quay is temporarily unusable for loading. The steamer LANUSEI (3,713 GRT) capsized and sank within 15 minutes. The tanker LABOR (510 GRT) capsized and blew up. The pump steamer MANDOVA and the coastal steamer ROMOLO also sank. Other coastal vessels are sinking. Destroyer GRANATIERE, steamer TODI (4,999 GRT), steamer JAC SCHIAFFINO (1,757 GRT) and two naval landing craft were damaged. Two landing craft loading sites have been cleared. (See teletype 1200).

## 3. Sea Transport Situation:

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On the evening of 22 Mar., three of our submarine-chasers left Naples and two left Crotona to escort the convoys of tanker HERRENSCHMIDT (9,103 GRT) and steamer ZEILA. The steamers BOTTIGLIERI and SKOTTFOSS have sailed from Sousse for Trapani accompanied by one torpedo boat and one corvette. Small vessels proceeded between Sicily and Tunisia according to plan.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Nothing special to report.

In view of lively shipping and the troop transfers reported by agents to be taking place in Palestinian and Syrian ports, Group South claims that air reconnaissance in the Eastern Mediterranean is inadequate. The last reconnaissance of Beirut was on 6 Mar., and of Port Said and Suez on 3 Mar. The two long-range reconnaissance planes allotted to the 10th Air Corps have not improved reconnaissance to the necessary degree. The Group assumes that Eastern Mediterranean traffic is but weakly escorted as no increase in naval forces has been detected. Therefore, it believes that submarine operations against the Palestine, Syrian and Cyprus traffic would have good prospects of destroying shipping with consequent disruption of the enemy's preparations for a possible penetration into the Aegean area. Greater use of submarines would also be helpful in checking up on enemy movements. Group South's assumption that enemy traffic in the Eastern Mediterranean is weakly protected is shared by Naval Staff. It is planned to assign submarines to the Eastern Mediterranean also in order to accustom young commanders to the difficult Mediterranean conditions in the less dangerous areas. Nevertheless, the Western Mediterranean must continue to be the main center of submarine operations for the time being. Group South has been advised accordingly.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, in the afternoon one destroyer, and in the evening, a cruiser, probably the DORA, were off the central to southern Caucasian coast. Four submarines were detected in the central to western Black Sea and two submarines in the area off the east coast.

Own Situation:

At 0400 enemy PT boat attacks on naval landing craft of



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the 9th Anapa transport, anchored ten miles west of Cape Takil, were repulsed. On account of weather conditions the naval landing craft entered Theodosia.

The Kerch - Taman fish-salting plant ferry traffic had to be suspended due to rough seas. Two heavy combined operations ferries and two landing craft sprang leaks due to collision. Combined operations craft traffic to Kossa Chuchka was hampered by drifting ice. 2,600 persons, 130 motorized and 357 horse-drawn vehicles, 1,190 horses, and 304 tons of war material were transferred to the west. Fifteen naval landing craft made 17 crossings.

On the night of 23 Mar., PT boats were unable to operate due to bad weather.

Steamer convoys and lumber transports were still suspended.

At Novorossisk there was gunfire on both sides. The east and north harbors came under enemy fire.

In order to reinforce escort forces, Group South had requested that naval landing craft (artillery) be assigned first to the Caspian Sea, and also to the Black Sea if the situation demanded it. Twelve artillery motor lighters were promised by Quartermaster Division. Group South reports that the allotted six artillery motor lighters can only be used as stationary gun carriers and not as naval landing craft (artillery) since they have neither sleeping nor galley accommodation. The Group urgently requests six naval landing craft (artillery) for reinforcement of the escort forces. (See teletype 2045).

Furthermore, in view of the increased demand for protection of sea-borne supplies, Group South has requested the following: reinforcement of the sea target and anti-aircraft armament on the transports; for close escort, helicopters to be carried by submarine-chaser WITNESS and to be used on ships and for coastal waters. A first allotment of 15 helicopters is requested with a current monthly allocation of three machines for losses. (See teletype 1325).

Group South also draws attention to the fact that the loss of naval landing craft in the Kerch Strait ferry traffic due to mines, ice and bad weather has increased beyond all expectations and that, when the Azov traffic begins, further losses by enemy action must be counted on, since almost the whole southeast coast of the Sea of Azov including the Don estuary will remain in enemy hands. When the Air Force supply transport service from Kerch to

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the east ceases, an additional 1,150 tons per day will have to be carried by sea across the Strait. This will further limit the possibility of withdrawing naval landing craft for the Sea of Azov. Therefore, the Group contends that the already requested assignment of ten further naval landing craft is of the utmost urgency. (See teletype 1710).

All these demands will be dealt with by Quartermaster Division.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

In the House of Commons on 23 Mar., Churchill was asked for assurance that no Axis proposals in regard to suspension of hostilities would be accepted before the House of Commons had had an opportunity to express its opinion.

Churchill answered evasively with a reference to the constitutional customs.

In the opinion of diplomatic circles, this question in the House of Commons may have some connection with current rumors as to the result of Ribbentrop's and General Werlimont's last visit to Rome. From the fact that, as shown by the minutes of the conference, the Italians stated that the loss of Tunisia might create a new situation, it is concluded that Italian diplomacy thereby wishes to ensure freedom of action for a new course. As a further consequence, the British Parliament evidently thinks that negotiations for a separate peace are already near to hand.

Portugal:

According to a diplomatic report, the latest German submarine successes have aroused great apprehension in Anglo-American circles. Seizure of the Portuguese and Spanish Atlantic islands as bases for convoy traffic has therefore, in the Portuguese view, gained new importance.

Finland:

The U.S. Chief of Information, Davis, declared that Finland has now lost all sympathy in the U.S.A.

Turkey:

Reuter reports that the reception of a very friendly message from the President of the Turkish National Assembly was announced in the House of Lords. According to the Official German News Agency (DNB) the U.S.A. have given four 10,000 GRT vessels to Turkey on charter. Discussions with Great Britain on the purchase of six other ships are still going on. Ports in Southern Turkey are being expanded with the assistance of British engineers.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. A report from Commanding Admiral, Group West, which has been received by Quartermaster Division, states that the matter of expanding bases in France still cannot yet be discussed as it involves Fuehrer Decree No. 40.

On his forthcoming trip to France, Commander in Chief, Navy will try to have Group West and Commanding General, Armed Forces, West expedite the matter.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

A.) It is proposed to issue the following instructions to Group North:

1.) Supplementing Naval Staff's order "Employment of Surface Forces" (1/Skl I op 502/43 Gkdos. Chfs. of 19 Feb.), the view expressed by Commander in Chief, Navy in discussions with Commanding Admiral, Fleet and Commanding Admiral, Task Force as to the functions of the Task Force in northern waters is confirmed as follows:

a.) Commander in Chief, Navy has obtained the Fuehrer's consent to the transfer of the SCHARNHORST, by which the northern waters Task Force will be considerably strengthened for the attack and destruction of convoys by surface forces.

b.) This is the primary task and is to be given first consideration in the plans of the Commanding Admiral and Commanders of the formation. It must not be overshadowed by thoughts of protecting Norway, which are to be regarded as secondary.

2.) This must be clearly expressed to Commanding Admiral, Task Force, Admiral, Northern Waters and Commanders in modification of Group North's instructions for the employment of naval forces in northern waters. Chief, Naval Staff agreed.

A corresponding teletype has been sent by 1/Skl I a 827/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

B.) Group North supports the request of Commanding Admiral, Task Force of 22 Mar. that the NUERNBERG be moved to Harstad in order, if possible, to avoid the risky and lengthy passage through the Tjeld Sund.



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Naval Staff supported the request and proposed that the transfer of the NUERNBERG, GREIF and JAGUAR to Harstad be approved. Chief, Naval Staff agreed.

C.) Group South and Admiral, Aegean Sea have made urgent representations concerning the withdrawal of the HERMES from the Aegean Sea to the Italian area. After thorough consideration of all pros and cons, Chief, Naval Staff has concluded that the concentration of all forces in the Tunisian area is the most pressing need. Admiral Ruge's report on his negotiations with the Italian Admiralty in regard to a replacement has not yet been received.

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Special Items.

I. Chief, Naval Staff is to visit the west area from 25 to 28 Mar. in order to inspect PT boats and submarine bases, and to hold discussions with Commanding Admiral, Group West and Commanding General, Armed Forces, West.

II. Memorandum of the conference between the Japanese Naval Attaché, Admiral Yokoi and Chief, Operations Division on 22 Mar. as per 1/Sk1 I opa 891/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV. The main items were the transfer of German submarines to Japan and the fuelling at Penang of German submarines operating in the western part of the Indian Ocean.

On the same day, a meeting took place between Vice Admiral Nomura and Chief of Staff, Naval Staff. The matters discussed are contained in Files I opa X, 1, "Cooperation Germany / Japan", pages 278 - 294.

III. In the matter of delivering submarines to the Japanese Navy, Chief, Naval Staff decided:

1.) The delivery of submarines to the Japanese is necessary for economic and military reasons. The Navy had previously mentioned one or two boats; the Fuehrer and the Reich Foreign Minister have promised the Japanese two boats. Two boats are to be delivered.

2.) In the expectation that Japan will keep her promise to step up submarine construction, Germany too will do all in her power to deliver the first boat to the Japanese as quickly as possible, that is, a German crew (plus technicians) will take the first boat to Japan.

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3.) The IX c boat is the most suitable for operations in the Arabian Sea, in view of the distance from bases under Japanese control. Type IX D 2 not only takes longer to build, but is unsuitable for convoy attack, and therefore is not to be recommended in the long run.

4.) Series construction in Germany on account of Japan cannot be considered.

5.) Our willingness to cooperate could hardly be better demonstrated.

6.) The matter of payment and of economic exchange has not yet been raised in the discussions between the two Navies.

Additional note:

a.) Quartermaster Division and the Naval Attaché are requested to handle the delivery.

b.) Chief of Staff, Naval Staff will inform Vice Admiral Nomura of the decision of Commander in Chief, Navy.

c.) The second type IX c boat must be fetched from Germany by a Japanese crew.

Vice Admiral Nomura has been correspondingly informed by letter from Chief of Staff, Naval Staff. Copy as per 1/Skl I opa 893/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo has been advised accordingly by telegram 1/Skl I opa 890/43. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XV.

IV. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has advised Naval Staff of the Fuehrer's order for employment of troops in connection with the instructions on the eastern campaign during the coming months. The part that regards Naval Staff is Section III which reads as follows:

"The final shaping of the Gotenkopf bridgehead is closely bound up with the sea transports across the Strait of Kerch as well as on the south coast of the Crimea and in the Sea of Azov.

"Shipping suitable for transport in the Strait of Kerch and the Sea of Azov is limited and is inadequate for the simultaneous maintenance of a high ferry performance and for large troop and material transport movements from the Gotenkopf to the harbors in the northern Sea of Azov.



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"The adjustment of these transport operations, for which the demands of the Army are decisive, will be arranged by direct agreement between Army and Navy. The result is to be reported.

"For sea transport operations across the Sea of Azov the Air Force will have to assign air cover."

Group South has been advised accordingly, with instructions to report the arrangement reached with the Army.

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Situation 24 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, U.S. warships and merchantmen have lately been putting in to Monrovia and Dakar by preference. At the beginning of March, only 1 auxiliary aircraft carrier, 3 corvettes and, temporarily, the FROBISHER were reported at Freetown.

Another intelligence report states that all troops standing by in South Africa have now been shipped. Naval Intelligence Division has been ordered to check this report.

Intelligence Center, Spain reports that on 22 Mar. two submarines and one steamer with fuel and matériel put in to Port Etienne from the south.

According to an Italian report, a convoy of 18 loaded steamers and tankers with unidentified escort was sighted on 16 Mar. at 25°06' N, 29°06' W, sailing southeast.

2. Own Situation:

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports that Ship "28" will be ready at the beginning of May and assumes that she will be assigned an operational area west of South America.

This assumption conforms with the plans of Naval Staff.

By radiogram 0226, the DOGGERBANK has been informed on the positions of Spanish steamers; by radiogram 1206, about an SOS call from an unidentified vessel "FLZH" from 43°40' N, 10°40' W, asking for assistance from a plane of the British 19th Group; by radiogram 1433, on weather report for 24 Mar., and by radiogram 2150, on air reconnaissance sighting reports on the afternoon of 23 Mar.

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Submarine U "161" reported her position as 42° N, 37° W. The report does not indicate whether the REGENSBURG has been met or not.

REGENSBURG has therefore been instructed by radiogram 1031 that if the rendezvous has not taken place she is to proceed at once to submarine U "161" which is waiting at the position reported.

In addition, the REGENSBURG has been advised, by radiogram 2038, of the position lines of enemy convoys, as determined by dead reckoning, for 25 Mar., namely:

- a.) SC 123 from AK 45 to 88, course east-northeast, speed 7 knots.
- b.) ONS 1 from AJ 34 to AK 46, course southwest, speed 7 knots.
- c.) ON 2 from AK 32 via 37 to 93, course west speed, 8 knots.
- d.) HX 230, course north, speed  $8\frac{1}{2}$  knots, in BE 25.

By radiogram 1652, the KARIN and REGENSBURG received weather reports for 24 Mar.; by radiogram 2300, the following instructions for the use of radar interception gear:

- 1.) Don't get nervous. The device receives location beams at ranges greater than that of the locating device.
- 2.) If definitely located, turn away slowly and take a deceptive course.
- 3.) If a break-through is once started, do not deviate, even if located.
- 4.) No German ship has appeared in the traversed areas for two years, therefore, if located, do not assume that you have been recognized at once.
- 5.) Radar interception is an auxiliary resource intended to facilitate a break-through, but a chance location, which the enemy will not find suspicious in this area, must not be allowed to upset a planned break-through.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been advised as to the special recognition signal for the submarine rendezvous by radiogram 0121.

Finally, all vessels in foreign waters have been advised by radiogram 1734 of the position of the U.S.A. - Gibraltar convoy on 24 Mar. at 34° N, 52° W, course east, speed 8 knots, and of the



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sighting of two enemy destroyers at 2100 on 23 Mar. by one of our submarines at 46°40' N, 22°30' W, course 230°.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance by Air Commander, Atlantic Coast produced no result.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Four torpedo boats made an unsuccessful search from La Pallice for the missing submarine U "665."

Channel Coast:

From 2255 until 2330, minesweepers M "4626" and M "4625" were engaged by enemy PT boats in grid square BF 2937 (north of St. Brieux). Details have not yet been reported.

PT boats S "84", S "110" and S "122" moved from the Hook to Boulogne, S "112" from Ostend to Boulogne.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Six ELM/J mines were cleared off Scheveningen and one north of Schiermonikoog. Escort and patrol service in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North was carried out according to plan.

During the evening of 23 Mar., several enemy planes approached the coastal area between Ameland and Borkum thirteen times, presumably to lay mines. One Wellington plane was shot down by naval anti-aircraft fire. Flights by single enemy planes over the Dutch coastal area and the Heligoland Bight and their engagement by naval anti-aircraft fire were reported on the evening of 24 Mar.

Operations Staff, North Sea Station has transferred to command post Sengwarden and has assumed duty.

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The precautionary alert ordered by North Sea Station on the evening of 22 Mar., in view of the destroyed communications equipment and the enemy situation reports from Group West's area, was mistakenly interpreted and handled by the Army as an alarm so that, among other things, divisions were ordered to marching readiness. Army offices welcome this mistake, as it served to reveal certain defects. News of this incident reached Naval Staff by irregular channels, through the Reinforced Frontier Guard Control Service (Coastal) via the Ministry of Finance.

In connection with the negotiations on the German-Swedish shipping agreement for 1943, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping again points out the long delays to which ships are subjected en route to Rotterdam. In this connection he comments that, while a change in the transport movements to and from Rotterdam is at present under thorough investigation, it is in any case to be anticipated that a certain amount of coal and ore shipments will still go via Rotterdam. The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, therefore, emphasises the Swedish desire that the trips be expedited and asks that every effort should be made to solve the question of escort in a satisfactory manner.

North Sea Station and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North have been advised accordingly.

The Swedish complaints are not new. If ships are lost Naval Staff is supposed to provide protection. If this is done, the loss of time and money entailed is deplored.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

For corrected photographic interpretation master report on the air reconnaissance of Scapa Flow on 22 Mar., see teletype 1035.

According to a Foreign Office report from Stockholm, a convoy left the U.S.A. on 22 Mar. for Iceland, where it will divide into two parts which will proceed to England and Murmansk respectively.

According to radio intelligence, three Russian submarines were at sea off the Norwegian Arctic coast. One submarine put into Polar-noye, and one destroyer and one submarine left from there. Two British minesweepers were detected in the area of Bolshoi Oleni, probably clearing mines ahead of a PQ convoy.

The Norwegian Naval Command in London has announced the loss of the submarine UREGG.



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Reconnaissance in the northern North Sea was lively. No activity by the Iceland squadrons was noted.

Own Situation:

No situation report has been received from Admiral, Arctic Coast.

The two minesweepers sent out by Admiral, North Norwegian Coast to bring in the cutter, found her without her crew. The cutter sank while an attempt was being made to salvage her. The Air Force's report of 23 Mar. that minesweepers had fired on her and brought her in, is thus proved incorrect.

In the areas of the north and west coasts, 19 vessels were escorted north and 13 south. Six vessels sailed without escort.

Group North supports the proposal of Naval Command, Norway that the construction of shore berths at Alta should be started at once.

Group North has approved the planned barrage for Kamoey Fiord and has asked for allocation of mines.

Group North has also approved the immediate transfer of two heavy anti-aircraft batteries, two sets of 4 cm guns and floating anti-aircraft battery "Thetis" from Bogen Bay to Alta.

Finally, Group North proposes to assign the LORELEY to Naval Command, Norway upon completion. (See teletype 0924).

The transfer to Alta of the formation of Commanding Admiral, Task Force has been carried out according to plan. (Operation "Silesia"). Weather ship COBURG has entered Narvik. For brief report on Operation "Brausewetter", see teletype 1445.

The northern waters patrol line has been increased by two boats, to a total of nine. Submarine U "703" reported the further course of the ice border north and west of Jan Mayen. The submarine has been ordered to check the passage north of the island between 9° and 10° W, and report the course of the ice border.

Submarine U "212" was located and chased by a vessel shortly after midnight on 24 Mar. in thick fog.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

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Missions in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were carried out according to plan. At 0135 the coastal motorship SLEIPNER sank in grid square AO 7676 lower right through collision with minesweeper M "345".

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports the completion of Operation "Wartburg" by the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla.

The 24th Landing Flotilla laid the first section of the "Nashorn I A" barrage in the Gulf of Finland comprising 629 UMA mines with 50 m. mooring rope. Altogether ten sections are planned.

Admiral, Baltic States reports the usual activity in Kronstadt Bay and the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland.

An enemy air attack on Tallinn on the evening of 23 Mar. caused minor damage to civilian property. Mines were reported to have been dropped in Tallinn Bay.

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#### V. Submarine Warfare.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

Lively air reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay by 40 planes.

##### 2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic the search for convoys by Groups "Seeteufel" and "Seewolf" was unsuccessful. Nor have the southern boats reported any successes. Details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

Conclusive report on convoy No. 19 has been forwarded to the Naval Adjutant at Fuehrer Headquarters, for information of the Fuehrer. Copy as per 1/Skl I u 894/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV. This is the greatest convoy success achieved to date by the submarine campaign. Thirty-eight submarines were employed against the England-bound convoy in the central North Atlantic; 50% of them made attacks and sank altogether 32 vessels for 186,000 GRT and one destroyer. Nine other ships were torpedoed.

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#### VI. Aerial Warfare.

##### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:



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In the west area 136 planes of the 3rd Air Force were out on operation. Of these, 17 fighter-bombers attacked Ashford in the morning with very good effect. One FW 190 plane was lost by direct anti-aircraft hit. Two Spitfires were shot down by our escort fighters.

Northwest of Finisterre, a Ju 88 shot down a Halifax. The Ju 88 had to make a forced landing in Santander.

In the afternoon, three Mosquito planes flew into the area Vechta-Guetersloh and successfully attacked railroad installations. For details see "Daily Situation."

During the night of 24 Mar., five enemy planes flew over via Jutland into the Warsaw - Litzmannstadt area at an altitude of 2,000-1,500 m. Night fighters were unsuccessful. Fifty-five of our planes were sent out against Edinburgh. Only 14 of them reached their destination owing to bad weather.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Considerable air activity in the Tunisian area. Ten enemy planes were destroyed. Our attacks were concentrated on the area of Gafsa. German planes escorting a convoy observed a heavy explosion on one of a formation of five Italian destroyers proceeding in the opposite direction 30 miles north of Cape Bon. This was probably caused by a mine. Shortly after noon, the town and port of Ferryville were attacked from a height of 8,800 m. by 21 enemy planes with fighter escort. About the same time Messina was attacked by twelve Liberators. No enemy planes were reported shot down during these attacks.

## 3. Eastern Front:

On 24 Mar., 17 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts. No special reports have been received from the 4th and 5th Air Forces.

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# VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

## 1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

Convoy traffic in the Straits of Gibraltar was very heavy. Between 0800 and 0900 about 42 loaded freighters of varying size passed Ceuta en route from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. The escort consisted of 1 destroyer and 8 escort vessels and corvettes. About 1100, a convoy from the Atlantic

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escorted by 10 - 15 vessels entered Gibraltar. The convoy consisted of about 38 vessels, including 10 LSTs, some of them with an LCT each on board. Definite observations could not be made because of rain and fog, so that it is possible that the two convoys mentioned are identical. Naval Staff is having this checked.

A convoy of 15 steamers in ballast with 6 escort vessels passed Ceuta at 1400 coming from the Mediterranean and making for the Atlantic. Six steamers and 2 escort vessels left Gibraltar, presumably for the Mediterranean, and 1 British transport without troops, 1 tanker and 2 steamers left for the Atlantic.

No shipping was sighted in the Western Mediterranean. According to radio intelligence, a convoy will be 35 miles northwest of Bougie at 1215.

In the forenoon there was a submarine 24 miles west of Marsala.

According to Italian air reconnaissance, at 1445 there were 3 cruisers and 4 destroyers proceeding southwest at high speed in the area 30 miles southwest of Malta.

According to a sighting report, there were 10 steamers in Tripoli harbor and 3 escort vessels on the roads. In the afternoon 5 steamers and 2 small naval vessels were sighted in Benghazi. In the forenoon 10 steamers and 5 escort vessels sailing west were sighted west of Sidi Barani.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. No reports have been received from our own submarines.

Our PT boats and motor minesweepers were not out on operation.

At 0830 two of four Italian destroyers carrying German troops to Tunis were hit by mines or submarine torpedoes 29 miles north of Cape Bon. The destroyer MALOCELLO was sunk, the destroyer ASCARI is still afloat. The other two destroyers entered La Goulette at 1000. The German Naval Command, Italy reports that rescue operations are under way. The number of German troops on the two destroyers is not known. According to observations by our own fighters, one of the destroyers was certainly and the other probably sunk by enemy planes. This report from German Naval Command, Italy was apparently disregarded by Commanding General, Armed Forces, South and Air Force General Staff. (Compare "Aerial Warfare / Mediterranean Theater").



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The air raid on Ferryville was severe. The steamer OMBRINA (6,015 GRT) received a direct hit and blew up. Also lost were motor minesweeper R "10", the VIGOREUX, three harbor defense vessels, one tank lighter, one Siebel ferry, one landing craft and one 4-ton floating crane. One 80-ton crane with pier was destroyed as well as nearly all workshops, the power station and the approach roads. There were very few casualties.

On 23 Mar., east of Cape Spartivento, the submarine-chasers "2210" and "2204" attacked the submarine which torpedoed the tanker ZEILA. The submarine is believed to have been destroyed since location showed her in the same position on the bottom from 2100 on 23 Mar. until 1300 on 24 Mar. In an enemy air attack on the evening of 23 Mar., submarine-chaser "2205", escorting the tanker HERRENSCHMIDT, suffered casualties from strafings but no special damage.

Minesweeper M "6022" and the six auxiliary motor minesweepers entered Bizerta on the night of 23 Mar. These vessels cleared altogether eight mines 30 miles north of Cape Bon.

On 24 Mar., minesweeper M "6023" and five other auxiliary motor minesweepers are to leave Toulon for Genoa.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

On 23 Mar. the tug TANACE was sunk by a bomb west of Trapani. The tanker BERNADOTTE has been towed in to Trapani. On the same day, the tanker ZEILA (1,833 GRT) was torpedoed near Cape Spartivento. No more reports on her have been received.

War transports KT "5", "6" and "13" are en route from Tunis to Palermo; the convoy TOMASEO - SALUZZO is en route from Bizerta to Naples. Traffic by small ships between Sicily and Tunisia was carried out according to plan.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

On 25 Mar., the Swedish steamers AKKA and YARRAWONG will leave Piraeus for Canada. The ships will be piloted by a patrol boat as far as 37°37.6' N, 24°6.6' E, and thereafter will follow the usual Aegean and Mediterranean courses at twelve knots, reporting their positions every four hours.

One of the two Italian PT boats which ran aground on 21 Mar., near Palaeo-Chora has been refloated. Convoy traffic was suspended on account of bad weather. To an inquiry from Naval Staff, Group

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South has reported that the captured French vessel BIRGIT, awaiting escort in Istanbul, will be loaded with chromium ore as proposed by the Naval Attaché, Istanbul. If the situation permits, Group South also plans to use other transferred steamers for transporting chromium ore.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was little shipping off the east coast.

Own Situation:

No German or Italian PT boats were sent out because of bad weather. Escort service and minesweeping have not yet been resumed.

The ferry traffic to Kossa Chuchka was lively. A large ice-barrier to the north prevented rough seas in this area. On the other hand, ferry traffic to Taman and the fish-salting plant by naval landing craft was impossible due to wind and sea conditions. On 23 Mar. minesweeping planes cleared a mine on the Kerch-Taman route. On 24 Mar. combined operations craft ferried to the west 1,460 persons, 665 horses, 350 motorized and 208 horse-drawn vehicles, etc. Admiral, Black Sea plans to set up an alternative emergency unloading site protected from the northeast wind.

Special Naval Transport Staff reports that at a meeting on 23 Mar. at the Headquarters of General von Foerster the deputy of High Command, Army for supply of the 17th Army, Lieutenant-General Dostler, made an urgent and sharply-worded demand that, as from 24 Mar., 1,000 tons of supplies per day be carried east regardless of the weather. This demand does not include the Anapa traffic or engineer and railroad equipment. Performance is to be increased up to 2,000 tons as soon as possible. Airborne supplies will cease immediately.\* Referring to the difficult weather conditions, General Dostler accused the Navy of using vessels that were unsuitable for the Black Sea. Admiral Scheurlen protested against this accusation and suggested that seaworthy ships be requested from the Mediterranean. General von Foerster also took up arms for the Navy against the unfounded accusations and protested against General Dostler's representations to High Command, Army. Special Naval Transport Staff reports that the constant Anapa traffic occupies as many landing craft as are necessary to meet the demand for supplies which amounts to 1,000 tons per day.

\* From now on transport operations to the east and west will enjoy the same priority.



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The fulfilment of the now doubled demand for supplies is therefore decisively handicapped by the Anapa traffic. Special Naval Transport Staff therefore proposes to investigate whether, with the present good road conditions, the Anapa traffic is still necessary.

In regard to this incident, Admiral, Black Sea reports that, in reply to remonstrances, General Dostler denied having made accusations against the Navy. He merely wished to suggest that suitable vessels should be requested. On 25 Mar., General Dostler will personally clear up the matter with Admiral Scheurlen. The General explicitly assured Admiral, Black Sea that it was far from his intention to make any accusations against the Navy.

Group South has supplemented its statement on the operational possibilities of submarines in the Black Sea as follows:

1.) Present and possible future developments of the situation on the southeastern front demand the continuation of supplies for all branches of the Armed Forces via the Black Sea. The experience of two years of war in the Russian campaign has proved without any doubt that operations depend largely on supply by sea, as transport facilities on land are inadequate.

2.) German naval supremacy in the Black Sea will decisively influence the further operations of our Armies and is of great importance to the war.

3.) Unlike coastal defense from the land, the protection of seaborne supplies, which is the Navy's primary function in the Black Sea, calls for offensive action against enemy naval forces and sea traffic. An attack on the Caucasian coast sea traffic will tie down Russian naval forces, so that they will be unable to undertake an offensive against German seaborne supplies.

4.) By tying down the Russian Fleet and increasing its losses, we will protect our freedom of movement, which is necessary in supplying the fighting army. At the same time, the possibility of Russian landings on our coast will be eliminated. The prosecution of the war on the southeastern Russian front must be supported by relentless employment and greatest concentration of all offensive weapons, of which submarines, if available in sufficient number, are the most far-reaching and therefore the most effective.

5.) The intensification of Russian anti-submarine defense and the increased activity of the enemy Air Force will entail gradual losses or, at least, long periods of repair. Repair time will anyway be prolonged due to increased operations and imminent

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need for basic overhaul, which will reduce the overall operational readiness and striking power of the submarine force in the Black Sea.

6.) Naval Group South therefore again requests the urgent assignment of six additional submarines. In view of the advance of the season and the time required for transfer and for dockyard preparation in the Black Sea area, the decision must be made quickly, otherwise, it cannot be guaranteed that the requested boats can be made ready for action this year, which may be the decisive one in the Russian campaign.

In view of the dispersal of our forces due to delivery of submarines to the Japanese and Italians and the limited prospects in the Black Sea, Chief, Naval Staff has refused the above request. The Black Sea submarines, which will shortly be increased to six in number, must first of all prove their worth.

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VIII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

Churchill's statements on the New Order for Europe have understandably aroused lively press comment by the small nations. The "Times" takes the opportunity to reiterate the demand for confident cooperation between the Anglo-Americans and Russia and writes:

"Europe, and not Europe alone, will perish unless threefold accord can be fully maintained between the U.S.A., Russia, and Great Britain."

In the House of Lords on 24 Mar., there was a lively debate on anti-submarine defense. Failure to date was attributed to the following causes:

- 1.) The superior speed of the German submarines in comparison to the convoys (20 (!) : 7 - 8 knots).
- 2.) The fact that the British radio direction-finding system had been given to France and that Vichy had betrayed it to Germany.
- 3.) Separate British and U.S. command.
- 4.) Miscalculation by the Admiralty of the importance of the Air Force as protection for shipping in conjunction with naval power.
- 5.) Shortage of escort vessels and their insufficient speed.

The Admiralty spokesman replied that the appointment of a supreme commander for the anti-submarine campaign would be a step backwards. In any case, he said, Great Britain is her Allies' partner and neither their master nor their servant.

The admiralty had the highest priority for anti-submarine armament and material and allocation of long-range planes was increasing.

The construction of floating air bases in the Atlantic had been carefully examined but was not considered practicable at present.

In order to effect complete coordination in submarine warfare, the German Admiral Doenitz had taken over command of all resources of the German Fleet. It was a compliment to the British methods of central control that the Germans had also adopted this method after three years. The submarine threat was still very great but the assertion that the defensive fight had failed was entirely unjustified.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

For communications between Naval Staff and Chief, Naval Staff, who is absent from Berlin, the following code names have been agreed upon:

for Group North	"Peter"
for Commanding Admiral, Task Force	"Johanna"
for operation	"Urlaub"
for Alta	"Schwarzwald"
for Narvik	"Harz"

Otherwise no special reports or decisions.

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Special Items.

I. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff replied to Naval Staff's proposal of 19 Mar., concerning the possibility of providing the additional 18,000 tons of fuel oil requested by the Italian Navy by increasing the Roumanian quota, as follows:

"No increase of Roumanian fuel oil deliveries to Italy can be counted on. The War Economy Staff advises that, in spite of strong representations, even the March allotment of 39,000 tons from Roumania, scheduled for current Italian requirements, cannot be guaranteed.

"In these circumstances, Naval Staff is requested to examine whether or not delivery of the requested quantities of fuel oil is still refused, in spite of the acknowledged necessity of the projected operations by Italian warships. According to our information, Italian stocks must be sufficient for a first operation, so that the question of deliveries will not come up until the need has arisen and would have to be taken from German current production at the expense of the German Navy.

"In connection with the preparatory measures for operations, it is proposed that the matter of a central control of all oil questions of the Italian Admiralty be investigated by German Naval Command, Italy or Admiral Ruge.

"Early comments are requested."



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II. During his recent visit to Italy, Commander in Chief, Navy obtained the Italians' agreement to the conversion of Italian operational submarines into transports.

The Italians are prepared to convert and operate as transports nine of the ten submarines at present stationed in Bordeaux. In exchange, they have been promised nine German operational submarines to be delivered as the Italian submarines become available.

Operations Division has asked Quartermaster Division to arrange with the competent Italian offices to establish the operational readiness of the submarines as soon as possible. Attention is drawn to the preliminary work which, it is believed here, has already been done by naval Oberbaurat Aschmoneit (of Naval (Ship) Construction Division, Design and Building Branch) in the course of preliminary discussions.

III. Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch has approved the establishment of independent harbor defense groups in Bizerta, Tunis, Sousse and Sfax and also the plan to establish such groups in Hammamet and Gabes, without an overall flotilla command. The harbor defense groups will be subordinated to the port commanders.

IV. Following the reference by Commander in Chief, Navy to the basic agreement reached between him and the Reichsmarschall in regard to Siebel ferries (see War Diary, 10 Mar.), Field Marshal Milch has confirmed that the Air Force will complete only the 40 ferries now under construction and will deliver them to the Navy. The quota of about 8,000 tons provided for further production will be placed through Krupp, at the disposal of the Navy for construction of artillery motor lighters for the Mediterranean. Field Marshal Milch pointed out to Commanding General, Armed Forces, South and the Reichsmarschall's Adjutant that this confirmation is based on the assumption that High Command, Navy is solely responsible for the production of further sea transport tonnage of whatever kind, and that the Fuehrer will be asked to give a final ruling on this question.

On 22 Mar. a conference was held between Quartermaster Division, Naval Staff and representatives of Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, Air Force General Staff, and others, concerning the question of Siebel ferries and naval landing craft. Commanding General, Armed Forces, South took the occasion to demand that the twelve artillery motor lighters scheduled for the Black Sea be transferred to the Mediterranean. As four of these vessels are already en route to the Black Sea, only the remaining eight come into question. Discussion of the question of Siebel ferry construction was rendered superfluous by the above-mentioned confirmation of Field Marshal Milch.

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V. On 28 Feb., Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff reported that preparations for the employment of aerial mines with new firing devices will be made so that, upon release by the Fuehrer, they can be put into use at the end of April or the beginning of May. The Air Force agrees with Naval Staff that at least 2,000 mines per month will be required for the effective mining of the convoy routes around the British Isles. As the Navy will take over 500 of these mines, there will remain 1,500 to be dropped by the Air Force. The Air Force can do this if weather conditions permit of about ten to twelve missions per month and if the mining formations in the west are increased to two wings.

Since only very limited forces are available, it will be necessary for the areas to be mined by PT boats to be clearly defined in order to avoid duplication. The arrangement made with the Air Force for aerial minelaying must therefore be re-examined. Sea areas which the enemy situation (locating conditions or superior defense) or our own mine situation render no longer accessible to our PT boats, must be left to the Air Force. On the other hand, areas practicable for PT boats are to be left exclusively to them.

The Navy does not yet plan to use the new firing devices in waters outside the area around the British Isles. The Air Force also plans to use them only to a limited extent and in special cases, the local Air Force commands cooperating closely with the corresponding commands of the Navy. Attention is invited to the need for distinct separation of the later operational areas of the Navy from those of the Air Force. It is planned for the new firing devices to be used by submarines as soon as they have been adapted for the torpedo-tube mines.

Naval Staff has issued corresponding instructions to Group West and Commander, PT Boats with copy to Group North, Group South, Commanding Admiral, Submarines, Naval Command, Norway, North Sea and Baltic Stations and German Naval Command, Italy; these instructions contain, at the same time, a guide on the tactical characteristics of the new firing devices DM 1, AA 1 for the LMB, and AD 104, 105 for the BM 1,000 which at present our sweeping devices are unable to clear or to do so only with very great difficulty. Absolute secrecy is called for.

VI. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division has forwarded statements from a very reliable agent, dated 11/12 Mar., concerning the British plan for invasion of the continent. The report contains relatively few new facts and reaches some doubtful conclusions but is worth reading. Photographic copy as per 1/Sk1 9178/43 geh. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation."



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VII. Summary of the intelligence on the enemy obtained by radio deciphering and radio intelligence during the period 15 Feb. - 2 Mar. 43 is contained in the Radio Monitoring Report No. 12/43 of Chief, Radio Monitoring Reports, Naval Communications Division.

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Situation 25 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

North Atlantic:

A source of unknown reliability reports that at the beginning of May 1943, 2 U.S. battleships, 1 carrier, 8 cruisers, 18 destroyers, 25 tankers and 20 submarines will leave U.S. ports for England or the Mediterranean.

On 18 Mar. six large passenger steamers, allegedly of 20,000 GRT each, entered Casablanca. They were carrying only a few troops but had large cargoes of matériel aboard.

It is reported from Buenos Aires that about 300,000 men are at present being embarked for Africa in the U.S.A., including four armored divisions.

South Atlantic:

From the sea southwest of Freetown, movements of the auxiliary cruiser BULOLO and of a second British vessel in the patrol service have been reported. BULOLO is said to have been about 500 miles southwest of Freetown on 13 Mar.

On 23 Mar., Freetown reported to Dakar the sighting of a hove-to supply ship without escort, flying a red-yellow-red flag, and of two submarines near the coast northwest of Monrovia.

Naval Staff sees no connection between the two.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has been informed by radiogram 0945 that our air reconnaissance has not sighted her and that Naval Staff estimates her position today, by dead reckoning, to be between Oporto and Ferrol but is calculating on delay.

Weather report for 25 Mar. was transmitted by radiogram 1125, and the positions of the northbound convoy from Gibraltar for

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0800 on 26 Mar. by radiogram 1930. DOGGERBANK was ordered by radiogram 1930 not to wait at the destroyer rendezvous but to sail east along the limits of territorial waters.

Submarine U "161" met the REGENSBURG according to plan and transmitted the information requested by Group North. The ship is proceeding at  $15\frac{1}{2}$  knots and will be at point "A" on the morning of 28 Mar. Unfortunately, degaussing gear, radio direction-finder and echo-sounding apparatus are out of action. The ship requests ice reports and announcement of our planes.

The decision as to proceeding eastwards may therefore be delayed until 28 Mar.

Group North has been advised accordingly by Naval Staff. Confirmation has been sent to REGENSBURG, by radiogram 1145, as follows:

"Submarine has transmitted report as per operational orders, according to which the ship will be at "Anton" on 28 Mar. Further orders as to proceeding east will follow."

REGENSBURG has been informed, by radiogram 2131, of position lines of the following convoys for 26 Mar.:

- a.) SC 123 from AK 29 to 92.
- b.) ONS 1 from AJ 52 to 68.
- c.) ON 2 from AK 14 via O1 to 58.
- d.) HX 230 in AJ 94 on northeasterly course.

Weather report has been transmitted to REGENSBURG and KARIN by radiogram 1558. The forecast is favorable for the operation: "Southeast freshening to force 5 - 7, mainly overcast, clouding-up, rain, frequent fog in the Denmark Strait."

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has received the following order by radiogram 1445:

1.) At 1600 mean local time, make for submarine rendezvous and wait for her within radius of ten miles until nightfall. If no result, repeat on the following days.

2.) Passage eastwards delayed. After meeting submarine, wait in grid squares CD 30, 50 and 60. Obtain grid square chart from submarine.

All vessels in foreign waters have been advised by radiogram 2337, supplementary to radiogram 1849 of 23 Mar., that enemy planes of



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the types Beaufighter, Stirling, Halifax, Lancaster and Liberator may also be encountered in and west of Biscay and that Radio Ferrol gave warning of a drifting mine at 44°06' N, 8°25' W, on 23 Mar.

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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1330 our air reconnaissance reported two corvettes and one fast escort vessel in GG 5582 (directly off Lisbon).

Information on British minefields, as of September 1942, in the areas between Scotland and the Faroe Islands and on the Norwegian coast off Malangen Fiord has been gained from material captured on the British PT boat which ran aground off Floroe. Entries have been made on charts by Naval Intelligence Division as per 1/Sk1 876/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

According to an intelligence report of 24 Mar. forwarded by Intelligence Station, Wilhelmshaven, an Anglo-American landing near St. Nazaire is expected in the near future.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Long-range reconnaissance for the REIHER was unsuccessful. A repeat flight on 26 Mar. has been requested. While on sea-rescue search for submarine U "665" on 24 Mar., a Ju 88 plane was lost while making an emergency landing after hitting the water during low flight. In order to rescue the crew, seen to be drifting in life-jackets, three Ju 88's flew over Spanish territorial waters and parachuted a non-commissioned officer near Cedeira to organize rescue work from the next harbor.

One ELM/J mine was cleared off La Pallice.

Channel Coast:

Minesweepers "4626" and "4625" which, on 24 Mar., were engaged by enemy PT boats off the coast of Brittany, have returned without damage or losses.

On 24 Mar., the 10th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared three "Mark 19" mines with snag lines off Boulogne.

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From 2302 to 2328 two of our patrol boats in position were engaged by six enemy PT boats and night fighters. One enemy PT boat was sunk. Our vessels had one man killed but were not damaged.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there were 22 steamers proceeding north off Orfordness in the afternoon. Many small vessels were observed off the Thames and on the southeast coast.

Own Situation:

Between Scheveningen and Wangeroog eleven ELM/J mines were cleared.

The Hook - Elbe convoy put in to Helder for the night. Other escort and patrol services in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North were carried out according to plan.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, two ice-breakers with three steamers were en route from the Gorlo Strait to Yokonga. Air activity over the North Sea was normal; the Iceland squadrons were not on operation.

The ice border in northern waters has receded to the east and north about 30 to 40 miles. Bear Island is almost ice-free on all sides.

At 0745, air reconnaissance sighted a submarine on course 60° about 210 miles northwest of Kristiansund. At 0720, three vessels, probably minesweepers, were moving south at the northern tip of the Faroes. At the same time, two steamers of 1,500 - 3,000 GRT were sighted on the west side of the Faroes and a probable hospital ship on course 330° south of the Orkney Islands.

Own Situation:

On 22 Mar. a Russian gun fired four rounds from the Rybachi Peninsula on the fiord entrance of Petsamo. In the morning a submarine periscope was sighted by the Kroken Battery near Korsnaes. Submarine chase is under way.



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Escort service was carried out according to plan.

BEITZEN's passage from Narvik to Alta has been delayed as her propeller is out of action.

For brief report of Admiral, Northern Waters on the attempt to capture the cutter flying the Norwegian war ensign on 23 Mar. at 64°34' N, 5°51' E, see teletype 1140. The vessel was abandoned and showed traces of machine-gun fire. She sank while in tow after radio and equipment, including a chart, had been taken from on board. The dinghy was missing.

Commander, Submarines, Norway and the Fleet having declared their approval of the transfer of the submarine supply service from Kirkenes to Hammerfest, Naval Staff has no objections to abolishing the Kirkenes torpedo command. Quartermaster Division, however, has been instructed to stock 30 reserve torpedoes in Kirkenes for destroyers and torpedo boats and to set up a torpedo establishment for their upkeep. The torpedo barrage batteries at Kirkenes can draw on the reserve torpedoes stored for the naval forces.

No special reports have been received from our submarines. The patrol line has been ordered to turn back, as the northern wing of the patrol line going northeast has encountered thick drift ice in AB 7179.

Strictest secrecy must be maintained in regard to the use of the northern passage by blockade runners returning from overseas until the last blockade runner, the IRENE, has come in. The cargoes they bring are of such vital war importance that no sacrifice or trouble must be spared to keep knowledge of this operation from the enemy. Relevant orders in regard to the handling of ships entering the Norwegian area have been issued to Naval Group North by 1/Skl I k 895/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IIA.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

A mine was cleared ahead of the Oslo-Aarhus convoy south of Anholt. Nineteen vessels and one minesweeping plane were engaged in channel sweeping in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. The steamer KAP GUIR, sailing alone in the Kattegat, was damaged by a mine north of Anholt and was escorted to Aalborg. Other escort service was carried out according to plan.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that clearing of the entrance to Tallinn and of Tallinn Bay has been carried out according to plan. Barrage section "Nashorn 1 A" was laid.

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The steamer BUNGSBERG sank south of Naissar following two mine hits.

Admiral, Baltic States reports that there was considerable enemy gunfire against the battery position in the coastal area of Kronstadt Bay throughout the day and night of 24 Mar. After Army guns had shelled Leningrad a large fire was observed in the town. According to photographic air reconnaissance, seven single-engined planes were noted on the Lavansaari airfield. During the night of 24 Mar., an enemy air attack on Tytersaari caused slight damage to houses and disrupted communications.

At Talinn, enemy air attacks during the evening and night of 24 Mar. caused considerable damage to buildings and three large fires. The garrison was assigned to fire-fighting.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

1. Naval Staff requested on 25 Jan. 1943 that, in view of the increasing PT boat threat in the Norwegian area, merchant vessels on the Norwegian run should be armed. In this regard, Quartermaster Division states that, due to the shortage of medium and heavy anti-aircraft guns, this request cannot be fulfilled at any near date since all new production of armament is committed for vessels in the Mediterranean. However, the boats of 5th and 7th Motor Minesweeper Flotillas employed in the northern area have meantime had their anti-aircraft armament increased.

This situation is yet another reason to give up arming the merchant vessels in Baltic Sea traffic.

2. In the course of a report on the result of the discussion on 5 Mar. concerning the difficulties of the Rotterdam traffic, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping sets forth the possibilities of transferring part of that traffic to the railroad and the inland waterways. The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has called the attention of the Ministry of Transportation and the industrial producers interested in transportation to the fact that it is essential to exploit available possibilities of restricting sea traffic to Rotterdam to about one million tons of coal and ore in view of the increasingly dangerous situation.

North Sea Station and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North have been informed by Naval Staff.



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## VI. Submarine Warfare.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance activity in the Bay of Biscay was normal, 20 enemy planes being sighted.

### 2. Own Situation:

No reports of success have been received from our submarines. Groups "Seewolf" and "Seeteufel" in the North Atlantic are in position lines from AK 4736 as far as BD 2714, and AJ 2354 as far as AK 4576, respectively. Temporary contact made by submarine U "592" in AD 9845 with a large vessel accompanied by two destroyers, apparently a damaged whaler of 14,000 GRT, led to no success on account of poor visibility and rain showers.

The attention of the Commanders of these two Groups has again been drawn to the definite ban on attacking unaccompanied vessels in a strip 200 miles wide north of Route "Anton".

For the interception of a slow southbound convoy, eight submarines in the south have formed Group "Seeraeuber" which, at 1700 on 26 Mar., is to be in patrol line DH 9768 to 9898.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 142 planes out on operation in the west area and 4 in the Mediterranean.

In the afternoon enemy planes flew into the areas of Abbeville and Boulogne. The attacks had no great effect. During the night of 25 Mar., two courier planes were observed en route to Sweden and an incursion by one plane from the eastern front into the area of Lublin and back, presumably to drop agents.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

In the Tunisian area eight enemy planes were shot down.

The mission by our bombers against the cruiser formation reported to be near Malta produced no results.

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During the night of 25 Mar. four torpedo bombers were sent out against an enemy convoy west of Algiers.

3. Eastern Front:

No special reports have been received.

Special Items:

Chief, Air Force General Staff has asked Naval Staff to permit night fighting at all altitudes for a period of about 14 days in the area off the west coast of North Schleswig and Jutland and over the Baltic Sea entrances, in order to combat enemy planes penetrating into the Litzmannstadt - Warsaw area with sabotage material and agents.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The large convoys which came through the Straits of Gibraltar from the west on the forenoon of 24 Mar. were two different formations. In the convoy that put in to Gibraltar, 6 more LST's were identified, making a total of 16 vessels of this type in port.

At 0715 on 25 Mar., a convoy of 8 large transports and 2 steamers with 4 escort vessels, coming from the Mediterranean, passed Ceuta going towards the Atlantic. In the forenoon, a loaded French troop transport and a ballast steamer, with four escort vessels, put in to Gibraltar from the Atlantic. At the same time Ceuta reported sighting 6 large and 2 small unidentified vessels with course to the Mediterranean. In the afternoon 4 steamers and 1 escort vessel sailed for the Atlantic.

According to an intelligence report, four minesweepers loaded with mines and bound for Gibraltar, left British harbors on 8 Mar.

The Intelligence Service reports from an Italian source, considerable land, sea and air transport of troops and aircraft material to the east in Morocco, Algiers and Tunis. The number of Anglo-American troops in these three areas is estimated at 400,000 men. The units speak of an impending large-scale landing operation which is said to be planned in addition to the offensive on the Tunisian front.

On 23 Mar. the Military Attaché, Tangier reported that 24 U.S. landing craft of 130 tons each entered the Mediterranean from



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Casablanca. From the same source it is reported that free merchant ships have recently been concentrated in English ports.

Considerable convoy traffic was observed in the Western Mediterranean. The large convoy reported from Ceuta on 24 Mar. was reported by submarine U "77" at 0731 to be in CH 7683 proceeding at nine knots. It was attacked without results. One of our planes reported that at 1335 the convoy was 30 miles north of Oran and consisted of 31 merchant vessels, three of them of up to 20,000 GRT. According to another submarine report, the convoy was 20 miles north of Cape Tenes at 2345.

A westbound convoy of 20 steamers with 3 destroyers was reported by one of our submarines at 1520 in CH 8359.

Naval Intelligence Division has reported on the situation in the Western Mediterranean to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Air Force, Operations Staff, Army General Staff, Group West, Group South and German Naval Command, Italy. Reference is made to the conspicuous increase of special vessels for landing purposes at Gibraltar. In regard to the convoy situation, Naval Intelligence Division states that all the regular Mediterranean convoys to be expected from U.S.A. and Great Britain have arrived. This movement has been completed by the arrival of the KMS 11 convoy from England, which had been reported in the Atlantic as consisting of about 55 vessels. Part of this large convoy has been routed to Morocco. Thirty-five steamers and three tankers have entered Gibraltar; only four steamers proceeded on to the Mediterranean. The amount of shipping in the Western Mediterranean is almost unchanged at 1.4 million GRT; about 450,000 GRT of this are in Gibraltar.

Although convoy traffic corresponds to the usual schedule and the convoys are not unusual either as regards size or composition, Naval Intelligence Division agrees with Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Armies West that, in view of the amount of troops and material already in North Africa, the continued transport traffic to that area is a striking indication that an enemy action is to be expected, which is emphasized by the remarkable recent increase in landing transport craft. The fact that the greater part of the KMS 11 convoy remained in Gibraltar would appear to indicate that such an enemy operation will not begin immediately.

At 1030 a submarine was detected west of Marsala.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, little shipping was observed.

At 1200 there were 7 steamers with 4 escort vessels 30 miles northeast of Tobruk on westerly course. At 1130 a light cruiser was reported to be southwest of Haifa on northeasterly course.

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An enemy landing near Gabes, reported by the Italians, is considered improbable by Commanding General, Armed Forces, South and German Naval Command, Italy.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were in the operational area.

At 0731, submarine U "77" missed a large eastbound convoy in CH 7683 with a spread of four torpedoes. At 1519, submarine U "431" attacked a westbound convoy in CH 8359 with five torpedoes which missed. Submarine U "561" is en route to Toulon to repair damage caused by planes.

Submarine U "593" left Salamis for the east.

PT boats were not out on operation on account of bad weather.

Minesweepers M "6021" and M "6023" and the five auxiliary motor minesweepers put back to harbors on the south coast of France because of the bad weather. The ex-French destroyer PANTHERE left Toulon on 23 Mar. for Italy.

A heavy enemy air attack was made from a high altitude on the town and harbor of Sousse between 1408 and 1443. One harbor tug, one salvage tug and an Italian PT boat were sunk; the mole and approach roads were damaged.

The Italian High Command has issued preliminary instructions on the temporary shifting of part of the supply traffic for the troops fighting in Southern Tunisia to small coastal vessels. This will be put into effect by special order. The organizational preparations will be made by German Naval Command, Italy. It will arrange for the necessary German-Italian anti-aircraft protection with the 2nd Air Force, the Italian Air Force and Army Group Africa. Orders for the flank protection of the Tunisian east coast by mine barrages will be issued by the Italian High Command. (See teletype 1245).

With reference to the development of the supply situation, German Naval Command, Italy has requested, in agreement with Staff Ruge and Chief, Supply and Transport, Italy that, contrary to the present plan, the war transports be taken over immediately by the Navy after their conversion as military transports has been completed. The ships are to carry solely military crews and will be grouped into a flotilla. They are to be used in groups of two to four vessels. The war transport flotilla will be under Chief, Supply and Transport, Italy for military purposes, and operationally directly under German Naval Command, Italy. Docking will remain the task of the Deputy for German Sea Transportation in



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the Mediterranean. The reason given for this is that, from previous experience, the crew's efficiency is considerably enhanced by militarization. (See teletype 2240).

The matter will be examined by Quartermaster Division.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

The tanker HERRENSCHMIDT with submarine-chasers "2205" and "2208" arrived in Naples. During the night of 22 Mar., four German naval landing craft were unsuccessfully attacked by two enemy PT boats 30 miles north of Tunis. On its return passage from Bizerta the convoy TOMASEO has been re-routed to Leghorn.

One vessel from the south harbors entered Nice and another entered Ajaccio. Two others are still at sea.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Admiral, Aegean Sea has asked the Italian Admiralty, through German Naval Command, Italy, to limit hospital ship traffic in the Aegean Sea to a minimum in order to prevent betraying the mine-free channels. (See teletype 1210).

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, little shipping was observed off the east coast during the forenoon.

Own Situation:

Due to weather conditions there were no PT boat operations. No reports have come in from our submarines in the operational area. Shipping between Constantza and Sevastopol has been resumed. Ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was greatly hampered by a northeasterly wind. In the afternoon loading had to be stopped again. Enemy air attacks on Taman and Kerch caused no damage.

2,800 persons, 1,329 horses, 280 motorized and 400 horse-drawn vehicles were ferried over to the west.

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Due to bad weather the 9th Anapa transport did not put to sea.

On the basis of the reports of Admiral, Black Sea concerning the incident with General Dostler, Naval Staff plans to suspend the representations made to Army General Staff. Group South, Admiral, Black Sea and Special Naval Transport Staff "Scheurlen" have been advised accordingly.

In regard to Group South's request for the assignment of six naval landing craft (artillery), Operations Division has submitted to Quartermaster Division the opinion that the 15, 10 and 25 vessels of this type allotted to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North and Admiral, Norway respectively, should not be diverted. Since it is not planned to convert more than these 50 naval landing craft (artillery), the request of Group South cannot be fulfilled for the time being. The possibility of providing sleeping and galley accomodation on artillery motor lighters will, however, be investigated.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

The U.S. Navy Department has announced the sinking of a Japanese submarine in the Pacific by a U.S. submarine. According to "DNB", the Japanese Information Office has announced that the Japanese steamer TAKACHIO MARU was sunk by a U.S. submarine off Formosa Island on 19 Mar.

In the Sea of Ochotsk, the Russian steamer KOLA was sunk by a submarine. Sixty-nine of the crew perished. The Japanese press attributes this sinking to a U.S. submarine. The Russians, through "Tass", refute this statement, thus implying Japanese responsibility.



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Items of Political Importance.

Great Britain:

On 25 Mar. a debate was held in the House of Commons on the convoy battle in the North Atlantic. Churchill refused to correct the allegedly exaggerated number of sinkings reported by the Germans in order not to give any information to the enemy. He merely declared that, today, the United Nations had larger fleets at sea than in the worst moment of the submarine campaign. This improvement was continuing. Even at a secret session no more factual reports could be made.

East Asia:

The Japanese/Russian fishing agreement has been extended for one year.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff approved the order of Quartermaster Division for the HIPPER's provisional transfer to Pillau. Subsequent transfer to Libau is to be considered.

Otherwise no special reports or decisions.

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Special Items.

I. Naval (Ship) Construction Division held an inter-office conference on the following types of ships and boats:

Fleet torpedo boats types 42 and 43, destroyers type 36 C, escort boats type 41 and multi-purpose boats. In regard to the latter type, reference is made to an abstract from the annual report for 1942 of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North. Copy of this abstract from 1/Skl 5888/43 Gkdos., Appendix 2 and minutes of above conference as per 1/Skl III a 8980/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

II. Service instructions for Vice Admiral Ruge for the duration of his command with the Italian Admiralty have been worked out by Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch. The designation of the office "German Staff with the Italian Admiralty" has been agreed upon between Vice Admiral Ruge, German Naval Command, Italy and Naval Staff. However, German Naval Command, Italy

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hesitates to approve Vice Admiral Ruge's proposal that he, as a part of Italian Admiralty, will be in charge of the commitment of German escort formations.

The final service instructions will provide that the German command functions (except for PT boats and submarines) will rest with Vice Admiral Ruge, while German Naval Command, Italy will continue to act as liaison staff for all matters except patrol and escort for the Tunisian supply service, for which it will act as Quartermaster General for the German Staff with the Italian Admiralty. Besides that, German Naval Command, Italy will continue to have operational command of PT boats and to supervise Commander, Submarines, Italy as heretofore. The Command with the Italian Admiralty is to be considered as provisional in nature and as a basis for the future fusion of the two German offices in Rome.

Finally it is to be provided that Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy shall be Vice Admiral Ruge's representative.

III. The Naval Attaché, Istanbul has forwarded a report from the Military Attaché, Ankara on a discussion with the Chief of the Turkish Armed Forces, Marshal Cakmak, and his Chief of General Staff, in which an assessment of the war situation led to the quite understandable Turkish suggestion that Germany should not permit her eastern plans to be in any way influenced by the possibility of Anglo-American operations. The discussion closed with a plea for continued confidence in Turkey, of which Germany might be absolutely sure, even if it sometimes appeared otherwise.

Copy of the report as per 1/Skl 9130/43 geh. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

The Turkish Marshal obviously felt it necessary to make some compensation for the recent very unneutral statements of the Prime Minister.

IV. An intelligence report of 24 Mar. from a very reliable "Ostrov" agent discusses the British preparations for an offensive. From various indications, such as disposition of the air forces, suspension of leave, etc., "Ostrov" concludes that preparations for major actions are undoubtedly under way, though not for a large-scale operation such as a continental invasion. As preparations were already started before the German counter-attack at Charkov, it remains to be seen whether the original plans have been modified.



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We must also not neglect to keep an eye on the political side of the enemy's preparations for action. It is very probable, and can be deduced from recent statements including Churchill's, that the British and Americans are unwilling to start large and perhaps decisive military operations until the political consequences are clearly established. Eden's trip to America may be assessed in this light, as having been necessary to coordinate the attitudes of Washington and London in respect to Russia. There may be many soldiers on the enemy side who deplore the fact that great military opportunities have to be wasted due to considerations of political coalition.

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Situation 26 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has been informed, by radiogram 0214, that she had not been sighted by our air reconnaissance up to noon on 25 Mar. and that at that time two corvettes and one fast escort vessel were at waiting position ten miles west of Cape Espichel.

Weather report for 26 Mar. was transmitted to the DOGGERBANK by radiogram 1118. Wind north-northeast force 3 - 4, changing cloud with mainly good visibility is forecast.

The positions of the Freetown - England convoy at 0800 on 26 Mar. at 42°30' N, 14° W and of the northbound convoy of 35 ships with 4 escort vessels (reported on 25 Mar.) at 38°40' N, 14°30' W at 1213, were transmitted by radiogram 1649.

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff reported by teletype via Group West to Chief, Naval Staff who is at present in Paris:

1.) On 28 Mar. the THUSNELDA will be at point "Anton" ready to proceed east. Weather and ice conditions are favorable for Route "Hamilkar."

2.) I suggest that THUSNELDA begin her passage east on 28 Mar.

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3.) Since a teletype conversation with Chief, Operations Branch, Group North indicates that previous objections to Route "Hamilkar" still obtain, the Group will not take over command at point "Anton" but approximately at the eastern outlet.

4.) It is planned for a submarine to stand by west of the island for rescue purposes. Group North will do likewise.

The REGENSBURG has been informed by radiogram as follows:

1.) Plan to depart on Route "Hamilkar" on 28 Mar.

2.) Submarine reports: Ice limit from AE 2231 via 2284 to AD 2931, from there direction 240°. Pack-ice barriers in stages with drift and broken ice in front of them at places.

During reconnaissance wind was from the south. Since fog is prevalent near the ice border and very thick in the Denmark Strait, safe passage only in absolutely ice-free waters. No patrol or location noted.

3.) If possible, keep outside the 200 meter line on the northwest corner of the island.

Weather report for 26 Mar. was transmitted to the REGENSBURG and KARIN by radiogram 1411. Visibility conditions for the northern passage are currently not unfavorable.

The KARIN and the PIETRO ORSEOLO have been ordered, by radiogram 1021, to deliver any courier mail on board to the submarines.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been ordered by radiogram 2214:

"Leave from 'Venezia' so as to reach 'Benito' by 1500 German standard time, 30 Mar. at the latest. Expect destroyer from northeast. Do not wait at rendezvous but proceed at maximum speed in accordance with radiogram 1205/22, para. 4. Expect Focke Wulf planes after 20° W."

IRENE has been informed, by radiogram 0257:

1.) Point "Jahrbuch" is shifted 250 miles to the east.

2.) REGENSBURG reports that at the beginning of March, U.S. planes were sighted 300 miles east and 540 miles north-northeast of St. Paul.

IRENE was further briefed by radiogram 1841 on enemy movements in the South Atlantic during the period 13-15 Mar.



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Naval Staff has advised the Naval Attaché, Tokyo as follows:

"Since submarine warfare is planned as far as Mombasa - Seychelles, extension of the operational area is requested as far as the equator and west of 0°, 65° E to 20° S, 70° E; Tokyo has agreed."

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

At noon our air reconnaissance spotted a convoy of 35 steamers with 5 escort vessels on course north at 38°40' N, 14°30' W.

Enemy reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was brisk. A British vessel was located 60 miles west of Lisbon.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

One ELM/J mine was cleared off La Pallice. Group West has requested repeat air reconnaissance for the REIHER on 27 Mar. and anti-submarine protection for an ore steamer from Bilbao to the Gironde.

#### Channel Coast:

During an engagement between two of our patrol boats and six enemy PT boats in BF 3713 on the night of 25 Mar., one PT boat was probably sunk. The boat blew up with a high tongue of flame. Drifting wreckage was observed. In the same sea area four boats of the 8th Minesweeper Flotilla were attacked by night fighter bombers.

Torpedo operations by the 5th PT Boat Flotilla in the western part of the Channel are planned for the evening of 26 Mar. The 2nd and 6th PT Boat Flotillas are to transfer to IJmuiden.

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## III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

### 1. North Sea:

The Swedish steamer SYRIUS struck a mine near Rotersand but with the assistance of tugs was able to proceed to Bremen.

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Otherwise escort and patrol services in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North were carried out according to plan.

The 4th PT Boat Flotilla transferred from Boulogne to the Hook of Holland.

In reply to a telephone inquiry, Group North, Operations Staff has been advised as follows:

1.) Mine carriers for barrages "SW 12" and "SW 13" minesweepers. The following procedure seems advisable: First, lay plenty of anti-sweeping devices in one or more operations. Distribute over a large area so as to make formation of a barrage gap difficult. As a final operation, lay mines in protected barrage area; note exact navigational position with a view to our own freedom of movement and area for further operations.

2.) For Barrage "14" in short nights use only destroyers, perhaps in April, during possible transfer to the north. Prepare plans for commencement at short notice.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Teriberka reported drifting mines near Bol Oleni and Schelpino. Aerial activity over the central and northern North Sea in the direction of northern waters was brisk; operations of the Iceland squadrons were insignificant. One of our submarines was attacked in AF 1146 by an enemy plane.

Own Situation:

In an enemy air attack on the Petsamo airfield on 25 Mar., a direct hit on an anti-aircraft position damaged one gun. Twenty vessels were escorted north and twenty south. Eight ships sailed without escort.

Submarine chase in Bjoerne and Lysa Fiords (south of Bergen) produced no results and was discontinued.

According to observations of Naval Shore Command, Molde, two boats, probably British PT boats, that were sighted putting in and out north of Flaavaer, took part in the attack on the Army post on the Dragesund bridge.

In regard to the mining of West Fiord, Group North has received the opinions of all the authorities concerned who oppose this plan and summarizes the objections as follows:



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1.) Although the barrage would provide protection for Narvik, it would greatly hamper our own freedom of movement, also for merchant shipping, especially in conditions of poor visibility.

2.) The barrages do not last long because of the great depth of water (400 meters).

3.) From previous experience, the barrage will result in losses only to ourselves. On the other hand, in view of the depth of water and the extent of the barrage, even if large numbers of mines are used, it will offer little protection against penetrating submarines.

4.) In order to give a sufficiently large training area for the Fleet, the barrage would have to be laid at least on the line Maloey - Yttertuven (Lofotodden).

5.) A sham barrage or warning to shipping, as proposed by the Fleet, would, apart from a merely passing effect, impose great restrictions on the Lofoten fishing.

Re 1.) - 5.): For these reasons, and because the minelaying would call for numerous fully seaworthy patrol and escort vessels for barrage pilot service, which cannot be provided owing to their general shortage, the laying of a barrage is inadvisable.

Group North and Naval Command, Norway have been instructed by Naval Staff to prepare barrage "16 d" ("Klein Erna") so that, if the destroyers are transferred in April, it will be possible to start it at short notice.

The BEITZEN has put out from Narvik for Alta. The 8th PT Boat Flotilla has completed its firing exercises and sailed for Harstad. PT Boat "S 106" is making for Bodo because of damage to her steering gear.

Commander, Submarines, Norway has been ordered by Group North to assign submarine "U 703" to ice reconnaissance; she is to proceed on about 13' longitude southward in stages as far as 68° N. The weather report position in AE 23 is to be taken up from 1600 on 27 Mar.

At 0700 submarine "U 339" was damaged in AF 1146 by aerial attack and is returning to Trondheim. At 0400 on 27 Mar., the patrol line will be between AB 7155 and 7899.

With reference to the British report on plans for German naval attacks against the Murmansk traffic (see War Diary, 23 Mar.), Commanding Admiral, Task Force suggests that counter reports be put out along the following lines:

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"a.) It has been decided to abandon Fleet operations in favor of submarine warfare.

"b.) Shipping movements are designed to make it difficult for the enemy to recognize this decisive measure before crews are reduced and thus to continue tying down enemy forces beyond the time when the ships are actually laid up."

Group North does not anticipate any special success from this measure. Naval Staff is of the same opinion.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

##### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, the DICTO and the LIONEL are to await the next period of bad weather and are meanwhile to lie in the skerries and wait for fog. Their sailing may possibly be combined with a planned attack on Denmark. Landing craft for such an operation are said to be concentrated on the British east coast.

It might at the most be a commando raid.

##### 2. Own Situation:

The Hanstholm barrage gap is occupied by one patrol boat, the Hirtshals - Arendal line by two patrol boats. One mine was cleared north of Anholt. The steamer GUIR entered Aalborg. The Danish steamer HELA (100 GRT) sank after striking a mine in AO 7465. Escort service and channel sweeping in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic were carried out according to plan.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that barrage "Nashorn II a" has been completed as scheduled with 978 UMA mines. While preparing barrage "III a", the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cleared 26 mines.

Admiral, Baltic States reports harassing gunfire on the coast of Kronstadt Bay. No damage was done. The Lissi Noss - Oranienbaum truck traffic was more intense than on foregoing days. There was lively enemy air activity in the sea area of Tytersaari. During the night of 25 Mar., Tallinn was again attacked by enemy planes. Two sticks of bombs fell into the harbor area.

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#### V. Merchant Shipping.



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The Naval Attaché, Madrid reports that the seven German ships sold in Spain in 1942 will probably be put into service in April, as British permission has now been obtained for the change of flag. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

One submarine-sighting report was intercepted 120 miles west of Jamaica and another 60 miles southwest of Cuba.

2. Own Situation:

In the North Atlantic submarine U "564" of Group "See-teufel" intercepted a convoy on course 240° in AJ 3581 at 1850. Other boats of the Group only made hydrophone contact. Submarine U "663" reported an aircraft carrier. The situation is at present obscure.

After passing through Denmark Strait, submarine U "191" reported the ice border from AE 2231 via 2288 to AD 2931 then in direction 200°. No patrol or location activities were noted.

Submarine U "455" passed 13° W on her way out for minelaying operations off Casablanca.

No action reports have been received from boats in the south. On Route "Anton", section "C" has been opened for attacks on unaccompanied vessels until 29 Mar. inclusive.

Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

At 1900 on 25 Mar., the Japanese Liaison Officer advised that there was no objection to the immediate extension of the German operational area in the Indian Ocean as far as 0° and west of the line 0°, 65° E to 20° S, 70° E.

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VII. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Forty-two planes of the 3rd Air Force were out on operation in the west area and four in the Mediterranean. For reconnaissance results, see "Situation West Area." On 27 Mar.

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reconnaissance is planned by two planes off the west Portuguese coast and by six planes between 42° and 46° N to the west to the range limit.

On 26 Mar. small enemy air formations and isolated planes flew into the west area, strafing freight trains and traffic installations. Several locomotives were put out of action.

In the Egersund area, an enemy plane was shot down by anti-aircraft fire after an unsuccessful attack on one of our convoys.

During the night of 26 Mar., a total of 172 incursions were made into Reich territory. In the Rhine - Westphalian industrial area, 120 enemy planes made harassing attacks on altogether 44 towns and places and six anti-aircraft gun positions. Great damage was done to houses in Oberhausen and Duisburg. There was no fighter defense because of bad weather.

A plane from the east entered the area of Lublin, presumably to drop agents. Nineteen planes were reported in Western France in the vicinity of the Loire estuary, but they made no attacks.

## 2. Mediterranean Theater:

The large eastbound enemy convoy was attacked north of Cape Tenes by twelve torpedo bombers. Only one hit on a steamer was reported. Another attack on the same convoy during the evening was also apparently unsuccessful. During the night of 26 Mar., eight planes made a harassing attack on Algiers. There was great air activity on both sides in the Tunisian battle area. Four enemy fighters were shot down.

Photographic reconnaissance of Alexandria and Beirut furnished no new information.

## 3. Eastern Front:

On 25 Mar., 37 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts. From the Black Sea area and from the operational area of the 5th Air Force there is nothing special to report.

### Special Items:

Group North has advised Naval Staff, for information, of the order that, on the basis of previous experience which does not warrant any basic change, the system of night fighting as now practiced will remain in force. (See teletype 2340).



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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

In the forenoon three escort vessels entered Gibraltar from the Atlantic. At noon a French transport with colored troops aboard, 15 LST's, each with one LCT on deck, and 24 LCI's with 3 escort vessels left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean. Whether the landing craft were loaded or not is not yet known. Ten LST's can carry about 300 - 400 up to medium-heavy tanks, 20 LCT's, another 20 tanks and 4,000 men. Of the KMS 11 convoy which entered the Straits of Gibraltar on 24 Mar. in full strength of about 55 ships, without deviation to Morocco, 33 are still in Gibraltar. The other 22 ships were reported north of Cape Tenes about midnight on 25 Mar. and off Algiers early on 26 Mar.

The transfer to the east of the special landing vessels undoubtedly represents a more acute situation. The destination of the KMS 11 is not yet known. Supplementing the report of 25 Mar., Naval Intelligence Division has reported accordingly to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Air Force Operations Staff, Foreign Armies, West, the Naval Groups and German Naval Command, Italy.

About 1600, the NELSON, RODNEY, FORMIDABLE and nine destroyers put in to Gibraltar from the Mediterranean. According to an Italian report, besides the warships, there were 65 steamers, 3 troop transports and 10 tankers in Gibraltar at 1800 on 25 Mar.

Great convoy activity was observed in the Western Mediterranean. At 1920 our air reconnaissance sighted an eastbound convoy of 10 - 15 vessels 30 miles northeast of Algiers. At 1855 our submarines reported a westbound convoy 50 miles west of Royan and at midnight an eastbound convoy 20 miles northeast of Alboran consisting of 20 vessels, presumably the landing craft formation.

The interception of an enemy convoy in the Sicilian Channel, reported by the Italian hydrophone station at Trapani at 1150, seems unlikely. Our reconnaissance produced no confirmation whatsoever.\*

At 0805 there was a westbound convoy of 9 steamers with 5 escort vessels 10 miles northwest of Mersa Matruh.

According to an intelligence report of 3 Mar. from the Naval Intelligence Station, Istanbul (source allegedly reliable), the

\*No unusual shipping movements were observed in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean.

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sale of ten Allied ships to Turkey is said to be a purely fictitious device for the purpose of protecting British ships by means of the Turkish flag. The port of Suez is said to be jammed with the many convoys coming from the U.S.A. From Feb. 1 - 20, 22 steamers and troop transports are said to have arrived in the various harbors and roads of Cyprus and to have landed, among other things, ammunition and a U.S. contingent of 4,000 men. These vessels left immediately after unloading. Two jetties 250 meters long are being built at Polis in order to expedite the shipment of troops and material. About 50 mahones [Turkish vessels] have been noted in the vicinity of Polis and Lazi, and 20 more, some of them pulled ashore, at other places. These vessels resemble the landing craft used by the British at Dieppe. Their bows can be opened to allow tanks to drive out.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. At 0042, submarine U "431" probably sank a steamer of 6,000 - 8,000 GRT from an eastbound convoy in CH 8264, and torpedoed a second steamer of 5,000 GRT. Submarine U "755" fired a spread of three Pi-2 torpedoes at an unaccompanied steamer of 4,000 GRT in CH 7551. The steamer sank within 90 seconds. Another spread of three Pi-2 torpedoes was fired by the same boat at an overlapping transport. Twelve minutes later a hit was picked up by hydrophone; however, the result was not observed.

Submarine U "77" sighted a westbound convoy in CH 7676 and after midnight on 26 Mar. an eastbound convoy of 20 vessels in CH 7546.

PT boats and motor minesweepers were not sent out on account of bad weather. The search by motor minesweepers and auxiliary motor minesweepers for survivors from the destroyers sunk off Cape Bon had to be discontinued on 25 Mar. on account of bad weather. No reports have yet been received on the extent of the losses.

Due to the air raid of 24 Mar., Ferryville has been temporarily put out of action as a port of discharge. German Naval Command, Tunisia states that reinforcement of anti-aircraft defense is necessary. For details see teletype 1235.

In a brief report, Commander, 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla gives details of the destruction of an enemy submarine which attacked the steamer ZEILA on 23 Mar. Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy has acknowledged destruction of the submarine. (See teletype 1205).

With reference to Group South's assessment of the situation concerning the use of submarines in the Eastern Mediterranean, German



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Naval Command, Italy contends that, in view of the overall situation, the main submarine theater should still be the Western Mediterranean. The prospects of destroying shipping are at least as great in that theater as in Eastern Mediterranean.

German Naval Command, Italy has forwarded a request from the Italian Admiralty that, in view of the recent heavy Italian merchant shipping losses, the transfer of the vessels still in France which have been promised to Italy should be made urgent. German Naval Command has reported information received verbally from the Italian Admiralty on the newly planned disposition of the Italian Fleet forces:

1.) Battleships (three operational) at Maddalena. Until completion of the harbor (vessels, tugs, nets, etc.) to remain at Spezia; in addition:

2.) The GORIZIA class cruisers already in Maddalena, 3 - 4 destroyers.

3.) Later: addition of cruisers SAVOIA and MONTECUCCOLI and altogether 12 - 15 destroyers, 9 - 10 of them for the battleships, 3 - 5 for the cruisers.

4.) PT boats: In Porto Torres and Alghero a total of 8; in Porto Vesme, 12; in Corsica / Ajaccio, 8; in North Corsica, 4. No zoning but operations in accordance with situation.

5.) For submarines, certain zones southeast of Majorca. West thereof, German submarines as before.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

On the evening of 25 Mar., a transport submarine entered Sousse and put out again during the night after discharging 50 tons of cargo. On account of weather conditions, there was no other shipping.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

An attempt to sabotage the searchlight near Salamis was again observed. Five steamers with Italian troops aboard entered Candia from Piraeus. They are to sail again in the evening with the assault brigade for Rhodes. The HERMES is to lead the convoy. In view of this escort mission, the planned minelaying operation in the Aegean area has been postponed.

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Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Little shipping off the east coast has been reported.

Own Situation:

PT boats were not out on operation due to weather conditions. Ship "19" carried out a submarine chase on the Sevastopol - Sulina route. Off Eupatoria one of our convoys was attacked at about 1300 by four torpedo bombers which fired four torpedoes. Numerous telephone lines in Anapa were destroyed by bombing. A Crimea towed convoy of 24 vessels is en route from Odessa to Sevastopol.

The ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was hampered by rough seas. In the afternoon loading in Taman had to be stopped. The combined operations landing craft traffic to Kossa Chuchka was especially brisk. The Army Group has requested an immediate increase of supplies to the east to 1,500 tons per day. About 4,300 persons, 270 motorized and 492 horse-drawn vehicles, 1,896 horses and other war matériel were ferried to the west.

The General Dostler affair has been settled by a personal interview with Admiral Scheurlen.

Group South reports that, at the Nicolayev shipyard, the original plan for construction of nine war transports, three with anti-submarine equipment, has been reduced to six. The operational situation in the Black Sea, however, makes the further construction of six war transports absolutely essential. The matter will be further handled by Quartermaster Division.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

No special reports have been received.



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Items of Political Importance.

France:

The Colonial and Navy Ministries have been combined and placed under control of Rear Admiral Bléhaut. The Ministries of War and Air have also been combined into a Ministry of Defense under the former War Minister, General Bridoux. A number of Ministers have withdrawn from the Vichy Cabinet, including Admiral Abrial and Admiral Platon.

Numerous envoys and ambassadors have recently left their posts and gone over to the side of the dissenters.

Spain:

In a report dated 20 Feb., the Japanese Military Attaché in Madrid describes the situation in Spain. He is of the opinion that Spain is unable to think seriously of defense due to her own inefficiency, the lack of material assistance from the Axis Powers and the public's antipathy. The question of The Monarchist Party and the revival of Communism are the causes of the nation's internal weakness. Against her own will, Spain is slowly approaching the Anglo-Americans and gradually estranging herself from the Axis Powers. The Anglo-Americans are making every effort to approach Spain and, exploiting the present war situation, to infiltrate with troops and arms.

Portugal:

The press, in close contact with and obviously inspired by the Government, has declared that Great Britain, as personified by Churchill, and Portugal, as personified by Salazar, have the same basic aims.

Great Britain:

The British Ministry of Supply has stated that rubber supply situation for the rest of 1943 is critical.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

The delivery of German submarines to Japan has come to the knowledge of the Italian Navy. In view of the well-known sensitiveness of the Japanese, this indiscretion, which is probably attributable to the Foreign Office, is extremely regrettable. It

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will be necessary to prepare an answer to be given in case the Japanese should question us on this matter. It would be advisable to inform the Foreign Office through the permanent representative of Commander in Chief, Navy at Fuehrer Headquarters or Herr Hewel, the Foreign Office representative at Fuehrer Headquarters.

No other special reports or decisions.

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Special Items:

I. Group West reports that it is planned to start Operation "Elisabeth" on 29 Mar. The 3rd Air Force has therefore been asked to carry out reconnaissance with the strongest forces possible and to the maximum range from 27 Mar. until probably 31 Mar. At the same time the search for the REIHER is still necessary.

II. In a discussion between Commander in Chief, Air Force and Naval Staff on the question of Air Force operations in northern waters, Air Force Operations Staff concluded from Naval Staff's opinion as set forth on 20 Mar., that it was also the view of High Command, Navy that joint action should be concentrated on attacks on enemy merchant ships. Commander in Chief, Air Force feels that employment of the Air Force against naval forces can be ruled and ordered only as occasion arises. Air Force Operations Staff has no objections to contact being made between Naval Group North and the 5th Air Force on this matter.

As a result of this, Admiral, Northern Waters reports that his discussions with Air Commander, Lofoten reveal that a heavy enemy group could be effectively engaged or even merely driven off only if our air forces are considerably increased, especially since the only torpedo bombers available are the He "115" type, which are unsuitable for this purpose. The only prospect of success lies, however, in combined attack by strong forces of torpedo planes and bombers in waves. The 5th Air Force has confirmed this view of Air Commander, Lofoten and considers the effective engagement of a heavy enemy group by the present forces, which currently comprise only twelve operational planes, to be as good as hopeless. In any case, the 5th Air Force does not believe that, with the present number of forces, the enemy's freedom of movement can be seriously hampered, especially as it must be assumed that he is fully informed in regard to our weakness in the air. The 1st Group, 30th Bomber Wing could only tie down the enemy once and this would be merely temporary.



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In view of this, Group North considers that the time has come to request from Commander in Chief, Air Force an allocation of forces, particularly modern torpedo planes.

Naval Staff is of the opinion that, in view of the overall position in regard to the commitment of our naval forces and the well-known personal attitude of the Fuehrer, Group North's request cannot be recommended. Naval Staff considers that the effect of even a limited engagement of our air forces has been underrated by the Air Force and the enemy's knowledge of our weakness overestimated. Naval Staff will advise Chief, Naval Staff to this effect.

III. The Army's 1942 summer offensive in the east did not achieve its aim - the Caucasus oil. A repetition of this operation in the summer of 1943 would hardly have better prospects - even if there were the forces available for this purpose. However, it is possible that the advance into the Caucasus might be made by sea, into the Poti - Batum area. This operation might perhaps be less costly in lives and have more prospect of success.

In order to clarify the possibilities of performing such an operation and the necessary material conditions, Naval Group South has been instructed to compile a study on a combined operation against the Caucasian coast with the aim of an "expedition" through Transcaucasia to Baku.

IV. Quartermaster Division has ordered Admiral, Landing Craft and Bases to transfer at once a first group of ten naval landing craft, with crews, to Rotterdam where, in cooperation with the Dockyard Control Staff, Holland, they are to be fitted out and completed for use in the Mediterranean. Fitting up for their transport overland to the Mediterranean will be handled by the Deputy of High Command, Navy, Dr. Scholz, in cooperation with the D.A.P.G. (German General Oil Company).

Transfer route: Seine - Auxerre - Chalon sur Saône - Rhône.  
Three naval landing craft are to be at Auxerre by 18 Apr.

V. The Finnish Military Attaché in Bern has heard from the U.S. Military Attaché there that German submarines have inflicted considerable losses on the U.S. Navy. The Allies lost 15½ million tons in 1942 as compared with 17 million tons of new construction. Due to Russian pressure, the U.S.A. would be forced to attempt a landing in France, although the Americans were quite sure that German fortifications in France had been improved in the last few months and that a large number of troops had been transferred to France from the Russian front. However, the Americans had lately been able to train excellent airborne forces and were prepared to

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use 500,000 men in such a landing attempt. Other sources have stated that the U.S.A. have been able to deliver 4,000 armored cars of the latest type alone to Russia during the past six months.

VI. The Naval Attaché, Rome reports the following information from the Japanese Military Attaché, Stockholm:

1.) In his negotiations with Eden in London, Molotov is said to have obtained British agreement for an unhindered Russian advance into Scandinavia and on the Balkans. This agreement stands in the way of an understanding between Great Britain and the U.S.A. in regard to the establishment of a second front.

2.) The U.S.A. are said to have demanded that Great Britain establish a second front in Northern Scandinavia and in the Balkans regardless of the Anglo-Russian agreement mentioned in para. 1.) above, as the U.S.A. do not want the Russians to advance into Scandinavia and the Balkans. On the other hand, Great Britain does not want to carry out any landing operation on the French Channel coast. There are therefore said to be considerable difficulties at the moment.

3.) Many new airfields have been set up on Cyprus. British long-range bombers are now arriving there.

According to information from a Japanese major in Tangier, dated 20 Mar., Allied forces in North Africa amount to over 30 divisions, including ten divisions of British territorial troops. 4,000 planes are said to be at the disposal of the Allied Air Force.

VII. A map exercise on a large-scale British landing in Norway (time - March 1943) has been carried out by Group North on the basis of the actual strengths on both sides.

The map exercise led to the conclusion that a landing in the Bodoe area is very improbable, in the Harstad area improbable and is not to be expected in the area of Namsos or Trondheim so long as Germany has the present number of reserves in Norway and the possibility of reinforcing them from home. There is no operational aim to be attained by the enemy from the Bergen area. An operation in the Kirkenes area aiming at Finland, Northern Sweden and Northern Norway might be contemplated but could not achieve surprise. The obvious idea of cutting off Norway by seizing Jutland would necessarily fail, due to the too close proximity of our sources of power! Such an attempt would be nothing but an episode.



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Major operations with wide aims need hardly therefore be taken into consideration in the areas mentioned.\*

Commanding Admiral, Group North concurs in the conclusions of the map exercise and especially emphasizes that the greatest danger of large-scale enemy operations is to be expected in other war theaters, such as the decisive key position of the Dardanelles.

Naval Staff has noted the performance and results of the map exercise with interest. In its opinion, even landing operations with limited aims, such as the map exercise has shown to be practicable, could have decisive and far-reaching effects. If the enemy were to dig-in in the Bodoë area, for example, supplying of the Armed Forces in Northern Norway, and to some extent in Lapland, would be so jeopardized as to entail serious consequences for the Northern Finnish front. How this would affect the attitudes of Finland and Sweden is obvious. In any case, any actions that might comprise a quick thrust towards Sweden are the most dangerous. To the enemy, Sweden represents the bridge to the Baltic Sea and it is on freedom of movement in the Baltic that the whole submarine campaign stands or falls.

Even a small scale attack in the Petsamo area, if not checked, would have far reaching effects as soon as the nickel and nickel ore exports to Germany were interrupted. It would even occasion serious gaps in armaments if these exports, 50% of which go by sea, were to be held up by interruption of our Arctic Coast traffic at Bodoë.

On the whole, from the knowledge gained by Group North from the map exercise, it would be a mistake to underestimate the threat to the Norwegian area just because large-scale operations with widespread aims are out of the question. Even the limited targets which have been judged attainable are of sufficient importance to call for the commitment of all forces, as heretofore, in the protection of the Northern area and defense against attacks on its coasts.

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Situation 27 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

\*On the other hand, raids and operations of a limited nature are possible and to be expected.

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1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from a diplomatic source in Portugal, a large convoy, for which 15 large tankers are said to be loading in Galveston and about 40 freighters in Norfolk and in Newport News, will leave the U.S.A. for Liverpool on 7 Apr. Furthermore, it is said that a great number of very heavy bombers will transfer from Rochester to England and Casablanca early in April.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK has been informed, by radiogram 1208, that:

1.) Naval Staff is at present uncertain as to her position;

2.) air reconnaissance for her continues;

3.) by dead reckoning, the most southerly north-bound convoy will be at  $40^{\circ}$  N,  $14^{\circ}$  W, speed 10 knots, on the morning of 27 Mar. and that no southbound convoy from England is to be expected for the next few days: the air west of the coast is therefore clear.

The weather report for DOGGERBANK for 27 Mar. which forecasts good visibility, has been transmitted by radiogram 1636.

By radiogram 0116 the REGENSBURG was advised of the interception of a convoy by our submarines at about 2000 on 26 Mar. in grid square AJ 3552, at first on course  $240^{\circ}$ , afterwards on course  $10^{\circ}$ . It is possible that there were two convoys.

Chief, Naval Staff has decided that REGENSBURG is to leave point "Anton" on 28 Mar. via Route "Hamilkar", and that Naval Staff will be in control up to about point "Max". A submarine will remain at point "Max" from 30 Mar. to 2 Apr. or until the REGENSBURG passes. The submarine is not assigned to meet the REGENSBURG but, if possible, to sight and afterwards to report her and to stand by for rescue work. Similar measures will be taken in the western sector. Naval Staff will inform Group North of this instruction. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl I a 925/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

By radiogram 1724 the REGENSBURG has been instructed to depart from point "Anton" via Route "Hamilkar" on 28 Mar. so as to pass the point "J" section by night if possible. In addition, REGENSBURG has been advised by radiogram 1724 that, contrary to the operational order, Naval Staff will retain control as far as about point "Max" and thereafter will turn it over to Group North.



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Radiogram 1324 to REGENSBURG, with copy to KARIN, orders that once the break-through has been started, it is to be carried through. Naval Staff estimates current weather and enemy situations to be favorable. A Murmansk convoy is unlikely. Even in case of damage, for instance by ice, the ship will proceed so long as she is still able to. In case fog and ice do not permit of maximum speed, it should be remembered that fog is the ship's best protection.

Weather report for the REGENSBURG and KARIN was forwarded by radiogram 1409. Visibility in the route area is still favorable for execution of the operation.

The REGENSBURG and KARIN have been informed by radiogram 1530 that some drifting mines from the barrage inside the 200 meter line have been observed in grid square AD 29, and that the convoy reported in radiogram 0116 on 27 Mar. is presumably on a south-westerly course and that an aircraft carrier has been sighted in the vicinity.

REGENSBURG, with copy to KARIN, has been informed by radiogram 1745 that at 1500 our submarines reported the convoy in grid square AJ 3873, sailing east at a speed of nine knots. Naval Staff recommends hauling off to the east.

The position of this convoy at 1820 in grid square AJ 3894, sailing east, was transmitted to REGENSBURG, with copy to KARIN, by radiogram 2108.

Operations Division has informed Submarine Division that Operation "Segelhafen" will begin on 28 Mar. from point "Anton" and that Operation "Elisabeth", combined with "Anke", will begin at midnight on 28 Mar.

Therefore, PIETRO ORSEOLO will begin to move east on 27 Mar. from grid square CD 37 via CF 26 to BE 97. Submarine Division will be asked, if necessary, to issue corresponding sailing directions as this route is south of Route "Anton".

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

At 1510 Air Commander, Atlantic Coast reported 32 merchant vessels, 1 cruiser, and 4 escort vessels, speed eight knots, sailing north, in grid square CF 3370.

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No special air reconnaissance information on the area around the British Isles has been received.

On 16 Mar. radio deciphering intercepted a noteworthy radiogram, according to which British vessels had on that date performed night minesweeping operations from Portsmouth in the area west of Dieppe on a route specially designated by the name "LL". The search produced no results.

According to the documents in possession of Operations Division, on map no. 18, captured at Dieppe, the points of the British approach route were marked with double letters. In this operation, "LL" was at 50°25' N, 00°29' E.

As an evaluation of captured British material and supplementing the sections of the "Signal Handbook of the British Fleet" and "The Fleet Tactical Instructions" already dealt with, Naval Intelligence Division has issued a report on directions for close escort of British convoys.

Copy of the report as per 1/Skl 9680/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

On 23 Mar. two ELM/J mines were cleared near La Pallice by mine-exploding vessels. At 1100, Group West issued the password for Operation "Elisabeth". It is planned to start at midnight on 28 Mar. Preliminary reconnaissance for "Elisabeth" on 28 Mar. has been requested from Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, as allowed by his forces, between 42° and 46° N, as far as maximum range.

Reconnaissance for the DOGGERBANK is being flown by two FW 200 planes between the west Spanish coast and 11° W, as far as maximum range. They will pass over Cape Villano at 1000.

Channel Coast:

During the night of 26 Mar., the 2nd and 6th PT Boat Flotillas transferred to Ijmuiden, the 4th PT Boat Flotilla to the Hook of Holland. Three pairs of boats of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla carried out a torpedo operation from Cherbourg at points BF 2299 left center, 2299 right center, and BF 2377. One pair was located by a plane and following radar interception of this, the boats stopped. The plane circled around the boats within listening range but without identifying them. At 0148, after two attempts at diversion, a short sharp attack was made south of BF



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2378, center, by two motor gunboats on the 1st Subdivision of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla, causing no casualties or damage. The convoy route was checked but no enemy vessels were sighted. For brief report see teletype 1645.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Minesweeper M "82" was damaged by an ATE mine west of Scheveningen and has put in to Rotterdam under her own power. In grid square AN 8581, an ATE mine was cut, rendered inactive and brought in to the Hook. One ELM/J mine was cleared near Ameland.

The Hook - Elbe convoy was delayed for 48 hours because of suspected mines on Route "Rot".

Anti-aircraft defense against single enemy planes in Dutch territory and west of the Heligoland Bight was without observed success.

In regard to the suggestion of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North on the bombing of Danish trawlers fishing in our declared area (see War Diary, 23 Mar.), Admiral, Denmark, in agreement with the Reich Deputy, proposes the following measures:

a.) That such vessels be seized by surface forces. This would be the best solution because of indisputable proof.

b.) That attempts be made by the Esbjerg harbor defense flotilla or by forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses North, in cooperation with the Air Force, to capture these vessels on their return passage - but before they reach the three mile limit.

c.) That captured vessels be brought into German ports and, on the basis of the results of investigation, requisitioned for the duration and used as patrol boats and minesweepers of the German Navy. This would have the advantage of usefully employing the vessels instead of destroying them and would have a less unfavorable effect on Danish public opinion. (See teletype 1155).

The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has forwarded a communication from the German Embassy, Copenhagen stating that, in view of the loss of the Danish steamers AGNETE and MARIE TOFT, the Danes have asked that night passages to and from Rotterdam be stopped immediately in order to avoid passing the dangerous Terschelling area at night. The Danes will send no further ships to Rotterdam until they are certain that night passages will not be made.

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Naval Staff has replied to the Reich Commissioner as follows:

"For sometime past, local Commanding Admiral has been taking steps in order to fulfil Danish wishes. Reference should also be made to the great successes in defense against PT boats which have recently been frequently cited in the Armed Forces reports. It is also pointed out that no Danish ships, except for the two in question, have been damaged by enemy PT boats up to the present.

"As Naval Staff has predicted several times, the development of the military situation in the North Sea tends to a steadily increasing threat to Rotterdam traffic. The greatest possible reduction of this traffic is therefore necessary, especially since, as shown above, increasing resistance is to be expected from the Danes and the Swedes."

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Radio Intelligence detected three submarines in the area of the Norwegian Arctic coast. Six submarines carried out exercises in the areas of Olenya, Wayenga and Kola Bays. On 25 Mar., according to air reconnaissance of Molotovsk, there were ten freighters and numerous coastal vessels, as well as three vessels, apparently destroyers, under construction on the slipway.

British reconnaissance activity over the North Sea was again brisk. Four planes were ordered to search for a lifeboat. Five planes of the Iceland squadrons were observed on operation.

Own Situation:

At 2240 on 26 Mar., a Norwegian midshipman in British uniform and a naval stoker, who had been taken prisoner by Army forces, landed in the north harbor of Utsire. They stated that they had been ordered, together with five other Norwegians, to take 900 liters of gasoline in cans to Hisken Island by cutter, hide it there and return to England. They had put in to Utsire because they were not sure of their position. According to a report from the 269th Infantry Division, the vessel which put out from Utsire again was not a fishing cutter but probably a PT boat. Admiral, West Norwegian Coast has sent out six boats to search. For details see teletypes 1550 and 2320.

Also on 26 Mar. a Norwegian fisherman encountered a boat with nine men, some of them wounded, in the sea area of Aalesund near Ulla. There were arms on board. The men asked the way to the nearest harbor and to Mole. Due to shortage of forces, Air Commander,



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North was unable to send out a search the same day. Further steps by Naval Shore Commander, Molde, the Army and the security service are under way. (See teletype 1655).

On 27 Mar., air reconnaissance reported a motor boat with the Norwegian flag on course 75° in grid square AF 5516, 140 miles west of Folda Fiord. The Air Force has been requested to take action against this vessel on 28 Mar.

No situation report has been received from Admiral, Arctic Coast.

At noon on 26 Mar., a Mosquito plane flew over Aas Fiord observing the anchorages. Convoy traffic in the area of Admirals, North Norwegian Coast and West Norwegian Coast was carried out according to plan. In the Lister area, the unaccompanied Norwegian steamer MAILAND was unsuccessfully attacked by a torpedo bomber. A Bristol - Blenheim type plane approached one of our convoys in the same area and was shot down in flames. The signal book was salvaged. In Haugesund, a barracks of the 504th Naval Artillery Battalion burned down. A supplementary report from Commander, 11th Submarine-Chaser Flotilla gives details of the destruction of the enemy submarine on 21 Mar. near Nordkyn. (See teletype 1515). The report considers there is no doubt that the submarine was destroyed.

At 2100 the BEITZEN entered Kaa Fjord.

The ten submarines in the operational area have been combined to form Group "Eisbaer". Submarine U "703" has been ordered to send a weather report from grid square AA 98 early on the morning of 28 Mar.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Four patrol boats were on duty in the Skagerrak and one at the Hanstholm barrage gap. Twenty-one vessels were engaged on channel sweeping in the Baltic Sea entrances. One ELM/J mine was cleared north of Anholt. Northwest of this island, the Danish steamer KARIN TOFT sank following a mine explosion. Route "38" has been closed as mines are suspected. The Aarhus - Oslo transport has been delayed for 24 hours owing to lack of escort.

At 1530 the ADMIRAL SCHEER left Wilhelmshaven for transfer to Swinemunde.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that the partial barrage of "Nashorn III a", checking sweeping of the minelaying course for barrage "Walross" and clearing of the sea area of "Corbetha"

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barrage have been completed to schedule. An L 2 mine was cleared near the Tallinn approach buoy. The net defense unit for "Walross" is ready in Baltic Port. Minelayer KAISER is in Baltic Port, minelayer OSTMARK in Swinemunde and the 31st Minesweeper Flotilla in Gdynia.

Admiral, Baltic States reports the usual activity on both sides without special incidents. A heavy anti-aircraft battery has arrived in Tallinn and is ready for operation.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance in the Biscay was normal, with 24 planes on operation.

2. Own Situation:

The operation against the convoy, presumably westbound, south of Greenland was broken off as contact was not regained. In the meantime, submarine U "305" intercepted an eastbound convoy at 1605 in grid square AJ 3885. Groups "Seewolf" and "Seeteufel" were ordered to attack it. Weather conditions in the operational area are unfavorable due to poor visibility. The convoy, with which contact was maintained until midnight, was the HX convoy which had been expected according to dead reckoning. No action reports have been received from the North Atlantic, the West Indies or the Cape area. Details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VI. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Ninety-four planes of the 3rd Air Force were on operation in the west area and 17 in the Mediterranean. Single harassing attacks were made on Deal and Hastings by two Ju 88 planes in each case.

Shortly after setting out for long-range reconnaissance, an FW 200 plane was shot down by one of our own patrol boats off the Gironde estuary. This regrettable incident is being investigated.

At 1900, five Mosquito planes dropped 20 high-explosive bombs on armament plants in Holland. During the night of 27 Mar., about



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120 enemy planes made incursions. About 70 planes attacked Berlin. Besides great damage to houses, the Lankwitz anti-aircraft barracks and five industrial plants were hit. Heavy casualties were caused on a military leave train from Berlin to Paris. For details see "Daily Situation". According to reports so far available, eight enemy planes were shot down.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

On the evening of 25 Mar., 14 bombers carrying LT 350 aerial torpedoes were sent out against shipping in Algiers harbor. Eight planes reached the target and dropped 32 torpedoes in the harbor basin. In spite of very strong defense, immediate and highly effective results were observed. Two of our planes were shot down over the harbor.

On the evening of 25 Mar., four torpedo bombers attacking an eastbound convoy northeast of Algiers scored hits on three merchant vessels. On the forenoon of 27 Mar., aerial torpedo hits were also reported on three steamers in an eastbound enemy convoy off Cape Bougaroni.

Dive Bombers, fighter-bombers and bombers were in action over the Tunisian battle fronts.

3. Eastern Front:

During the night of 26 Mar. 13 planes dropped mines in the harbor of Ghelenjik. No special reports have been received from the area of the 5th Air Force.

Special Items:

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has informed Naval Staff that the Air Force General Staff plans to instruct Air Force Commander, Center or Night Fighter Corps to make arrangements with the local naval authorities for night fighting to be carried out on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein, at all altitudes, at least in certain areas and for certain periods. Operations Staff has asked Naval Staff to point out to the local naval authorities the need for this measure, which is aimed against the numerous incursions into the Warsaw area which have lately been reported.

Naval Staff's instructions to this effect have been issued to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North, North Sea Station and Group North, with copy to Admiral, Denmark, Baltic Station and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic. Copy of the order 1/Skl I a 8766/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. V.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

On the evening of 26 Mar., two French transports and a gunboat entered Gibraltar from the Mediterranean. On 27 Mar. light naval forces entered the harbor. The following were noted in the harbor at noon: 3 battleships, 1 carrier, 2 British auxiliary aircraft carriers (each of which can carry 30 fighters), 1 minelayer, 1 cruiser, 3 auxiliary cruisers, 17 destroyers, 15 corvettes, 2 cable layers, 4 transports, 7 tankers and 71 steamers.

In the Western Mediterranean convoy activity was lively. The eastbound convoy which was northeast of Algiers on the evening of 26 Mar., was reported at 1610 entering Philippeville and comprising at least 20 ships. At 0921, the landing ship formation was 64 miles west-northwest of Oran on easterly course, comprising 15 LST's, 26 landing craft and 6 escort vessels. According to an intelligence report from Spain, all the LST's were carrying 6 tanks each. Another eastbound convoy consisting of 5 transports, 4 steamers and 3 escort vessels was reported at noon by one of our submarines 20 miles northwest of Oran.

At 1550 a submarine torpedoed the steamer SIDANO (2,384 GRT) in the harbor of Milazzo.

Complete reconnaissance of coastal waters from Mersa Matruh up to 30 miles west of Derna produced no sightings. According to a reliable intelligence report, the British are preparing a commando raid from Cyprus against the Dodecanese. The objective is said to have been not yet finally decided. The operation is not to be a large one, but is for the main purpose of trying out the German/Italian reaction. It will reportedly take place at the beginning of April.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were in the operational area.

At 1850 submarine U "77" torpedoed a steamer of 6,000 GRT in grid square CH 7676. At noon, in grid square CH 7692, submarine U "596" fired a triple miss on an eastbound convoy of five transports and four steamers. Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation".

In view of continuous bad weather, PT boat operations were not possible. Minelaying off the Tunisian coast was also impossible.

With reference to the report from the Naval Attaché, Madrid concerning the torpedoing of the steamer BARTOLO, Operations Division



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has called the attention of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping to the urgency of the measures proposed by the Naval Attaché, Madrid designed to give Spanish seamen an incentive to work for the Axis Powers.

Group West and the Naval Attaché, Madrid have been instructed that cooperation between the Group and its subordinate offices and the Naval Attaché is to ensure that the latter is informed in regard to the situation on the south coast of France to the extent necessary for accomplishment of his control tasks. The strengthening of the anti-submarine defense in the Mediterranean is to represent the reason to outward appearance, reference being made to the Armed Forces report of 25 Mar. This was at first urgent for military purposes in the Southern Italian - Tunisia area and in future will also be to the benefit of the Spanish ore and fruit traffic. Copy of the order 1/Skl II b 8849/43 Geheim in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

Because of continued bad weather, transport traffic was suspended.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

The second Italian PT boat which had run aground near Palaeo-Chora has also been salvaged with the assistance of tugs. The troop transport convoy led by the HERMES entered Rhodes in the afternoon. Other convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

PT boat operations were not possible due to bad weather.

Submarine U "19" reports a hit on a 2,000 GRT passenger steamer. The steamer stopped after an explosion. Further observations were not possible as defense operations started. The submarine had to discontinue the operation because of damage to thrust bearings. Submarine U "24" was ordered to report on possibilities of attack in the operational area. She has reported that there had been such possibilities, but she had been unable to exploit them.

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Convoy service in the Black Sea was carried out according to plan. The Crimean tug convoy with 24 vessels entered Sevastopol in the afternoon. The Kerch ferry traffic was carried out to all landing stages under considerable enemy air activity. To the west were ferried: 2,700 persons, 450 motorized and 140 horse-drawn vehicles, 501 horses; to the east: 1,173 soldiers, 230 tons of ammunition, 105 tons of railroad material, 450 tons of construction material and 308 tons of supplies. Fourteen naval landing craft were in operation and made 18 crossings.

The Naval Liaison Officer with High Command, Army has forwarded an order of High Command, Army, Quartermaster General under which it is necessary to restrict air supplies to the 17th Army Command to a minimum by intensifying the sea-borne supply service. Major General Dostler has been appointed Deputy of Army General Staff for supplies by sea to the 17th Army Command. In order to advocate to the relevant naval offices Army Group A's request for provision of shipping, he is responsible, through the Army Group, for seeing that adequate supplies are provided and for the speedy loading and unloading of ships. For these purposes he will be given adequate powers by the Army Group. The responsibility of the Army Group for supplying the 17th Army Command and of the Quartermaster General for supervision thereof will not be affected by the appointment of the Deputy of the Army General Staff.

With reference to Group South's proposal regarding the employment of helicopters (see War Diary, 23 Mar.), Naval Staff states that Commander in Chief, Navy has sent a personal letter to the Secretary, Air Force, requesting that production of FL 282 type helicopters be speeded up. With the present production of this type, it is impossible to give the Group Command any fixed date for the equipment of six submarine-chasers. High Command, Navy has no knowledge of the Group Command's request to assign a Flettner helicopter to submarine-chaser WITNESS. On the other hand, the Group's request for the equipment of the minelayer BULGARIA is under examination.

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#### VIII. Situation East Asia.

The Naval Attaché and the Air Attaché, Tokyo have forwarded a communique from the Japanese Naval Staff according to which the overall situation in the southern area is unchanged. The air campaign on both sides is as published. Apart from that, Japanese flying boats made night attacks on the airfield on Canton Island on 19 and 22 Mar. Some enemy planes were destroyed. Construction of Japanese airfields on Kiska and Attu has been started. The islands are under frequent enemy attack.

Four or five U.S. submarines have been observed in the area around Japan and four in the southern area.



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Items of Political Importance.

Nothing special to report.

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Special Items:

I. Naval Staff's decision concerning service instructions for the German Staff with the Italian Admiralty has been issued in conformity with Vice Admiral Ruge's proposal (see War Diary, 20 Mar.). Copy as per teletype of Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch, 1/Skl 9120/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

II. In regard to the location of the command post for Naval Group North, the Group has replied to the inquiry of Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch as follows:

There is no doubt that the functions of operational command can best be performed from Sengwarden. At the same time, there is no doubt that the performance of administrative functions from Sengwarden will be complicated. From Ahlbeck, the latter functions could be performed most satisfactorily, but the operational command functions, and especially those for the northern area, would be complicated to an almost unbearable extent even if the communications improvements, which are actually possible and not too extensive, were made there. With special reference to the administrative functions, which are of utmost importance in the fourth year of war, the Group Command would prefer to remain in Kiel.

III. The Naval Attaché, Rome has learned from a confidential source that the Italian Admiralty has received information that the Reich Government plans to place a civilian in charge of the Toulon arsenal. The Italian Navy, and Admiral Tur in particular, would consider such a step to be highly disadvantageous. Italian agreement to the German proposal in regard to the organizational relations between the commander of the Toulon arsenal and the Italian Naval Prefect, Provence, was based on command of the arsenal being held by a German naval officer. The Naval Attaché, Rome has asked for instructions in the matter.

The question is to be dealt with by Quartermaster Division.

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Situation 28 Mar.

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I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

On 27 Mar. two armed British sea-going tugs, presumably from Casablanca, put in to Las Palmas for a short time on their way south.

2. Own Situation:

The DOGGERBANK and KARIN have not yet been picked up. There is no cause for alarm as no definite fix on the DOGGERBANK has been obtained since she left Batavia and considerable delays may well have arisen during her long voyage. Both vessels have been ordered, by radiogram 2017, to report noon position on 28 Mar., if opportunity offers, and if they are still more than 300 miles south of the Azores.

DOGGERBANK has also been given: by radiogram 0921, the positions of four Spanish steamers; by radiogram 1659, the position (by dead reckoning) of the convoy Gibraltar - England as of 0800, 29 Mar. at  $37^{\circ}$  N,  $11^{\circ}$  W; by radiogram 1832, the position of two British destroyers at 1300 at  $44^{\circ}$  N,  $15^{\circ}$  W, proceeding south at very high speed, and by radiogram 1659, weather forecast.

KARIN has been informed, by radiogram 0825, that a submarine has been waiting for her since 26 Mar. at  $43^{\circ}30'$  N,  $33^{\circ}$  W, and has been ordered to go to meet her at once.

Weather report on the northern passage was sent to REGENSBURG and KARIN by radiogram 1303.

In addition, REGENSBURG has been informed, by radiogram 0134, of the position of an enemy convoy at 2300 on 27 Mar. in grid square AJ 3981, and of one unaccompanied steamer at 1800 in grid square AJ 3972 and another at 2200 in grid square AJ 3883.

By radiogram 2039 REGENSBURG was instructed that, up to point "Hans", in view of our own submarines, she must not deviate for more than 100 miles on either side of her course line; she was also informed that an enemy plane escorting a westbound convoy was located in grid square AD 8979.

By radiogram 0945, Naval Staff has confirmed to the PIETRO ORSEOLO receipt of the report from submarine U "161", received meantime, that the ship's engines are in good condition, maximum speed is  $14\frac{1}{2}$  knots and that endurance at top speed is still 20 days. Command of ORSEOLO will pass to Group West at noon.



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II. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance reported at 1245 a British destroyer proceeding at very high speed on southerly course in grid square BE 9473 and a steamer with two destroyers on course 200° in grid square BE 9725.

At Spithead, 25 incoming steamers were observed and, southeast of Portland, a convoy probably on easterly course.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One ground mine was cleared off the Gironde and two off La Pallice.

The Group has advised PIETRO ORSEOLO, by radiogram 1330, that it has assumed command, and that the rendezvous with the destroyers is at 1500 on 30 Mar. at 43°20' N, 15° W. Recognition signals of our own planes have been forwarded by radiogram 1250.

For Operation "Elisabeth", Air Commander, Atlantic Coast has been requested to provide air reconnaissance for 29 Mar. between 42° N and 48° N to maximum range, in such a way that, on the return flight, 8° W will be crossed at nightfall. It has been requested that available heavy fighters be at immediate readiness.

At 2200, 100 enemy planes attacked St. Nazaire.

Group West has reported on the status of the reinforcement of anti-aircraft defense for the submarine bases at Brest, Lorient and St. Nazaire. For details, see teletype 1420.

Channel Coast:

At noon an enemy air raid was made on Rouen. An oil tank and an ammunition train were set on fire.

Motor minesweeper R "99" struck a mine near Calais and was under-slung.

During the night of 28 Mar., the 5th PT Boat Flotilla put out for torpedo operations off Plymouth Sound, and the 2nd, 4th and 6th PT Boat Flotillas in the Smith Knoll area. Enemy locating reports were intercepted from both positions. Further reports have not yet been received.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

During the night of 27 Mar. the boats in patrol position "Rom" had an engagement with enemy PT boats, one of which was certainly damaged.

Forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North cleared nine mines, including five moored mines, in the Scheveningen area.

Escort and patrol service was carried out without incident.

During the night of 27 Mar. the shooting down of three enemy planes during flights through the Heligoland Bight and the Hoofden was confirmed. Air warning sets were destroyed. In the anti-aircraft areas of Emden and Brunsbuettel, the power supply was temporarily interrupted by several nuisance balloons.

Rotterdam was attacked at noon by 24 planes. In the Wilton Yards, the steamer CEUTA was sunk; in the Nieuve Waterberg Yards, one patrol boat overturned in the dock and patrol boat "2009" sank. Other vessels (1 mine-exploding vessel, 1 minesweeper and 2 PT boats) were damaged in both dockyards. One enemy plane was shot down by naval anti-aircraft fire before the attack.

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance over the northern North Sea and in the area of the Shetlands - Bergen was brisk. Eleven planes of the Iceland squadrons were reported on operation.

According to location, there was a British vessel, possibly a submarine, in grid square AN 2850 (85 miles west-northwest of Stavenger).

At 2251, Scapa sent an urgent operational radiogram to Thorshaven.

A supplementary report states that on 25 Mar. a submarine on course 60° was in a position 200 miles northwest of Trondheim and on 26 Mar., at 1123, a submarine was sighted eight miles south of Svolvær (area of Narvik)

Own Situation:

On 26 Mar. six star shells were fired from the Rybachi Peninsula on a convoy leaving Petsamo. A hunt was started for



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the submarine near Svolvær. On 28 Mar. one of our convoys was unsuccessfully attacked by a submarine between North Cape and Nordkyn. A submarine chase is in progress.

On 27 Mar. eight enemy planes were over the Petsamo area without dropping bombs; one enemy plane reconnoitered the anchorages in Kors and Lang Fjords. Other planes were reported from the west and southwest coasts.

On the evening of 27 Mar., three planes made an unsuccessful attack on the Norwegian steamer NAMSOS near Stadtlandet with one aerial torpedo and machine gunfire.

Convoy service was carried out according to plan. As from 29 Mar., Naval Command, Norway will no longer include shipping movements in his situation report. In agreement with the 5th Air Force, the local Air Force offices will receive direct advice of these movements from the coastal Admirals; Commanding Admiral, Task Force, the 5th Air Force and Commanding General, Armed Forces, Norway will be informed, as necessary, by Naval Command, Norway.

As at midnight of 29 Mar., submarine U "625" is detached from the patrol line south of Jan Mayen to grid square AE 2349 to meet the REGENSBURG. Submarine U "703" has been ordered to report the weather on 29 Mar. twice from different positions, but without passing south of 69° N.

Group "Eisbaer" is to occupy the patrol line from AA 9631 - AF 1446 from 1600 on 29 Mar.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

In the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic one ELM/J mine was cleared 25 miles east of Anholt. Escort service and channel sweeping were carried out according to plan and without incident.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that the second section of barrage "Nashorn III A" has been laid by the 24th Landing Flotilla. The net defense unit is continuing Operation "Walross". The "Corbetha" and "Wartburg" barrages are being cleared.

Admiral, Baltic States reports that a British aerial mine, dropped by a Russian plane, was salvaged in a meadow near Tallinn.

The 1st Air Force has transferred a flight of five fighters to Helsingfors to support barrage Operation "Walross".

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This fulfils the original request of Group North and Naval Staff.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has always been opposed to the suggestion raised some time ago by Group North that Delfzyl be included in the goods traffic to and from Rotterdam, giving as his reason the difficulty of making the port efficient enough and of establishing the supply routes to it.

Naval Staff does not wish to continue the correspondence on this subject with the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping if no essentially new aspects have emerged, and expresses its opinion in the following memorandum to Group North, copy to North Sea Station and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North:

In a letter to High Command, Navy, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping who, by will of the Fuehrer, is responsible for the control of merchant shipping, the turn-over in the ports, and the increase of their capacities, expressly reserved to himself the decision on economic questions and technical ones concerning transport and on the use of ports for new assignments. Naval Staff has pointed out to the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping the possibility that the sea route to Rotterdam might some day have to be discontinued. It must be left to him to judge the consequences of this.

Since, after repeated examination, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping rejects the proposals made concerning shipments to Delfzyl, no further correspondence on this matter will be entered into if no essentially new aspects have emerged.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was reported to be very brisk, with 42 planes on operation.

2. Own Situation:

In the sea area of the operation against the convoy in grid square AK, there is a southwesterly gale with sea strength eight. The boats of Groups "Seeteufel" and "Seewolf" are trying



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to use the westerly weather to get ahead of the eastbound enemy. It has been very difficult to maintain contact, especially since, probably due to the weather, the convoy tends increasingly to break up into groups and individual vessels.

South of the Canary Islands, submarine U "167" detected a convoy on southwesterly course in grid square DU 2378. Six other boats of Group "Seeraeuber" gained contact with this convoy. At 1247, submarine U "167" sank one 6,500 GRT steamer; at 1448, U "159" sank an ammunition tanker of 9,000 GRT, and around midnight, U "172" sank a passenger-freighter of 7,000 GRT. After this day's attacks, the convoy seems to have broken up into several groups.

Off the South American coast, submarine U "518" sank the Dutch steamer MARISO (7,659 GRT) on 20 Mar. in grid square FJ 8883, and the British steamer INDUSTRIA (4,861 GRT) on 25 Mar. in grid square FJ 9181.

Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

During the day there was considerable activity by mixed enemy formations. Rouen was attacked by 75 Boeing Fortresses from a high altitude. One Fortress and six Spitfires were shot down. For further details of the attacks on Rotterdam and St. Nazaire, see "Daily Situation".

During the night of 28 Mar., 45 of our bombers went into action against Norwich.

For 29 Mar., Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, plans to carry out reconnaissance with nine FW 200 planes in accordance with the request of Group West.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Apart from reconnaissance reports, no others have been received. The number of planes on Malta has decreased by at least 28 as compared with 3 Mar.

### 3. Eastern Front:

The 5th Air Force reports that on 27 Mar. one 7,000 GRT

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steamer was sunk by fighter-bombers in Kola Bay. A drifting ship's bow was sighted about 250 miles southeast of Jan Mayen.

Reports from the Army fronts and from the Black Sea have not yet come in.

Special Items:

For instructions from Group North on the trial performance of night fighting at all altitudes in accordance with the Fuehrer's order, see teletype 1909.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

At 1700 on 27 Mar., a convoy of 15 partly-loaded steamers with 8 escort vessels left Gibraltar for the Atlantic. This formation was joined by a convoy coming from the Mediterranean, consisting of 14 steamers in ballast, 1 special freighter, 5 landing craft and 1 escort vessel. From this last-mentioned convoy, 3 tankers, 2 steamers, 1 transport and 3 escort vessels had previously put in to Gibraltar. At 1945, a smaller convoy of 4 steamers, 2 tankers, 1 transport and 1 destroyer, which had put out from Gibraltar, followed, also making course for the Atlantic.

About 0700 on 28 Mar., 5 transports, 2 passenger steamers, 1 large freighter and 5 escort vessels passed Ceuta towards the Atlantic. This formation was joined by 2 auxiliary aircraft carriers, 1 transport, 1 steamer and 3 escort vessels from Gibraltar.

In the afternoon a minelayer of the ADVENTURE class put in to Gibraltar from the Atlantic. Two of the vessels in the port of Algiers, reported as auxiliary cruisers, have been recognized as LSI's.

Shipping in the Western Mediterranean was slack.

At 1146, a submarine sank the steamer LILLOIS (3,681 GRT) 70 miles north of Cape Vaticano.

Nothing was sighted during a thorough morning reconnaissance of the coastal waters from Ras el Hilal to Derna.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines were in the operational area.



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At 1255 on 27 Mar., submarine U "593" fired a spread of four torpedoes, which missed, against a westbound cruiser of the LONDON class. At 1524 on the same day, she sank two ammunition steamers of 4,000 and 5,000 GRT, respectively, from a westbound convoy in grid square CO 5811. At 2202 on 28 Mar., U "81" sank a 500 ton freighter, loaded with depth charges, and a sailing vessel in grid square CP 8341.

At 1700 submarine U "77" reported from grid square CH 5575 that she was unable to submerge due to a heavy bomb hit and that confidential documents had been destroyed. The submarine requested air escort after daybreak. Submarine U "380" was sent out to assist her. At 2035 U "77" reported that she was completely unserviceable, but still afloat and was steering for Cape de la Nao 15 miles away.

At 1945, the Naval Attaché, Madrid was informed that one of our submarines had struck a mine at 38°35' N, 00°50' E and was instructed to ask the Spanish Navy for assistance. At 2137 he advised that the Spanish Admiralty had instructed its Naval Commander, Balearic Islands to send all vessels that could be made ready at minimum notice to render assistance. Possible vessels are a destroyer from Soller, and a minelayer from Palma, Majorca, a gunboat and a trawler from Valencia and probably another gunboat from Cartagena. There is also a minesweeper on her way north from Cartagena, which has been ordered to make immediately for the scene of the accident 40 miles away. As soon as the minesweeper has reached the scene, the measures at Valencia and Cartagena will be cancelled.

Commander, Submarines, Italy was ordered by Naval Staff to send a radiogram to submarine U "77" instructing her to ask the Spanish Navy for permission to stay and repair sea damage. U "77" has already received orders to put in to Denia. On the other hand, the Spaniards propose to send the boat to Alicante but, for political reasons, refuse to tow her. However, as the boat can only run on batteries, it is uncertain if she can reach Alicante. The Naval Attaché, Madrid has therefore been advised that we must insist on Denia regardless of the difficulties - even the navigational difficulties mentioned by the Spanish Navy. Furthermore, the Naval Attaché, Madrid has sent an officer to Denia, to which port the minesweeper NEPTUNO is also being dispatched in order to avoid incidents.

PT boats and submarine-chasers were unable to operate because of bad weather.

On 27 Mar., motor minesweepers R "3" and R "4" were between Ehrenbreitstein and Schierstein en route from Germany.

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On the morning of 28 Mar. minesweepers M "6021" and M "6023" and five auxiliary minesweepers left Toulon again for Nice.

Motorship C. COSTA (6,400 GRT) caught fire in the harbor of Naples. At 1730 the ship blew up. The harbor had been previously cleared so that, from reports so far received, no great damage was caused to vessels apart from the sinking of 20 lighters. The fire, however, has spread to the dockyards and the town.

In view of the seriousness of the situation, Commanding General, Armed Forces, South has urgently requested Commander in Chief, Navy to place the destroyer HERMES under German Naval Command, Italy since the number of operational Italian destroyers and escort vessels has decreased still further and the ex-French destroyers with German crews are not yet ready to sail.

Group West reports that, in accordance with orders from Commanding General, Armed Forces, West, (see War Diary, 21 Mar.), the ten merchant vessels released to the merchant marine have been put back into reserve for special Operation Balearics as per order received from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (see War Diary, 27 Mar.).

A report from Group West states that two explosions occurred in the main power station of the Toulon arsenal, presumably due to sabotage.

### 3. Sea Transport Situation:

Supply traffic has not yet been resumed due to persistent bad weather.

### 4. Area Naval Group South:

#### Aegean Sea:

According to an Italian report, there was a submarine northeast of the Doro Channel.

After disembarking the Rhodes Assault Brigade, the troop transport escorted by the destroyer HERMES started her return trip to Candia (Crete) on the evening of 27 Mar. Other convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

Group South reports:



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1.) Anglo-American possibilities and plans for penetrating the Aegean area depend to a great extent on the general situation in the Mediterranean.

2.) A penetration would probably be made from the Eastern Mediterranean. It is therefore of urgent interest to the Group to control reconnaissance also, which must extend beyond the Aegean area as far as the starting bases and concentration areas of the British and American penetration forces and on as far as the Red Sea.

3.) The concentration of battleships and aircraft carriers, increased convoy traffic in the Western Mediterranean and the apparently critical situation of our Tunisian bridgehead, are indicative of operations west of the Sicilian Channel. However, the possibility of a break-through to the east and operations against the Aegean area in conjunction with Eastern Mediterranean forces, should not be ignored.

4.) For the Aegean it is necessary that events in the Western Mediterranean be carefully followed. It is therefore requested that the Group be kept advised of reconnaissance results which are of importance in assessing the situation.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

On the afternoon of 27 Mar., one of our convoys was repeatedly attacked southwest of Eupatoria by four enemy torpedo bombers. Six torpedoes all missed their targets. At the same time an enemy submarine attacked with two torpedoes, both of which missed. On 28 Mar. the tug FORSCH was damaged by a mine near the Sevastopol approach buoy. The FORSCH was towed in. Convoy service between Constantza and Sevastopol was carried out according to plan. Three naval landing craft left Theodosia for the 9th Anapa transport. During the night of 28 Mar., these vessels will anchor near Cape Takil.

In the afternoon the 1st PT Boat Flotilla and Italian PT boats left Ivanbaba and Theodosia, respectively, for operations off the Caucasian coast. On account of bad weather, the Italian PT boats turned back.

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During the night of 27 Mar., an enemy plane, flying at 3 m. altitude, was observed to drop five mines in the Strait of Kerch near Kossa Chuchka. Operations by the remote clearance group and by a mine-sweeping plane produced no results. There is an ice barrier in the northern entrance to the Strait of Kerch and in the Sea of Azov, but it is expected to disperse soon due to the consistently warm weather. In the Strait of Kerch, 3,700 persons, 2,100 horses, 400 motorized and 575 other vehicles and war material were ferried to the west and 1,230 soldiers, 456 tons of ammunition, 2,055 tons of supplies, etc., to the east.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

Russia:

The Soviet press points to the fact that Hitler has been able to transfer 22 divisions from Western Europe to Russia, terming it a frightful accusation of all those in London and Washington who are responsible for the conduct of Allied war operations. Stalin has given the Russian nation to understand that the setting up of a second front in Europe is being sabotaged by the Governments of Great Britain and the U.S.A.

In regard to the renewal of the Russo-Japanese fishing agreement, the "New York Times" writes:

The agreement serves the interests of both countries, which have to maintain the fiction of neutrality although neither Russia nor Japan have any delusions as to the real situation. Both nations behave as if everything were in order, but they are keeping their powder dry until the day of reckoning comes.

According to a United Press report, Japan is said to have tried to expand the agreement, so as to provide for weather observation stations on the Kamchatka coast.

Iran:

Sharp clashes have occurred between the Russian occupation Army and the Iranian population.

U.S.A.:

According to the press, reliable information has been received on Eden's conferences in the U.S.A. This is said to be to the effect that Eden, Roosevelt and Hull have been seeking the widest possible basis for a comprehensive agreement between the Anglo-Saxon powers, Russia and China. Secondly, considerable progress is said to have been made with plans for the post-war economic reconstruction of Europe. Thirdly, Eden's conferences are said to have achieved a considerable degree of unification in regard to the establishment of regional councils for the coordination of defense and economic development. Fourthly, a joint program of political activity in a coming invasion of Western and Southern Europe is said to have been drawn up. Fifthly, the question of Germany's future after an Allied victory is said to have been examined.

According to Radio New York, the President has presented a new bill providing for a vote of more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  billion dollars for new naval work and coastal installations.

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Italy:

On 12 Mar., the Military Attaché, Rome made a report to High Command, Army on the Italian military situation. The Naval Attaché, Rome has forwarded a copy of the report which, on the basis of the information available to the Military Attaché from the relatively restricted sector of Rome, obviously exaggerates the unfavorable aspects of the situation. Copy as per 1/Skl 8644/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIII.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. In the opinion of Chief, Naval Staff, the enemy is evidently taking his time in the Mediterranean, for political as well as military reasons. Therefore, it is unlikely that a large-scale action will be started in the near future. Consequently, there need be no hesitation in assigning the destroyer HERMES to German Naval Command, Italy for the present.

The following instruction has therefore been sent to Naval Group South, Admiral, Aegean Sea, German Naval Command, Italy and the German Staff with the Italian Admiralty:

The shortage of suitable escort vessels for Tunisian supplies necessitates the indefinite assignment of the destroyer HERMES to this service. Destroyer HERMES is therefore detached and administratively subordinated to German Naval Command, Italy; operationally she will be attached to the 7th Coast Patrol Force. Until her detachment, Admiral, Aegean Sea will remain in administrative command. Details of the transfer will be directly controlled by German Naval Command, Italy and Admiral, Aegean Sea. The transfer is to take place immediately. Estimated date to be reported. Request for replacement from the Italian Navy is unchanged.

Field Marshal Kesselring has received the following notification:

"I had already instituted steps on 24 Mar. for the transfer of destroyer HERMES from the Aegean Sea in order to reinforce the Tunisian traffic escort vessels. Indefinite transfer of destroyer HERMES to Italy has been ordered today."

II. Report by Quartermaster General:

a.) Amendment of the service instructions for Vice Admiral Ruge as per memorandum in War Diary of 28 Mar. The first French torpedo boats with German crews were to be ready on 23 - 26 Mar. Delay has arisen due to dockyard matters. Vice Admiral



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Ruge will report whether assistance from High Command, Navy is necessary and desirable, in order to have the work expedited.

b.) Chief, Naval Staff approved this and also the transfer of HIPPER from Wilhelmshaven to Pillau and eventually to Libau;

c.) The complaints of the Director General of the Reichswerke A. G. for Inland Shipping concerning transportation via the Black Sea and the Danube, forwarded by letter from Minister Speer to Commander in Chief, Navy. Copy as per l/Skl I A No. (not given, Tr. N.) of 24 Mar. 1943, in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

Commander in Chief, Navy agreed with Minister Speer in regard to the proposed personal report by the Director General.

III. The Naval Attaché reports that the Spanish Navy and authorities afforded every cooperation in the matter of submarine U "77".

IV. Report by Chief, Naval Ordnance Division, Bureau of Naval Armament on a preliminary conference with representatives of the Reich Minister of Armament and Ammunition on the question of construction iron.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

V. Report of Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

a.) According to information from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, it is planned to throw in strong forces to clear the Novorossisk bridgehead in order to eject the enemy from this base which endangers our supply lines in the Sea of Azov. The Naval Liaison Officer with High Command, Army reports that this operation is planned for 6 to 8 Mar. Chief, Army General Staff requests that the Navy should participate in this operation to the greatest possible extent so as to deny the enemy complete freedom of movement at sea. At the same time preparations are to be made for the immediate construction of coastal defenses in this sector in accordance with recent experience gained from the successful enemy landing.

Naval Staff welcomes this plan, the expediency of which it has repeatedly emphasized.

b.) Operation "Elisabeth" was started on the night of 28 Mar. The rendezvous between the KARIN and our submarine has not yet taken place. Nor has there been any news of the DOGGERBANK. Position reports to be given if the ships were more than 300 miles south of the Azores, have not been received. It would have been advisable to have arranged a submarine rendezvous with the DOGGERBANK and KARIN in the South Atlantic, in order to gain better information for bringing them in.

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c.) In view of Group North's objections to mining of West Fiord (notes in War Diary, 28 Mar.), Chief, Naval Staff agrees to cancellation of the plan.

Group North has been informed that Naval Staff approves the cancellation of the planned West Fiord barrage.

d.) Compliance with Naval Staff's instructions to Group North on supplementing the latter's order of 17 Mar. regarding operations by surface forces. Amending the order of 17 Mar., the Group indicates the combatting of enemy convoy traffic in northern waters as the primary task and orders that plans, tactical exercises and preparations are to be carried out accordingly. The handling of defensive tasks, which will retain their secondary importance, will be restricted to briefing and instructing the Commanders and adjusting ideas and plans with other Armed Forces offices.

Chief, Naval Staff approves.

e.) Army General Staff, Foreign Armies, West has submitted a sketch of the distribution of Italian divisions as at 1 Mar. Copy as per 1/Skl 885/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIII.

VI. Particulars were submitted, as ordered by Chief, Naval Staff on the Navy's requirements of iron, with graphic representation of the transport and escort tasks.

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Special Items.

On the basis of the following summaries and necessary dockyard periods, Group North proposes the distribution of minelayers for 1943 as follows:

1.) The BRUMMER - Naval Command, Norway (to be used at the same time as anti-aircraft cruiser, gunboat, protection for herring fishery). If possible she should be used at speeds of not over 15 knots, which she can attain on her Diesel engines. As from September, perhaps assigned to Admiral, Northern Waters.

2.) The OSTMARK - to be released immediately for dockyard period in Stettin. Duration, three weeks. After that, with the ELSASS at the disposal of Group North or Naval Command, Norway for reinforcement of the northern sector of the West Wall under Commander, Minelayers.



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3.) The SKAGERRAK - at the disposal of Naval Command, Norway until the LINZ is ready for action. After that, SKAGERRAK will be released to Minelaying Experimental Command, LINZ (motorship with very large mine capacity) at the disposal of Naval Command, Norway.

4.) The KAISER - (as heretofore) and the ROLAND (again operational by 9 Apr.) at the disposal of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic until the end of April (after completion of "Nashorn" and "Seeigel"). From then to the end of summer, at the disposal of Group North for possible reinforcement of the southern sector of the West and Southwest Wall. The restricted speed of the KAISER and the ROLAND will be sufficient for the North Sea area, where strong protection by slow escort forces is required for operations. At the end of the summer, the KAISER and the ROLAND will again be placed at the disposal of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic as soon as there is a possibility of the Russian Baltic Fleet attempting to break out.

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Situation 29 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

2. Own Situation:

No position reports have been received from the DOGGERBANK or KARIN. However, the IRENE apparently applied the order on position reports as applying to her and at 2356 reported her position by short signal as 14° N, 38° W. Naval Staff has confirmed receipt by radiogram 0043.

According to this, the blockade runner is four days further north than the dead reckoning estimate.

The weather report was sent to the DOGGERBANK by radiogram 1504, and to REGENSBURG and KARIN by radiogram 1218. This shows the forerunner of a storm depression over the Denmark Strait, in the southern part of which easterly winds, force 4 - 5, snow, rain and poor visibility are likely while poor visibility is also to be expected in the northern part. The weather is thus as favorable for a break-through as could be desired. According to the evening report, transmitted by radiogram 2310, the winds are veering westward in the southern part of the Strait and the range of visibility is increasing to ten miles, while the very favorable conditions in the central and northern parts remain unchanged.

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The REGENSBURG has been informed, by radiogram 1733, that one of our submarines is at point "M" and will report REGENSBURG's passing if possible. A rendezvous with the submarine is not planned, but the ship should try to pass point "Max" as exactly as possible, if the ice situation permits. The submarine has orders not to report sooner than ten hours after REGENSBURG has passed.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been ordered, by radiogram 1132, to proceed on inside territorial waters as far as 43°30' N, 1°50' W, where she will be picked up by escort forces.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was a convoy of 35 steamers with 5 escort vessels at 1750 in grid square BE 5971 on course 360°. At the same time, radio intelligence intercepted a report from a British plane to the effect that six unidentified vessels had been sighted in grid square BF 5781 on northerly course, speed 20 knots.

These are our vessels on Operation "Elisabeth".

Photographic reconnaissance of ports in southern England produced no new information of any importance.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

Operations "Elisabeth" and "Anke" have been started according to plan. Group West has requested Air Commander, Atlantic Coast to carry out reconnaissance on 30 Mar. for "Elisabeth" and "Arno" between 41° and 48° N up to maximum range, starting so as to pass 15° W, on the return flight, at 1700.

By radiogram 1834, Group West has informed all concerned that six unidentified vessels in grid square BF 5781, course and speed unknown, were reported by a British reconnaissance plane at 1750. Weather report was issued by radiogram 1932. For 30 Mar. a temporary deterioration of visibility to 5 - 3 miles is forecast in the Bay of Biscay.

A supplementary report by Group West on the air raid on St. Nazaire on the evening of 28 Mar. is contained in teletype 1050. The sluice was not damaged. Blast and fire damage, especially in the town, was considerable. The number of planes known to have been shot down has risen to five.



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Channel Coast:

During a torpedo operation by the 2nd and 4th PT Boat Flotillas on the night of 28 Mar., the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla made a surprise contact at 2355 with two motor gunboats at close range. PT boat S "29" received numerous hits from light machine gunfire. The Commander and men on the unarmored bridge became casualties at once. The boat was rammed astern. The Flotilla continued its search for the enemy convoy according to plan, but without success, and later picked up S "29". The boat, however, had to be sunk after the crew, with seven wounded and four dead including the Commander, Lt. (j.g.) Lemm, had been taken off. For brief report see teletype 1420.

The operation of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla in Plymouth Sound was carried out without special incident. For brief report see teletype 1535.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Six ELM/J mines were cleared between Juist and Terschelling and one near Ijmuiden.

At 2200 on 28 Mar., enemy PT boats were reported to be off position "Windhuk"(near Zeebrugge).

Escort and patrol service were carried out according to plan and without incident.

At 1055, enemy air raids were made by small forces on Rotterdam and Dordrecht and at 1400 on Helder. Slight damage was caused in harbors and dockyards.

One enemy bomber was shot down by naval anti-aircraft fire near the Hook and another near Wilhelmshaven.

In regard to the proposal of Admiral, Denmark concerning measures to prevent Danish fishermen from breaking out to the west, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reports:

"As all measures so far employed have proved inadequate, I consider it absolutely necessary to use every means of attack, even bombs. It is now clear that the attraction is not the greater catch but British money. All reports on passage through the declared area with nets are of value to the enemy. The prevention of every break-out is of the highest importance to us.

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Half measures are of no use; only by severity can the matter be settled once and for all. The Danes must be told: 'Anyone outside limits will be shot.'

2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Moderate air reconnaissance was observed over the North Sea and the Iceland area. According to our own air reconnaissance, on 28 Mar. a 4,000 GRT steamer was stuck fast in the ice off the entrance to Belushya.

Own Situation:

At 0158 an enemy submarine attacked one of our eastbound convoys in grid square AC 8413 (near Festerneset). The steamer AJAX (2,297 GRT) was sunk. At 0600 one of our westbound convoys was attacked near Vardoe by a submarine with three torpedoes which missed. At 1030 and 1100, and also at 1710 submarines were reported north of Sylte Fiord off Festerneset and off Vardoe.

On 28 Mar. one of our eastbound convoys was attacked near Tanahorn by enemy planes with six misses. One Hampdon plane was shot down by a patrol boat. Enemy air activity was observed on 27 Mar. in the area of Narvik, on 28 Mar. in the area of Petsamo and Kirkenes, and on 29 Mar. on the southwest coast. Three British pilots in a rubber dinghy were picked up west of Godoe.

Escort service was carried out according to plan. Eight vessels were escorted north and 14 south.

Submarine Division reports that in the Iceland / Faroe passage, nothing but one four-engined plane in grid square AF 4532 was observed in the period 23 to 26 Mar.

Group North has approved the plans of Commander, Submarines, Norway for submarine operations against the next PQ convoy. There are at present ten submarines in patrol line between AA 9631 and AF 1146. Five other submarines will form a reserve group as from 30 Mar. and will be disposed as a second wave. The boats will be relieved after every 25 days at sea.

Group North has been ordered by Naval Staff that the submarine at position "Max" is not to report REGENSBURG sooner than ten hours after she passes and, "if no sighting is made, is not to radio until ordered to do so."



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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

Northwest of Anholt one mine was cleared. Another was cleared by a Danish minesweeper near Nyborg and two more by another Danish minesweeper near Svendborg. East of Skagen the Danish motor-schooner FUGLAND was damaged by a mine. Fifteen vessels and two minesweeping planes were assigned to mine clearance in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

In view of the danger of mines, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic plans to close Route "38" to ships of over 600 GRT and to introduce compulsory escort for traffic between Morup-Tange and "Schwarz 15".

Although this measure by Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic is commendable from the aspect of mine protection, Group North has asked for a ruling from Naval Staff since merchant ship traffic will be slowed down considerably. (See teletype 2214).

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that Operation "Nashorn" has been interrupted due to weather conditions. After the "Walross" net barrage has been laid, Group North plans to lay ground mine barrages at points where diving under is possible and has asked for a provisional allotment of 200 RMH mines to be kept on hand at one of the eastern mine depots. (See teletype 1606).

Admiral, Baltic States reports normal activity on both sides.

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V. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance was lively in the Bay of Biscay, with 31 planes on operation. An unidentified vessel, which reported having been torpedoed 340 miles west-southwest of Rockall Bank was probably hit by one of our submarines; a report from a position 300 miles southwest of Freetown probably refers to a hit from an Italian submarine.

2. Own Situation:

No results were achieved in the operation against the convoy southeast of Greenland which was sailing east, widely scattered by the storms. It is noteworthy that the enemy Air Force was operating in spite of the bad weather. A chaser group of two escort vessels was reported from grid square AK 8465.

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At 1810 outward bound submarine U "404" intercepted a convoy in grid square BE 5951 on course 20° and, shortly before midnight, torpedoed one of the vessels, a 4,000 GRT steamer. Three other submarines succeeded in making contact.

After a considerable break, contact with the convoy south of the Canary Islands was re-gained at 2035 by submarine U "105" in grid square DU 4693 and maintained until 2206. Group "Seeraeber" is in operation against this convoy.

Further reports are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VI. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

During the night of 28 Mar. Norwich was attacked by 42 planes with good results. We lost two.

During the day, 152 planes of the 3rd Air Force were out on operation in the west area and 9 in the Mediterranean.

Eight FW 190 planes made a harassing attack on Brighton. One Typhoon type plane with four guns was shot down by one of our fighters.

For enemy incursions during the day, see "Situation North Sea".

For details of photographic reconnaissance of the English south coast, see "Daily Situation".

For the night of 29 Mar. 23 planes have been assigned to mine the coastal waters between the Thames and the Humber.

During the same night, the enemy attacked the Ruhr area and Berlin with 80 - 100 planes in each case. For damages, see "Daily Situation". Ten other planes were observed laying mines in the area of the West Frisian Islands.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Besides considerable activity in the Tunisian area, an attack was made between 0715 and 0730 by twelve He 111 planes on a westbound enemy convoy northeast of Bougie. Two steamers of 5,000 GRT each were hit.



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Five enemy planes were shot down in aerial combat. For reconnaissance results on Algiers and Tripoli, see "Enemy Situation Mediterranean".

3. Eastern Front:

On 28 Mar. 31 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts, as against two of ours.

For reconnaissance results of the 5th Air Force, see "Enemy Situation Northern Waters". No special reports have been received from the 4th Air Force.

Special Items:

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has called the attention of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (with copy to Naval Staff) to the necessity of evacuating essential foodstuffs, war economy goods and supply equipment from areas liable to air attack and has asked Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff to issue corresponding orders. (See teletype 2035).

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

According to a report from Intelligence Center, Spain, 150 German prisoners of war, allegedly submarine crews, were brought into Europa Point prison in Gibraltar on 24 Mar. Another 180 German prisoners of war are said to have been disembarked in Gibraltar on the same day. On 26 Mar. 25 twin-engined U.S. planes with airborne troops landed in Gibraltar.

According to a situation report from Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, the enemy attack in Tunisia has extended to almost the whole remaining western front, though the main thrust continues to be in the south. This has further aggravated the already critical situation in regard to ammunition. Southeast of El Guettar further enemy reinforcements indicate a new large-scale attack with the aim of breaking through to the coast. The main body of the Italian 1st Army was withdrawn to the "Schott" position without special enemy pressure.

The situation at sea in the Western Mediterranean shows no essential change. The large convoy of landing craft apparently entered Oran on 27 Mar. One small convoy arrived at Malta on 27 Mar. and another on 28 Mar. On 29 Mar. convoy traffic was lively.

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At 0300 there were about 15 vessels north of Cape de Fer on westerly course. At 0915, 5 vessels with 5 escorts were observed northeast of Bougie sailing west and at 1205, 2 tankers and 3 escort vessels northwest of Algiers, sailing southeast.

There was a submarine off Cape Carbonara (Sardinia) at 1017.

Off the southeast corner of Malta, 4 merchant vessels, including one very large one, with 2 destroyers and 2 torpedo boats were observed about noon making for La Valetta.

Complete reconnaissance of the coastal waters between Tobruk and Sidi Barani produced no sightings. There were 2 large freighters, 3 small steamers and 1 destroyer south of Haifa, sailing north.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Submarine U "77" sank (presumably after further air attacks). Nine survivors of the crew drifted ashore south of Denia. Our submarines, which had been sent to help, have been ordered to return to their operational areas. The survivors were taken to Valencia by a Spanish gunboat. According to a report from the Naval Attaché, Madrid, the Spanish Navy is doing everything to help. The gunboat DATO has been ordered to obtain the most exact information possible from the survivors concerning the position of sinking, in order that further search may be made.

Weather permitting, PT boats will carry out a minelaying operation off Bone on the night of 29 Mar.

Submarine-chasers "2201" and "2204" were sunk by an enemy submarine while at anchor on the Palermo roads. Details have not yet been received. Motor minesweeper R "10", reported a total loss in the air raid on Ferryville, is expected to be back in operational readiness within 8 - 12 weeks with the assistance of the Ferryville arsenal. The Sousse harbor barrage battery is reported ready for action again in its new position. On the afternoon of 28 Mar. minesweepers M "6021", M "6023" and five auxiliary minesweepers entered Tropez. In regard to the destruction of motorship C. COSTA at Naples, it is reported that she was set on fire by an explosion of her cargo of gasoline. Loading in Naples is at present possible only at two moles.

Commanding General, Armed Forces, South reports that, following the loss of the two destroyers on 24 Mar., the Italian High Command refuses any further use of destroyers as troop transports until the French destroyers are in operational readiness. It is maintained that the nine presently operational Italian destroyers must be saved for Fleet operations in case of an enemy attack on



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Sardinia or Sicily. Even by representations to the Duce, Commanding General, Armed Forces, South was unable to have this decision changed. As shipping is at present suspended due to weather conditions, the only alternative is to carry troops by air transports which, however, are almost fully committed at present for the supply of fuel and ammunition.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

The steamers PIERRE CLAUDE and BELLUNO, escorted by four torpedo boats, and the steamers LE BORGNE, AQUILA, GIACOMO and the tanker BIVONA, escorted by 1 destroyer, 2 torpedo boats and 2 German submarine-chasers, were to leave Naples in the evening for Bizerta. Their departure has not yet been reported. Due to the weather, it will probably be impossible to resume small vessel traffic until 30 Mar.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

On the afternoon of 28 Mar. an enemy submarine was detected 15 miles northwest of Mytilene. Submarine-chase by planes in the northwestern Aegean Sea and in the Doro Channel, and by Italian submarine-chasers and the 21st Submarine-Chaser Flotilla in the Gulf of Petali and the Keos Passage produced no results. An intensified submarine chase was arranged for 29 Mar. in the Gulf of Salonika and between Lemnos and the Dardanelles. On 27 and 28 Mar. three suspicious cutters and one rowboat were captured on the traffic control route.

Convoy service was carried out according to plan and without incident.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance sighted six PT boats sailing northwest at 0350 northwest of Tuapse. In addition, brisk shipping was noted off the east coast. A submarine forty miles south of the Strait of Kerch was bombed by one of our planes. Off Novorossisk, three enemy PT boats making for the landing stage were forced to turn away by our gunfire.

Own Situation:

Off Cape Sarich the towed convoy to Sevastopol was attacked by four torpedo bombers; they fired four torpedoes which missed.

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During an air attack on Anapa, the harbor control office was destroyed and one gun damaged.

The operation by the 1st PT Boat Flotilla during the night of 28 Mar. was unsuccessful. A gunboat was sighted southwest of Tuapse. Enemy searchlights trained on the sea and the use of flares made operations immediately off the coast very difficult. During the night of 29 Mar. four Italian PT boats were on operation southeast of Novorossisk.

On 27 Mar., minelaying operation "S 53" was carried out north of Sulina with 144 UMB mines. Convoy traffic between Sevastopol and Constantza was undisturbed.

The 9th Anapa transport has been carried out; the 10th unit left Kerch in the afternoon.

The ferry traffic in the Strait of Kerch met with brisk enemy air activity. Two enemy planes were shot down by anti-aircraft fire and a third by night fighters. One Ju 52 was attacked by Russian fighters and made a forced landing. In favorable weather conditions about 4,000 persons, 1,500 horses, 450 motorized and 350 horse-drawn vehicles, as well as 200 tons of war material were ferried to the west by 25 naval landing craft and four lighters. 500 soldiers and 1,850 tons of war material were ferried to the east.

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#### VIII. Situation East Asia.

On the basis of reports from the Japanese Naval Staff, the Naval Attaché, Tokyo reports:

"From 0300 until 0700 on 27 Mar. a naval battle took place between a U.S. formation consisting of 1 PENSACOLA class cruiser, 1 light cruiser and 4 - 5 destroyers, and a Japanese formation of similar strength at a range of over 17 km. Hits and fires on the heavy cruiser and other enemy vessels were observed. The Japanese formation suffered no damage or losses."

According to enemy reports, the battle took place west of Attu Island in the Aleutians.



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Items of Political Importance.

U.S.A./Great Britain:

According to a Swiss press report from Washington, Eden is said to have obtained agreement as to joint action in Europe after a possible invasion. He is said, however, to have been less successful in his attempt to intervene between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. British intervention was declined in Washington as it was felt that the U.S.A. could bring about a settlement themselves. The "Observer" comments that there still exists a wide gulf between U.S. public opinion and Soviet policy in regard to the Balkans and the Baltic States. According to Associated Press, a conference will be held in London soon after Eden's return. Sumner Welles is expected to attend this conference as well as the Chinese Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador.

U.S.A.

The press discusses the Government's domestic war aim, which copies, almost literally, all the measures put into practice in Germany for the concentration of all forces and exploitation of all facilities for the prosecution of war.

Turkey:

A prominent political personality has made a statement on the question of Turkish neutrality. According to this, Turkey is not neutral towards the war between Germany and Britain but non-belligerent, since Great Britain is her ally. However, Turkey is neutral, in the full meaning of the word, towards the German/Russian and the Japanese/American war. As for the rest, Turkey has no evil intentions whatsoever nor does she bear hostility of any kind towards any country. Her alliance with Great Britain is a purely defensive one. Turkey will never raise her hand against a country that does not attack her.

On 31 Mar. the Bulgarian King Boris is expected at the Fuehrer Headquarters.

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Report by the representative of Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch on the situation and status of naval landing craft. In the course of this conference Chief, Naval Staff decided that the third pair of artillery motor lighters should not be transferred to the Black Sea but to the Mediterranean. Two artillery

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motor lighters have already been sent to the Black Sea and two others are en route. The fourth and fifth pairs are also to be transferred to the Black Sea.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

On plans of Commander, Submarines, Norway for submarine operations in northern waters, as per memorandum in War Diary of 29 Mar., Chief, Naval Staff ordered that the Group be instructed to keep in mind the uncertain date of the FQ convoy and to make sure that the submarines are advised of the appearance of the REGENSBURG.

No other special reports or decisions.

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Special Items.

I. Copy of the final service instructions for Vice Admiral Ruge for the duration of his command with the Italian Admiralty, as per 1/Skl 9331/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. In order to clear up the question of responsibility in the Adriatic - Aegean sea transport service which is at present completely confused, Quartermaster Division plans to institute the following measures insofar as they have not already been put into effect:

1.) Conference between Commander in Chief, Navy and Reichsstatthalter Kaufmann for the purpose of agreement on the following points:

a.) Supply of the Armed Forces to be handled by the Navy; industrial supply by the Deputy for German Sea Transportation in the Mediterranean. Similar responsibilities for organization, loading and unloading.

b.) Commanding General, Armed Forces to make use of the Navy sea transport organization for the supply of the Armed Forces. He will establish priorities for the goods to be shipped, and the ports of departure and destination and will be responsible for transportation to and from the quay.

c.) The Deputy for German Sea Transportation in the Mediterranean will be responsible for the provision and management of merchant tonnage in accordance with the requirements of the Navy sea transport organization.



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2.) The attention of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is called to the order of Supply and Transportation Office of the Armed Forces Overseas, by which, without the knowledge or participation of High Command, Navy, tasks of the Navy in sea transport have been transferred in part to Commanding General, Armed Forces and in part to the Mediterranean shipping company. It is requested that this order be immediately cancelled and that the responsibilities as always practiced in the Adriatic - Aegean sea transport be restored independent of a final decision.

III. Group North proposes that gunboat K "1", after she becomes operational on 30 April and until the start of engine replacement at the end of May, be put under Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic; that K "2" be sent to Norway for the Arctic area and K "3" also to Norway, after completion of current repairs at about the end of Apr.

The first four vessels of the 29th Minesweeper Flotilla will be ready for operation about the middle of May.

IV. The Naval Attaché, Madrid has forwarded, for information, a report from the Air Attaché on a discussion with the Spanish Air Minister. Copy as per 1/Skl 9234/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C a. The report gives Spaniard's opinion concerning the probable development of the war situation and the political expediencies arising from it. He considers the situation in the Mediterranean in the framework of the overall situation. The Minister does not believe that the British and Americans already have sufficient forces for a landing in Sardinia. He certainly does not believe that they are at present planning a landing on the Iberian Peninsula. In his opinion, the center of events will shift to the Eastern Mediterranean. He considers the weakest point of the Axis to be the Balkans. Our enemies expect that, in case of an Anglo-American attack on the Balkans, Turkey will finally side with them. He holds that Germany should concentrate her efforts this year on the Russian front, although this would not enable her to finish the war against the Soviets. The situation would alter only if Japan should decide to take active steps against Russia in the Far East. This, however, was unlikely. On the political side, Germany had so far neglected to make full use of the occupied eastern territories by granting national self-government within the German sphere of power. Also, the creation of even a small Polish state would be to Germany's interest. The creation of such states would greatly relieve the German Armed Forces in the east, so that they could again be used for the decisive battle against the Anglo-American powers.

V. According to radio intelligence, five large British steamers carrying war material from the U.S.A. to the Persian Gulf have sailed again, after unloading in the Persian Gulf ports, with a

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new load of war material for Egypt. According to Naval Intelligence Division, such movements are unusual and can be accounted for only by another report received to the effect that shipping is urgently needed in Egypt for the middle of April.

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Situation 30 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff has informed the DOGGERBANK: by radiogram 1506 of weather conditions north of  $45^{\circ}$  N; by radiogram 0914 of the position of two England - Gibraltar convoys at  $39^{\circ}30'$  N,  $13^{\circ}$  W, of a convoy to Gibraltar at  $34^{\circ}30'$  N,  $28^{\circ}$  W and of a convoy West Indies - England at  $34^{\circ}30'$  N,  $23^{\circ}$  W; by radiogram 1506 of positions of various Swiss and Spanish vessels in the Atlantic between  $30^{\circ}$  and  $40^{\circ}$  N.

The REGENSBURG and KARIN have been informed, by radiogram 1158, of weather conditions in the Iceland area. Favorable weather for unobserved passage through the central and northern part of the Denmark Strait is still forecast.

By radiogram 1109, REGENSBURG has been informed that, in the afternoon, our air reconnaissance can be expected north of  $66^{\circ}$  N as far as the ice limit between  $0^{\circ}$  and  $15^{\circ}$  W.

The submarine rendezvous with the KARIN has not yet been reported. The KARIN has been informed, by radiogram 1236, that the submarine is still waiting at the position given on 28 Mar.

The IRENE has been given the following instruction:

1.) Naval Staff plans to bring IRENE in to Norway north or south of Iceland.

2.) The submarine rendezvous will presumably take place at about point "Isegrimm". The submarine will bring operational orders and charts.

3.) Therefore, if engines and weather permit, proceed northwards at about 12 knots so as to pass Iceland before full moon.



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4.) IRENE's light construction and consequently reduced speed in bad weather is realized here.

5.) Deliver courier mail to the submarine.

Copy of the radiogram as per l/Skl I k 954/43 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

All vessels in foreign waters have been advised by radiogram 0912 that nine FW 200 planes will pass  $15^{\circ}$  W on their return flight from reconnaissance at 1700, and that weather conditions are generally unchanged. Radiogram 1500 contains information on the position of an enemy convoy which will be at  $32^{\circ}$  N,  $30^{\circ}$  W, on easterly course, at 0800 on 31 Mar.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance there was, at 1600, a formation consisting of 3 heavy cruisers, 4 destroyers and 2 aircraft carriers in a position 330 miles west of Oporto, on southerly course, speed 20 knots. Group West believes the formation to be an escort group for the MKF 11 convoy which evidently turned back because of the British air reconnaissance report on the 8th Destroyer Flotilla. Group West also believes that our own planes overestimated the types.

British reconnaissance over the outer Biscay and in the area northwest of Cape Villano was brisk. Our Operation "Elisabeth" vessels were reported several times by air reconnaissance. For instance, the four destroyers were picked up 180 miles west of Cape Villano, and at 1320, a merchant vessel was reported at  $44^{\circ}25'$  N,  $11^{\circ}$  W on course southwest, with the comment "probably the TANNENFELS". Finally, a German merchant vessel was reported at 2010 90 miles northwest of Cape Villano on course  $220^{\circ}$ .

British vessels were located 520 miles and 455 miles west of Brest, and 120 miles and 400 miles northwest of Cape Ortegal.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

At 2000, the Group advised all concerned in "Elisabeth" and "Arno" of a sighting report of a British plane at 1320 at  $44^{\circ}25'$  N,  $11^{\circ}$  W and instructed the relevant blockade runner immediately to sail west. (See radiogram 2000).

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Group "Landwehr" (8th Destroyer Flotilla with the PORTLAND) has been informed by Group West of the result of our air reconnaissance (convoy at 1600 in grid square CF 3594 on course south).

The OSORNO was instructed by Group West, by radiogram 2310, to reach 43°30' N at dawn and then proceed on a general westerly course.

At 2157 the following groups of an incompletely deciphered short signal were received from the HIMALAYA: "Position 47°20' N, 12° W, confidential papers destroyed".

Further details and copies of all orders and reports concerning "Elisabeth" are contained in Appendix to War Diary, Part C II b, file "Elisabeth".

Channel Coast:

A French fishing cutter sank off Dunkirk after striking a mine.

During a thrust on the night of 28 Mar., the 4th PT Boat Flotilla, after reaching the convoy route in grid square AN 8179, was detected by continuous starshells fired from midnight on the convoy route and chased to the northeast at 0100. After their departure from the assembly point to the east, the vessels were accompanied by several shadowers carrying radar and when approaching the position of the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla, after the latter's contact with the enemy (see War Diary, 29 Mar.) they were constantly located by a shadower. Sea reconnaissance planes crossed over them eight times, dropping bombs the last time. The Flotilla put in first to Helder and later transferred to Ijmuiden. For brief report see teletype 1240.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Three ground mines were cleared north of Terschelling and one north of Borkum. An Elbe - Hook convoy entered Borkum because of bad weather. For the same reason, only one patrol position was occupied. From 2200 on 29 Mar. incursions by several low-flying enemy planes into the area west of Borkum were observed. Aerial mines are suspected in the shipping lanes north of Ameland - Schiermonikoog. At 1429 one of the enemy planes returning from an attack on Berlin was shot down by the naval anti-aircraft guns at Wilhelmshaven. As the planes flew over, radar



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sets were jammed. Another plane is reported to have been shot down by naval anti-aircraft guns near the Hook of Holland on the afternoon of 29 Mar.

In regard to the proposal of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North concerning Danish fishing vessels west of the declared area (see War Diary, 23 Mar.), it is now reported that:

a.) Naval Staff telephoned to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North that, according to former instructions, full offensive action is permitted against Danish fishing vessels encountered outside their fishing grounds, but that an effort must be made to capture them if possible.

b.) The Reich Ministry of Food emphasizes the special importance of Danish fishing and has proposed that Admiral, Denmark take steps for penalties to be made more severe (Reich Deputy with the Danish Government).

c.) Naval Staff is investigating whether prize regulations in force allow the confiscation of fishing vessels surprised in infringement.

On 25 Mar., Admiral, Denmark was advised accordingly by telephone by Chief, Operations Division. For views of Admiral, Denmark, see War Diary, 26 Mar.

## 2. Norway/Northern Waters:

### Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, Commander, Destroyer Flotilla was at sea in the afternoon with four destroyers in the area of Murmansk. Destroyers were named together with submarines. Four Russian submarines were observed operating off the north coast of Norway. In the afternoon, one submarine put to sea for operations. One submarine is to return to Polarnoye on 31 Mar. Russian submarines were informed of our own steamer movements from Tromsøe to the east and of our movements in the area of Sylte Fiord. On 29 Mar. a British vessel was located in the direction of Spitzbergen.

### Own Situation:

At 1030 a westbound convoy was attacked by an enemy submarine without success near Korsneset. On 29 Mar. enemy air attacks were made on Petsamo and on an eastbound convoy near Festerneset, against which seven torpedoes were fired but missed.

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Seven bombs were dropped on an eastbound convoy near Sylte Fiord, and three aerial torpedoes (all misses) were fired on an eastbound convoy near Kyberg. In addition, Vardoe was bombed. One enemy Pe 2 plane was shot down by Battery Vardoe.

Naval Command, Norway is to make a daily shipping movements report to Naval Staff separated from the Daily Situation Report. For copy see teletype 1710.

PT boats S "64" and S "69" have entered Bodo; S "44" and S "66", with the C. PETERS, left Ramsund for Bodo.

Naval Staff has informed Group North that the rendezvous of the KARIN with the submarine has not yet taken place. On 29 Mar., the IRENE reported her position and was ordered to meet a submarine and, proceeding if possible at 12 knots, to take Route "Hamilkar" via point "Anton". By dead reckoning Naval Staff expects the ship to be at "Anton" on 8 or 9 April.

Group North has advised Naval Staff of the instruction to Admiral, Northern Waters concerning measures for the escort of the REGENSBURG by three destroyers of the Alta group. The NUERNBERG Group is to transfer as covering group to Harstad. Corresponding teletype as per 1/Skl 956/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

From 1600, Group North will take over control of the REGENSBURG.

Weather forecast for 31 Mar. was transmitted to REGENSBURG by Group North in radiogram 2143. The storm depression in Eastern Iceland is moving towards the Lofoten Islands.

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#### IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The patrol line in the Skagerrak was occupied during the day by five patrol boats and during the night by one. On account of weather conditions, the other boats remained in the lee of the land. In the Sound one ground mine was cleared south of Helsingoer and one southeast of Nyborg. The closing of Route "38" has been cancelled. Fourteen vessels are engaged in channel checking.

At 1730 on 29 Mar., the ADMIRAL SCHEER berthed in Swinemunde.

At 0347, submarine U "416" struck a mine in grid square AO 8381. She can be kept afloat and has put in to Roenne.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that the laying of barrage



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"Nashorn II a" has been completed. On account of weather conditions, sweeping of the minelaying course for "Nashorn IV a" had to be discontinued. No reports have been received from net defense unit "Walross". Admiral, Baltic States reports that a heavy anti-aircraft battery is ready for action in Tallinn. On the east coast of the Gulf of Riga and on Oesel numerous balloons carrying containers filled with liquid have been reported and some have been shot down and secured. As yet no damage has been reported. A company of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion effectively assisted during enemy attacks on the position of the 10th Air Force Field Division. A U.S. radio set and a rubber dinghy were captured from an enemy reconnaissance patrol south of Lovkolovo.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

A report by Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Merchant Marine Branch on the status of the Russian merchant fleet in the Black Sea as at the middle of Mar. is contained as per 1/Sk1 10034/43 geh, in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance activity in the Bay of Biscay was brisk, 33 planes being observed.

2. Own Situation:

The three convoy operations started in the Atlantic were discontinued in view of the proximity to land and the consequent very heavy air threat. From the convoy southeast of Greenland, a 10,000 GRT steamer is reported to have been sunk by submarine U "610" on 29 Mar. and a supplementary report states that a 5,000 GRT steamer was probably sunk on 11 Mar. by submarine U "86". The submarines in operational area AK have been ordered to seek unaccompanied vessels.

From the northbound convoy in BE, submarines U "662" and U "404" sank four more steamers for 27,000 GRT and torpedoed three others.

Four submarines in BE have been detached to assist the PIETRO ORSEOLO.

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No success reports have been received from the boats in the south on operation against the convoy south of the Canaries. Further details are contained in "Supplement to the Submarine Situation" in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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VII. Aerial Warfare.

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Ninety-seven planes of the 3rd Air Force were on operation in the west area and 18 in the Mediterranean. For reconnaissance results, see "Enemy Situation West Area".

Between 1945 and 2050 the enemy made a low-level attack on the Philipps plant at Eindhoven.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force was engaged in continuous support of the Army forces in the Tunisian area throughout the day and the night. Two enemy planes were shot down.

During the night of 29 Mar., one hit was observed on a 5,000 GRT steamer and another on a destroyer during an attack on a west-bound convoy between Algiers and Bougie. Sinking could not be confirmed.

3. Eastern Front:

On 29 Mar., 35 enemy planes were shot down over the Army fronts.

No reports have been received from the 4th Air Force. The 5th Air Force had 31 planes on operation for reconnaissance and escort tasks. At the request of Group North two FW 200 planes carried out reconnaissance in the sea area southwest of Jan Mayen and four BV 138 planes east of Iceland. No enemy vessels were sighted.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

On the afternoon of 29 Mar., five landing craft and two other boats, believed to be landing craft, entered Gibraltar from the Atlantic. The ADVENTURE class minelayer left Gibraltar the same evening, presumably for the Mediterranean. On the morning



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of 30 Mar. six destroyers and two submarines, one flying the Polish flag, left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean. In the afternoon, the MALAYA carried out firing exercises east of the fortress and returned to Gibraltar about 2300. At noon, a French convoy of four steamers with three escort vessels entered Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

According to the information from Naval Intelligence Division, it may be assumed that the landing craft used for the landing in Algeria on 8 Nov. 1942 are still in those harbors. On 25 Mar. transport vessels in Gibraltar for enemy landing operations were assumed to be the LSI's PRINCESS BEATRIX and QUEEN EMMA, also 16 LST's, 24 U.S. LCT's and 6 LCT's on board the 16 LST's. These are sufficient to land 7,332 men and 514 tanks. Including the landing craft in Algerian harbors, there was thus enough special shipping available in the Western Mediterranean for simultaneous use in landing 2½ infantry divisions and 1½ - 2 armored divisions. This figure may still be increased by landing craft not yet observed.

Shipping off the Algerian coast was slight. According to a sighting report, there were six steamers in Bougie and three destroyers on the roads on 29 Mar.

Submarines were sighted near Cape San Vito, southwest of Cape Carbonara and north of Palermo.

In the Eastern Mediterranean shipping was also only slight.

According to an unconfirmed radio broadcast from America at 2020, British forces are said to have landed in Sfax.

## 2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area. No action reports have been received from our own submarines.

On 29 Mar. and on 30 Mar., PT boats did not operate because of bad weather.

Five submarine-chasers of the 22nd Submarine-Chaser Flotilla performed convoy escort. Minesweeper M "6024" and submarine-chaser "2210" were to move from Naples to Trapani. Report on this has not yet been received. The tenth boat of the 22nd Submarine-Chaser Flotilla left Marseilles on 29 Mar. for Toulon. Minesweepers M "6021", M "6023" and four auxiliary motor minesweepers entered Imperia. They are to proceed on to Naples on 30 Mar.

According to a report from Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, the large-scale enemy attack southeast of El Guettar has

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so far been repulsed in heavy fighting. Enemy concentration at this point for a break-through to the east is clearly evident. He is concentrating mainly in the area around El Hamm and Gabes.

From the withdrawal of the two auxiliary aircraft carriers from Gibraltar to the west, Commanding General, Armed Forces, South concludes that for the time being the enemy is not planning major naval operations in the Western Mediterranean.

The German Staff with the Italian Admiralty reports that the two submarine-chasers sunk in Palermo roads by an enemy submarine, had anchored in shallow waters, relying on their echo-ranging sets.

As shown by the consequences, this was a mistake.

Admiral, Aegean Sea reports that at noon on 2 Apr. the HERMES will be ready to sail from Piraeus. He assumes that German Naval Command, Italy will control the transfer. The latter has reported Naples as provisional port of destination and the necessary orders for radio procedure during transfer.

German Naval Command, Italy, in agreement with the German Staff with the Italian Admiralty and Chief, Supply and Transport, Italy, has submitted a request to Quartermaster Division for militarization of the war transports. (See War Diary, 25 Mar.). Naval Staff has decided that, owing to the shortage of personnel, a full military crew for these vessels can not be provided and that military control, if necessary, must be carried out by escort officers. The management of the ships must remain unchanged. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl 9657/43 geh. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

To an inquiry from Quartermaster Division, German Naval Command, Italy reports that by intervention of Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, fifteen 2 cm four-barreled anti-aircraft guns have been placed at the disposal of the Naval Shipborne Anti-Aircraft Battalion, Naples for use on Italian escort vessels.\* The formation of a training battery of the Anti-Aircraft and Coastal Gunnery School has been requested.

\* A proposal has been made to the Italian Admiralty to exchange the 2 cm Breda guns for German four-barreled anti-aircraft guns and that Italian gunners be trained by the Naval Shipborne Anti-Aircraft Battalion, Naples.



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3. Sea Transport Situation:

At 1017 on 29 Mar., the steamer EGLE (1,142 GRT) was sunk by an enemy submarine near Cape Carbonara.

On 30 Mar., convoy traffic to Tunisia was again hampered to some extent by the weather. The LE BORGNE convoy is running to schedule. The NUORO convoy, en route from Naples to Tunis, entered Trapani for a short stay during the night of 29 Mar. and, after joining the steamer BENEVENTO which had come from Naples, continued passage during the night of 30 Mar. On account of bad weather, the convoy PIERRE CLAUDE - BELLUNO put in to Trapani temporarily but continued to Bizerta during the same night. War transports KT "7" and KT "9" have returned to Naples because of engine trouble on one of the vessels. War transports KT "5", KT "6" and KT "13", en route from Palermo to Bizerta, anchored off Trapani on account of bad weather. An Italian torpedo boat, en route from Naples to Bizerta, collided with an Italian corvette and had to be diverted to Trapani. Another torpedo boat put in to Trapani for protection from the weather. Nine Italian and eight German naval landing craft, en route from Trapani to Bizerta, anchored in the lee of Marettimo; 13 Siebel ferries, 15 infantry landing boats and one landing craft, which had left Marsala for Tunis, returned to their port of departure because of the weather.

Two neutral merchant ships which left Marseilles on 28 Mar. arrived at their Italian port of destination on 29 Mar.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

Submarine chase by planes in the northern Aegean Sea produced no result. On 28 Mar., a Greek motor sailing ship was rammed and sunk by an enemy submarine south of Lemnos, after having refused to sail to Egypt. There were no German soldiers aboard.

Unescorted small vessel traffic in the sea area Salonika - Lemnos was stopped because of submarine danger.

A naval landing craft and five boats of the Coastal Patrol Flotilla, Macedonia have been assigned to support anti-guerilla activities on the coast of Salonika. Convoy traffic was carried out according to plan.

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Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was little shipping off the Caucasian coast.

Own Situation:

Operations by the four Italian PT boats during the night of 29 Mar. were uneventful. The boats were fired on from shore without effect. During the night of 30 Mar., five boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla were on operation in the sea area of Tuapse.

On 30 Mar. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus successfully raided the coastal strip northeast of Temriuk in connection with a landing operation of the 49th Army Corps. Three motor-fishing cutters and two motor tugs were employed. One boat was sunk by one of our own chasers.

During an enemy air attack on Sevastopol, the accommodation ship of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla was hit, sprang a leak and sank. Salvaging will be possible. The Supply and Transport Office building was destroyed. Twenty German and 50 Roumanian soldiers were killed. The Chief of the Supply and Transport Office was badly wounded.

Convoy service between Sevastopol and Constantza was carried out according to plan.

In the ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch, about 4,000 persons, 320 motorized and 719 horse-drawn vehicles and 2,500 horses were transferred to the west and 569 soldiers and about 1,800 tons of war material to the east. Twenty-seven naval landing craft and two lighters were used.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.



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Items of Political Importance.

U.S.A.:

With reference to the discussions with Eden, Roosevelt declared at his press conference on 30 Mar. that he hoped that the U.S.A. and Russia would also meet in similar conferences in the near future. Meetings of the same kind would also be held with other representatives of the United Nations. In his talks with Eden, definite agreement had been reached. The views of both Governments corresponded to a great extent. All current military and political matters had been discussed as well as post-war problems. Final decisions had not been reached nor had they been planned. The discussions were only for the purpose of information.

The U.S. State Department announces that 38 nations have been invited to discuss problems of post-war supply with the U.S.A. The conference will be opened on 27 Apr. and will be held at a place in the U.S.A. to be announced later.

In regard to Anglo-American-Russian relations, the United Press reports:

"Since the press conference held by the American Ambassador in Moscow, Admiral Standley, in which he complained about suppression by the Russian press of information on American aid, increasing acknowledgement of the part played by American war material in the Russian theater of war is now to be noted in Russian reports. At the same time, there is also a marked increase of reports in the American press on conditions in the Soviet Union."

Chile:

On the occasion of U.S. Vice-President Wallace's visit to Santiago, the Chilean War Minister declared at a dinner that it would be a good thing if Chilean forces took an active part in the war on the side of the United Nations.

Great Britain:

According to radio London, Alexander stated that, in spite of the damage caused by submarines to shipping, Allied ship construction had exceeded losses by a good two million tons during the past eight months. The submarine, however, still remains an increasing menace. He did not intend to give any information on British attacks against submarines as he did not want to afford the Axis the chance to send out submarines to replace those lost. In the next few months the fleet of escort vessels would be reinforced from

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both sides of the Atlantic. At this moment there were hundreds of motor torpedo and gunboats. British submarine losses were "grievous and heavy", but Great Britain could "more than replace" these submarines.

Churchill declared in the House of Commons that it was not in the public interest to state on what other fronts, besides North Africa, Burma and the Southwest Pacific, British land, sea and air forces had "moved into position". Asked if he would advise against use of the expression "Second Front", Churchill answered that to his mind, this was not desirable. Great Britain's friends, who were struggling very hard, knew exactly what was meant in Great Britain by the "Second Front".

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Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff.

I. Conference of Departmental Chiefs.

At the conference of the Chiefs of Departments with Commander in Chief, Navy, Operations Division first gave a review of the Army situation and the situation at sea.

Commander in Chief, Navy then made some basic statements, which are characterized by the following twelve points:

- 1.) All measures must serve towards winning the war.
- 2.) The war against merchant shipping is in the forefront. Every effort must be made.
- 3.) Of special importance is the campaign against enemy location and the enemy Air Force.
- 4.) The construction of new submarines will be increased.
- 5.) The PT boat weapon is to be promoted. It can play a valuable part in the war against merchant shipping by attacking British coastal convoys.
- 6.) The Air Force will change its tactics. It also will try to adjust its operations to the aspects of the war against merchant shipping.
- 7.) The Japanese Navy will also take up submarines and the war against merchant shipping.
- 8.) Italy must hold Tunis by using all forces in order to avoid immeasurable consequences.



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- 9.) Our own convoy escort must be increased.
- 10.) Efforts must be made to economize manpower as much as possible.
- 11.) Bureaucracy must be stamped out.
- 12.) Decentralization and the establishment of responsibility are of the greatest importance.

II. In connection with a report by Chief, Naval Intelligence Division on newly established enemy closed areas off the British coasts, which must also be considered from the viewpoint of an attack from Great Britain against the Continent, Chief, Naval Staff commented that, according to the statements of Field Marshal Rundstedt, the greatest difficulties in connection with the occupation and defense Army in the occupied west area would be surmounted by 15 April, and that, from 15 May onwards, an enemy attack could be anticipated with the greatest serenity. On this occasion, Chief, Naval Staff demanded that the submarine bases should not be allowed to fall into enemy hands, even for half an hour.

III. Report by Quartermaster Division, on net barrages, torpedo barrages, hawser buoy barrages and anti-submarine net barrages.

IV. Chief, Naval Staff ordered examination of the desirability or otherwise of a raid for the purpose of capturing British radar sets or other measuring gear from the British coast. This examination is to be made by Chief, Naval Communications Division.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

V. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division:

a.) on Group North's order for meeting of the REGENSBURG by three destroyers of the Alta Group and preparation of the NUERNBERG Group as a supporting force, in accordance with memorandum in War Diary, 30 Mar.

b.) on the performance of Operation "Elisabeth" and the bringing in of the PIETRO ORSEOLO as per memorandum in file "Operation Elisabeth".

No decisions are required from Naval Staff.

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Special Items.

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I. Naval Staff agreed with Group North's proposal concerning the employment of gunboats K "1", K "2" and K "3" (see War Diary, 30 Mar.).

II. Commander in Chief, Navy has had the following teletype sent to the 8th Minesweeper Flotilla:

"From the War Diary of the 8th Minesweeper Flotilla I have noted the outstanding overall achievements of the Flotilla from the day of its establishment up to 7 Dec. 1942.

"I commend the Commander of the Flotilla at that time, Lt. Cdr. von Kamptz, and his men for their excellent performance of duty and the great successes obtained."

III. The Naval Liaison Officer with the 4th Air Force reported on 13 Mar. to Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer on the successful results of his liaison activity. Among other things, the question of quicker transmission of reconnaissance results has been satisfactorily solved. Efforts to increase the use of aerial mines and to set up air convoy escort are making progress. In view of the sympathy of the 4th Air Force Staff towards all naval difficulties, the Naval Liaison Officer also expects to achieve results in more important matters.

In view of this favorable situation, the Naval Liaison Officer has been urged, through the Liaison Officer with Air Force Operations Staff, to win over the 4th Air Force for large-scale bombing of the Black Sea naval forces in Batum and Poti and of submarines at the other bases.

IV. According to reports from Group West, the effectiveness of cutting floats in the Channel area is problematical in view of excessive dips. This would mean that the 1,045 cutting floats so far used in this area have been useless. Moreover, the lack of suitable anti-sweeping gear just here is particularly disadvantageous operationally. The enemy cannot at present be prevented by planes or naval forces from sweeping our flanking barrages, and their defensive force must be maintained as long as possible, as the laying of new barrages is feasible only in a limited area.

Naval Staff has therefore ordered Naval Ordnance Division, Underwater Obstacles Branch to adapt the cutting floats immediately against dip so that the laying of new barrages with anti-sweeping gear, planned for April, can be carried out.

V. On 2 Mar. 1943, Operations Division reported on the measures taken for provision of naval landing craft in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. 1/Skl 6405/43 Gkdos., with comments from Quartermaster Division, is to be found as per 1/Skl 9452/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.



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VI. For report by Naval (Ship) Construction Division, K III ML 6400/43 geh., of 27 Mar. on overland transport via France and on organisation of the western sector Auxerre - Chalons, see Files 1/Skl I L 15/Gk.

VII. On the basis of subsequently acquired knowledge of the reasons and purposes of the military-political report by the Military Attaché, Rome (see War Diary, 29 Mar.), the Naval Attaché, Rome requests that his previously expressed opinion of the report be disregarded since it is important that the effect of the report on High Command, Army, Armed Forces High Command and the Fuehrer's Adjuatant should not be undermined. Copy of teletype 1/Skl 9487/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIII.

VIII. Naval Intelligence Division has studied the report of the Spanish Consul in Cardiff (see War Diary, 20 Mar.) and, after examining the various items, states in brief that the report does not correspond to its own information. The view that there is currently a severe crisis in shipping cannot be shared. Further limitations in the civilian sector are considered temporarily possible. In summer 1943 the enemy's new construction will probably have reached its peak. Whether, in connection with the sinkings to be anticipated, the enemy's shipping situation will be alleviated, cannot be foreseen.

IX. A copy of a short evaluation of intelligence by Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Merchant Marine Branch, concerning enemy concentrations during the period 21 to 28 Mar., is to be found, in the form of a memorandum for a verbal report by Chief, Naval Intelligence Division, in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation".

The following should be noted:

a.) The report of 22 Mar. alleging concentration of the British Home Fleet and its putting to sea, is probably false.

b.) The situation in the Western Mediterranean has been aggravated by the presence of another battleship and the appearance of new landing craft, including 16 LST's.

X. Copy of the discussion between Commander in Chief, Navy and President Diehls on 30 Jan. as per 1/Skl 9819/43 geh. See War Diary, Part C, Vol. XI.

XI. Naval Intelligence Division reports, in connection with the enemy situation east, on Russian PT boat formations in the Black Sea. Copy as per 1/Skl 9983/43 geh. in War Diary, File "Data on the Enemy Situation".

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Situation 31 Mar.

I. War in Foreign Waters.

1. Enemy Situation:

An intelligence report from two agents states that a convoy with Brazilian troops and material left Natal and Pernambuco at the end of Mar. for West Africa.

Movements of the French cruiser PRIMAUGUET and the auxiliary cruiser BULOLO, as well as of a number of destroyers and corvettes in escort and patrol service, are reported from the area of Freetown at the end of Mar.

In the middle of Mar., a U.S. convoy with planes and pilots for India and Australia put in to Port Elizabeth.

It is reported from Mozambique that shipping to the north has increased again.

2. Own Situation:

By radiogram 1340, Naval Staff informed the DOGGERBANK of the weather report for 31 Mar. and, by radiogram 1340, that the enemy northbound convoy is believed to have turned back having sighted our destroyers at  $41^{\circ}$  N,  $16^{\circ}30'$  W. By radiogram 2223, the DOGGERBANK was advised, as a result of air reconnaissance, that the reported northbound convoy was again sighted at 1345 on a northerly course at  $41^{\circ}30'$  N,  $15^{\circ}$  W.

Naval Staff has informed Group West that on 1 Apr. at 1200 and at 1900 Naval Staff will assume control of the three outgoing blockade runners.

By radiogram 2306, the ALSTERUFER and OSORNO were instructed that Naval Staff will assume control on 1 Apr. at 1200, and the PORTLAND that Naval Staff will assume control on 1 Apr. at 1900. For PORTLAND, point "Paddel" is shifted 100 miles further east and for the OSORNO, point "Ebbstrom" is shifted 300 miles further east. After assumption of control by Naval Staff, the ALSTERUFER is to make direct for Odde, PORTLAND and OSORNO for the new points "Paddel" and "Ebbstrom". From these points the ships are to hold a southerly course.

Naval Staff calculates that the IRENE will reach  $43^{\circ}$  N,  $36^{\circ}$  W on 4 or 5 Apr. She has been ordered to make for this point five hours after dawn and to wait within a ten mile radius thereof until dusk. The ship has also been advised of a special recognition signal. In order that she may be guided through the northern



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passage as early as possible before the full moon period, delay must be avoided. IRENE has therefore been ordered, after receipt of the operational order to steer north, together with the submarine which delivers it, at ten to twelve knots and to release the submarine as soon as the reports required by the operational order have been handed over. Submarine Division has been informed by letter 1/Skl I k 975/43 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

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## II. Situation West Area.

### 1. Enemy Situation:

The Intelligence Service reports from a diplomatic source, as of 29 Mar., that on 19, 21 and 23 Mar., 14 troop transports with American and Canadian troops arrived in Glasgow. The troops were immediately taken by road to the north coast of Scotland. On 22 Mar. a U.S. convoy, consisting of 23 steamers and 6 tankers, entered Belfast. The cargo consisted mainly of gliders for troop transport, landing craft, motor boats, tractors, light tanks and steel nets for the construction of provisional take-off and landing strips.

Another intelligence report of 26 Mar., from Dunkirk, states that an enemy landing is expected between 2 and 15 Mar. in the area of Calais with a simultaneous feint attack on Boulogne.

At 1045 air reconnaissance sighted 9 merchant vessels and 1 cruiser on southerly course in grid square CG 1473 and, at 1345, in almost the same sea area, a convoy consisting of 27 merchant vessels with 3 cruisers and 8 escort vessels on northerly course. Radio intelligence intercepted a number of enemy reports concerning our convoy shadows and an unidentified vessel, speed twelve knots, course 70°, in grid square BF 8473 at 1113.

### 2. Own Situation:

#### Atlantic Coast:

One ELM/J mine was cleared in the Gironde.

Regarding brief signal 2157 from the HIMALAYA on 30 Mar., the Naval Communications Officer has corrected the latitude to 44° N. At 2150 on 30 Mar., the HIMALAYA, camouflaged as the MANCHESTER COMMERCE, gave an SOS signal reporting that she had been stopped by a warship at 1950 at 43°49' N, 12°28' W, and that the ship was being abandoned.

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It is incomprehensible how the HIMALAYA could get to a position so far to the south.

Naval Staff has urgently advised the Naval Attaché, Madrid that the outgoing Italian blockade runner HIMALAYA has been scuttled, after being attacked by a warship, about 130 miles west of Cape Villano, that rescue operations are under way and that lifeboats will probably put ashore.

Group West reports that the probable loss of the HIMALAYA is attributable to her following a wrong course. The 4th Coast Patrol Force neglected to deliver Group West's sailing orders to this blockade-runner as ordered. Commanding Admiral, Group West has ordered a court-martial investigation.

It is feared that the HIMALAYA may have encountered vessels of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla. Details must be awaited.

Group West has requested Air Commander, Atlantic Coast to provide additional reconnaissance with available Ju 88 planes in the sea area between 9° and 13° W, and 43° as far as 45° N, starting at dawn.

The departure of the other three blockade runners has apparently been accomplished without incident.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO has been picked up by the 8th Destroyer Flotilla according to plan.

Further details concerning Operations "Elisabeth" and "Anke" are contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b, File "Elisabeth".

Channel Coast:

Nothing special to report.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Mine-sweeping activity was stopped on account of the weather. The patrol positions were not occupied.

At 1320 heavy enemy air forces attacked the dockyard and the harbor installations at Rotterdam. The dockyard on the Nieuwe Waterweg was heavily damaged and work was temporarily stopped.



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2. Norway/Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, three Russian destroyers returned to Kola Bay in the morning. Three Russian submarines were advised of a freighter and nine motor barges in an unidentified sea area. Air reconnaissance over the North Sea was limited during the day. No operations of the Iceland squadrons were reported.

Own Situation:

On 29 Mar., three Russian submarine-laid mines were cut near Festerneset. On the morning of 30 Mar., the Coastal Listening Station sighted two Russian vessels in a northerly direction which withdrew at high speed behind smoke screens and were fired at by batteries Romanov and Petsamo. The fire was returned from the Rybachi peninsula battery. Eight enemy planes were noted in the area of Petsamo.

In Tofte Fiord one of our motor minesweepers captured a Norwegian cutter with a sabotage detachment of twelve men aboard. Two Norwegians were shot while attempting to escape. The cutter was blown up by her crew. According to prisoners' statements, four other cutters are to put in.

Escort service was carried out according to plan.

On 30 Mar., the NUERNBERG, GREIF and JAGUAR moved to Harstad. At 0800 three destroyers of the Alta Group left Kaa Fiord to pick up the REGENSBURG.

For orders of Group North to the REGENSBURG, see radiograms 1219, 1227, 1707 and 1943.

In accordance with the suggestion of Operations Division, Group North plans, upon completion of Operation "Segelhafen", to reduce the sea turns of the submarines operating in northern waters to about 18 days.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

The Hirtshals - Arendal line was occupied by four patrol boats. Minesweeping was impossible on account of the weather.

Naval Staff considers that the plan of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic for compulsory escort on Route "38" is impracticable

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due to the delay to shipping. According to a communication from the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, the greater risk of mines must be faced. Order to Group North accordingly, see teletype 1719.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic reports that the net defense unit on Operation "Walross", has laid 5.3 miles of net from south to north. The 24th Landing Flotilla has completed barrage "Nashorn IIa" and "III a". Due to weather conditions it is not possible to begin barrage "IV a" or to carry out minesweeping.

Admiral, Baltic States reports the dismounting of Battery Odensholm which, after overhaul, is to be installed on the Dubni Peninsula. There was the usual activity in Kronstadt Bay.

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V. Merchant Shipping.

1.) The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping reports that the transfer of the Spanish fruit and ore traffic to Port Vendres has been ordered.

2.) According to a communication from the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, the shipping space required for April for Armed Forces supplies to Norway will amount to about 413,000 GRT, to Finland about 110,000 GRT. Shipments to the Baltic States will require 187,000 GRT. In German coastal traffic, apart from coal, 110,000 GRT will be required and another 260,000 GRT for coastal coal traffic, only 20,000 GRT being at present scheduled from Rotterdam. About 200,000 tons will be dispatched from Oxeloesund.

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VI. Submarine Warfare.

1. Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay was normal with 17 planes on operation.

According to radio deciphering, the U.S. auxiliary aircraft carrier BOGTE and the aircraft tender BELKNAP and G. C. BAGDER are employed on escort duties in the North Atlantic.

2. Own Situation:

No special operational reports have come in from the submarines in the North Atlantic. Several submarines have been



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dispatched to assist the HIMALAYA. Nor have any action reports been received from the southern submarines.

Order to Submarine Division concerning opening of the various sectors of Route "Anton", or periods when they will be closed, has been issued by 1/Skl I u 973/43 Gkdos. Chfs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IV. Further details in War Diary, Part B, Vol. IV.

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## VII. Aerial Warfare.

### 1. British Isles and Vicinity:

The 3rd Air Force had 126 planes out on operation in the west area and 26 in the Mediterranean.

During the period from 9 to 31 Mar., FW 200 type planes of Air Commander, Atlantic Coast flew 146 daylight missions for Naval Group West off the west coast of Portugal and in the outer Bay of Biscay. During these flights, twenty large enemy convoys were sighted, not to mention small or unaccompanied vessels.

Enemy air attacks were made at noon in the area of the Scheld estuary (see "Own Situation North Sea") and in the areas of Dunkirk, Ostend and St. Omer - Calais.

### 2. Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force were heavily engaged throughout the day and night over the whole front of Army Group Africa and especially in advance of the Italian 1st Army. Other strong forces of the German Air Force were on escort duties with air and sea convoys. In defense against an attack on the convoy NUORO, five enemy planes were shot down. Our bombers again had to be used for the supply of aviation fuel.

At 1400 the enemy made a heavy attack in the Cagliari - Decimo area. One steamer was sunk and two others damaged. For further damage, see "Daily Situation".

The probable sinking of an enemy submarine by a Ju 88 in the area northwest of Trapani is reported from 30 Mar.

### 3. Eastern Front:

On 30 Mar. 33 enemy planes were destroyed over the Army fronts. Reconnaissance by the 4th Air Force in the Black Sea

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produced no noteworthy information. The vessels of the Black Sea Fleet were in harbor at Poti and Batum.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Enemy Situation Mediterranean:

The FORMIDABLE, escorted by 8 destroyers, left Gibraltar in the forenoon for the Mediterranean. East of Gibraltar she took planes on board. Two steamers and 1 cable layer with 1 destroyer and 20 landing craft arrived in Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

According to an intelligence report from Spain, the special freighter which sailed on 27 Mar. from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic was a DEWDALE type LSI. In the forenoon, minesweeping activity was observed in the area off Tangier. Shipping on the Algerian coast was slight.

At 0535 two to four PT boats and one larger vessel, probably a destroyer, were sighted 45 miles southeast of Pantelleria proceeding at high speed on easterly course, presumably returning from a minelaying mission.

Reconnaissance of the coastal waters between Derna and Tobruk produced no sightings.

2. Own Situation Mediterranean:

Two Italian submarines are reported in the operational area.

At 2015 on 30 Mar., in grid square CH 8292 U "596" sank two steamers totalling 14,000 GRT from a westbound convoy of 20 steamers, and scored five hits.

On account of bad weather, PT boats were not sent out. East of Bizerta, the Italians carried out a submarine chase.

Minesweepers M "6021", M "6023" and five auxiliary motor minesweepers entered Genoa on 30 Mar. Further passage of minesweeper M "6024" and submarine-chaser "2210" from Naples to Trapani has been postponed for 24 hours because of engine trouble on the submarine-chaser. Moored mines have been noted 20 miles west-southwest of Cape Spartivento.

Motor minesweepers R "3" and R "4" have arrived in Strasbourg on their transfer to the Mediterranean.



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According to the situation report of Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, an early attack on the position of the 1st Italian Army is to be expected. Sfax airfield was repeatedly and successfully attacked by strong enemy air forces.

3. Sea Transport Situation:

Convoy PIERRE CLAUDE - BELLUNO entered Tunis. Convoy NUORO, en route to Bizerta, was attacked without success by enemy planes. Convoy LE BORGNE, consisting of 2 steamers and 1 tanker, escorted by 1 destroyer, 1 torpedo boat and 2 German submarine-chasers, is en route from Naples to Bizerta according to schedule. War transports KT "7" and KT "9" have left Naples for Tunis. Nine German and seven Italian naval landing craft are en route to Bizerta.

4. Area Naval Group South:

Aegean Sea:

At 1600 on 30 Mar., an enemy submarine shelled a factory near Chruso in the southeastern part of Cassandra Huk. Four cutters and a turpentine container were set on fire. Submarine chase is underway. Convoy traffic is held up due to submarine danger.

Group South has advised Naval Staff for information of its comments to Vice Admiral Ruge concerning intensification of the measures for the defense of the Corinth Canal. For copy see teletype 1340.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance produced no new information. Shipping off the east coast was slight.

Own Situation:

The operations of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla off Tuapse during the night of 30 Mar. were unsuccessful. Italian PT boats were unable to make a thrust against enemy traffic between Ghelenjik and Cape Myshakov because of bad weather. On the afternoon of 30 Mar., submarine U "19" entered Constantza. Shortly after midnight on 31 Mar., submarine U "24" torpedoed and set fire to the tanker SOWJETSKAJA (8,228 GRT) in Gagry Bay.

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At noon, four aerial torpedoes were fired at the convoy DRESDEN in the area of Eupatoria; all missed their targets. One plane was shot down. An escorting motor minesweeper received casualties by strafing.

The 11th Anapa transport was completed according to plan and the 12th transport is underway.

The ferry traffic across the Strait of Kerch was carried out according to plan. To the east were ferried: 833 soldiers and 1640 tons of supplies; to the west: about 4500 persons, 550 motorized and 414 horse-drawn vehicles, 1745 horses, etc.

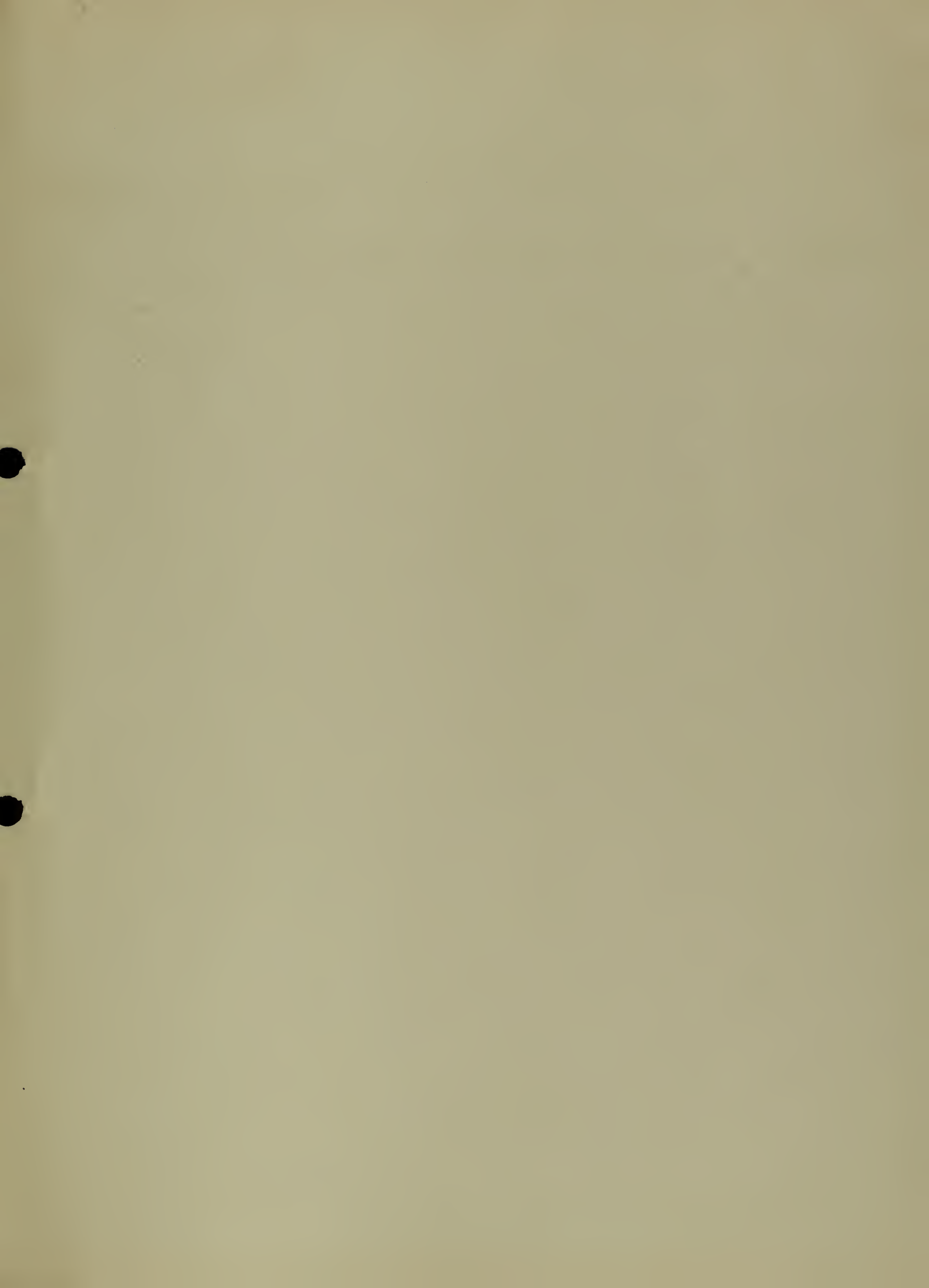
If the weather continues warm, the traffic to Temriuk will begin on 7 Apr.

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IX. Situation East Asia.

Nothing special to report.





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