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WAR DIARY

German Naval Staff Operations Division

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PART A VOLUME 53

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JANUARY, 1944

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WAR DIARY OF THE GERMAN NAVAL STAFF
(Operations Division)

PART A

January 1944

Chief, Naval Staff:	Grand Admiral Dr.h.c.Raeder
Chief of Staff, Naval Staff:	Admiral Schniewind
Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff:	Rear Admiral Fricke

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OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

Washington, D.C.

Foreword

1. The Office of Naval Intelligence has undertaken to translate important parts of the War Diary of the German Naval Staff. The present volume, entitled War Diary of the German Naval Staff, Operations Division, Part A, Vol. 53 is the twenty-ninth one of the series to appear. 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 the Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 1939-1945, which have been published by this office, 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 microfilm library of Naval Records and Library.

3. Due to the cost of publication, only a limited number of copies could be made; it is therefore desirable that the copies which have been distributed are made available to other offices which may be interested.

Washington, D.C.
1950

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing special to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

Army Situation:

Defensive fighting continues in the Nikopol area. We are slowly withdrawing our front. The situation in the Shitomir - Korosten region and northwest of Kirovograd must be regarded as serious. However, it is reported from Vitebsk that the three divisions which were brought up have gained a full-scale defensive success. We shall probably be able to control the situation west of Nevel.

Otherwise no special reports or decisions.

Special Items:

In view of the foreign exchange situation, Armed Forces High Command has issued a regulation, similar to the one already in existence for Bulgaria and Rumania, restricting the transfer of all troops and units of the Armed Forces to Hungary. Any such transfer must have the previous approval of Armed Forces High Command.

Situation 1 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Nothing special to report.

II. Situation West Area

Enemy Situation:

Forty-two planes and also five sea-rescue planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay up to 10° W.

At 1626 a British vessel with formation "Dunose" reported shadowing planes from a position in BE 3826. Our air

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reconnaissance sighted a cruiser, probably DUNOSE, in BE 3864.

On each of the following occasions one British vessel was located: in BE 4220 at 1229, in AL 6980 at 1351, in AL 6660 at 1400, in BE 2950 at 1717 and in BE 3850 at 1913.

It was learned from the monitoring service that the Irish steamer in the Bay of Biscay rescued 164 German survivors. She entered an Irish port on the morning of 1 Jan. This seems to confirm that the radio message from "unknown" to "unknown", intercepted on 31 Dec., had to do with the Irish steamer.

According to an intelligence report, it is rumored that 260,000 - 280,000 tons of shipping are assembled in ports on the south and southwest coasts of England and 350,000 - 370,000 tons in the ports of South Wales. British military circles think that the projected invasion preparations will be nearing completion towards the end of January at the earliest. According to another intelligence report from London dated 24 Dec. all PT boats in the Bristol Channel area have been ordered to assemble in the area Lizard Head - Falmouth - Plymouth. A PT boat commander stated in Cardiff that he was expecting to be transferred to the Newhaven - Dover region. He thought that by the middle of January at least 200 PT boats would be assembled there to form a 5th Squadron to cooperate with commando troops.

Own Situation:

Re the Engagement in the Bay of Biscay:

At 1612 on 28 Dec. our air reconnaissance reported a hospital ship of 8,000 G.R.T. in BE 6668 on course 120°.

Operations Division informed the International Red Cross by teletype via the Foreign Office and the legation at Berne that numerous German survivors were drifting in rubber dinghies 100 miles from the position of the hospital ship, and requested that she should be directed towards their position to assist the rescue.

On 30 and 31 Dec. the Naval Attaché, Madrid repeatedly informed the two Spanish destroyers of sighting reports of rubber dinghies with survivors in the search area.

According to advice from the Naval Attaché, Madrid, the destroyers reported picking up a rubber dinghy with four men on the afternoon.

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of 31 Dec. The men were alive and well. The destroyers continued their search until the forenoon of 1 Jan. when shortage of fuel forced them to start on their return passage.

Atlantic Coast:

On the afternoon of 31 Dec. during an enemy air raid on Le Verdon roads a Liberator was shot down by our patrol vessels. During an attack on St. Nazaire a mine exploding vessel shot down a plane.

One submarine was escorted into harbor.

The transfer of destroyer Z "23" and torpedo boat T "22" from St. Jean de Luz, the one to the Gironde, the other to Brest, is planned for the night of 1 Jan.

Channel Coast:

When putting out from Boulogne to resume her passage the steamer MUENSTERLAND ran into a net barrage at 0330 and had to put in again to have her propeller cleared.

At 1100, while in harbor, the steamer was bombed and machine-gunned by 10 enemy planes. There were a few casualties. No further damage has been reported.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Patrol vessels were withdrawn on account of the rough sea.

Otherwise nothing special to report.

Norway, Northern Waters:

Eleven planes with four escort planes from No. 15 Group were spotted over the North Sea. Only one plane from the Iceland Squadrons was observed.

At 0824 an escort vessel dropped depth charges in an unsuccessful attempt to attack submarine U "601" in AC 9497 (north of Archangel).

At 1115 submarine U "277" sighted one destroyer and detected two others by hydrophone.

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At 1045 on 31 Dec. our air reconnaissance sighted four merchant vessels, each about 4,800 G.R.T., putting in and five escort vessels (presumably parts of the expected PQ-convoy) in the entrance to Archangel.

Own Situation:

Fifteen vessels were escorted north and 23 south. Nineteen were delayed awaiting escorts.

At 0937 an enemy submarine unsuccessfully attacked our northbound convoy with three torpedoes in the southern outlet of Karm Sound. Submarine chase was started.

Submarine Group "Isegrimm" sailed for patrol line AC 4143 - 4723 at 1600.

Group "Eisenbart" went into operation on receipt of report from submarine U "601" (see Enemy Situation). In view of the sighting and hydrophone detection reported by submarine U "277" it seems possible that the QP convoy is approaching.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

No special reports.

Own Situation:

One ground mine was swept southwest of Hesseloe. At 0920 the steamer HECKSEE (2,000 G.R.T.) sank after striking a mine northwest of Anholt. Minesweeping in the eastern Baltic was hindered by weather conditions. All escort and transport duties were completed without incident in the whole Baltic Sea region.

V. Submarine Warfare

At 0232 submarine U "545" from Group "Ruegen" sank a destroyer in AL 1248 and at 0535 reported the sinking of a damaged freighter in AL 1248.

Submarine U "275" reported a searching group in BE 8248. This consisted of three destroyers, 2 of which were sunk by "Zaunkoenig" (acoustic homing torpedo, Tr. N.). Submarine U "382" sank a third anti-submarine vessel in BF 8224.

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A sortie by Group "Borkum", with eleven submarines, is planned for 1000 on 2 Jan. from patrol line BE 8551 to BE 9464. Their target is a southbound convoy, which according to dead reckoning may be intercepted at 1800 on 2 Jan.

Group "Hela" which participated in the search in the Bay of Biscay has been dispersed. Two submarines have begun their return passage. According to radio intelligence one submarine was attacked by a plane in DB 95 and apparently damaged. According to air reconnaissance, at 1935 another submarine was spotted by planes in the Bay of Biscay. She was apparently unable to submerge and was attacked by strong formations. She was reported several times up till midnight. Our Ju 88's were sent in to assist.

VI. Aerial Warfare

British Isles and Vicinity:

There was lively air activity during the day in the west area. The attacks on the steamer MUENSTERLAND in Boulogne have already been reported. In the afternoon six construction sites were attacked and partially damaged by a strong bomber formation with fighter escort. In addition, various isolated targets were attacked by fighter-bombers.

Reich Territory:

In the evening 25 planes, probably Mosquitoes, carried out nuisance raids in the western part of the Reich territory. Bombs were dropped on various places, including Bochum and Duisburg. During the night of 1 Jan. several hundred enemy planes flew into the Greater Berlin area via Holland and Hanover. The raid was directed against the southern half of the city. For particulars, see Daily Situation.

Mediterranean Theater:

During the night of 31 Dec. 13 of our bombers attacked the harbor of Augusta. A fuel depot and two freighters were set on fire. Enemy night fighters were active and there was heavy anti-aircraft fire. We lost five planes. In the daytime there was moderate enemy air activity.

During the night ten planes were reported in the area of Air Force Command, Southeast. They were in the Central Aegean and

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off Athens, probably dropping mines there.

Eastern Front:

No special reports.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West

Enemy Situation:

An AURORA class vessel entered Gibraltar from the west at 0950 on 31 Dec. Seven freighters, two destroyers and three corvettes left Gibraltar for the Atlantic at 0730 on 1 Jan.

Own Situation:

Nothing special to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy

Enemy Situation:

At 0845 on 31 Dec. our air reconnaissance reported 16 freighters and three escort vessels east of Crotone heading for Taranto, and at 2030 on 1 Jan. a destroyer 20 miles southwest of Naples heading east, at 2050 presumably the same destroyer on course 210°.

At 0858 radio intelligence intercepted a request for tug assistance from a British naval vessel off Bizerta.

Own Situation:

It is now reported that one motor coaster was sunk and another beached during the shelling of our coastal traffic off San Georgio by enemy destroyers on the night of 30 Dec.

An enemy plane was shot down by fast escort vessel "20" at Imperia on 28 Dec.

German Naval Command, Italy reports that a total of 3,804 mines was laid in the period from 8 Sept. to 31 Dec. Altogether an area covering 315 miles was mined.

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Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean has presented a report on the experiences of U "642", which broke through the Straits of Gibraltar in the new-moon period Oct. 1943. The boat deviated from the usual procedure in that she passed Cadiz and proceeded as far as Cape Trafalgar surfaced; from there she proceeded submerged the whole length of the Straits as far as the Marbella lighthouse.

On 24 Dec. German Naval Command, Italy requested allocation of a total of 1,400 EMC, 1,400 UMB and 200 EMF mines.

It seems that we cannot meet this request until the special program of Reichsminister Speer takes effect and mines are produced in considerable quantities.

The following decision has been communicated to German Naval Command, Italy:

"1. It will not be possible to allocate German mines to the Italian area for some time, as the small quantities available have to be used exclusively for the defense of the west area, or held in readiness for the minelaying which we plan to carry out in the Gulf of Finland and the Skagerrak in the spring of 1944.

2. The minelaying already carried out on the west coast of Italy is thought to be adequate and almost complete. Special acknowledgment is made of the smooth way in which it has been carried out with the small forces available and relying almost exclusively on Italian captured material. Any mines required for reinforcements must come from Italian stocks or new production. The defense of the Italian east coast has to take second place to urgent plans for other areas."

3. Area Naval Group South

a. Adriatic Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance spotted an incoming convoy of seven freighters with several escort vessels in the Strait of Otranto. There are no further details. Reconnaissance of the Dalmatian Isles showed that in Brac, Hvar, Vis and Seedro there were altogether 23 sailing vessels, 1 ferry, 39 large, 15 medium-sized and 86 small boats. There were no ships off the island of Mljet. The inhabitants stated that the greater part of the garrison of this island fled to Vis several days ago.

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Own Situation:

Coast patrol boats G "101" and G "105" were heavily damaged and sunk during an attack by bombers on Zara on 31 Dec. G "107" is undamaged. The Commanding Officer of the 22nd Naval Anti-Aircraft Battalion is included in the list of killed and missing.

PT boats S "36" and S "56" carried out their operation according to plan on the night of 30 Dec. and shelled the harbor of Lagosta. S "36" will be out of action for four days owing to rudder damage from the heavy sea.

b. Aegean Sea:

No special events were reported.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Radio intelligence stated that three submarines were intercepted in the northwesterly part. Another boat was intercepted on her approach route.

Own Situation:

Naval landing craft did not sight any shipping in the Strait of Kerch during the night of 31 Dec. Heavy guns shelled the boats off Cape Tuszla. They did not sustain any damage. Kamysh Burun and four batteries of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion were shelled that same night. Two batteries of this battalion returned fire but without any noticeable effect.

With the improvement in the weather the Crimea convoys have started again.

Submarine U "20" left Constanta on operations.

During the night of 1 Jan. four boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla were out on operations against shipping off the Caucasian coast in the region of Cape Idcopas.

Three naval landing craft transferred from Kamysh Burun to Feodosiya.

VIII. Situation East Asia

No special reports.

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Items of Political Importance

The British Deputy Prime Minister declared in a New Year message to the nation that the British were determined to make good their mistakes. The Germans must expect set-backs on land, at sea and in the air. Air attacks would continue to grow in intensity. The war, however, was full of uncertainties. The British must not become over-optimistic for still greater sacrifices would be required from everyone.

British newspapers also made the New Year an occasion for warning against excessive optimism and slackening of effort.

The Spanish Government has denied having recognized Mussolini's Government.

The Argentine Government has decided to dissolve all political parties.

On 22 Dec. the Military Attaché in Sofia reported on the political situation as follows:

"It is becoming more and more apparent that the Boschiloff Government is decidedly weak. The Prime Minister's apologies to the British and Americans for the use of military defense forces during the recent air raids have created a bad impression in all quarters. It is also noted that the Bulgarian Government is anxious to avoid anything that could give the enemy occasion to take energetic action against them (Jewish question).

The Prime Minister is regarded as very loyal to the Regent Filoff who, in his position as Regent, does not enjoy the sympathy of the Bulgarian public.

At the moment one cannot say whether this fact might ultimately lead to a change of Government. At present there are no indications of this.

All the reports spread by the enemy press and radio, e.g. resignation of the Foreign Minister, are to be regarded as part of the war of nerves decided on at Cairo or Teheran and have no foundation at present.

It might perhaps seem ominous that in the last secret session of the Government majority, voices were raised demanding a break from Axis policy. However, the matter should not be credited

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with too much importance so long as the eastern front holds out and there are no further major set-backs.

There can be no doubt about the pro-German leanings of the military, who remain the most influential group in deciding Bulgaria's attitude."

In an earlier report the Military Attaché had mentioned certain divergences of view between Government and Army which, however, have no decisive importance at present. In his view an immediate intervention by the Army, led by Regent Kyrill, may be expected if any critical situation should arise. Kyrill's prestige is still growing, and the Army is deliberately marking him out as a future Prince Regent.

Together with the police the Army is the guarantee for the maintenance of law and order and also protects the country against increasing Communist influences.

On 1 Jan. Chief, Naval Staff presented himself at the Fuehrer Headquarters.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Chief of Staff stated that our operations are greatly hindered by the heavy guns in Kossa Tuszla, which shell the Kerch shore and the naval landing craft on patrol.

Chief, Operations Division reported that the enemy coast is dotted with batteries. It is not to be expected that they can be kept down or cut out by use of monitors, as ordered by the Fuehrer, and especially not by improvised ones.

II. Quartermaster General reported upon the request of Commander, 1st PT Boat Division regarding MS "75" and "76" (see War Diary 30 Dec. 1943) and proposed that the old decision should remain in force. The two boats should be allocated to the 10th MAS (PT) Boat Flotilla which is under German Naval Command, Italy.

Chief of Staff agreed.

III. Report by Fleet, Operations Section

a. The Fuehrer has ordered: Effective 1 Jan. 1944, Army Group Command B is subordinated to Commanding General, Armed

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Forces, West. Army Group Command B is, however, still scheduled to take operational control in the area of Commanding General, Armed Forces, Denmark, in case of a large-scale enemy landing or in the event of "Margarete", and may be called upon at short notice in both cases. Direct subordination under the Fuehrer is canceled.

b. Regarding the proposal of Naval Command, North concerning the Tyboroen and Esbjerg ground mine barrages: for this purpose Chief of Staff wishes to have the results of the war game from Group North.

IV. Army Situation

We are resisting the enemy pressure on the Dnieper bend. The situation in the Shitomir area is still serious.

Special Items

I. In the course of the enemy air raids on the Gironde estuary at noon on 31 Dec. strong forces attacked four Air Force stations. Damage was done on all airfields. Surprisingly there was no attack on the blockade-runner OSORNO. The inference might be that the enemy is carrying out the preliminary stage of future operations in this area.

Naval Staff therefore asked Group West for an assessment of enemy plans, with reference to the possibility that these attacks could be the preparations for a landing operation or for raids by airborne units.

Group West does not believe that any special conclusions can be drawn from these attacks. In view of the fact that the enemy has been making systematic attacks on our western air bases there is no reason for us to think that he is making preparations for landings or raids.

"If there is some special motive other than systematic action against airfields for these present enemy attacks on the bases of Air Commander; Atlantic Coast then it is rather to be presumed that the daily activity from these bases and the special missions in connection with the blockade-runner operations are hindering British plans. Hence the present large-scale attacks.

As the enemy is still laying mines in the Gironde area, a landing there seems improbable. He might conceivably try a landing farther south but this seems unlikely. A raid on the BERNIAU is possible; however, we have provided good defenses against this. The Group does not think that any close connection exists between the large-scale attacks against the air bases and possible raids."

II. In a report to Quartermaster Division dated 28 Dec. Group South suggested transfer of naval authorities as follows:

"1. Broad lines of plan:

A. Transfer Staff of Admiral, Black Sea to Bucharest or Constantza - Eforiaz.

B. Appoint a Naval Shore Commander responsible for Rumanian coast from Nikopol up to the Bulgarian frontier with three Sector Commandants at Odessa, Sulina and Constantza.

C. Appoint a Naval Shore Commander, Bulgaria for the Bulgarian coast.

D. Dissolve Naval Liaison Staff, Rumania.

E. Set up an organization to receive supplies. Organization to consist of detachment for special duties with very small number of supply personnel in Odessa, Galati, Constantza and Varna.

F. As a precaution give each naval shore commander a naval artillery battalion for any manning of Rumanian and Bulgarian coastal batteries.

G. Transfer surplus personnel to the Adriatic and Aegean areas immediately.

2. The political angle:

A. Plan does not allow for past or present developments in the political attitude of the Balkan states.

B. Plan outlined under 1. can only be carried through if the present ban on further transfers to Rumania and Bulgaria is abolished and the Army and Air Force make a simultaneous move into the coastal area and the interior.

C. If the defense is left to Rumania and Bulgaria, only liaison staffs at Rumanian naval command stations are necessary.

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3. Before working out further details of the plan we have to know and fit in with the Army's intentions.

4. The execution of Plan 1 would enable us to appoint a second Naval Shore Commander, Dalmatia, meet the request for two naval artillery battalions in the Adriatic, give the Port Commanders in the Adriatic and Dodecanese their urgently needed reinforcements and also give Admiral, Aegean the reinforcements he has already listed in detail."

Quartermaster Division has decided: "For the present we do not intend to give the plan our further consideration. We regard it as a basis for further measures to be taken if and when the military situation demands."

Situation 2 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports.

2. Own Situation:

The WESERLAND reported by short signal:

"At 1500 on 1 Jan. chased and attacked by a seaplane at about 10° S, 25° W. Am turning about."

In the early hours of 2 Jan. the WESERLAND reported that planes had been shadowing her since 2200. Position at 1100 on 2 Jan. 12° 48' S, 22° 16' W.

Radiogram 1336 from Naval Staff ordered the WESERLAND to turn about and withdraw to the south. Attempt another breakthrough in about a week. Orders giving new dates on which she is to pass certain points will follow.

Operations Division also informed all vessels in foreign waters that shadowing planes have spotted the WESERLAND and instructed them that when between 15° S and the equator they are to proceed about 150 miles farther west than previously ordered. They will then be on the shipping lane from South America to Freetown and

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will probably be less noticeable than on their previously ordered course outside the regular route.

Naval Attaché, Tokyo was instructed to give the SCHLIEHMANN sailing orders to bring her to a point lying 5° further east than "Loeffel" on 26 Jan.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Fifty-six planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. In addition, six locations of British vessels were reported in the rendezvous area.

2. Own Situation:

Operations to bring in the TRAVE

From the brief reports received to date, Naval Staff has compiled a preliminary account of the destroyer engagement off the Bay of Biscay on 28 Dec. This has been transmitted to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy); Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer; High Command Army, General Staff, Naval Liaison Officer; Groups North, West and South; Naval Commands, Baltic, North, Norway and Naval Attaché Department for information of our Attachés. Final report will follow after scrutiny of all action reports. The account runs as follows:

"1. Assignment: To meet a blockade-runner at 13° W and bring her in.

2. Situation shortly before the engagement: On the afternoon of 27 Dec. the expected blockade-runner was sunk by enemy bombers at about 19° W. Operational Headquarters had no knowledge of this. From 1000 until 1300 on 28 Dec. the destroyers were standing on and off between 11° and 12° W. West and north of the destroyers our planes were searching for the blockade-runner. Hence the sea area east of the destroyers was not covered for about three hours. During this period the enemy cruisers approached from the northeast.

3. At 1300 on receipt of the report from one of our planes alarm was given in BE 6688. At 1314 the enemy - two cruisers - came in sight to the northeast. Our formation assembled in line ahead on course south; the three destroyers leading, in

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the middle the 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla (six boats), astern two destroyers with Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla, Captain Erdmenger, on board the rear ship Z "27". The formation tried to break through slowly to the east in front of the cruisers. Wind East 7 - 8, sea 5 - 6, good visibility. The seas were sweeping over the decks on the side facing the enemy and the torpedo boats restricted the maximum speed of the formation to 28 knots.

4. The enemy guns were firing well at a range of 174 hm. The rear destroyers fired spreads of six torpedoes without success. At 1415 in BE 6953, with the enemy slowly coming ahead, Erdmenger with the two rear destroyers and three torpedo boats turned about in an attempt to surround the enemy to the north. The other group was ordered to force its way through to the east. This group fired ten torpedoes without success.

5. The enemy soon followed Group Erdmenger and turned to the north, covering this group with accurate gunfire. Gunfire from our destroyers scored hits on a cruiser. At 1512 destroyer Z "27" lay out of control. Enemy gunfire prevented the other vessels from coming to her assistance. The enemy then approached the northern group, which turned off to the west. During this maneuver gunfire scored hits on two torpedo boats, T "25" and T "26"; they were put out of control and slowly sank. Z "23" and T "22" turned off to the southwest. Encounter with the enemy broken off.

6. The destroyers Z "32" and Z "37" from our eastern group again attempted to hasten to the assistance of Z "27" but were forced away by gunfire and continuous bombing attacks. At nightfall the destroyers followed the torpedo boats, which in accordance with their orders had made off to the east. The rest of the passage through the Bay of Biscay was without incident.

7. Z "23" and T "22" hauled off far to the southwest and successfully evaded the enemy. They both made for Cape Villano on the morning of 29 Dec. and in spite of several air attacks proceeded along the Spanish coast to St. Jean de Luz without incurring any damage.

8. No final judgment can yet be given. On 28 Dec. the destroyers and torpedo boats were out on operation for the seventh day in succession in bad weather and under frequent air attack. They were very much handicapped by the head-on sea which hampered them in using their armament. The absence of

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timely air reconnaissance reports must be put down to our lack of sufficient planes.

9. Good work by our planes assisted the rescue of survivors by our submarines, an Irish steamer and two Spanish destroyers. Rescue work is still going on."

Atlantic Coast:

Group West reported plans to stop the leak in the BERNAU with mats in such a way that she can be kept dry while the leaky holds are unloaded. If this is successful the BERNAU is to remain at her present berth as long as the weather permits unloading, as Group West thinks that the shallow water affords a good degree of protection against air attack; the vessel may burn out but she cannot sink. If it becomes imperative to change her berth, she will be moved up to Pauillac for the time being and we will hope that the enemy will not at once discover the new berth. Provided everything goes according to schedule, Naval Shore Commander, Gascony hopes to have the unloading finished by 8 Jan.

The Naval Station, Bordeaux sent the following extract from the Captain's passage report:

"On 10 Oct. an enemy submarine chased the BERNAU for three hours, but failed to stop her. On 8 Nov. she evaded a large transport. On the morning of 8 Dec. at 04° 40' S, 23° 00' W a Liberator plane fired shots in front of her bow and challenged her to stop but she kept on and by clever morse traffic, etc. deceived the plane. In the afternoon the same incident was repeated. The first German plane was sighted on the forenoon of 22 Dec. The U.S. carrier-borne plane which approached on 23 Dec. was likewise deceived. The plane which attacked on 24 Dec. was shot down."

Destroyer Z "23" has moved from St. Jean de Luz to Le Verdon Roads. T "23" is continuing passage to Brest escorted by the 10th Minesweeper Flotilla. One submarine was escorted in and two out.

Channel Coast:

A mine detonation was reported east of Cherbourg. Patrol positions were not taken up because of the bad weather.

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Special Items

In connection with the instructions from Operations Division about the minelaying offensive to be carried out by Commander, PT Boats (see War Diary 12 Dec. 1943), Group West on 21 Dec. reported that he had been given orders to follow the above-mentioned instructions and in order to confuse the enemy further he should now and then carry out torpedo operations, as envisaged in the initial plans.

Group West again explained its view and pointed out that the conditions prevailing at the time when the large-scale minelaying offensive was planned are now for the most part non-existent, i.e. firing devices AA 1 and DM 1 are not available and the Air Force is not taking any part. Its withdrawal is practically complete, as the 9th Air Corps is so deeply engaged in other costly operations that requests from Group West for occasional minelaying are useless. The Air Force has so few planes in the west area that, in view of the danger of an enemy landing, Group West must agree that the Air Force policy of economy is correct. The Group thinks that PT boats should again concentrate on torpedo operations with minelaying to be carried out at the discretion of Commander, PT Boats. A further review of the whole problem was requested.

On 30 Dec. Operations Division decided as follows:

"The same effect of increasing the enemy's confusion can also be obtained by occasional minelaying at other points. However, Naval Staff agrees with the orders to carry out torpedo operations now and then.

The limited effect of minelaying to date is not due to the enemy's skill in mastering our firing devices but to the fact that we have used a small number of mines. Generally the prisoners' statements about British successes in minesweeping are based on very inadequate data.

The withdrawal of the Air Force is no reason for keeping back the PT boats, rather they should make full use of the long nights and intensify their operations. Apart from the direct loss of tonnage there are opportunities for indirect success - enemy shipping can be greatly inconvenienced, minesweeping forces tied down, tactical experience gained in readiness for the time when we plan to use new firing devices. As soon as the enemy is restricted by systematic minelaying by PT boats, the Air Force will again supplement operations. A mine is a permanent source

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of danger; a torpedo, once fired, loses its effect."

Naval Staff sees no reason to alter the instructions given. There are also opportunities for the successful use of torpedoes in combination with minelaying.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

All patrol vessels were withdrawn owing to rough sea. Otherwise nothing to report.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Eleven planes, also six escort planes, were detected over the North Sea.

Our air reconnaissance in the Barents Sea reported sightings as follows: In Iokonga at 1000 6 coastal freighters, 1 vessel which looked like a motor refrigerator ship and 3 fishing vessels; in Teriberski at 0840 2 coastal freighters and 2 patrol vessels; off Polyarnoe at 1040 1 vessel which looked like a large destroyer, 2 steamers of medium size; off Vajenga at 1044 3 steamers, also 2 lighters being towed south.

Own Situation:

Two mines of an unknown type were cut loose ahead of an eastbound convoy in the Kiberg area. On 1 Jan. there was lively gunfire in the Petsamo region. The target was an incoming convoy. Enemy batteries fired 350 rounds. On the same day minesweeper M "365" ran aground off Vardoe. She was underslung and towed in. At 1158 on 2 Jan. there was a heavy underwater detonation 500 meters behind the stern of patrol boat V "5308" north of Stadtlandet. Route "A", north of Buholmen, is closed because of suspected mines. The steamer RUDAU is afloat again.

Twenty-eight vessels were escorted north and twenty-eight south.

Twenty-seven were delayed awaiting escort.

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Group "Eisenbart" has not reported any further contact with the enemy and will be dispersed. At midnight on 3 Jan. its boats are to join Group "Isegrimm" and be disposed from AC 4143 to 4759. Four boats will start on their return passage.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Fourteen vessels were sighted in Kronstadt Bay proceeding from Kronstadt to Lissi Noss. Planes laid a smoke-screen round a convoy escorted by two minesweepers acting as ice-breakers. Our gunfire scored a hit on a large tug. Heavy enemy counter-fire caused slight material damage.

2. Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

Submarine U "193", which had not sent any message since 7 Nov., reported the sinking of a tanker (12,000 G.R.T.) in DL 26.

Two submarines in the Bay of Biscay reported enemy air attacks.

Submarine U "543" sank a destroyer in BC 5489.

Group "Ruegen", in six small groups, moved a little farther to the east in the same area.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

There was brisk daytime activity in the occupied west areas. Fighter-bombers carried out scattered attacks on airfields and six construction sites. Slight damage was done. At noon planes were over the southern part of France, twenty-one entered the area Salon - Marseilles and six the St. Raphael area.

At noon 26 four-engined planes attacked the railway-line and bridge at Var. The line was interrupted. Normal working will be resumed in about four weeks. During the night of 2 Jan. there were minor attacks on the coasts of Belgium, Northern and Western France. Between eight and ten Fortresses seemed to be dropping mines in the Gironde. During this same night 27 of our planes

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started out for a raid on London.

2. Reich Territory:

In the evening about fourteen planes flew over the Rhine-Westphalia industrial area and dropped bombs at various places. During the early morning hours of 3 Jan. there was a fairly heavy attack on the eastern and southeastern districts of Berlin. For damage see Daily Situation.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

In the area of the 2nd Air Force the enemy put up 500 planes, mostly fighters and fighter-bombers, to machine-gun our front-line columns. Civitavecchia, Terni, the railway bridges at Ventimiglio and Taggio were also subjected to air attack.

The 2nd Air Force reported that altogether 201 planes were shot down in December, 67 of these by fighters, the rest by anti-aircraft. Our total losses were 45. Further, our planes scored hits on 34 vessels (totaling 208,100 G.R.T.) of which 17 (totaling 106,700 G.R.T.) were sunk.

The following report came from Air Force Command, Southeast:

At noon enemy planes penetrated into the Mostar area. Fourteen reconnaissance planes were over the Aegean Sea by day, during the night four reconnaissance planes were over the Khalkis area and three planes flew supplies to the partisans in the Balkans.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0830 1 small cruiser and 6 freighters left Gibraltar and at 1015 2 tankers and 6 freighters arrived from the Atlantic. At 1235 6 destroyers were reported heading for the Atlantic.

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According to a report of Intelligence Center, Spain from 1000 onwards the following passed through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean: a total of 69 vessels, including 34 U.S. freighters, 8 British freighters, 2 Norwegian freighters, 7 freighters of unknown nationality, 4 U.S. tankers, 1 Norwegian tanker, 3 tankers of unknown nationality, all of them carrying cargo, and also a special vessel with tanks on board. This convoy was escorted by gunboats and destroyers. Two of the tankers and four of the freighters entered Gibraltar.

Own Situation:

On 31 Dec. there was an explosion on the British steamer HARSLESTEN (5,483 G.R.T.) in Valencia, where she was loading oranges for Liverpool.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance there were two destroyers off the Bay of Naples on the evening of 1 Jan.

According to radio intelligence, there has been an increase in radio traffic between Casablanca - Algiers and Algiers - Palermo since 31 Dec. On 2 Jan. the traffic took on greater urgency and new vessels appeared. A British vessel, lying out of control 20 miles east of Cagliari after striking a mine, requested tug assistance but at 1000 she reported herself again operational.

Own Situation:

Owing to a storm, convoy traffic along the west and east coasts was interrupted. In Venice two more harbor defense vessels were commissioned.

For report of German Naval Command, Italy regarding December transport operations see teletype 0745.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

The occupation of the Island of Mljet ("Herbstgewitter 3") was completed after a mopping-up operation. Two coastal sailing vessels were included in the captures.

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There were no operations by PT boats owing to the bad weather.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 0805 two enemy reconnaissance planes flew over Rhodes. They machine-gunned the harbor but did not cause any damage. Otherwise nothing to report.

Special Items:

Under date 22 Dec. Group South presented a survey entitled "Basic Plans for mine barrages in the area under command of Admiral, Aegean Sea". This outlines all proposed minelaying. Included in the plans are: screening of the newly acquired area in the Dodecanese; revision of previous plans for east-west mine-barrier up to the northern Cyclades - barrier is now to run to the southern Cyclades - and thus protect our lines of communication to Leros; previous plans for the blocking of the Dardanelles in case of Turkey's entry into the war; previous plans, slightly modified, for supplementing the mine belt off the west coast of Greece; reinforcement of the barrages laid in the autumn off the south coast of Thrace. The degree of priority for each separate plan is given. The text is contained in files 1/Skl I E.

Operations Division has decided as follows:

"1. Agree with plans for minelaying to screen newly acquired Dodecanese bases to the east against surface forces and to protect the harbors and anchorages against submarines, likewise agree with plan to move the east-west barrier to the southern Cyclades so as to screen the supply route to the Dodecanese.

2. Plans can only be carried out insofar as present stocks of mines permit. In course of time there may be new supplies. As further supplies of EMC and UMB mines are doubtful and will be restricted to small quantities, investigate possibility of substituting EMR in some of the plans or practicability of using UMA. The previous monthly quota of EMR can probably be increased to 300.

3. It is a first priority to hold a quantity of mines in the area earmarked for blocking the Dardanelles, a task which may become necessary at short notice.

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4. The reinforcement of barrages off the west coast of Greece and south coast of Thrace can be postponed until plans there become more concrete."

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Radio intelligence reported movements of small ships towards the east coast. Three vessels, probably submarines, were detected in the operational area.

Own Situation:

During the night of 1 Jan. our PT boats were operating off the Caucasian coast, but they had no success. Naval landing craft in the Kerch Strait did not sight any enemy vessels.

Minesweeping and escort duties were carried out according to plan. Attempts to salvage the crane at Kinburn have so far been unsuccessful. Weather conditions have been unfavorable and the water is too shallow. Our tugs were withdrawn to take away lighters from Nikolayev - an urgent task which must be done before the ice sets in. 32,796 tons of supplies were sent to the Crimea in December; the shipping space used had a total capacity of 45,000 tons. Transport capacity was therefore not fully utilized.

Admiral, Black Sea instructed the Transfer Commandant, Linz to complete construction of three PT boats there and to hold up or cancel their further transfer.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing to report.

Chief, Naval Staff is still at the Fuehrer Headquarters.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General reported on the Fuehrer's decree regarding the establishment of a Reich Inspectorate of Civilian Air Raid Precautions.

II. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported on the enemy account of the SCHARNHORST engagement and the action in the Bay of Biscay. The Admiral in Command of the British Home Fleet, Admiral Fraser, has described the operation leading to the sinking of the SCHARNHORST. On the main engagement he states that the DUKE OF YORK and the SCHARNHORST were firing on each other continuously from 1700 to 1824. The SCHARNHORST always fired a broadside and then turned off, so that she presented only a narrow target. Her higher speed enabled her to withdraw slowly out of range of the DUKE OF YORK's guns. At 1806 the SCHARNHORST was hit and the resultant damage forced her to reduce speed to 20 knots at 1830. The DUKE OF YORK had received only two minor hits which pierced the masts. At 1824, when the SCHARNHORST's reduced speed was not yet apparent, the range was so great that both battleships ceased fire. Some minutes later the SCHARNHORST opened fire on the attacking destroyers which fired their torpedoes at ranges of less than one mile. On the DUKE OF YORK three detonations were heard at short intervals. At 1901 the DUKE OF YORK re-engaged and the SCHARNHORST sustained one hit after another. She was in flames. The glow of exploding ammunition was seen. The SCHARNHORST began to go round in circles. Her speed decreased more and more. At 1928, while on a northerly course, she came almost to a standstill. At 1932 the DUKE OF YORK ceased fire. The cruisers and destroyers then carried out their last torpedo attack.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. Naval Staff intends to transfer torpedo boats T "28" and

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T "29" to the west area to replace T "25" and T "26". In view of the priority which must be given to operations to bring in blockade-runners we shall have to accept this weakening of our forces in southern Norway. Provisionally we plan to withdraw T "28" at the time when the next destroyer intended for the Skagerrak should be arriving, probably 8 Jan. The two torpedo boats are to be transferred as soon as the moon is suitable. We shall try to have them arrive in good time to bring in the next blockade-runners (23 Jan.).

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff agreed. The decision of Chief, Naval Staff is to be obtained on 4 Jan.

IV. According to a British report, quoted by Chief, Naval Intelligence Division, signs of panic amongst German troops were seen for the first time in the southern part of the eastern front.

The enemy has broken through in the Shitomir area and the situation there is serious.

There is no change in the Vitebsk area. The general situation is extremely tense.

Special Items:

At the request of Operations Division, Naval Intelligence Division has ascertained that the Russians will have altogether 18 medium-sized and large submarines in their Baltic Fleet this coming spring. After the ice thaws approximately five additional submarines may be transferred from the Volga.

In view of this situation, Operations Division considers it necessary to take similar action as in 1943 and block the Gulf of Finland by mines and nets. Otherwise we fear that submarine training and merchant shipping in the Baltic will be interfered with in an intolerable manner. Likewise we cannot suppose that previous losses will deter the Russians from further attempts to break through to the west. For this reason it is essential to continue to provide mines for the Gulf of Finland; how and when they are actually used must depend on developments in the land fighting and on the ice situation. Preparations are to be made to ensure that mine requirements are covered to some extent even in the most unfavorable turn of events (withdrawal to the Narva line and extensive weakening of earlier barrages by ice). If the "Seeigel" system becomes ineffective in consequence of our withdrawal to the Narva line, or if the islands of Tyters and

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Hochland are lost, the new barrage system ("Krebs") can anyway be built up only to a limited extent with the mines provided, and will not meet the requirements of Naval Command, Baltic. If the barrage system "Nashorn", including the net, also comes within the enemy sphere, then the most we can do with the available mines will be to protect the Baltic against surface forces by putting a barrage in the outer Gulf of Finland or the Eastern Baltic. In this case we must forego anti-submarine barrages effective at all depths. On the other hand if the land front holds out and the mild winter continues the number of mines provided for reinforcement of "Seeigel" and "Nashorn" will probably not be fully required.

We intend to work out the details of the minelaying at a conference between Naval Command, Baltic, Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic and Naval Staff. This will take place towards the end of January or beginning of February. In the present situation there is no doubt that we must adhere to the plan to carry out large-scale minelaying in the Gulf of Finland.

If we withdraw our front and the Neva river becomes free, the Russians will be in a position to assemble such strong forces against the southern Finnish front that they can clear the Swir river and thus the line of communication from the White Sea via the lakes to the Baltic.

Situation 3 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Another fragmentary short signal picked up from the WESERLAND reveals that she is still being pursued by a shadowing plane. Naval Staff thinks that as the planes must already have reached the limit of their range at the position reported on 2 Jan. she may be able to shake them off by a move in a general southerly direction and by sharp changes of course during the night. Instructions to this effect were sent to the WESERLAND by radiogram 1300.

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Radiogram 1540 informed all blockade-runners about the experiences of the OSORNO. On 8 Dec. at 04° 40' S, 23° 00' W a Liberator fired shots across her bow and challenged her to stop. She went on and by skillful morse traffic twice successfully passed herself off to the plane as a British vessel. On 23 Dec. at 47° 28' N, 19° 07' W an approaching U.S. carrier-borne plane was deceived by a similar ruse.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Lively reconnaissance activity by 40 planes was detected over the outer Bay of Biscay. Six planes from the Azores squadrons were detected.

At 1344 our air reconnaissance reported 5 merchantmen of 2,000 - 3,000 G.R.T. and 5 escort vessels in BF 2377 (10 miles west of Start Point) on northwesterly course.

2. Own Situation:

Operation to bring in the TRAVE

Group West transmitted a short action report from the commander of torpedo boat T "25" who was rescued together with 32 members of his crew by submarine U "505". The submarine put into Brest at 1400 on 2 Jan. Copy of the report as per 1/Skl 16244/43 Gkdos. is in file "Operation to bring in the TRAVE" (annex to War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b). The boat fired a spread of three torpedoes on the ENTERPRISE. The seas washing over the torpedo aiming gear caused a complete short circuit. After the boat was hit several times and was already out of control the guns continued firing independently until the light ammunition was exhausted. Four hits on the enemy were observed. When the two cruisers again approached, the order to scuttle was given. The engineer officer, some of the petty officers and the Commander were the last to leave the boat. She sank at 1545 with her flag flying. The survivors were picked up by U "505" at 0500 on 29 Dec.

Atlantic Coast:

At 1300 destroyer Z "23" arrived in Bordeaux, at 0900 torpedo boat T "22" put into Brest.

Three submarines were escorted out.

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Channel Coast:

Patrol vessels did not go out owing to the weather.

At 2000 Commander, 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with the GREIF, KONDOR and MOEVE left Cherbourg for Brest.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Patrol vessels were withdrawn owing to the rough sea. The sailing of the convoys Elbe - Hook and Hook - Elbe was delayed because of the weather.

Four convoys totaling 38,746 G.R.T. were taken through the Dutch waters round Zeeland.

The following are extracts from the annual report of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North:

16,545 merchantmen totaling 18,461,721 G.R.T. were escorted, 998 of these totaling 2,119,466 G.R.T. were in the Rotterdam convoys.

We lost 23 steamers totaling 94,431 G.R.T., 9 of these losses being caused by mines, 8 by aerial torpedoes, 5 by PT boats and 1 by bombs. Twenty-three of the escort vessels were lost, 7 of them by mines, 5 by torpedoes from PT boats, 7 by aerial torpedoes, 1 by bombs. The remaining 3 sank after being damaged.

1,291 ground mines and 37 moored mines were swept. Twenty-seven enemy PT boats were sunk and 118 planes shot down.

Casualties were as follows. Personnel under Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North: 450 killed and missing, 363 severely wounded, 568 slightly wounded. Merchant Service personnel: 51 killed and missing, 15 severely wounded, 42 slightly wounded. (See teletype 1935.)

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Ten planes were detected over the North Sea.

At 0655 U "360" reported hydrophone noises, presumably a convoy, in AC 4417, later on in AB 6628. At 0900 the submarine was driven

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off by two destroyers in AB 6629. At 0910 U "636" reported a fairly loud depth charge detonation in AC 4457. At 2115 the same submarine again reported contact with enemy destroyers in AB 6712.

Our reconnaissance planes went up at noon but did not locate the supposed convoy, nor were there any further reports from the submarines. Hence it seems likely that the enemy vessels were only destroyer groups searching for submarines or returning from the Archangel area.

Own Situation:

Thirty-two vessels were escorted north and thirty-three south. Twenty-five vessels were left lying in harbor awaiting escorts.

At 1150 there was an unsuccessful submarine attack on a southbound convoy off Stadtlandet.

Groups "Isegrimm" and "Eisenbart" were ordered to operate according to reports from U "360". Group "Isegrimm" was transferred from AB 5842 to 8251, Group "Eisenbart" from AC 4143 to 4735.

With reference to the instructions for the commitment of Fleet forces in winter 1943/44, Naval Staff issued the following order to Group North/Fleet and, for information, Admiral, Northern Waters, Task Force and Commander, Destroyers:

"As long as the vessels of the Task Force are all out of action, occasional minelaying operations may be carried out by destroyers. Object is to inflict damage on convoy traffic between Britain and Russia."

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Two large barges, apparently stuck in the ice, were sighted in Kronstadt Bay; planes from Kronstadt put up a smoke screen round them.

2. Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

At 0653 submarine U "270" of Group "Borkum" reported the sinking of a destroyer. At 0532 U "305" reported an enemy air attack. According to radio intelligence, a British steamer was torpedoed in AL 2122. Her crew took to the life-boats.

U "744" in AE 7877 reported the sinking of a single steamer of 6,000 G.R.T.

The southbound convoy which Group "Borkum" was expecting has not been intercepted so far and is hardly likely to materialize. Since there are only nine submarines in the Group, until air reconnaissance is again available it will be sub-divided into three and assigned new patrols.

VI. Aerial Warfare1. British Isles and Vicinity:

About 100 enemy planes penetrated into Belgium, Holland and Northern France during the day and attacked airfields and construction sites. Thirty-two rocket bombs were dropped on one construction site but missed their target. Anti-aircraft guns and fighters warding off these attacks shot down seven planes.

2. Reich Territory:

During the night a nuisance raid by ten planes was reported from the Rhine-Westphalia industrial region; bombs were dropped in the Essen area.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Our Air Force carried out reconnaissance. At noon the enemy attacked a ball-bearing factory near Turin and did heavy damage. Other attacks in the same area caused damage to industrial plants which will entail considerable losses in aircraft production. Railroad stations and traffic installations were also attacked. Another target was Civitavecchia. Six planes were shot down. At the front enemy fighter-bombers made continuous attacks on motor transport vehicles and lines of communication in the Cassino area.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast enemy reconnaissance planes were spotted during the day. Twelve were in the Dalmatian area and 24 in the Aegean. One was shot down. During the night

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five planes brought supplies to partisans in the Crete - Eastern Greece area and nine to partisans in the Balkan area.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

Reconnaissance in search of the QP-convoy was without success. Visibility was poor and there were breakdowns in the sets.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon a convoy of 25 freighters escorted by a light cruiser and 6 gunboats passed through the Straits of Gibraltar from the Atlantic. On 2 Jan. 1 battleship of the WARSPITE class, 2 cruisers of the AURORA class and 1 cruiser of the CAIRO class were in Gibraltar. At noon on the same day 7 destroyers were on patrol in the Cape Spartel area. On the forenoon of 3 Jan. a convoy of 5 freighters with 5 corvettes and 1 cruiser of the CAIRO class left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean. According to a report from Ceuta, on 3 Jan. a convoy of 17 freighters, apparently carrying troops and escorted by a destroyer and 7 other vessels, put into Gibraltar.

The British freighter KERMA, which left Huelva with a cargo of ore on the evening of 1 Jan., joined a convoy of four freighters coming from the west and making for Gibraltar.

Own Situation:

Four escort vessels accompanied two steamers (5,500 G.R.T.) along the southern French coast. While on passage from Imperia to Marseilles, the steamer CIVIDALE (3,200 G.R.T.), proceeding at a slow speed, was driven by a strong wind into a minefield. She probably struck a mine. There are no details as yet.

At 2130 an enemy submarine submerged off the entrance to Monaco harbor after being fired on by machine-guns.

On 17 Dec. Group West reported that the situation as regards defense vessels on the south coast of France could only be

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described as catastrophic. The measures taken so far did not meet even the most modest demands, so that up to date it had been impossible to carry out proper minesweeping, organize an escort service or take measures against submarines. The Group summarized and supplemented previous proposals. Besides the six naval landing craft already approved for harbor minelaying it requested an extra assignment of fourteen to be fitted up as minelayers which could also be employed as a gun-carrier flotilla for convoy escort purposes. A further 20 naval landing craft, type D, were requested as submarine chasers. Besides carrying adequate anti-submarine gear, these should also be able to serve as gun-carriers. With a monthly output of about five naval landing craft in the south of France area there must be some delay in fulfilling these demands. Group West therefore proposed that some of the naval landing craft now in the area of German Naval Command, Italy should be immediately fitted up as submarine chasers and turned over to the Group. It further proposed that the conversion program for barges should be stopped and, instead, armed fishing vessels should be built at all suitable small shipyards on the south coast; the necessary materials must be supplied ready from Germany. These armed fishing vessels are intended primarily for minesweeping and harbor defense. However, the first to be produced must also be fitted up for use as submarine chasers in case of need. Finally, the Group proposed that the demands made on the shipyards by the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, Mediterranean should be put aside and all conversion work for the Navy given first priority.

On 25 Dec. Group West reported that the loss of submarine chaser UJ "6076" had further aggravated the catastrophic situation as regards forces of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla. There was now only one submarine chaser in the area and she had been non-operational for weeks. The assignment of at least two fully operational submarine chasers from the Italian area is urgently requested.

Naval Staff communicated the following decision to German Naval Command, Italy and Group West:

"There is at present a catastrophic shortage of submarine chasers in the area of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla. Only one submarine chaser is available and immediate measures are required.

For this reason, German Naval Command, Italy will immediately turn over two fully operational submarine chasers from the 22nd Submarine Chaser Flotilla, with their crews, and will report the

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execution of this order, giving the numbers of the vessels, by return. They will temporarily be under the command of the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla. They will be returned to German Naval Command, Italy when the submarine chasers now being converted for the 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla are commissioned, at the latest on 1 March 1944. The 6th Coast Patrol Flotilla will report their return."

The further proposals made by Group West on 17 Dec. are being examined at Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

On the evening of 2 Jan. air reconnaissance over the Gulf of Naples sighted 1 destroyer, 21 landing craft with their escorts (9 going in and 12 leaving) and 6 other vessels whose details were not recognized. On the forenoon of 3 Jan. air reconnaissance sighted nothing. At 0919 on 3 Jan. radio intelligence located a British vessel 5 miles southwest of Nice. Aerial photographs were taken of Bari. Evaluation is not yet to hand.

Own Situation:

Traffic along the west coast has begun again. The 4th Naval Motor Transport Battalion shot down one plane during an enemy air raid on Benedetto at noon on 2 Jan.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Enemy Situation:

South of Split one PT boat and one motor boat were sighted in Stiwina Bay (Island of Vis).

Own Situation:

The order closing the Mezzo Channel is canceled. There is no confirmation of the suspected minelaying by planes.

The steamer MAMELLI sustained no damage during the air raid on 30 Dec. She is still afloat in spite of having struck a mine. It is intended to tow her into Fiume.

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b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

A convoy of 13 freighters and 3 escorts was reported on westerly course 15 miles northeast of Derna.

Own Situation:

On the evening of 2 Jan. minelaying by enemy planes was reported near Chalcis. Vurtzi Strait is closed.

Naval Staff has agreed to the proposal of Group South to transfer vessels of the 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla to the Aegean immediately after their return to the Adriatic. The decision as to whether they are to be employed in the Adriatic or the Aegean is left to the Group.

Group South has pointed out that with the present political attitude of Turkey, any slowing-down in the pace of her armament program is in Germany's interest. For this reason the Ambassador and Naval Attaché, Ankara have already urged submarine operations against the transport of arms from the Egypt - Suez area to Alexandretta. The Group supports this proposal which also offers prospects of success in the war against merchant shipping.

(See teletype 2115.)

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Radio intelligence detected two submarines, one of them in the region of Cape Sarish.

Own Situation:

Owing to weather conditions there were no convoys and no PT boat operations during the night of 2 Jan. The operation by the 1st PT Boat Flotilla in the Tuapse area planned for 3 Jan. was postponed. During the night of 2 Jan. three naval landing craft from Kamysh Burun were sent out to patrol the Kerch Strait.

At 1410 25 enemy planes attacked Ak Mechet with about 100 bombs. One lighter was destroyed. Two planes were shot down by Rumanian fighters.

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A crane weighing 40 tons was transferred from Cherson to Odessa.

Motor minesweeper R "208" was salvaged and docked in Sevastopol.
In the afternoon Crimean convoy traffic was resumed.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

According to a Swedish press report from Moscow, Stalin has the official title of Grand-Marshal of the U.S.S.R. as from 1 Jan. 1944.

Chief, Naval Staff returned from the Fuehrer Headquarters.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Report by Quartermaster General:

a. Commander in Chief, Navy has been urged to designate the torpedo boats by names instead of numbers. This measure would entail considerable extra work which, under the present strained circumstances, would more than counterbalance the psychological value of giving them names. In addition the shipyards number all vessels in any case.

Commander in Chief, Navy thinks that names have more life than numbers, but has given orders that the matter be allowed to rest for the present.

b. The fifth and sixth of the naval landing craft (artillery) intended for the Black Sea are ready in Linz. It is proving difficult to carry out the order to equip them with 10.5 cm. guns.

Commander in Chief, Navy referred to the Fuehrer's wish and pointed out that he is not satisfied with 8.8 cm. guns. If it should be impossible to change the guns then new vessels will have to be built. The delay must be accepted.

Quartermaster General was ordered to investigate what length of time would be required for installing the heavier guns.

II. Vice-Admiral Weichold reported that Admiral Ferrini intends to appoint Captain Grossi as Commander, Italian Submarines. He suggested that we take this opportunity to explain to Ferrini that he cannot expect that the Italian submarine arm will be re-established. Ferrini is expected to visit Commander in Chief,

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Navy at the end of January.

Besides Borghese and Grossi and Lieutenant Commander Becker, Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy will also be present.

Commander in Chief, Navy raised the point that, provided there are no untoward events, one or other of the transport submarines might be later handed over to Grossi for manning. No decision will be made until Ferrini's visit.

III. Group West raised the question of changes in design and equipment of the PT boat (artillery).

In this connection Commander in Chief, Navy brought up the question of the form of tactics to be used in future PT boat operations. There can be no doubt that 3 cm. guns will be inadequate, although Commander, PT Boats with an eye on the rate of fire would prefer not to exceed this caliber. Group West wishes to use PT boats as escorts. The present types can carry only one 3 cm. gun forward. The aim should be to have 5 cm. or 5.5 cm. guns fixed in such a manner that some of them can be replaced by spare torpedoes, if these are more useful for the operation.

Naval Ordnance Division, its Artillery Branch and Naval (Ship) Construction Division are to investigate this question from the angle of the tactical conditions under which PT boats carry out their operations.

Chief, Naval Ordnance Division reported that a general demand for changes in the design of PT boats had been sent to the Shipbuilding Commission.

Commander in Chief, Navy also ordered an investigation on whether such devices as "Greek fire" can be used with modern weapons.

IV. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division brought up fresh reports of internal political tension in Bulgaria. He also described the dilemma in which de Valera was placed when the Irish steamer KERLOGUE put into Queenstown and landed the 164 German survivors from the Biscay engagement of 28 Dec. 1943.

V. Chief, Auxiliary Cruiser Section, Operations Division, using an action diagram, surveyed the course of the engagement in the Bay of Biscay on 28 Dec. 1943. There were no fresh points.

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Chief, Naval Staff stated that he was not satisfied with the results achieved by the guns and torpedoes.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

VI. Chief, Operations Branch reported upon the proposal made by Operations Division regarding transfer of torpedo boats T "28" and T "29" to the west area, as outlined in the conference with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff on 3 Jan.

Chief, Naval Staff approved the following instructions to Group West, Group North/Fleet with copy to Commander, Destroyers:

"1. T "28" and T "29" to be transferred to the west area.

2. In view of the urgency of operations to bring in blockade-runners and the weakening which has occurred in the flotillas in the west area, this reduction of our forces in Southern Norway must be accepted.

3. Time: T "28" to be withdrawn from the Skagerrak after the arrival of the next destroyer scheduled for this area (probably 8 Jan.). The two torpedo boats are to be transferred to the west as soon as the moon allows. Aim to have them arrive in good time to bring in the next blockade-runners (23 Jan.).

4. On arrival in the west area, the boats are to be allocated to the 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla, also for administrative purposes.

VII. Chief, Operations Division reported on the progress of the negotiations between Germany and Eire regarding the return of the survivors of the Biscay action. The outlook is not very promising. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII. Further investigations are being made to see whether there is some other way of taking them off. The possibilities are as follows: With the help of agents they might be taken off by submarines - this measure would endanger the submarines. We might make use of the steamers taking coal between Ireland and Spain but the situation in Spain and the general attitude of that country makes this a doubtful step. We might take them off by plane but in that case we could take only a limited number of selected men.

VIII. Chief, Naval Staff reported on the result of his conferences at the Fuehrer Headquarters on 1, 2 and 3 Jan.

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For minutes of his statements as per 1/Skl -44 Gkdos. Chefs, see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VII. (Reference number omitted in German text, Tr.N.) The discussion centered on three points:

- a. The SCHARNHORST affair;
- b. The Baltic Sea problem raised by the withdrawal of the Army front;
- c. The problem of the allocation of high frequency wave-lengths.

Further to this last item, Chief, Naval Staff mentioned to Chief, Naval Ordnance Division that he hopes to secure good cooperation from Kuepfmueller and Lueschen. At all events the priority claims of the Four Year Plan and the Air Force have now been set aside.

IX. With regard to the SCHARNHORST affair, Chief, Naval Staff reproached himself for not having recalled Admiral Kummetz from leave, as mentioned in the discussion on 2 Dec. It was not that he did not trust Rear Admiral Bey to carry out the expected engagement but he knew Admiral Kummetz well and had had an exhaustive discussion with him on the scope and the possible ways of carrying out the operation. Hence had Admiral Kummetz been in command, Chief, Naval Staff would have been quite sure that the assignment had been vigorously tackled and every possibility afforded by the situation exploited. Possibly the previous instructions given to him about breaking-off the operation led Rear Admiral Bey to wonder whether the decision to carry on or not actually did lie solely with the Commanding Admiral at sea. Such instructions would not have been necessary with Admiral Kummetz. We can never know exactly what considerations influenced the judgment of the Commanding Admiral of the Task Force. Possibly, after he had reported his misgivings about the weather and still Group North and Naval Staff gave no concrete orders either to carry on or to retire, he misinterpreted their reticence as an indication that he must not break off the sortie. Possibly it was his doubts about the suitability of the weather which persuaded the Commanding Admiral, Task Force to separate the destroyers from the SCHARNHORST. There would have been none of these unresolved questions had Admiral Kummetz been in command. Chief, Naval Staff would merely have described the assignment and knowing that Admiral Kummetz would act exactly as he himself, would not have said anything on its execution. The proposal

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from Group North that if necessary the SCHARNHORST should operate alone without the destroyers, met with instinctive opposition from Chief, Naval Staff. He subsequently agreed because he did not feel justified in leaving any chance of success unexploited and under certain circumstances the battleship on her own might have had this chance. Later events proved that it was a mistake to have the ship fight all alone in the darkness.

Chief, Naval Staff went on to discuss another factor which weighed heavily against us on that fatal day in the Barents Sea and also during the action in the Bay of Biscay. This was that the crews were not adequately trained and lacked experience at sea. Here the English, who are so familiar with the sea, possess an enormous advantage over us. We place superhuman demands on the Commanding Admiral and his crews when suddenly we ask them to carry out assignments under the most difficult operational conditions imaginable before they have had sufficient training and experience at sea. The conscious feeling of inferiority, both as regards numbers and equipment, in itself represents a handicap that must not be underestimated. Even though we actually were superior or at any rate equal to the enemy in strength, both the cruiser engagement of the SCHARNHORST and in particular the action in the Bay of Biscay were disappointments. The similar experience on both occasions indicates that we must devise training to counteract this tendency to rate the enemy higher than the facts warrant.

All these experiences must be minutely studied so that we can draw the lessons for the future. Without prejudice to the final assessment of the destroyer engagement of 28 Dec. in the Bay of Biscay to be submitted by Naval Group West, Naval Staff will order Fleet Command to conduct a special investigation of certain points, draw their conclusions and make the appropriate suggestions. The following points are to be investigated:

1. In how far does bad weather restrict torpedo boats and destroyers in their use of armament? At what degree of seaway do the restrictions become operative?

2. To what extent does bad weather (overflowing sea) impair the efficiency of the aiming gear and fire control installations? Suggestion for overcoming this.

3. Tactical cooperation between destroyers and torpedo boats - suggestions about possibilities and necessary training to be put forward.

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Special Items

I. After considering the view submitted by Quartermaster Division, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has issued a supplement to its directive of 28 Dec. regarding the ban on the withdrawal of personnel and material from the areas of Commanding General, Armed Forces, West and Commanding General, Armed Forces, Denmark. The supplement runs as follows:

"1. The Fuehrer's directive does not apply to exchanges in personnel which aim at the transfer of young men to the submarine arm.

2. Naval Staff has still complete freedom with regard to the disposition of forces. The Fuehrer's decision must be obtained regarding combat formations such as PT boats, torpedo boats and destroyers.

3. The comb-out according to the Fuehrer's directive of 27 Nov. 1943 must naturally also be carried out in the west area and Denmark, as its very purpose is to secure a strengthening of the combat and defensive forces in the threatened areas.

4. Personnel becoming available after the comb-out and economy measures are if possible to be used to strengthen our defensive readiness in the western and northern areas.

Hence substantial withdrawals of troops which weaken our general defensive strength require the Fuehrer's consent."

II. The directive issued by Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch under date 18 Dec. regarding organization of naval warfare (see War Diary 15 Dec.) provides that Naval Staff will give out a codeword to indicate that in case of attack Group North/Fleet is to assume supreme command. Operations Division has fixed the codeword as "Piccolomini" with date and time appended.

Situation 4 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

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2. Own Situation:

The WESERLAND instructed by radiogram 0045:

"First of all move away into grid squares BD, GE, GN, GO and area immediately south. Further orders will follow."

Radiogram 0046 pointed out to all blockade-runners that although the transmission of three radiograms is an unusual procedure, in the circumstances the WESERLAND's action was correct and necessary, as it enabled us to warn the other vessels. Unfortunately we were unable to give any help.

Following instructions sent to the BURGENLAND and the RIO GRANDE:

"1. The date of passing "Vera" will be timed to fit in with the interval between the UG and GU convoys. It is not necessary to keep exactly to point "Vera".

2. "Strandpromenade" (Tr.N.: route) leads from "Vera" via CC 62, BD 78, BD 83 to point "Lise".

Radiogram 0047 informed all blockade-runners that the U.S. - Gibraltar convoys are designated by the abbreviation UG and those in the opposite direction by GU. The addition of "S" behind the abbreviation means "slow", and the addition of "F" means "fast". These convoys sail from 63° W to Gibraltar keeping a course between 32° and 36° N.

According to dead reckoning, on 16 Jan. UGS 30 will be in DD 13 heading east, day's run 204 miles. On 16 Jan. GUS 26 will be in DE 32 heading west, day's run 204 miles.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that the RIO GRANDE and BURGENLAND are to be escorted into the Bay of Biscay together during the January new moon. There will be no interval between them. The WESERLAND will be brought back via the Denmark Strait. Group West was instructed to this effect and informed that the details will be communicated on 10 Jan. by Chief, Auxiliary Cruiser Section in person. He will also bring the decision on plans for sailings. At present these are still under discussion.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Very active air reconnaissance was observed over the outer Bay of Biscay up to about 10° W. The number of planes

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spotted was not reported. Four British vessels were located in the rendezvous area between 1211 and 2325.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

According to a report from the 2nd Submarine Flotilla, U "618" arrived with 4 petty officers and 17 men rescued from destroyer Z "27" on 30 Dec. They stated that a great many of the crew from this destroyer were picked up by an Irish steamer. They did not know anything definite about what happened to the officers. The Flotilla Commander and the destroyer's Commander were last seen on board at the turret gun. British cruisers were said to have fired on drifting life-boats. (See Teletype 1705.)

During the day 3 Jan. till 2000 on 4 Jan. 650 tons of rubber were unloaded from the OSORNO; to date a total of 2,910 tons rubber, 25 tons of coconut oil and altogether 425 tons of tin have been discharged.

At 0940 3 boats of the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla arrived at Brest from Cherbourg. One ELM/J mine was swept off the Gironde.

Channel Coast:

Patrol vessels were not sent out owing to rough sea. There was no movement of convoys. Minesweeping was interrupted on account of the weather.

While the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla was on passage from Cherbourg to Brest a mine detonation occurred off Cherbourg 300 meters away from the formation. It was probably an ELM/A mine.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Bad weather prevented escort and minesweeping. Patrol vessel "1411" ran aground while on passage from Rotterdam to Flushing. Anti-aircraft vessel "23" ran aground while on passage from the Weser to the Elbe. Both vessels are in danger of capsizing. Help is on the way.

It was reported from the area of Coastal Defense Commander,

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Heligoland Bight that 300 - 400 enemy planes were flying over Kiel. Naval anti-aircraft guns on Heligoland shot down two planes, the guns on Sylt shot down one. In addition following a 30.5 cm. salvo from Heligoland, four more planes flying at a height of 7,000 m., range 200 km., were clearly shot down.

2. Norway, Northern Waters

Enemy Situation:

During the forenoon lively air activity was observed over the North Sea in the direction of the Norwegian coast and Central North Sea - Skagerrak. Air activity later in the day was moderate. Air reconnaissance over the Shetlands did not observe any shipping concentrations or landing craft of any kind. Although the planes flew very low, there was no sign of activity by ground defenses.

Own Situation:

On 4 Jan. an enemy submarine made an unsuccessful attack on our northbound convoy off Folda-Fjord and on patrol vessel V "5717" off Kristiansund North. At noon on the same day a plane approached a southbound convoy off Askevoldt but turned off after being fired on.

Thirty-seven vessels were escorted north and thirty-two south. 15 vessels were left lying in harbor awaiting escorts.

As from 2000 submarine group "Isegrimm" will proceed from patrol line AB 7321 - 8472 to the Bear Island passage. Course will be 68°, speed 10 knots.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

A large-sized barge and a special motor vessel were observed stuck in the ice in the northern sea channel. Our coastal batteries opened fire and fourteen hits were observed on the motor vessel. Counter fire from the enemy and continual nuisance shelling of our coastal strip were without effect.

2. Own Situation:

Between 1103 and 2056 the port of Kiel came under attack from 300 to 400 enemy planes which approached in several

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formations and were apparently escorted by fighters throughout the flight. The attack was concentrated on the west bank of the town area. The Naval Clothing Depot, Local Pay Office, Inspectorate of Naval Training, Inspectorate of Torpedoes, Naval Laundry and Local Administration Office were hit, but the shipyards were only slightly damaged. Considerable damage was caused in the city. For particulars see Daily Situation, Aerial Warfare. According to reports to date, naval anti-aircraft guns shot down 12 four-engined planes. Seven planes were shot down by 50 of our fighters in the Kiel area. Probably more planes were shot down in the western part of the Reich. The enemy admits 18 planes lost.

Nothing to report from the other parts of the Baltic Sea area.

V. Merchant Shipping

Operations Division informed Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) and Operations Staff, Supply and Transportation Office of the Armed Forces Overseas that up to 31 Dec. 1943 24 vessels totaling 105,078 G.R.T. were transferred from Genoa to Southern France without loss.

VI. Submarine Warfare

In the evening three submarines reported enemy air attacks in BF 5493, 4824 and 5731. Subsequently at 2038 U "629" reported that she was unable to submerge. Two minesweepers are to go out to pick her up.

The arrival of submarine U "618" with survivors from destroyer Z "27" has already been reported.

Commanding Admiral, Submarines has issued the following order to all his boats:

a. Night attacks by anti-submarine planes are becoming more frequent. Therefore during good flying weather and clear visibility, boats in the Bay of Biscay which carry a small 3.7 cm. gun are to charge their batteries by day. In case of air attack, the submarine must drive off the plane a sufficient distance and then dive at the first favorable opportunity.

b. In the Bay of Biscay the number of attacks by enemy planes at night has visibly increased within the last few days. The attacks usually take place in the first and last hours of darkness, when most boats charge their batteries. In order to

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avoid further attacks the boats should charge their batteries at other times, preferably when there is no moon.

VII. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

There was very brisk enemy air activity during the day, both by single planes and strong formations flying over Holland, Belgium and Northern France. As the attacks were slight and there was little machine-gun fire, the operations seem to have been intended as a diversion for the flights into Reich territory.

In Western France attacks were carried out on anti-aircraft positions and an advanced army defense line, also on a construction site of the Todt Organization.

During the night of 4 Jan. thirty-six of our planes were sent out on a nuisance raid on London.

2. Reich Territory:

In the forenoon a strong bomber formation with fighter escort attacked Munster and the Rhineland. The attack on Kiel has already been reported. For details see Daily Situation. In the evening the enemy carried out minor nuisance raids over the area Hanover - Wismar - Rostock, the industrial region of Rhine-Westphalia and the Wittenberg-Berlin area. Some bombs were dropped.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

The photographic reconnaissance of Bari carried out on 3 Jan. cannot be evaluated owing to cloud. On the Italian front the enemy sent out 150 ground attack planes and 75 fighters against our motor transport columns.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast a formation of 40 to 50 planes attacked Sofia and Dubvico - south of Sofia - at 2020. For details see Daily Situation.

There are no reports from the Eastern Mediterranean owing to a breakdown in the telephone line.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

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VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 1330 on 3 Jan. 15 freighters, probably part of a convoy, arrived in Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

Own Situation:

The steamer CIVIDALE must be presumed lost. Air reconnaissance was without result. Three escort operations bringing in four steamers totaling 14,438 G.R.T. were carried out off the south coast of France.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, at 1950 on 3 Jan. there were two destroyers 30 miles northeast of Manfredonia (Adriatic). During the night of 3 Jan. they shelled Pesaro, southeast of Rimini, without result.

Own Situation:

At 1700 the minelayer DWARSLAEUFER and two motor minesweepers left Port Ferrajo for minelaying operation "Salm" in the Orbetello region. The steamer SPHINX (11,373 G.R.T.) caught fire in Genoa and is probably a total loss. The cause is being investigated.

Convoy traffic on the west coast of Italy was hindered by stormy weather.

Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean has fixed the operational area for U "380" as west of longitude of CH 8345, for U "616" east of it.

German Naval Command, Italy sent in a report on the conference held with the Under Secretary of the Italian Navy, Admiral Ferrini, on 1 Jan. Outstanding matters were discussed. Ferrini had had a previous interview with the Duce and a discussion with a general representing him. At the conference he put forward as an important Italian demand the establishment of complete Italian units, wearing Italian uniform and serving under the Italian flag.

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Ferrini plans to take immediate steps to collect volunteers to build up such a formation and thus counteract the enemy propaganda and uncertainty rife in the country. He intends to build up a naval infantry corps of 80,000 volunteers by the spring. Besides this corps, volunteers are now being quickly got together for service afloat, for naval artillery battalions and for guard duties ashore. In addition Captain Grossi is to enlist 4,000 volunteers from internment camps in Germany. Ferrini will forward his proposed agenda for discussion with Commander in Chief, Navy as soon as possible.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Our naval forces are not engaged in any operations at present. Supply ships are being made ready and overhauled in preparation for a further mopping-up of the islands. Shortage of troops has compelled the Army to withdraw its strong point on the island of Pag.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 1430 an enemy submarine was sighted submerging off the Turkish coast opposite the island of Kos. On 3 Jan. a vessel in the Gulf of Mirabella belonging to the Coastal Defense Flotilla, Crete was slightly damaged by machine-gun fire from two enemy planes. On 2 Jan. two auxiliary sailing vessels and one ship's boat were sunk in Monemcasia harbor when four enemy planes carried out a low-level attack with bombs and machine-guns.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, three PT boats and two submarines were at sea.

Own Situation:

Our patrol line had no contact with the enemy during the night of 3 Jan. Three naval landing craft will again take up position in the Strait of Kerch on the night of 4 Jan.

Submarine U "23" is on her return passage from the operational area to Constantza.

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Enemy planes attacked Ochakov and Feodosiya. In Feodosiya only slight damage was caused in the dockyard area.

Minesweeping off Sevastopol was hindered by the weather.

Convoy traffic and submarine chase proceeded without incident.

Group South reported its plans to lay barrages to provide additional protection for Odessa harbor and the mouth of the Sulina River. As long as the Crimea is in German hands, Naval Staff does not see any immediate danger of Russian light forces penetrating to Odessa or the mouth of the Sulina. Hence there is no immediate need for minelaying. Group South was informed to this effect and instructed to investigate whether mines can be obtained from Rumanian stocks, as UMB mines are not available at present. Anti-sweeping devices can be sent from Germany. If it so wishes, the Group can send in a fresh request in March, when we should have a clearer view of the position as regards the defense of the western area - now a priority matter - including minelaying required in the Gulf of Finland and the Skagerrak. By then we should also be able to see how events in the Black Sea are shaping.

IX. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

With the Russian Army approaching the former Russo-Polish frontier the Polish exile Government is making strenuous efforts to reach some clear understanding on their future eastern boundary. The British press is already preparing the Poles by pointing out that some sacrifice to Russia is inevitable.

Reuter denies reports circulating abroad to the effect that Portugal has granted the British government concessions on Madeira, similar to those already granted on the Azores. These rumors, which were already circulating at the end of December, have also been denied by the German Embassy in Lisbon. At all events the report that Allied forces had occupied the island has proved false.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Staff instructed Chief, Naval Communications Division to make every effort to have a submarine try out an ultra-short (centimeter) wave set in the very near future.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. An informative report dated 29 Dec. was received from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy). Points covered were as follows:

1. Withdrawal of the left flank of our eastern front:

No decision has yet been reached. The plans provide that the new front-line will run from Narva to Lake Peipus, taking in the Kurgalo Peninsula.

2. Turkish attitude:

The German Foreign Office has learnt from a highly confidential source that the British have approached the Turks with a proposal for joint military action against Germany. This provides that Allied air bases in Turkey are to be completed by 1 Feb., at the latest by 15 Feb. After the fall of Rome, expected in January, three groups of medium bombers are to be withdrawn from Italy to Cyrenaica. They are to hinder our

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traffic in the Aegean and camouflage the movement of British air formations in to Turkey.

On 15 Feb. Turkey is to state whether she will permit entry of twenty wings of R.A.F. planes. Should Turkey refuse, all supplies of armaments to her will cease and the policy of cooperation between the Allies and Turkey will be declared a failure. If Turkey agrees, the Allies will immediately start on an operation, presumably against Crete or Rhodes or other islands in the Aegean, using Turkish air bases. As soon as Izmir (Smyrna) is opened, the Turkish Army will receive its armaments by sea. Six to eight submarines are to be sent through the Dardanelles against the Crimea and the Rumanian coast. Probably there are plans for a later operation in the direction of Salonika.

3. Further Allied plans:

At present it is most important for us to have a clear picture of what the enemy is planning. We have to allow for skillful propaganda and other deceptive measures by the enemy. We can still expect an enemy landing operation in the west area, i.e. in the Channel, although the enemy may try to deceive us here too. Forcing a way through Italy is considered unlikely, as the operation would be too long and costly. The Balkans are a great uncertainty. To assist us to gain a clear picture all reports on the enemy, especially those dealing with the movement of troops, distribution of forces and concentration of shipping, must be very carefully examined, evaluated and regularly compiled. Beginning 1 Jan., Chief, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff wishes to see the information gained on these points every ten days, if possible in map form.

Instructions to this effect were issued to Naval Intelligence Division.

III. Army Situation

On the Crimean front our commanders have been expecting a strong enemy attack near Kerch for the last five days. In the southern part of the eastern front the day passed comparatively well. In the 7th Corps area, also in the Mogilev region, the enemy made a surprise attack and succeeded in breaking through and penetrating our front. The situation in the Vitebsk area has quietened down.

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Special Items

I. As already announced, Chief, Air Force General Staff has requested Commander in Chief, Navy to place three submarines at the permanent disposal of the Air Force for meteorological reconnaissance and to use them exclusively for this purpose. Copy of the letter as per 1/Skl 39/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. V. Further measures are in the hands of Submarine Division.

II. On 2 Jan. Operations Division requested Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff not to use hypothetical situations as the basis for the projected war game between the Air Force and the Navy. It would be more practical to hold a joint working conference to discuss the acute problems of cooperation as illustrated by past operations and the true picture of the situation today. In view of recent events Naval Staff especially wants to examine cooperation between Air Commander, Atlantic Coast or the 3rd Air Force and Group West and work out a joint plan for future occasions. Naval Staff has suggested that the conference should meet at the headquarters of Commander, Submarines at Angers and that besides the representatives of the 3rd Air Force and Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, the commanders of the formations who took part in the operations and possibly also the commanders of long-range reconnaissance units should be present.

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has requested the 3rd Air Force Command to consider the wishes of the Naval Staff when planning the joint conference.

Naval Staff, Operations Division has informed Group West, Submarine Division and Commander, Submarines, West accordingly.

According to an intelligence report received by the Spanish General Staff from a British source, 15 Jan. has been fixed as the final date for enemy preparations for invasion in the Mediterranean area. There are also plans for operations in the Balkans.

Situation 5 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1901 Pernambuco repeated for all U.S. warships the

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following radiogram sent by the Commander of the Air Force at Recife to several stations:

"If ship cannot give precise recognition signals, bomb her."

At 2132 Pernambuco repeated to Natal from an unknown air station:

".....ner sinking, recall plane."

2. Own Situation:

At 2017 the following short signal from the BURGENLAND was intercepted: "Am being attacked by several heavy vessels. My approximate position is 7° S, 26° W. Must scuttle ship, secret papers destroyed."

The second of the five blockade-runners returning home has thus been lost. As enemy warships were involved in the action, we can presume that the crew were rescued.

Chief, Naval Staff awarded twelve Iron Crosses 1st class and 83 Iron Crosses 2nd class to the crew of the OSORNO. As the bringing-in of the OSORNO was an important operation, he ordered that a request be submitted for the award of the Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross to Captain Hellmann of this ship. Copy of request 1/Skl 332/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

This request has been approved. Commanding Admiral, Group West is to present the awards as soon as possible.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Thirty-nine planes and 1 sea rescue plane were spotted over the Bay of Biscay.

One British vessel was located at 1249 in BE 3410 and one at 1700 in DJ 1910.

At 0915 our air reconnaissance reported a stationary merchant ship (1,000 G.R.T.) of unknown nationality 120 miles southsouthwest of Brest.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

On the west coast of France three convoys, totaling

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7,550 G.R.T. and including one ore steamer, were escorted from Royan to Bilbao.

On 4 Jan. 22 submarines were escorted out and one in. On 5 Jan. one submarine was escorted in.

At 1445 on 5 Jan. the damaged submarine U "629" was picked up by our own defense forces. One mine was swept off Brest.

Special Items

In connection with the action report of Z "23" of 27 to 29 Dec. the 8th Destroyer Flotilla reported:

It has been ascertained that the long wave (minimum power) signal about enemy aircraft carriers quoted under entry 1730 on page 5 - 6 was wrongly decoded by destroyer Z "23" and the mistake not discovered until later on.

When compiling his report the Commander of Z "23" still had no complete picture of the whole situation, hence the concluding paragraph on page 8 is incomplete and to some extent incorrect. It reads:

"While fully acknowledging the work done by the northern group, it must be stated that the southern group, which attacked with torpedoes during the half-hour it was under covering fire from the GLASGOW, was of real assistance in forcing the cruisers to sheer off and thus allow the German vessels to break through to the east."

The action report of Z "23" referred to has not yet been received here.

Channel Coast:

There was no patrol or escort service owing to rough sea and bright moonlight.

The 6th PT Boat Flotilla carried out alarm exercises and arrived in Ijmuiden according to plan. During the night of 5 Jan. seven boats of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla put to sea for a torpedo operation against an eastbound convoy. As yet we have no reports.

Naval anti-aircraft guns shot down one enemy plane off Cherbourg.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

On 5 Jan. naval anti-aircraft guns shot down two planes flying over the Heligoland Bight. Patrol vessel "1401" and anti-aircraft vessel "23" were refloated. Convoy 475 Elbe-Hook and convoy 1265 Hook-Elbe sailed according to plan.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Only seven planes were intercepted over the North Sea. Their objective was not clear. At 1550 a very urgent radiogram from Polyarnoye to all naval forces was intercepted. At 1610 it was repeated by Archangel also for Belushya.

The QP-convoy was not intercepted again.

Own Situation:

Submarines were withdrawn into the Bear Island passage. Group "Eisenbart" was dispersed.

Thirty-five vessels were escorted north and thirty-five south. Twenty vessels were left lying in harbor awaiting escorts. At 2400 on 3 Jan. the steamer MARCOBRUNNER (8,130 G.R.T.) ran aground in Varanger Fjord. The following were reported: at noon on 4 Jan. four enemy planes in the Bergen area, in the afternoon one enemy plane in the Egersund area, in the night of 4 Jan. one enemy plane south of Egersund.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Between 1039 and 1224 Kiel was heavily attacked by at least 580 planes. The attack was concentrated on the whole town area on the western side of the bay. The Germania shipyard was heavily damaged. Minor damage was reported in the Deutsche Werke and the naval arsenal. For short action report of Coastal Defense Commander, West see teletype 2245; for further details

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see Daily Situation.

On 4 Jan. U "676" of the 26th Submarine Flotilla was slightly damaged in a collision with a Norwegian steamer in the entrance to Pillau harbor.

On 3 Jan. patrol vessel "303" ran aground off Reval during a snow storm. In Kronstadt Bay Leningrad was under harassing fire from our Army batteries; the enemy retaliated with counterfire.

Group North/Fleet sent Operations Division copy of the directive for transfer of Commander, 6th Destroyer Flotilla with Z "39" and Z "28" from Sevastopol to Kristiansand South on 7 Jan.

For copy see teletype 1834.

V. Submarine Warfare

Submarine U "415" reported an enemy air attack in BF 5469 at 2304. She was damaged and requested assistance by naval forces. Two minesweepers were sent out on the approach route to meet her.

Further air attacks during the same night were reported by submarine U "541" from BF 7357 and by submarine U "107" from BE 5457.

U "667" reported seven enemy air attacks on 1 Jan.

Group "Borkum" has plans for an operation against a northbound Gibraltar convoy on 7 or 8 Jan.

On 6 Jan. two Ju 290's were sent out on reconnaissance in the area CF 50 and 30. In the meantime it was learnt that the convoy seemed to have left Gibraltar two days earlier than expected. The air reconnaissance was therefore too late.

There were no reports of successes from the Atlantic or the Indian Ocean.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

A great number of planes penetrated into the occupied west area during the day. In addition to many single planes

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15 formation flights were reported. Attacks were carried out on construction sites in Belgium and Northern France and on the Cotentin peninsula. A strong formation of four-engined bombers with fighter escort attacked the airfield of Merignac, and another similar formation the Air Force station at Tours. The 3rd Air Force reported that in warding off these attacks our fighters shot down 26 enemy planes; anti-aircraft artillery brought down five more. Two of our fighters were lost.

During the night of 5 Jan. only seven planes were reported flying into Belgium and Northern France; single planes flew into Western France but did not attack.

2. Reich Territory:

In the forenoon the town of Kiel was heavily attacked by 580 bombers with fighter escort. They went in to the attack in nine waves, four of which were clearly engaged on carpet bombing. The enemy fighter escort was definitely recognized in the Kiel area. There are as yet no reports from the Air Force on planes shot down.

At the same time 100 planes under fighter escort attacked Duesseldorf - Neuss.

A few isolated planes came in via Flensburg and penetrated as far as the Stettin Haff. In the evening 35 planes were reported over the western part of the Reich. A few bombs were dropped on Essen, Duesseldorf, Crefeld and other places. Stettin was heavily attacked in the early morning of 6 Jan. A few planes flew over Berlin. Industrial targets in Stettin also suffered heavy damage. The anti-aircraft cruiser UNDINE suffered casualties. The protected objects "Carlshagen" and "Pelitz" were not hit. The Naval Supply Office and a naval armament depot were damaged. For further details see Daily Situation. A single plane penetrated from the Sarajevo area via Breslau as far as Frankfurt on the Oder, and another coming from the same area penetrated as far as Linz and Klagenfurt. They flew out via Fiume.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Nothing to report from the 2nd Air Force area. In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast the enemy carried out armed reconnaissance in the region of Cattaro. Fourteen reconnaissance planes were spotted in the Aegean. In the evening between ten and twelve planes attacked the town and harbor of Rhodes.

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4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group East:

Enemy Situation:

At 1820 3 battleships, 5 destroyers and 1 cruiser of the AURORA class were sighted coming from the Atlantic and proceeding towards the Straits of Gibraltar.

This significant report is being checked. It is important to discover the whereabouts of the ships and their nationality, as this information may yield some clue to the enemy's plans.

In the afternoon a cruiser of the SYDNEY class together with another cruiser, which was flying the flag of a Rear Admiral, left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean.

According to an intelligence report, a convoy which is to take the WARSPITE and other damaged vessels to the U.S.A. began to assemble in Gibraltar during the night of 4 Jan.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At 0900 two vessels, thought to be destroyers, were sighted on course 30° 50 miles northnortheast of Palermo.

According to radio intelligence, at 2300 the radio station at Taranto asked an unknown station Vampa to report news of the Italian torpedo boat ALISEO. The ALISEO, under the command of Lt. Cdr. de Cossato, holder of the Knight's Cross, slipped out from German-controlled territory some time ago and went over to the enemy.

Own Situation:

The minelayer DWARSLAEUFFER was attacked six times

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by enemy planes northwest of Civitavecchia. One plane was shot down.

Minelaying operation "Salm" was carried out.

In the night of 3 Jan. one freight barge and one naval landing craft ran aground off Civitavecchia.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Following the evacuation of our troops, the island of Pag was again occupied by Tito's men.

On 30 Dec. the minelayer PASMAR was overdue on her passage from Zara to Pola. On 4 Jan. the steamer MAMELLI arrived in Trieste under her own power.

On the evening of 26 Dec. battery "Traste" of the 612th Naval Artillery Battalion was attacked by Tito's troops. The attack was repulsed.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

It is now reported that at 2300 on 29 Dec. four British PT boats checked and then released an auxiliary sailing vessel five miles northwest of Simi. On 30 Dec. a damaged auxiliary sailing vessel was plundered by partisans on the west coast of Hydra (40 miles southsouthwest of Piraeus).

At 1515 on 5 Jan. a submarine was sighted opposite Kos.

Own Situation:

PT boat S "601" is proceeding from Milos to Piraeus and will later move into the Adriatic Sea.

Two mines were swept in the Burzi Strait on 4 Jan. and two more on 5 Jan.

Quartermaster Division reported that no personnel are available for manning new batteries intended to reinforce our anti-aircraft

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defenses in the Dodecanese area. Quartermaster Division does not consider it practicable to withdraw personnel from other batteries. See also War Diary 30 Dec.

On 8 Dec. Admiral, Aegean sent in a proposal for the formation of a new naval anti-aircraft battalion for Stampalia. General Naval Administration Bureau, Recruitment Division informed Operations Division that this could only be done by using personnel made available by economies in Group South, or, with the approval of Quartermaster Division, by bringing up personnel made available by economies in Naval Commands, Baltic and North.

In the latter case Recruitment Division reserves the right to a final decision, as the disposal of the available personnel must depend on the allocation of recruits.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, 2 PT boats, 1 motor gunboat and 3 to 4 submarines were at sea off the Caucasian coast.

According to an intelligence report of 31 Dec., vessels of the Black Sea Fleet are being assembled in Anapa, Novorossisk, Kabardinka and Gelendzhik. At the same time the Black Sea Fleet and the Air Force have been ordered to support the Red Army in this area by attacks on Odessa and Sevastopol.

Operations Division decided to treat this report with reserve and passed it to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) with the comment that our PT boats reported Anapa harbor empty on the night of 29 Dec. There has been no particular reconnaissance of these ports since 31 Dec.

Own Situation:

At 2100 submarine decoy vessel "19" fired on a surfaced enemy submarine 20 miles west of Eupatoria and continued the chase after the enemy had submerged. During an enemy air raid on Ochakov harbor direct hits on the quay were reported. Two fishing vessels were damaged and there were slight casualties.

Naval anti-aircraft guns shot down a Russian plane over Ak Mechet on the forenoon of 5 Jan.

The 40-ton crane from Nikolayev was towed into Odessa by naval

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artillery lighter MAL "4". During the transfer the crane was slightly damaged south of Ochakov Point, presumably by an exploding mine.

Planes were seen to be dropping mines in the mouth of the River Bug on the evening of 4 Jan.

The tanker BACCHUS passed Istanbul on her way towards the Sea of Marmara. Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

On the occasion of the crossing of the former Russo-Polish boundary by Soviet troops, the Polish exile government has issued a statement that it expects the U.S.S.R. to take care to respect the rights and interests of the Polish Republic. The Polish Government has instructed the underground movement in Poland to continue and increase its resistance to the Germans, but to avoid any conflict with the advancing Russian Army.

British and American press reports reveal that diplomatic quarters are making strenuous efforts to get the Polish situation, which is especially difficult for the British, on a more satisfactory footing. As a first step they are attempting to restore diplomatic relations between Russia and the Polish exile Government.

The Polish question is the first practical test of the decisions reached in Moscow. It will be interesting to observe how far the British and Americans will succeed in their dilemma of maintaining face without too noticeably impairing their good relations with Moscow.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that a renewed request should be sent to Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division asking them to make every effort to watch the shipping traffic through the Suez Canal. If necessary Naval Staff can arrange to land agents by submarine.

II. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for the Ordnance Departments to begin immediately with the development of a mine which responds to suitable targets in the same way as the warhead of the "Zaunkoenig" torpedo. This problem must be thoroughly investigated without delay. If necessary, an estimate of the number of technicians, quantity of material required, etc. should be submitted.

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported on:

a. The note sent by the Polish exile Government when the Red Army crossed the former Russo-Polish frontier. British

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press commentaries emphasize that this note did not contain any concrete demands regarding the frontier.

b. The report of the German Ambassador in Sofia on the situation in Bulgaria; at present this is described as not causing any alarm. Copy as per 1/Skl 600/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

c. A tabular survey dealing with Anglo-American anti-submarine vessels. It is estimated that their total number is 5,000.

d. The personality and service career of the British Vice Admiral Bertram H. Ramsay, who has been Commanding Admiral, Dover since 24 August 1939 and has now been appointed Commanding Admiral of the Allied Invasion Forces in Great Britain.

Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

IV. Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section reported on the detection of the WESERLAND by enemy planes on 1 Jan. and her withdrawal to the south, also on the scuttling of the BURGENLAND in the narrowest part of the Atlantic between Natal and Freetown as described in entries 2 to 5 Jan. 1944 in the War Diary. Naval Staff discussed the question whether to divert the WESERLAND south of St. Helena on to the Cape route. The one remaining suitable time for her return via the Denmark Strait is the February new moon period. We have no concrete data on the position of the RIO GRANDE so that all our calculations are based solely on dead reckoning.

Operations Division submitted figures to show the results achieved by blockade running operations of 1943/44 (OSORNO, ALSTERUFER). The figures were compiled to meet the special instructions issued by the Bureau of Naval Armament for the preparation of war economy statistics.

The cargo from the OSORNO extends existing rubber stocks by about eight months, tin stocks by about nine months, wolfram stocks by six and a half months.

Our rubber stocks were almost exhausted before the arrival of the OSORNO. We must therefore give priority to additional imports of this raw material from the Far East.

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The situation with regard to tin is comparatively favorable as we have fair stocks on hand.

There has been a real improvement in our wolfram stocks since the arrival of the OSORNO, but we are unable to build up any reserve and this serious weakness is causing anxiety, especially in view of the possible stoppage of our imports from Portugal. It is a matter for great regret that 344 tons of wolfram concentrate, i.e. 172 tons of pure wolfram, enough to make up the shortage for twelve months, were lost with the ALSTERUFER. The wolfram brought in by submarines during the year 1944 will probably meet the deficit till the end of 1945, but will certainly not be sufficient to raise our stocks or balance the loss of European imports.

The successful operation by the OSORNO means that the supply of natural rubber may perhaps last till November 1944 and with the additional quantities brought in by the submarine transports over 1944 we may have enough to last till the end of the year. As the type XX submarines will not bring in any rubber imports until the fall of 1945, our flow of supplies will be broken between January and fall unless we use blockade-runners. In view of the rubber situation it is imperative for us to go on employing blockade-runners. Details on this point are contained in file 1/Skl I g and War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX.

In further discussion of this problem it was mentioned that the trials with submerged hulls in tow, as ordered by Chief, Naval Staff, are in progress. However, only submarines of type XXI can carry out tows of this kind and there will be no easing of the supply position before the fall of 1945.

Naval Staff is of the opinion that we shall have to renew our attempts to send out and bring in blockade-runners during the next operational period.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed. However, as the Fuehrer has expressed grave doubts about the wisdom of sending the ships out, the matter must be referred to him. The statistics are to be rechecked before they are reported to the Fuehrer.

Chief, Operations Division proposed that Group West should be informed that, subject to the Fuehrer's approval, the ships are permitted to sail from 25 Jan. on, the exact date depending on weather conditions.

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Chief, Naval Staff remarked that 200 "Thetis" decoy buoys, active over a period of 2 to 3 weeks, are to be laid shortly in the Bay of Biscay. ("Thetis" decoy buoy - Radar decoy consisting of a float with a vertical rod to which were attached various trappings for reflecting radar transmissions, Tr.N.)

Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section further proposed to send the four blockade-runners out together and, if possible, to couple this operation with the bringing in of the RIO GRANDE. Details are to be fixed at a conference at Group West to be held within the next few days.

Chief, Naval Staff is not in favor of having both the RIO GRANDE and the WESERLAND enter the Bay of Biscay, particularly as Group West reports that Air Commander, Atlantic Coast has suffered a sudden reduction in the number of planes at operational readiness. Owing to enemy action the 3rd Group of the 40th Bomber Wing will not be operational for the next five weeks. All FW 200 planes used for reconnaissance and all the FW 200 equipped with "Kehl" gear are out of action. Nor will any single FW 200's become operational. Beginning 20 Jan. probably only 5 Ju 290, 2 BV 222 and 3 Ju 88 planes will be available for reconnaissance. This means that on an operation lasting several days only four planes can be employed each day. Unless there are further losses we have about the same number of He 177 and Ju 88 bombers as at the end of December. Group West thinks that torpedo formations should be allocated, as the planes equipped with "Kehl" gear are not fully effective when there is low cloud. In the meantime the Group will attempt to have the 3rd Air Force assign the 26th Bomber Wing for this work and also increase the number of long-range reconnaissance planes.

Chief, Naval Staff decided that preparations should be made for the sailing of the four blockade-runners and that the RIO GRANDE and the WESERLAND should be brought in via the Denmark Strait and not through the Bay of Biscay. Depending on the situation, it may later be decided to direct one of the ships on an easterly course south of Iceland.

V. In view of the large number of submarines which have been damaged in the Bay of Biscay since 1 Jan., Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that two torpedo boats should be kept at three hours' readiness in Lorient (if possible in Bordeaux as well) to assist in bringing in the submarines.

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The following directive was issued to Group West with copies to Group North/Fleet and Commander, Destroyers.

"1. The numerous enemy air raids on submarines in the Bay of Biscay during the past few days again make it necessary for torpedo boats to be kept ready at short notice to render assistance to submarines.

2. Group West will report its plans for the disposition of the torpedo boats. It is essential to keep one group in Lorient or some other harbor in Brittany and desirable to keep another group in the Gironde.

VI. Chief, Naval Staff also expressed the wish that a request should be sent to the 3rd Air Force to carry out night fighter sorties over the Bay of Biscay. It is intolerable that the enemy should be able to make his night raids completely without hindrance and cause losses to our submarines right on our own doorstep.

VII. Chief, Naval Staff reported to the Fuehrer on his intentions to continue submarine warfare right until the new types are ready for operations. A restriction of submarine activity until that date is out of the question. As it is they will be in action, gain experience and remain accustomed to actual operational conditions. Thus they will be as well prepared as possible for the new phase of submarine warfare. Although we lost 227 of our boats, the submarine campaign in 1943 brought the second best result of any year of this war.

VIII. Chief, Operations Division reported that German Naval Command, Italy is keeping an attack on Bastia always in mind.

Chief, Operations Division, reporting about the proposal to take off the survivors landed in Ireland, stated that the Foreign Office has not yet been able to ascertain their names. Operations Division is still pressing for matters to be expedited. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

IX. Chief, Naval Staff is doubtful whether Group North/Fleet fully realizes that considerable effort must be put into the task of training the crews of the major units. The experiences of the December actions prove the need for vigorous measures. Everything possible must be done to eliminate the feeling of inferiority prevalent among our crews and the disadvantages of their lack of familiarity with the sea, which sets them in such sharp contrast to the men serving in the submarines, PT boats, minesweepers and patrol vessels. The remarks on this point

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contained in British commentaries on the engagements are not wholly unfounded. This problem must again be discussed with the Commanding Admiral and Chief of Staff, Group North/Fleet at a conference to be held on 14 Jan.

There are also plans for a conference with Commander in Chief, Navy at the beginning of February when these questions will be put on the agenda.

X. Army Situation

The major battle has extended to all sectors of the eastern front and there is again active fighting in the Vitebsk area. On the whole the German troops have had considerable successes in driving back the enemy.

Special Items

A summary of the data on the enemy gathered from radio decoding and radio intelligence during the period from 26 Dec. to 2 Jan., is contained in Special Radio Monitoring Report No. 1/44.

Situation 6 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Following the decision by Chief, Naval Staff, Operations Division issued the following directives:

1. To the WESERLAND:

"This time the WESERLAND is to start her passage north in the eastern sector of the South Atlantic so that she passes point "Klingel" on about 12 Feb. Particulars about the route and the time-schedule to be observed will follow. Until then she will stand off and on in the waiting area at the most economical speed."

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2. To the RIO GRANDE:

"Our experiences with bringing in the OSORNO and the ALSTERUFER have shown that besides a great deal of luck the element of surprise is essential for success. At present it is very difficult to run the blockade in the Bay of Biscay. Hence the RIO GRANDE is to steer a general northeasterly course from point "Vera" to the Denmark Strait and through the Strait to Norway. While in the North Atlantic the ship will receive the necessary navigational equipment from a submarine.

Details on this new assignment will follow. The orders sent so far on "Strandpromenade" are to be kept in reserve."

3. To Group West:

"1. On the evening of 5 Jan. the BURGENLAND reported that she had been attacked by warships and was about to scuttle herself at 07° S 26° W.

2. In view of the reduction in the forces available to Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, reported by the Group, and the apparent intensification of the enemy blockade, a blockade runner proceeding alone has very little chance of getting through the Bay of Biscay.

3. The RIO GRANDE and the WESERLAND will therefore be brought home via the Denmark Strait.

4. For the present the plans for sending out other blockade-runners remain in force. The orders fixing the sailing dates will follow after we have again consulted all the departments dealing with war economy and thoroughly investigated what consequences would ensue from the cancellation of the plans."

4. To Submarine Division:

"1. The blockade runner BURGENLAND was cornered by heavy vessels (Operations Division presumes that these were cruisers) at 07° S 26° W on the evening of 5 Jan. and scuttled herself.

2. Commander in Chief, Navy has decided that the RIO GRANDE is not, as previously planned, to put in via the Bay of Biscay. Instead she is to come in via the Denmark Strait. Navigational equipment, similar to that prepared for the WESERLAND,

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must be turned over on 19/20 Jan. in approximately AK 70. You are requested to fix the exact rendezvous and submit it to us.

3. The WESERLAND has orders to proceed from GE 55 to AK 70 via GG 65, FV 13, FF 49, EH 42, DE 16. Her schedule will be arranged so that she does not arrive in AK 70 until 17 Feb. The navigational equipment is to be turned over there. She will leave GG 15 probably between 16 and 18 Jan. At present the WESERLAND has orders to stay in GD, GE, GO and to the south of these squares."

Radiogram 1140 informed all ships in foreign waters about the scuttling of the BURGENLAND and the radio directive intercepted from Pernambuco (see War Diary 5 Jan.).

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Fifty planes were spotted over the Bay of Biscay up to about 14° W. At 1111 an Allied vessel was located in AL 5291.

At 1525 our reconnaissance reported a westbound convoy, consisting of more than 12 merchant ships with 4 destroyers, 25 miles south-southwest of Plymouth. At 1828 3 fishing boats of unidentified nationality were sighted about 120 miles southwest of Lorient.

According to an intelligence report from Lisbon, the enemy is shortly to carry out landing operations with commando troops on the French coast from Nantes to St. Malo and thus try out the strength of our defenses. There will be air raids at the same time as the landings and the planes will drop tear gas.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

On 4 Jan. the Foreign Office notified us that the International Red Cross, acting in accordance with our request, had immediately seen to it that the necessary steps were taken on behalf of the survivors in the Bay of Biscay. However, the British Consul in Geneva informed the International Committee of the Red Cross that he regretted that the hospital ship was already off Gibraltar when the report was received.

The Naval Attaché, Madrid reported that the two Spanish destroyers did not find any more survivors apart from the four men reported.

Two mines were swept off Lorient and one off the Gironde. The

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operations by minesweeping planes were restricted on account of enemy flights over the area.

The approaches to Bayonne and St. Jean de Luz, also the Gironde, are temporarily closed due to suspected mines.

One submarine was escorted in and two out.

Channel Coast:

The 5th PT Boat Flotilla was successful in its torpedo operation against an eastbound convoy between Land's End and Lizard Head on the night of 5 Jan. When putting out from Cherbourg three mines exploded in BF 3552 lower right, ahead and beside the Commander's boat. No damage was done. At 0319 the expected convoy was sighted by the 1st group of boats and attacked from the south. The 2nd group contacted the enemy at 0258 and attacked from the southeast. The 3rd group contacted the convoy at 0333. All three groups were successful. They sank altogether five steamers totaling 12,500 G.R.T. and a patrol vessel. Twenty-three torpedoes were fired. Our boats did not suffer any damage or casualties.

According to a short report from Commander, PT Boats (for copy see teletype 1730) the one piece of evidence which led him to carry out the operation was a report about convoy schedules sent in some time ago by radio intelligence. Air reconnaissance could not be employed owing to the bright moonlight. The flotilla put into Brest at 0805. The boats are to move from Brest to Cherbourg on the night of 6 Jan.

Patrol vessels did not take up positions owing to bright moonlight. Two mines were swept west of Jersey.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

On account of the stormy weather the westbound convoy 475 put in to Borkum roads. The eastbound convoy 1205 is proceeding according to plan.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North reported that 12 out of 18 available minesweeping planes are operational. In his annual report for 1943, he corrected the number of ATE mines cleared from 37 to 47.

Eight convoys totaling 18,440 G.R.T. were taken through the waters

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round Zeeland and the Ijsselmeer.

One mine was swept northwest of Ameland.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon four planes were spotted over the North Sea, in the afternoon eight. In the course of 5 Jan. seven planes were reported approaching the Petsamo area. One plane was spotted southwest of Lister on 6 Jan.

Own Situation:

At 1730 on 5 Jan. the steamer MAGGIO (5,371 G.R.T.) ran aground in the Kraak Sound and was damaged. At 1800 on the same day a Dutch motor cutter ran aground near Obrestad. There is no hope of salvaging her.

Twenty ships were escorted north and thirty-eight south. Thirteen ships were delayed awaiting escorts.

On 5 Jan. the Task Force reported to Group North/Fleet; Naval Command Norway; Admiral, Arctic Coast and Naval Shore Commander, Hammerfest:

"1. TIRPITZ now has four instead of two 38 centimeter guns ready for action and four instead of two 15 centimeter guns ready for action in the direction of Stjern Sound and Alta Fjord. The dockyard work will be completed according to schedule. The destroyers are engaged on fire control practice. There are no plans for the TIRPITZ to carry out firing practice, as vibration is to be avoided.

2. Two destroyers are at 45 minutes' readiness in Leirbotn. Their main purpose is to fire torpedoes against any heavy forces which may appear.

3. The anti-aircraft cruiser THETIS is at one hour's readiness at the western outlet of Skille Fjord so that if necessary she can use her quick-firing batteries against light naval forces.

4. The torpedo batteries "Lillan" and "Drott" in position as before at Talvik. To relieve the shortage of personnel destroyer officers are in command and acting as instructors.

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5. Two patrol vessels, formerly stationed in Lang Fjord, are now at the western outlet of the Stjern Sound. There will thus be no chance of an unobserved breakthrough in a snowstorm, etc. and a preliminary warning is quite certain.

6. The staff of the Task Force has been established and is now ready for work. Measures have been taken to ensure cooperation between all forces including the Army and their batteries."

At the request of Group North a teletype containing this information was sent to Operations Division.

In accordance with the directive from Operations Division on occasional minelaying by destroyers (see War Diary 3 Jan.) Admiral, Northern Waters sent his suggestions for minelaying to Group North/Fleet, with copy to Operations Division. Provided that the mines arrive in Kaa Fjord by about 20 Jan. he proposes to use the new moon period at the end of January for minelaying directed against the Anglo-Russian convoys. Mines are to be laid in the area from AW 2228 to 2327, to 2341, to 2252 and in the area from AC 8832 lower center to 8832 right center, to 8942 upper center, to 8941 lower right. Admiral, Northern Waters considers that the chances of success are slight, even if the minelaying is done unobserved, as Russian and British minesweepers regularly check the routes.

Admiral, Northern Waters thinks that we should have better chances of success against the Russian convoys if we were to use more submarines and, from the beginning of February, more bombers.

Mines cannot be supplied by 20 Jan. as they only arrived in Germany from Norway for overhaul a few days ago. However, Operations Division believes there are prospects of success, as non-contact mines lie at a depth of 15 meters and are not affected by the ice which hampers minesweeping considerably. In addition the mines will be equipped with anti-sweeping devices. The ice and continuous darkness will also make it very difficult for the enemy to carry out thorough minesweeping operations and keep exactly within the swept channels in the area 40 miles from the coast. The comments from Group North/Fleet are not yet to hand.

Commander, Submarines, Norway reported on the submarine situation as follows:

1. Six submarines are patrolling the Bear Island passage; all of them are equipped with two "Borkum" sets, "Naxos" sets

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and "Zaunkoenig" torpedoes; they are spaced 22 miles apart in the operational areas.

2. Two submarines will put into Narvik to take on more T5 torpedoes, they will then be at readiness in Hammerfest.

3. Four submarines will start dockyard overhaul in Trondheim, Bergen and Narvik.

4. Two submarines from the south will be allocated to Commander, Submarines. They will be held in readiness at Hammerfest.

5. One submarine will be ready to leave the dockyards on 10 and another on 12 Jan.

6. On 12 Jan. one submarine will be withdrawn to Narvik for a short period in dock.

7. The numbers of submarines ready for action in northern Norway are as follows (the six submarines in the Bear Island passage are included): on 10 Jan. - 8 (plus three submarines approaching), on 15 Jan. - 10 (plus one submarine approaching), on 20 Jan. - 12.

8. Submarines newly assigned and still in home ports are not taken into consideration in these figures.

9. So far two boats have been equipped to lay mines through torpedo tubes, four more will be similarly equipped.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

In Kronstadt Bay two planes attacked Battery "Peterhof" without result. Ski troops were observed on the ice.

2. Own Situation:

A fire broke out in one of the buildings of the Copenhagen Naval Hospital. The cause is presumed to be sabotage.

At 0500 the Danish motor sailing vessel ARRE capsized and sank in heavy seas south of Hesseloe. South of Bornholm a coastal patrol vessel drifted away out of control but was salvaged by a mine-exploding vessel.

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For supplementary reports on the air raid on Kiel on 5 Jan. see teletypes 1900 and 0734.

Extensive fires broke out in the harbor area following the heavy air raid on Stettin in the early hours of the morning. The auxiliary anti-aircraft cruiser HELIO was hit and sunk. The naval gunnery training ship TRAUTE was set on fire. There were casualties on the anti-aircraft ship UNDINE. She is still operational and repairs are in progress.

Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

During the night of 6 Jan. there were again reports from seven submarines about enemy air raids in the Bay of Biscay. Submarine U "270" reported shooting down a Fortress. The noticeable frequency of these raids over the Bay of Biscay demands action by our night fighters.

Two more submarines have gone through the Straits of Gibraltar and reported their position from the Mediterranean. One of them, U "344", took only twelve days for the passage from western France. Our air reconnaissance for Group "Borkum" brought no result. According to an intelligence report, the expected "MKS" convoy probably left Gibraltar on 6 Jan. This and other information reveals that the Gibraltar convoys are changing from a ten day to a fourteen day cycle. Therefore the next air reconnaissance off Gibraltar has been planned for 8 Jan. The operation against the convoy will take place on 10 Jan. in approximately the center of grid square CF. Group "Borkum" will move about 90 miles south.

There are no reports of successes from the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Four FW 190 fighters brought down a Sunderland 190 kilometers west of Brest at 1523; one of them failed to return.

Around noon a large number of enemy planes entered the west area. Railroad installations and construction sites, also the defense line at Valogne, were raided. Altogether three enemy planes were brought down by anti-aircraft guns and fighters during the day.

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During the night smaller formations continued the raids over Holland and Belgium/Northern France. Railroad stations and the Valogne defense line again provided the target. Aerial minelaying was observed off Arcachon and Bayonne.

2. Reich Territory:

During the evening smaller enemy formations approached the Rhine-Westphalia industrial area and dropped a number of bombs.

A plane of an unidentified type which approached via Ostend into the area west of Karlsruhe, without attacking, was seen to be flying at 700 kilometers per hour. Twelve planes were detected over the East Frisian area during the night of 6 Jan.; presumably they were dropping mines.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance. The enemy sent up about 220 fighter bombers and 160 fighters over the Italian front. Their objectives were mostly on our right flank. Our defense lines and supply traffic were attacked. Near Civitavecchia two out of ten enemy planes were shot down by anti-aircraft guns. Lucca (south of Spezia), the airfield at Pontedera in the same area and the railroad station and aircraft factory at Piaggio were damaged in an attack by smaller formations. During the night the enemy carried out nuisance raids in the Turin and Padua area but did not make any serious attacks.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast seventeen planes were observed on reconnaissance over the Aegean. One of our auxiliary sailing vessels was sunk in the Simi - Rhodes area.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At about noon a French torpedo cruiser put into Gibraltar from the Mediterranean and sailed again for the Atlantic. At

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1300 2 aircraft carriers, 3 cruisers and 11 destroyers passed Tres Forcas on easterly course. Obviously this must be the battleship group reported on 5 Jan. Planes were seen to take off and land on both aircraft carriers. At 1600 four more destroyers were sighted off Tres Forcas on easterly course.

At 0845 a convoy of 56 ships, presumably GUS 26, put out for the Atlantic.

At 1400 on 5 Jan. the WARSPITE was observed still in Gibraltar.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance there were four landing craft on southerly course 20 miles east of Cape Bellavista (east coast of Sardinia) during the forenoon. According to radio intelligence, the large eastbound convoy which entered the Mediterranean on 2 Jan. is probably north of Philippeville. Radio intelligence also detected another eastbound convoy north of Bizerta.

Our air reconnaissance observed only a few vessels in Barletta and Bari, there being no landing craft among them.

At noon a submarine which had sunk one of our naval landing craft was sighted off Rapallo and Sestri Levante.

Own Situation:

The steamer SPHINX capsized in Genoa harbor when fire broke out. The cause has not yet been ascertained.

During the night of 4 Jan. five motor coasters ran aground south of Civitanova. Two more are overdue.

Submarine U "380" (Lt. Brandi) reported two "Zaunkoenig" torpedoes misfired in CH 8355 on 23 Dec., a "FAT" torpedo misfired in CH 7541 on 27 Dec. (sea 6) and a dud torpedo on a steamer of 6,000 G.R.T.

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3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

According to a report from the Army, on 31 Dec. the minelayer PASMAN - overdue - ran aground in fog on the island of Ist while on passage from Zara to Pola. The crew of 24 Germans and 4 Croats were captured by Tito troops. Plans have been made to rescue them on the night of 6 Jan. Torpedo boat TA "22" and two other vessels put out from Pola to salvage the minelayer and free the crew.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff gave the following decision on the request for the occupation of the islands in the Dalmatian area. Originally the request was submitted from Group South (see War Diary 20 Dec.), to Operations Division who passed it on with their full support.

"With the exception of Brioni, the islands in the first priority group, as far as they are in German possession, have already been occupied by our defense forces. Brac and Hvar will be permanently occupied immediately on capture. The remaining islands cannot be occupied owing to the shortage of troops but they will be kept under observation by the available forces."

Group South reported that the 2nd Army Tank Command insists that in view of the lack of troops for the outer islands the operation against Brac - Solta must be carried out. The Group asked that if possible the report on the operation in the Armed Forces High Command Communiqué should be delayed until all the islands are mopped up, so that the enemy does not gain valuable information on the progress of our operations.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 1050 one of our fighters sighted a submarine periscope in the Petali Gulf.

Enemy planes attacked Rhodes at 2200 on 5 Jan. but no damage was done in the harbor area. Two mines with non-contact firing were found ashore. The harbor and the approach to Rhodes have been temporarily closed, as minelaying is suspected.

According to a report from Air Force Command, Southeast, statements made by British prisoners of war from Leros reveal that members of

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the British occupying forces are transported regularly to Syria and Palestine within 24 hours after their escape to the Turkish mainland.

Operations Division requested Naval Group South and Admiral, Aegean to report whether they have any similar information.

Own Situation:

At 1130 an auxiliary sailing vessel struck one of our mines near Kephallonia and sank.

On 3 Jan. the first group Santorin of the landing detachment belonging to Admiral, Landing Craft and Bases returned to Piraeus with two infantry landing craft after mopping up the islands of Sikinos, Pholegandros and Siphnos. The operation was concluded without incident. Seven Italians were captured. The island of Giura was also mopped up without incident.

PT boat S "601" returned to Milos because of bad weather.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

Own Situation:

Our naval forces were not operating owing to the weather. The paddle steamer DUERNSTEIN from the towed convoy Odessa - Sulina sank after being damaged by heavy seas.

A Rumanian report states that three lighters have run aground.

On the night of 6 Jan. three naval landing craft will be on patrol duty in the southern part of the Kerch Strait.

Admiral, Black Sea, reporting on the land situation, states that the enemy has not yet begun the expected attack on the Baksy front. The operation against partisans was concluded successfully.

Admiral, Black Sea further reported to Group South that Army Group A demands a minimum of 12,000 tons of fuel per month.

The only way to meet this demand is to send the steamer BACCHUS once a month to supply the Crimea. It is doubtful whether this

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can be done as the convoy has been delayed seven days. At the moment there are sufficient stocks in the Crimea.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The British press is discussing the Russo/Polish boundary question with noticeable anxiety. The Russians are now voicing their opinion. The official press service of the Russian Embassy in Washington states that after the Russo-German partition in 1939 the Red Army liberated Western Russia, White Russia and the Western Ukraine from the yoke of the Polish oppressors. Moscow regards all territories formerly belonging to Poland as the rightful possession of the U.S.S.R.

Considerable unrest is noticeable in the other smaller states. Thus the Czechoslovak exile Government has denied an alleged statement by Benes that Russia and Czechoslovakia will have a common frontier, as Russia will take possession of Bessarabia, the Northern Bukovina and part of Hungary.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Army Situation:

The enemy continued his heavy attack in the Kirovograd area and considerably extended his penetrations. We are still fighting a defensive battle near Vitebsk. Attacks and counterattacks from both sides are not having much effect.

II. On the subject of the urgently needed night fighter operations over the Bay of Biscay, Operations Division ascertained the following:

1. "Wilde Sau" (codeword for a night fighter operation, Tr.N.).

The planes have no radar sets and operate only on bright nights. Their method of attack is to break into the concentration of enemy planes over the objective. Searchlights and flares are used to improve visibility if there is cloud.

These air operations over the Bay of Biscay thus hinge upon a chance meeting of a night fighter with an enemy plane. Since too the FW 190 can only carry out short flights and since a night operation over the sea by a single-engined plane (especially when visibility is none too clear) means completely blind flying with all its strain on the pilot, the effort expended is out of proportion to the possible results.

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2. "Wilde Sau" with Ju 88 C 6, i.e. twin-engined planes. These have no radar sets or homing receivers and also depend upon a chance sighting on a bright night.

3. Free-lance Night Fighter Operations using Hohentwiel gear (Ship Detection Gear)

Such operations are possible in theory, but they are wasteful as planes can only be located at distances up to 15 kilometers = $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Also they can only be carried out on bright nights, as the enemy plane must be perceptible to the naked eye for the actual attack. Therefore the only way to achieve success is to employ a large number of planes.

Therefore free-lance night operations over the Bay of Biscay cannot bring satisfactory results unless the fighters are equipped with homing sets which respond to the radiations of the enemy locating planes (ASV and Rotterdam sets). Therefore the planes must be equipped with the Flensburg set and "Naxos Z" and also a Lichtenstein or wide angle set, so that they can spot and bring down the enemy also on dark nights.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for a relevant request to be sent to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff.

Special Items

I. Group West submitted the report of a conference held at their headquarters on the subject of the blockade runner operation at the end of December 1943. Those taking part were the commanders of destroyers Z "23" and Z "32", Commander, 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla and Chief, Operations Branch of Air Commander, Atlantic Coast. Copy as per l/Skl 60/44 Gkdos. Chfs, in file "Operation to bring in the TRAVE" (Appendix to War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b).

The summing-up is as follows:

"The reasons for the unhappy events of the operation to bring in the TRAVE were:

1. We did not know that the TRAVE was scuttled at an early stage.
2. The enemy had a good insight into our operations.
3. Our air reconnaissance was poor.

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4. We had no proper advance warning about the cruisers.
5. The He 177 planes had no chance to begin their operations in good time and the weather was unsuitable for them.
6. The unfavorable weather slowed down the destroyers and torpedo boats and hindered their gunnery and torpedo-firing.

Thus all the unfavorable factors which were brought up during the preliminary discussions with Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla came into play together and there was no opportunity to break off the operation."

The crews' state of training is not mentioned in this report. Obviously the parties concerned thought that they could assume that we know enough about the part played by this factor.

Further inquiries into the unsatisfactory course of the engagement are in progress.

II. Operations Division has compiled a paper under date of 1 Jan. 1944 dealing with the possibilities of a landing on the Channel and southern North Sea coasts against the background of weather conditions. The paper has been made available to the interested higher commands. Copy is to be found as per l/Skl 43837/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

III. High Command, Navy/General Naval Administration Bureau and, for information, Operations Division have received a report dated 4 Jan. from Commanding Admiral, Group West on the personnel situation in the west area as seen in the light of Field Marshal Rommel's recent check-up on the strength of our defenses there. The Commanding Admiral quotes the following extract, in which the Field Marshal deals with naval personnel, as a warrant for his requests:

"The question of personnel is of decisive importance. The batteries must not be further weakened, rather should they be strengthened. Therefore personnel should not be drafted until equivalent replacements have arrived. If the replacements are not equivalent, more men must be assigned. (For example - on the 15 and 17 cm. guns the loading man must be exceptionally strong, as he lifts the shell into the barrel by himself. Recent replacements are drawn from older age groups and at least two, in some cases even four men are needed for this duty). Now that men are frequently changed and replacements are very varied and of poor standard (old men, racial Germans grade III, eastern

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nationals) one officer for each battery is insufficient. There should be at least two.

The number of non-operational personnel should be reduced only where there is overmanning. This is not the case with the Navy. Proportion of front-line to non-operational personnel including all signal personnel is 4:1. It must be remembered that in the event of a landing the rear-line services will be subject to very heavy extra strain. We cannot allow a motor transport battalion to be reduced or even dissolved in the name of economy in personnel and then be faced with the task of reforming it under serious difficulties when a landing hampers our railroad traffic."

IV. Group North/Fleet submitted a copy of their directive dated 20 Dec. 1943 sent to Commanding Admiral, Task Force; Admiral, Northern Waters; 5th Air Force. Subject is naval operations in Northern Waters during the winter 1943/44. This cancels the earlier directive of 17 March 1943.

Copy is contained in file 1/Skl I op. Operations Division passed the following comments to Group North/Fleet:

"1. Paragraph II. 2.:

The following clause should be added to line three after "Fleet Command": '.....unless Commander in Chief, Navy on grounds of the overall situation expressly reserves the decision for himself.....'

2. As the loss of the SCHARNHORST must entail a revision of the directive, especially paragraph VII./ 4. and 5a., the additional clause given in 1) should be incorporated in the new draft."

V Naval Command, Baltic reported on 19 Dec. 1943:

"Of all defense forces of the Navy the flotillas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic are the least battle-ried. They have experience against mines but as there has been hardly any enemy action in their operational area for years, they are totally unaccustomed to operations by enemy planes or light forces. The situation there may change but it must also be borne in mind that the need to build up concentrations in other waters or other diverse factors might require us to transfer the flotillas. The plans to overcome the weakness by exchanging the flotillas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic with those of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North cannot be put into practice because equipment with protective shields, balloons, etc. is lacking.

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Unless the standard of equipment is the same, the exchange is hardly justifiable. So far the flotillas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North have had the preference as regards equipment. Naval Staff's opinion is requested."

After consultation with Quartermaster Division, Naval Staff gave the following decision on 2 Jan. 1944:

"1. For the reasons previously stated Naval Staff would most warmly welcome an exchange of the flotillas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic with those of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North.

2. The situation in the operational areas demands that Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West should be given preference as regards equipment with protective shields, etc. Production is low and there is no prospect of changing the allocations. Naval Command, Baltic or Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic can only receive a small allocation of protective shields (about 10 to 15 a month). On the other hand the shields, etc. are easily reinstalled and it may be possible to turn over the equipment when exchanging the flotillas.

3. In view of the general shortage of naval forces the exchange of the flotillas must not cause a prolonged period of inactivity.

4. If, after allowing for facts mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 3, there still seems to be some practical possibility of carrying out the exchange, consult Naval Command, North and submit proposals to Naval Staff."

The report from Naval Command ran as follows:

"1. The exchange of the flotillas of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic with those of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North would require a certain time for dismantling and exchange of equipment, also for familiarizing the crew especially with the operational conditions on the Dutch coast. With the prospect of an enemy landing before us we cannot afford to devote time to this purpose and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North has therefore requested the postponement of the exchange. The Naval Commands have agreed.

2. We are examining the possibility of doing the conversion

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work on those vessels of Commanding Admirals, Defenses, Baltic and North, which are being overhauled at present or will be overhauled in the near future."

VI. On 23 Dec. 1943 Chief of Staff, Naval Staff informed Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division about the formation of the Naval Special Operations Unit under Group North/Fleet and its tasks. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff had already given verbal confirmation that commando raids carried out at sea or involving a sea crossing are exclusively the Navy's concern. In the interest of uniform organization Chief of Staff therefore asked Chief, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division to approve putting the Sabotage Group of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla exclusively under German Naval Command, Italy. The connection with Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division will be guaranteed, in that this Division will be kept informed or asked to supply specialist and perhaps general duty personnel as soon as there are purely intelligence tasks included in the assignments of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla and other detachments of the Naval Special Operations Unit. Hence Naval Staff requested that the previous orders for the withdrawal of the "Gamma" men of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla be canceled. ("Gamma" men - marine commandos with similar duties to "frogmen", Tr.N.)

No statement on this matter has yet been received from Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division. In the meantime it has come to the knowledge of Naval Staff that Armed Forces High Command and also the SS are planning and preparing operations which rightly belong to the Navy's province. In particular, Coastal Infantry Battalion 800 of the Brandenburg Division is preparing for operations using special speed boats adapted as landing craft and the SS are training 20 "Gamma" men to destroy enemy shipping.

Chief of Staff asked Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division not to go on with their plans for an operation by Coastal Infantry Battalion 800. Such an operation should not fall to Armed Forces High Command for it involves operational and tactical projects which are in the Navy's sphere. Furthermore the area in which it is to be carried out is one in which the Navy must claim the lead in all operations. We are not in a position to relinquish that claim even where commando operations are concerned.

Chief, Naval Staff has been informed of the matter.

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All the relevant documents and correspondence will be found in file 1/Skl I op XI, 4 Vol. 1 "Commando Operations".

VII. Transfer of Vessels from Genoa to the Adriatic:

1. 3rd PT Boat Flotilla: Six of the nine boats are in the Adriatic - Aegean area, three of these are ready for action, the transfer of the remaining three will begin within the next few days, they will be ready for action in the Adriatic probably about the end of February.

2. 7th PT Boat Flotilla: Four of the eight boats are on transfer, the remaining four will follow when the transfer of the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla is complete. Ready for action in the Adriatic probably about the end of February.

3. 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla: Five of the twelve vessels are already in the Aegean; the remainder have been moved to the Adriatic with the exception of motor minesweeper R "185" which is on transfer at this moment. Ready for action in the Adriatic probably about the end of January.

4. 6th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla: Five of the six vessels are in the Adriatic, the sixth will be transferred shortly. Ready for action in the Adriatic probably about the middle of February. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy will be informed accordingly.

Situation 7 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

As a result of the change in our plans with regard to the blockade runners due to put in this season, the following directive was sent in writing to Group North/Fleet:

"Motorship WESERLAND was spotted by enemy planes off the island of Ascension in the southern Atlantic. According to reports so far received, the ship was able to escape capture by turning about and withdrawing into the southern Atlantic. She has been sent to a waiting area in the southern Atlantic and will not attempt a

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breakthrough via the Denmark Strait until about 20 Feb.

Instead of motorship WESERLAND, motorship RIO GRANDE, speed 12 knots, will break through the Denmark Strait during the January new moon period. Thus the orders previously given to the WESERLAND will now apply to the RIO GRANDE.

The RIO GRANDE will have her foremast as usual, the top part of the after mast will be down, the loading masts on the foredeck are down, there is an anti-aircraft platform on the forecastle. She is painted gray overall. She carries one 10.5 cm., one 3.7 cm., four 2 cm. guns. Day's run at maximum continuous speed 296 miles, at cruising speed 276 miles. The ship is camouflaged as the MOLDA. As the secret call letters of this ship are not known, the RIO GRANDE has been instructed that when sending an emergency message in English she is to use the secret call letters of the JAMES LYKES, viz. WDUL."

The following directive was sent by radiogram to the RIO GRANDE:

"A weather plane is investigating the ice situation in the Denmark Strait and a report will be sent to you. During the breakthrough via the Denmark Strait you must keep close to the border of the ice. As the ice at this time of the year has a smooth edge, it is not over-dangerous. However, the edge does not run in a straight line, there are numerous curves. You will not receive orders to start on the breakthrough until the weather is favorable. Naval Group North will take over command east of the Denmark Strait. The time and place will be communicated later."

Radiogram 1700 informed all blockade runners about the way in which the OSORNO successfully deceived an enemy plane.

"Continued on course in spite of order to stop. Hoisted distinguishing signal for camouflage ship. British flag on the gaff, British colors on No. 1 hatch. Morse signals were answered with unintelligible morse. Extra crew below deck, officers on bridge waved their hands."

The Japanese Naval Attaché submitted the schedule for the voyage of the KIEFER (Japanese transport submarine, Tr.N.) from 11 Jan. to 1 Mar. 1944, the day when she is due to arrive. Cruising speed $9\frac{1}{2}$ knots. From 40° N the boat is scheduled to proceed surfaced at 11 knots for six hours of the day and submerged at 2 knots for 18 hours.

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Submarine Division will be informed to this effect. Copy as per 1/Skl I k 45/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Forty-one planes from No. 19 Group, also two rescue and two weather planes, were spotted over the Bay of Biscay up to 13° W; the majority of them came over between 0600 and 1300. At 2130 a plane reported a merchantman in BF 5424 on 30°, speed 4 knots and at 2241 transmitted a description of her type to Plymouth. It is possible that in this case one of our minesweepers was mistaken for a merchantman.

One British vessel was located in AM 5270 at 1321 and one in AM 5310 at 1655, one in AL 6966 at 0037 on 8 Jan. and one in BD 9890 at 0202.

At 1511 our air reconnaissance reported three steamers off Falmouth steering northeast and at 1515 four steamers off Start Point steering northwest.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Two mines were cleared off Bayonne, two off La Pallice and one off St. Jean de Luz. Otherwise nothing to report.

Channel Coast:

During the night of 6 Jan. the 5th PT Boat Flotilla, consisting of seven boats, moved from Brest to Cherbourg. Patrol positions were not taken up owing to the stormy weather. Convoys proceeded to and from the Channel Islands.

We received late reports that on 5 Jan. three mines were detonated off Cherbourg, five cutters were exploded west of Triagoz and one mine was detonated north of Morlaix.

It is worth noting that enemy ground mines have been detected in the Cherbourg area, previously no mines of this type had been laid there. However, no definite conclusions may be drawn yet, as this may possibly be a deliberate attempt to mislead us.

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Special Items:

Following the directive from Naval Staff, Group West reported that three torpedo boats are in Brest and three in Concarneau ready to assist submarines. For the present they do not intend to transfer a group to the Gironde in view of the mine situation there, especially as the distance to the central Bay of Biscay is the same from Brest as from the Gironde. After the first operation to assist a submarine has been carried out, a group of torpedo boats may be moved to the Gironde.

Re the transfer of torpedo boats T "22" and "23" to a home base, Commander, Destroyers has proposed to Group West that both boats should be transferred simultaneously on about 1 Feb. If they were to be transferred separately, they would have to join slow convoys and he wishes to avoid this. He also asked for especially careful security and camouflage of the transfer. Naval Staff agreed to the transfer of both boats together; they are to proceed at high speed as a group. Copy of the relevant order as per 1/Skl 61/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Convoy 470 from the Elbe to Hook of Holland is still detained on Borkum roads owing to the storm blowing from the west. There was no minesweeping or escort work. The patrol positions off the Dutch coast were not taken up. Six convoys totaling 60,000 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland. Nine minesweeping planes were out on operations.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Fifteen planes of No. 18 Group were spotted on missions over the North Sea. On the evening of 5 Jan. six formations totaling 50 planes penetrated into the Petsamo-Kirkenes area; bombs were dropped, causing damage and slight casualties.

A submarine was located in AF 8343.

Own Situation:

The steamer MARCOBRUNNER which ran aground off Arneoy was refloated.

Twenty-two ships were escorted north and thirty-three south.

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searchlight. After submerging the submarine heard propeller noises which she thought to be noise boxes.

Due to the lack of sufficient air reconnaissance the boats of Group "Ruegen" are being disposed individually. We shall have to accept the resultant disadvantage that the attacks will always be carried out by one submarine alone.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

Three enemy planes were shot down in air combats over the Bay of Biscay and Channel outlet, one of our planes failed to return.

Strong formations of enemy planes were over the occupied west area during the day. A raid on Theville airfield resulted in heavy damage. The defense line at Valogne (20 kilometers south of Cherbourg) and the base at Bussart were also attacked.

Enemy planes were seen over the west area in the evening but there were no raids.

2. Reich Territory:

Ludwigshafen was heavily attacked round about noon. The I.G. Farben works at Oppau were severely damaged. There were also raids on Mannheim and Kaiserslautern. For damage see Daily Situation Report. Our air defenses brought down 23 planes for certain. For the first time it was observed that the enemy had fighter protection over the target.

In the evening there were minor nuisance raids on the Rhine-Westphalia industrial area; isolated bombs fell on Duisburg and Crefeld.

In the forenoon about 40 to 50 Liberators, escorted by 25 fighters, came into Reich territory from the south. They flew by way of Split - Agram into the Marburg - Wiener Neustadt area. Several bombs fell on the metal works in Marburg on Drau. We sent up 84 planes. Twenty-two heavy fighters engaged the enemy and brought down 10 of his escorting fighters, which also on this mission came right over the target. Three of our planes were lost.

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3. Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance over the Central Mediterranean.

The enemy carried out daylight raids on Fiume, Imperia, the airfield at Perugia and the towns of Foligno and Arezzo. The town areas and transport installations were damaged. Our anti-aircraft guns brought down two planes. About 250 enemy ground attack planes were in action over the front area, concentrating on our right flank. During the night the enemy made air attacks on Reggio. Nuisance raids were reported from Padua and Bologna.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast five enemy reconnaissance planes were reported over the Aegean during the day; one plane brought supplies to the partisans in the Balkan area in the evening.

4. Eastern Front:

In the Black Sea area there were reconnaissance flights over Tuapse, Suchum and Ochamchiri.

No reports from the 5th Air Force area.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

With regard to the sighting report of 5 Jan. concerning battleships, the Intelligence Service reported that 3 battleships, 5 cruisers and 9 U.S. destroyers put into Gibraltar at 2200 on 5 Jan. After refuelling the formation left the harbor at the same time as a convoy passing through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean. The convoy consisted of 14 troop transports and 20 freighters carrying war material and food. Obviously the battleship formation was the escort. As the Straits were fog-bound this intelligence report could not be confirmed by the observation posts. The intelligence report does not tally with the sighting report of 6 Jan. from Tres Forcas, if - as presumed to date - both reports concern the same formation. The Tres Forcas report mentioned a formation consisting of 2 aircraft carriers and 3 cruisers with destroyer escort. Also we are not clear about the nationality of the formation. As the 9 destroyers seem to be American, it may well be that the other units also belong to the United States. Naval Intelligence

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Division points out that fresh evidence about the presence of aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean could indicate that the enemy intends to use naval forces to support the Italian fighting in those areas where there is no adequate fighter protection from land bases.

In the forenoon a CAIRO class cruiser put out from Gibraltar, course unknown. At 1400 the WARSPITE, 6 destroyers, 14 freighters, 11 tankers and 34 small vessels were in Gibraltar. In the evening a convoy consisting of 38 freighters, 9 tankers, 2 destroyers and 4 corvettes put out from Gibraltar into the Atlantic. Three more freighters followed shortly afterwards.

Own Situation:

A steamer of 3,000 G.R.T. was escorted along the south coast of France.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

One destroyer and 30 merchant ships were reported off Naples on the evening of 6 Jan.; at noon there were 11 merchantmen 50 miles south of Taranto heading for that port. At 1020 our air reconnaissance reported 6 steamers on course 120° 200 miles southeast of Cape Passero and at 0050 on 8 Jan. north of Philippeville 1 battleship, 2 aircraft carriers with 5 escort vessels on easterly course.

This report still does not lead to any clarity on the heavy formation.

Own Situation:

At noon on 6 Jan. one of our barge convoys was attacked by an enemy submarine between Sestri Levante and Spezia; a group of naval landing craft was also attacked.

During the night of 6 Jan. Civitanova and Porto Recanati, south of Ancona, were shelled by enemy naval forces, probably destroyers.

Submarine U "343" will take the operational area between longitudes CH 8274 and 9455, submarine U "380" will take the area to the west, submarine U "616" the area to the east.

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3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Weather compelled torpedo boat TA "22" and two harbor defense vessels to break off their operation against the island of Ist. They were to have salvaged the minelayer PASMAN and liberated the crew. Torpedo boat TA "22" put back into Pola with engine trouble. The operation will be repeated without torpedo boat TA "22" on the night of 7 Jan. A harbor defense vessel ran aground near Sibenik in heavy seas and is a total loss.

The stormy weather and heavy snow have interrupted telephone and teletype communications between Skutari and Cattaro. Traffic by motor vehicles is also impossible.

Group South reported that Army Group F and the 2nd Army Tank Command are adhering to their plan to take the inner islands first. No troops are available for Vis and Lagosta. The operation against Brac is to start in the early morning of 12 Jan.; the codeword is "Morgenwind". As two of the Siebel ferries brought up are already non-operational because of engine trouble and another is only conditionally ready for action, Group South has requested German Naval Command, Italy to turn over one naval landing craft.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 2020 on 6 Jan. a submarine was sighted northwest of Milos. On the same day at 1115 a plane bombed an auxiliary sailing vessel in Kos Strait. Three more mine containers were found on Rhodes.

Own Situation:

The Steno and Burtzi passages are again open for small vessels. All other vessels require minesweeper escort.

The convoy consisting of the steamers CHARLOTTE and HELGA with torpedo boat TA "16" and motor minesweeper R "211" was delayed by five hours. The steamer BACCHUS on passage from Istanbul to Piraeus was ordered to remain in Turkish territorial waters until the convoy arrives.

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c. Black Sea:

At 1350 an enemy submarine was attacked by one of our planes south of Tarchanskutski. Two submarine chasers were sent out.

Besides three lighters, a paddle steamer, a tug and a skoot drifted away from the towed convoy Odessa - Sulina. One lighter has been salvaged so far.

At the request of Admiral, Black Sea, the 4th Air Force will transfer two Ju 188's to the Crimea for reconnaissance of the Caucasian coast and harbors. Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

According to a Japanese report the enemy has made a fresh landing on the north coast of New Guinea. An enemy division which landed 80 kilometers southeast of Madang near Helmholtz Point is threatening the Japanese position on the Huon peninsula from the rear.

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Items of Political Importance

From the Anglo-American press one gathers that the Governments of Great Britain and the U.S.A. have no intention of taking sides in the so-called Russo-Polish controversy. It would be both foolish and dangerous for them to enter the arena at this juncture. The present moment, when the Russians are on the offensive, is not a suitable time for starting up a political debate.

The disavowal of Poland finds expression in some extremely pointed criticisms leveled against the attitude of the Polish exile government. A Swedish newspaper reports from New York that the Allies seem to be about to abandon the Poles.

How far these press reports represent the opinions of the governments concerned remains a matter for conjecture. However, the problem reflects the political difficulties which our enemies inevitably had to face as soon as the Moscow agreement was put to a real test.

The International Committee of the Red Cross in an appeal of 30 Dec. 1943 again makes an urgent appeal to belligerents to refrain from all reprisals against prisoners of war and internees. The appeal describes the committee's growing anxiety about the increasing harshness of the weapons now being used.

There is no more hope of agreement between the Yugoslav government and Tito, according to Reuter. Well-informed circles realize that there are at present no prospects of a compromise.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Staff again pointed out that those responsible for the present submarine operations in Northern Waters - where the sea areas are limited and the approach and return routes short and safe - are not paying sufficient attention to the need for economy of forces. In view of the local conditions it would be preferable to keep most of the submarines in readiness and not send them out until there is some prospect of a promising operation. A relevant directive will be issued to Group North/Fleet.

II. Chief, Naval Staff is of the opinion that heavy losses of destroyers off the Bay of Biscay have prompted the enemy to

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decrease or perhaps abandon the employment of search groups against submarines. He is using planes instead. This may be the explanation for the heavy air operations of the past few days.

III. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division reported on the results of the conference with Reichsminister Speer on allocations of materials, etc. With certain cuts military demands have generally been met. The question of tank trucks, which are scarce at present, might be solved by a special drive.

On this point Quartermaster General reported that we have a stock of oil amounting to 50,000 cubic meters in Rumania, but no means of transporting it.

IV. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division:

Antonescu has mobilized three divisions for the Transnistrian (Transnistria - Territory between the Dniester and the Bug, Tr.N.) border and requests detailed information about the situation on the eastern front.

V. Army Situation:

Successful fighting against partisans reported from the Crimea. The enemy has taken Kirovograd from the south.

Special Items:

I. Group North/Fleet submitted copy of the directives sent to Admiral, Northern Waters; Task Force; 6th Destroyer Flotilla and 5th Air Force, on commitment of naval forces in the southern Norwegian area, effective 21 Jan. 1944. Copy as per 1/Skl 739/43 Gkdos. in file 1/Skl. I op.

The directive which was laid down on 20 Dec. 1943 has meantime been superseded in certain respects. Further comments by Naval Staff are unnecessary.

II. On 4 Jan. 1944 Commander in Chief, Navy replied to the letter dated 27 Oct. 1943 in which the Under Secretary of State of the Italian Navy, Captain Fernissio Ferrini, announced his intended visit. Commander in Chief, Navy fixed the end of January as the date for the visit and went on to say:

"We can take the opportunity of your visit to discuss the employment of Captain Grossi, which you mentioned in your letter

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of 11 Dec. and thoroughly go into the various points to be considered in connection with the reconstruction of the Italian Navy. I should be grateful if you would postpone any planning on this matter until after our meeting. I propose that Captain Grossi and Commander Prince Borghese should be present at the discussions.

I have put Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy in charge of the preparations for your visit, and I would ask you to advise him of the items you wish to have placed on the agenda."

The visit is provisionally fixed for 28 Jan. 1944.

A relevant directive has been forwarded to German Naval Command, Italy.

III. Following the suggestion by Commander in Chief, Navy, Chief, Underwater Obstacles Branch, Naval Ordnance Division sent in a report on the anchored torpedo, which when attracted by a passing ship cuts itself loose and steers towards its target (see War Diary 6 Jan.). The report states that the problem has repeatedly come up in the course of the past few years, but Underwater Obstacles Branch cannot favorably consider the project of the "Mito" (Mine torpedo, Tr.N.), as at the present stage in the development of non-contact firing devices it can be swept too easily. Bearing this point in mind the "Mito" must not have too large an effective range and hence has hardly any advantage over a mine. A device as complicated as a torpedo is a valuable combat weapon, as long as it is deliberately aimed, but when employed in the same way as a mine - as a mass weapon which waits for some object to touch it off - it is uneconomical. In addition, the "Mito" is much more difficult to lay than the ordinary type of mine and is only effective for a limited period. The EMF mine or SMA with A 4 (acoustic firing device), now almost ready, come near to the solution of the problem.

Details are contained in file 1/Skl IE.

IV. According to a foreign press report, the U.S. Air Force had a formation of especially equipped Flying Fortresses in readiness to destroy the SCHARNHORST in Alta Fjord. Preparations for the operation were almost complete.

In the interests of other targets for operations of this kind Operations Division passed on the information to Group North/Fleet; Admiral, Northern Waters; Commanding Admiral, Task

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Force; the TIRPITZ; Naval Command, Norway.

According to Reuter, the Commander of the NORFOLK in a statement on 7 Jan. said that some of the 28 cm. shells in the covering salvoes from the SCHARNHORST hit the cruiser. An oil-fire broke out and there were casualties. Shells from the NORFOLK forced the SCHARNHORST to turn off.

According to London Radio, neither Rear Admiral Bey nor Captain Hintze were among the 36 survivors rescued by the British.

V. The Intelligence Service submitted a report dated 2 Jan. 1944 from the very reliable agent "Josefine". Subject is invasion. The report states that there is to be a combined operation against southern France from Gibraltar, North Africa, Corsica and Sardinia. French forces which are to start from North Africa and Corsica are under the Supreme Commander Eisenhower, not Maitland Wilson. It would seem therefore that Eisenhower's sphere of authority extends beyond Gibraltar into the Western Mediterranean.

According to another intelligence report of 3 Jan., Wilson is continuing with the plans of his predecessor in Eisenhower's Supreme Command. Landings are to be carried out on both coasts of Italy using all forces available in the Mediterranean theater. 15 Jan. has been set as the date for the project.

These two statements are not entirely reconcilable and can probably be put down as belonging to the extensive field of deliberate misinformation.

Situation 8 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Enemy Situation:

The OSORNO sighted the following:

On 2 Nov. 1943 at 24° 10' S 78° 40' E a large steamer, apparently a transport, on southeasterly course; on 13 Nov. 1943 at 46° 55' S 27° 00' E an iceberg; on 10 Dec. 1943 in heavy rain at 04° 50' N 25° 06' W a vessel.

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The escort of the "UG" convoys varies and the exact system is not known to Naval Staff. Extensive air reconnaissance and close escort by destroyers and escort boats can be expected at any time.

This information was passed to all ships in foreign waters by radiogram 1340.

One British vessel was located at 1509 in BE 7550 and one at 2308 in BD 9260.

Own Situation:

The RIO GRANDE received the following radio directive:

1. One of our submarines will be waiting at new point "Erna" from 22 Jan. The RIO GRANDE will make for this point beginning 1200 local mean time and must reach it the same day. The date will depend on the convoy situation. If she does not meet the submarine immediately she will search the vicinity within a radius of 15 miles until darkness. Withdraw by night and repeat the attempt the next day if there is no meeting.

2. "Erna" is situated 10° 30' farther north and 4° 10' farther west than "Registertonne".

3. While on passage to "Erna" steer a zigzag course by day, if sighted zigzag sharply and take up a northeasterly course in the direction of northern Scotland. Correct any such deviations from course by steering a northerly course at night.

II. Situation West Area

Enemy Situation:

Forty planes were spotted over the Bay of Biscay as far as 10° W. One Allied vessel was located at 2019 in CG 8710.

Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Group West submitted a brief action report of destroyer Z "27". It was compiled by the Commander of destroyer Z "32" on the basis of statements made by the four non-commissioned officers and the twelve men rescued. Copy as per 1/Skl 662/44

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Gkdos. in file "Operations to bring in the TRAVE". (Appendix to War Diary, Part C, Vol. IIb). According to this, five hits were observed on the GLASGOW, viz. on the fore turret, bridge, fore funnel, hull aft and aircraft shed. Fire was seen to break out. Destroyer Z "27" had both engines out of action at 1440. The Commander gave orders to prepare to scuttle. At about 1500 some of the crew left the vessel. She was again hit in several places. She was blown up at about 1520 and sank at 1625. Men who were on the rafts said that they heard gunfire in the southwest. The survivors were rescued by a submarine between 0300 and 0400 on 30 Dec.

From 2000 6 Jan. to 2000 7 Jan. 298 tons tin, 192 tons wolfram, 362 tons wood oil, 150 tons coconut oil were unloaded from the BERNAU. From 7 Jan. to 2000 8 Jan. an additional 80 tons tin and 30 tons wood oil were unloaded. From the evening of 7 Jan. on, work was impeded by the silting up of the pumps.

The unloading will probably be completed on 8 Jan.

Two mines were swept off Bayonne, one off the Gironde and one off La Pallice.

Four submarines were escorted in.

At 1700 two minesweepers were machine-gunned by two enemy fighters off Lorient and slightly damaged. The Commander of minesweeper M "4011" was seriously wounded.

Brest roads were re-opened.

Channel Coast:

At 2150 on 7 Jan. small enemy vessels were located in the Alderney-Cape de la Hague area. They moved quickly on, changing courses and could only be detected for short periods.

There was no patrol or escort work because of moonlight.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Convoy 475 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland began further passage from Borkum at 1100 but put into Helder because of stormy weather. For the same reason the patrol vessels did

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not take up their positions. Three mines were swept north of Vlieland and one southwest of Heligoland.

Six convoys totaling about 41,000 G.R.T. were taken through the Ijsselmeer and waters round Zeeland.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Five planes belonging to No. 18 Group were spotted over the northern North Sea. At 1547 one British vessel was located in AF 7171.

Enemy planes flew over the region west of Lister and the Kjevik area during the day but did not attack.

According to radio intelligence, three PT boats were at sea in the Berwick area.

Own Situation:

A combined operations barge putting out from Petsamo Fjord was shelled by an enemy battery without result.

At 1615 on 7 Jan. the steamer NATAL (3,172 G.R.T.) ran ashore near Makkaur. She is probably a total loss. At 1500 on the same day the net barrage at the northern entrance to Haugesund was largely destroyed when a mine, which had drifted in, exploded.

During the night of 7 Jan. two enemy planes dropped one bomb near Fagerstrand.

Forty-two ships were escorted north and thirty-six south. Twenty-three were delayed awaiting escorts.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

Our coastal sectors in Kronstadt Bay were subjected to heavy shelling and continuous air raids from 0830 on. There was no damage.

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Own Situation:

One mine was swept west of Cape Kullen.

Torpedo boat T "28" is on passage from Kristiansand South to Swinemuende. Destroyers Z "31" and Z "28" are on passage in the opposite direction.

Admiral, Baltic States reported the withdrawal of the armed fishing vessels patrolling the net barrage; they have either been laid up for the winter or gone into dock. The remaining vessels of the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and the NETTELBECK have been detached for overhaul in dock. The hospital ship OBERHAUSEN will transfer to Reval.

V. Submarine Warfare

At 1152 submarine U "426" reported an enemy air attack in BE 6669.

One Ju 290 made a reconnaissance flight in CF for Group "Borkum" but nothing was sighted. On 4 Jan. submarine U "532" put out from Penang for the operational area in MS and LC.

Reports of successes are not to hand.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

There was only slight enemy air activity over the occupied west area.

2. Reich Territory:

During the evening slight nuisance raids by enemy planes were reported from the west and southwest.

Some bombs fell on Aachen, also on Offenbach and Frankfurt/Main.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force carried out a reconnaissance of the sea area off Benghazi, Derna and Tobruk. For observations see Enemy Situation, Area German Naval Command, Italy. In the evening ten Ju 88's attacked a westbound enemy convoy off Ras Amer

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and damaged four freighters, one of them a large vessel.

The enemy attacked the airfield and town of Reggio, the town of Lucca, the railroad station at Grosseto, the harbor at San Remo, also the airfield at Marcigliana. About 300 fighter-bombers and 150 reconnaissance planes were in action over the Italian front, concentrating on our right flank. During the night of 8 Jan. enemy night fighters attacked our columns near Ravenna and 40 to 50 enemy planes raided the airfield at Villa Orba in northern Italy where eleven Me 109's were burnt out.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast, Metcovic and the airfields at Mostar and Devoli were attacked.

In view of the Mediterranean situation Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, plans to transfer Bomber Wing 100 FK (long-range bomber, Tr.N.) to the southeastern area. The approval of Commander in Chief, Air Force is still pending.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

There are no fresh reports about the battleship or carrier formation.

According to an intelligence report, the INDOMITABLE put into Casablanca on 31 Jan. (Should be 31 Dec., Tr.N.)

At 0820 Ceuta reported six loaded freighters, one of them possibly a transport, making for the Atlantic. At 1205 on 7 Jan. Cape Spartel sighted one transport (16,000 G.R.T.) with four landing craft on deck on easterly course.

According to another intelligence report, one convoy was to put out from Casablanca on 7 Jan.

Own Situation:

One steamer (2,152 G.R.T.) was escorted along the south coast of France. In the evening submarine U "343" was attacked in CH 7343 by enemy planes and as a result was unable to submerge. The submarine asked for fighter protection but this could not be given. She was directed to scuttle herself, if need be, and send the crew to the Spanish coast on rubber

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dinghies or on a neutral vessel. The Naval Attaché, Madrid was informed.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

No further reports were received on the formation consisting of 1 battleship, 2 carriers and 5 escort vessels, seen north of Bougaroni on an easterly course on the night of 7 Jan.

According to radio intelligence, there was brisk patrol activity off the eastern part of the French North African coast.

At 0830 our air reconnaissance sighted a westbound convoy consisting of 17 freighters with 1 ship, thought to be a cruiser, and 2 destroyers 40 miles north of Tobruk; at 1000 a convoy consisting of 32 freighters with 3 escorts on course 130° was sighted 60 miles northnorthwest of Benghazi; at 1545 a convoy, probably the one reported at 0830, was sighted 5 miles north of Derna, and at 1618 a convoy consisting of 6 large and other small steamers with 6 escorts was sighted on course 270° 35 miles north of Benghazi; possibly this was the one already spotted at 1000.

At 2110 air reconnaissance reported a northbound convoy consisting of 18 steamers and 2 destroyers, 30 miles northnorthwest of Stromboli. A report, as yet unchecked, states that one submarine flying the Italian flag was sighted off the east coast of Sardinia.

According to photographic reconnaissance of 6 Jan., Ischia is still used as a PT boat base. There were 11 PT boats, also 3 minesweepers in the harbor.

Own Situation:

Two planes were shot down for certain and a third was probably shot down in the enemy air raid on Portiglione on 7 Jan. In the fighter-bomber raid on Imperia, SG "20" (formerly the Italian torpedo boat PAPA), shot down two planes. Following a near hit the boat shipped water and is listing and aground.

During the night of 7 Jan. Ancona was shelled by two enemy destroyers. They were driven off by the Naval Artillery Battalion, Ancona and subsequently shelled Falconara and Porto Potenza.

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The mopping up operation in the Tagliamento estuary went off without incident.

Transport along the Italian east and west coasts was hindered by unfavorable weather. The figures for December 1943 in the area of German Naval Command, Italy were as follows:

a. West Coast:

Supplies 7,222 tons, Todt Organization transports 1,863 tons, return transports 23,492 tons.

b. East Coast:

Supplies 2,579 tons, return transports 448 tons.
Total 35,604 tons.

The transfer of the motor minesweepers and PT boats to the Adriatic Sea has been made difficult by the low level of the Po river.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

At noon on 7 Jan. Fiume was raided by 22 enemy planes. The Navy did not suffer any damage.

The operation against the island of Ist was postponed to the night of 8 Jan. because of bad weather.

PT boats S "36" and S "55" canceled their operation against enemy shipping in the island region south of Split and their subsequent shelling of Vis harbor owing to the weather. Torpedo boat TA "22" is ready for action and on passage in the Trogir area.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 2113 on 7 Jan. torpedo boat TA "16" sighted an enemy submarine submerging in the Doro passage. The steamer BACCHUS arrived from the Dardanelles in Piraeus at 0320 on 8 Jan. along with torpedo boat TA "16" and submarine chaser "2110".

c. Black Sea:

Submarine U "23" arrived in Constantza on 7 Jan. At 1415 one of our planes unsuccessfully bombed a surfaced enemy

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submarine 15 miles west of Eupatoria.

Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

No special reports.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Operations Division reported on the development of new beach mines of simple construction for use in the defense of coastal approaches. Several thousands of this type of beach mine RMK (Regular Mine-Coast) will probably be ready for delivery by 1 April. The mine consists of a concrete block with a charge case filled with 70 kilograms of explosive in the middle. Mounted on the block is a tripod of gas pipes, on top of which there is a lead or impact horn for contact firing. Depth setting for the present up to 1.35 meters. The Navy will lay RMK mines in water up to a depth of seven meters at high tide. For the present we plan to use it only as a protection against landings in the west area and on the Jutland coast.

II. Chief of Staff advised that the Fuehrer is deeply concerned about a possible enemy landing in the Gironde area, where noticeably heavy enemy air raids have been observed during the past few days. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that evidence of enemy minelaying in this area should be collected and submitted.

As early as the spring of 1943° Operations Division pointed out the possibility of an enemy landing south of the Gironde estuary. (See 1/Skl in War Diary, Part C, Vol. a). (Ref. omitted in German text, Tr.N.)

Special Items

Naval Attaché, Madrid reported:

"On the evening of 8 Jan. the Minister for the Navy told me that, according to his reports, the British are very nervous about the prospect of German reprisals and intend at all events to forestall them by invasion. Enormous preparations are under way. According to his sources, first of all there will be a heavy feint attack for purposes of diversion; the actual landing will follow elsewhere. So far he has not learnt anything about where these operations are planned to take place. In view of rumors recently circulating here, I asked the Minister for his opinion

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on the probability of an enemy landing in Portugal. He thought this unlikely, as the British know that such an operation must force Spain into war against them and that although their weapons are inadequate the Spaniards will tenaciously defend every square yard of their difficult territory; then at the end of a weary advance through the Iberian peninsula the British forces would find their way blocked by the easily defended barrier of the Pyrenees. A relatively small initial success with only prestige value would hardly persuade the British and Americans to risk these disadvantages, especially as they wish to avoid endangering their Gibraltar route which is now so very important."

Situation 9 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

The following directive issued to the WESERLAND:

"The WESERLAND is to sail from GE 85 to GG 65, so that she seems to be following the La Plata - Walvis Bay route. From there she is to change course to the north and continue on approximately the Cape - U.S.A. route via FV 13, FF 49, "Kurrleine" to "Klingel". She is to time her passage so that she passes "Klingel" on 12 Feb. She does not need to adhere exactly to the points mentioned. Her actual course should roughly follow the route given, but should be adapted according to weather and traffic."

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Only three planes were spotted over the Bay of Biscay. British vessels were located in the rendezvous area on four occasions during the day.

At 1339 our air reconnaissance sighted a convoy of 39 merchantmen with escort vessels and fighter cover in CG 9311. No details

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about the ships, their course and speed, were given, probably it was MKS 35.

According to an intelligence report from Lisbon, the enemy is to attempt to land commandos near Royan between 10 and 15 Jan., weather permitting. They are to carry out reconnaissance in the direction of Angoulême and also land agents. The operation is to start from Liverpool.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One mine was swept near Le Verdon. One submarine was escorted out and two in.

Channel Coast:

Three mines were swept southwest of Jersey. Otherwise nothing to report.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

One mine was swept north of Terschelling. Otherwise the continuing stormy weather restricted the activities of the minesweeping and escort units. At 2200 convoy 475 resumed its passage from Helder to Hook of Holland. Four convoys with altogether 33,458 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Nine planes were spotted over the northern North Sea. At 2225 one of our submarines reported that she had been twice located by radar by a plane in AB 6234. It was definitely not one of our planes.

On 8 Jan. the scuttled British one-man submarine No. W "47" was found eight meters offshore near Bratholmen (Bergen) in water three meters deep. She was brought in to Bergen undamaged and with one adhesive (sabotage) mine on board. The boat has apparently been submerged for several weeks and is being transported to Kiel on a minesweeper.

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Own Situation:

Fifty-six ships were escorted north and thirty-three south. Twenty-five were delayed.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Following the conclusion of diplomatic negotiations, the oversea traffic with Swedish ships (so-called Gothenburg traffic) approved by Germany will be resumed to the same extent as before the closing of the Skagerrak (six freighters per month, six to eight tankers to enter and leave per year).

Operations Division sent the following directive to Submarine Division; Group North/Fleet; Naval Command, Norway; Naval Command, Baltic; Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic; copies to Naval Command, North and Naval Intelligence Division:

"As long as the Skagerrak remains closed, a special ruling will have to be made for outgoing and possibly also for incoming Swedish ships.

Submit report on whether the same procedure is to be used as in the case of the MANGALORE and the SAGGAT and whether two to three Swedish ships should be assembled each time for escort through the Skagerrak.

The probable time of departure of the first Swedish ships will be notified later."

Following request by Naval Staff, Naval Command, Baltic submitted their opinion on the question of patrolling Danish territorial waters (see War Diary, 31 Dec. 1943). Copy as per l/Skl 784/44 Gkacs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch is dealing with the matter.

Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

At noon our air reconnaissance reported a northbound convoy in CF 9311. Group "Borkum" is waiting for it in the patrol line extending from CF 2945 to 3556. A Ju 290 plane started off at 2200.

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Submarine U "976" located a convoy by hydrophone in BE 2186, probably on westerly course. Before surfacing the boat was damaged by depth charges and had to withdraw.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. British Isles and Vicinity:

There was only slight enemy air activity over the occupied west area during the day. An airfield was attacked. A few planes came in from the south and penetrated into the Nice coastal region and the Toulon - Salon - Marseilles area. During the night of 9 Jan. planes again came in from the south and penetrated over the Marseilles area and up to Avignon.

Reports on our air activity are not to hand.

2. Reich Territory:

No enemy air activity.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force made reconnaissance flights. The two convoys were again spotted. Strong enemy formations attacked the harbor and town of Pola; the dock installations and the submarine base were hit. An Italian and a German submarine were sunk. There was also a heavy raid on the harbor and town of Ancona. Eight freight cars loaded with anti-aircraft ammunition were destroyed at Aquila railroad station.

In the front area 110 ground attack planes and 75 fighters were active over the right flank; 75 ground attack planes were active over the left flank.

During the night of 9 Jan. the enemy carried out nuisance raids in the Bologna - Padua area.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast, eight BV 109's attacked the harbor and shipping targets near the islands of Hvar and Solta on 8 Jan. Five ships and one motor boat were damaged, two boats were set on fire and one sunk. Metcovic was raided and 14 reconnaissance planes were over the Aegean by day. During the night six planes were reported supplying partisans in the Balkan area, ten to fifteen were off Salamis, apparently dropping mines, and one plane bombed the airfield at Eleusis.

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At noon about 150 planes from Foggia carried out another terror raid on Sofia. Considerable damage was caused. The German Legation was hit. Thirty-four Bulgarian and forty-two German fighters went up. A report on their successes is not yet to hand.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0750 a convoy of at least 40 fully-laden freighters entered the Mediterranean from the Atlantic; 6 freighters and 1 tanker joined it at Gibraltar. At 0200 Ceuta reported a cruiser of the CAIRO class making for the Atlantic. According to a report from our Naval Attaché in Madrid, a British freighter, escorted by a destroyer and a plane, passed Cartagena - Cape Palos at 1730 on easterly course, keeping close to the coast and following the curve of the bays.

At 1755 our air reconnaissance reported two British destroyers off the Spanish coast east of Almeria on course 70° and another British destroyer also on course 70° south of Cartagena. At 2007 the latter was again reported 30 miles southeast of Alicante.

Own Situation:

Five vessels totaling 1,500 G.R.T. were escorted off the south coast of France. Submarine U "616" reported at 1124 having sunk two enemy submarines in CH 9525.

No further reports were received from submarine U "343". Two Spanish fishing smacks searched for her without success. In the afternoon the Spanish destroyer CHURUCA put out from Cartagena to continue the search.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

No reports are to hand on the battleship formation and the convoy of transports.

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At 0815 our air reconnaissance reported a convoy of 24 merchantmen east of Bomba on course 130°, and at 0835 a convoy of 27 merchantmen 60 miles northwest of Ras Amer on course 250°.

An aerial photograph of Brindisi showed 1 destroyer, 1 vessel thought to be a minelayer, 4 small auxiliary vessels, 5 submarines, 1 transport, 14 freighters and 2 floating docks.

Own Situation:

A naval landing craft and a tanker barge ran aground near Leghorn on 8 Jan. Both vessels were repeatedly raided and hit by enemy fighter-bombers, which continued their attacks through the night. The tanker barge has refloated meantime. Another naval landing craft ran aground near Porto Ercole. In addition a tanker barge had to be beached after being damaged in an air raid north of Civitavecchia.

The loading installations at Portiglione are temporarily out of action owing to air raid damage.

The Naval Artillery Battalion scored three 15.2 centimeter hits while answering the shelling from the destroyers off Ancona on the night of 7 Jan.

Two motor coasters reported overdue off the Italian east coast on the night of 4 Jan have since put into Guilianova in a damaged condition.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Metkovic was heavily raided by the enemy on 8 Jan. and considerable damage was caused in the harbor. Eight motor coasters and one infantry landing craft were sunk.

Submarines U "81" and U "NAUTILUS" were sunk in the raid on Pola at 1130 on 9 Jan. The other submarines were undamaged. Two officers, one non-commissioned officer and eight men were killed. Torpedo boat TA "21" was slightly damaged.

The operation against the island of Ist was carried out according to plan on the night of 8 Jan. The crew of the minelayer PASMAN, which ran ashore, were taken off by a boat belonging to the partisans on 30 or 31 Dec. So far investigations have been without result.

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PT boats S "36" and "55" carried out their operation according to plan on the night of 8 Jan. Two auxiliary sailing vessels with ammunition and fuel were sunk between the islands. The harbor of Vis was shelled as planned; on this occasion increased defensive fire by medium and light artillery was encountered. In the evening the boats departed for another operation against the island area; after that they were scheduled to shell the harbor of Komica on Vis.

Torpedo boat TA "22" put into Pola.

Group South has again drawn the attention of Army Group F to the necessity of giving priority to the capture of Vis and Lagosta. The enemy measures prove how important it is to hold the island of Vis, an advance position which can serve as the starting point for continuous enemy naval and air activity against our sea routes and coasts. The capture of the two islands would rob the enemy of good unloading points for large vessels taking supplies to the Dalmatian Islands. He would no longer have good harbors in which to load smaller vessels going on to the inner islands. There would no longer be possibilities for operations by light naval forces. His air bases would be gone. With the islands in our hands we should have good harbors for our operations to cut off the enemy's supplies. The capture of Vis and Lagosta would make the general mopping up of the southern Dalmatian Islands much easier.

According to a report from the Naval Liaison Officer at the 2nd Army Tank Command the Group's suggestion is regarded there as the ideal solution. However, shortage of forces prevents them from beginning at the perimeter and taking the islands in turn and keeping them garrisoned as strong points. They regard it as their first duty to hold the inner islands and thus ensure the protection of the coast.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) is being kept informed of the Group's views.

b. Aegean Sea:

On the night of 8 Jan. an enemy submarine sank a motor boat belonging to the Port Control Office, Mytilene off Cape Baba Burnu. One submarine was sighted at 1430 north of Kos close to the Turkish coast, one off the east coast of Rhodes (time not stated) and one at 2000 northwest of Levita.

One ELM mine was swept in the Burtzi passage.

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c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 1730 on 8 Jan. nine boats attempted a landing on Pervomaisk without success.

Own Situation:

Enemy air raids on Kamysh Burun and Ak Mechet did not cause any damage. During the night of 9 Jan. the patrol line in the southern part of the Kerch Strait was not taken up owing to the weather. The submarine chase in Eupatoria Bay was interrupted for the same reason. The 150 ton crane which stuck fast near Kinburn Point has drifted from the enemy shore and is now drifting northeastwards. The order for its destruction is canceled meantime - possibly it may drift to our shore.

The paddle steamer ELBE belonging to the Odessa - Sulina towed convoy has been towed into Sulina.

Three naval landing craft (artillery) put into Sulina from Linz.

Two steamers on passage from Constanta to Sevastopol reported several times that they were being shadowed by enemy planes.

In view of the repeated unsuccessful operations by the 1st PT Boat Flotilla against enemy supplies to the Caucasus, Group South has suggested to Admiral, Black Sea that in the interests of fuel economy and general wear and tear, he should restrict PT boats to operations against especially valuable targets and defense against possible future enemy landings. For radiograms between Group South and Admiral, Black Sea see Radiogram 2137.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Following receipt of directive from Chief, Naval Staff (see War Diary 8 Jan.) Commander, Submarines, Norway reported on plans for more economy in submarine operations in Northern Waters.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed to the proposals.

II. Chief, Naval Staff ordered an inquiry as to why torpedo boats which are to assist in bringing in submarines have been transferred to Concarneau instead of Lorient, which has stronger anti-aircraft defenses and can give the boats better protection while in harbor.

III. In view of the heavy enemy air raid on Pola on 9 Jan., Chief of Staff has asked Chief, Air Force General Staff to reinforce the anti-aircraft defenses there. Air Force General Staff has promised to look into the matter and send a reply.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that if a satisfactory reply is not received by 11 Jan. then the Navy must themselves provide the most essential defense forces.

IV. Chief, Naval Staff drew the attention of Chief, Naval Communications Division to our recent losses of Mediterranean submarines in surprise attacks by enemy planes at night.

V. Quartermaster General submitted the new construction schedule drawn up by the Shipbuilding Commission. The monthly output of submarines is again reduced from 38 to 33. Copy of the schedule in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

VI. Chief, Naval Staff agreed to the proposed plan for setting up Battery Greville in the Esbjerg area and the three 38 cm. guns which can be spared from Petsamo, in Oslo Fjord. Relevant orders to be issued by Quartermaster Division are to be reported to the Fuehrer via Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy.

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VII. In accordance with the directive from Naval Staff (see War Diary, 5 Jan.) Chief, Naval Intelligence Division submitted a report on how transport space for enemy landings is distributed through the various theaters. In the circumstances the summary must largely be based on estimates. However, the compilers drew on all available data, including the production quotas for these vessels. Taking into consideration the number of troops and amount of material that can be transported by all the various types of landing craft, the summary reveals the surprising fact that about 50% of the estimated available landing space is assembled in England while the remaining 50% is distributed over the Mediterranean and other theaters, particularly the Far East.

Chief, Naval Staff plans to report this first summary to the Fuehrer in person. However, he gave orders for the figures to be re-checked before his conference and this time the compilers are to keep the facts known about British and American production at the forefront of their minds.

In a highly restricted circle

VIII. Chief, Operations Branch reported his Division's opinion on plans for landing on the Biscay coast. The surf is not a decisive obstacle. The beach south of the Gironde nearly to Biarritz is very suitable for landings. To the north there are not so many sandy beaches, here the ports are more important. Our artillery defense in the Gironde Estuary and in the area south of it is extremely weak. Enemy minelaying in this coastal area is also no obstacle for a landing.

Operations Division previously drew attention to this possibility in the spring of 1943 and Chief, Naval Staff commented on the gravity of the situation. He wishes to discuss the matter with the Fuehrer. It is important to secure the opinion of Armed Forces High Command and Army General Staff.

IX. Report of Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section:

Underwater Obstacles Branch submitted a letter from the Director General of Hasag, the manufacturers of pressure boxes.

The important point about this letter is that it shows that Naval Staff's ideas on the employment of mines with new firing devices are known to the chiefs of the manufacturing firms. It may be that the secrecy of the pressure box principle is being

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compromised. Naval Staff has therefore examined the question of whether it is still correct to continue holding back the new firing devices. Since the decision not to employ them was taken in August 1943 the following fresh considerations have arisen:

a. The expected enemy offensive in the west is resulting in a heavy concentration of shipping space on the west and south coasts of England.

b. With the enemy passing through the Mediterranean at will, the Suez Canal traffic is increasingly important.

c. Small numbers of He 177 and FW 200 planes are now available for long-range minelaying.

To a. The American contingent for the major landing is being assembled in Liverpool, the Bristol Channel and Belfast. To interfere with these concentrations may be a decisive contribution to our defense. The ports mentioned are well suited for minelaying.

To b. Interference with the Suez traffic would considerably affect supplies to Russia and the political attitude of Turkey.

To c. From French or Norwegian bases the above-mentioned types of planes can reach the western ports of England, and Belfast, from Rhodes or Crete the Suez Canal. Even small numbers of mines promise lasting effects.

The necessity to release the new firing devices may arise very suddenly. In order to avoid technical setbacks, Naval Staff proposes:

aa. To lay a trial barrage in a front line area during an offensive sortie by PT boats.

bb. To lay an active barrage in German-controlled coastal waters under conditions as much as possible resembling those found in the operational areas of the English west coast (off Brest or the Biscay ports).

cc. An experimental covering run over DM mines. Ships are to carry registering devices and conditions are to be as specified above under bb.

The Fuehrer has approved the trial in a frontline area.

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Copy of letter from Hasag to Reichsminister Speer and the comments of the Special Committee M6 are filed in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed in principle to the proposals put forward by Operations Division and gave orders for thorough trials so as to guard against all setbacks.

The appropriate directives to Underwater Obstacles Branch and Commanding Admiral, Naval Group West were issued as per l/Skl I E 98/44 Gkdos. Chfs. Copies in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

Special Items

I. On 4 Jan. 1944 a conference was held with representatives of Group South and Admiral, Adriatic at Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch. Conditions in the Dalmatian coastal area were discussed. Because of the shortage of personnel, in the area under Admiral, Adriatic out of a total of about 65 coastal batteries (for sea targets) ready for action only 20 are at present manned. There is a complete vacuum in the Croatian coastal area. The Croatian Navy now in process of formation can hardly provide the men and otherwise the Army is responsible for the coastal artillery there. Group South and Admiral, Adriatic see considerable danger in this situation and requested the assignment of new naval artillery battalions. Chief, Organization and Mobilization Branch, stated that no more men can be assigned in any circumstances. If the batteries cannot be manned after regrouping within the area then those which are still without crew must be rendered useless for the enemy, if necessary by removal of the breech mechanism and the ammunition. The assignment and training of the available Army coastal gunners for the better rapid firing naval guns is also to be considered.

Admiral, Adriatic is extremely skeptical about the possibility of getting personnel for the Croatian Navy. The population is subject to very heavy pressure from Tito's men. Desertions from the Croatian Army to join the partisans are already frequent. In his opinion very little confidence can be placed in the Croatian Navy.

II. The following inquiry arrived from the Naval Attaché, Istanbul:

"The Ambassador requests immediate information on what assistance the Navy can offer Turkey if she is overpowered by the Allies. Request reply by telegram."

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III. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff have sent Naval Staff a copy of the following directive to Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast:

"1. Major units of the Anglo-American Navy have recently been seen to enter the Mediterranean. Two aircraft carriers and several cruisers were observed for certain, possibly also battleships. Their presence may well be intended to increase the continuous heavy British pressure on Turkey to enter the war on the side of the Allies. In this case an early attack on Crete or the Aegean islands may be expected, in particular on Rhodes and the other islands off the Turkish west coast. The present position of the enemy warship formation is not known.

2. The Fuehrer directs that all preparations for the defense of Crete and the Aegean islands must be checked and improved as far as still possible. Maximum alertness is ordered. The Air Force will report their plans for intensification of their operations in the southeast. The Navy will concentrate their available Mediterranean submarines to prevent an attack on Crete and the Aegean islands.

3. Every opportunity to intercept the warship formation on its eastward passage is to be taken."

Operations Division informed Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean accordingly (copy to Group South) and ordered him to submit his plan of operations by telegram.

Copy of order 1/Skl I a 805/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

IV. Air Force, Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section, have issued an account of the loss of the SCHARNHORST which gives a clear cut summary of the British statements on the affair. Copy as per 1/Skl 1128/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IIa "Operation SCHARNHORST".

Situation 10 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Nothing to report.

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II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Moderate air activity was observed over the Bay of Biscay by day; during the night of 10 Jan. air activity was very brisk; 49 planes were spotted. At 1846 one British vessel was located in AL 9632.

According to radio intelligence, at 1530, 1545 and 1700 British planes reported battle cruisers, destroyers and other vessels, thought to be transports, on northerly course in AM 3954. These radiograms may have been transmitted for practice only. No other reason can be inferred.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Group West reported that between 2000 9 Jan. and 2000 10 Jan. in all 200 tons tin, 150 tons wood-oil and 20 tons coconut oil were unloaded from the OSORNO. The remaining cargo will be unloaded on 11 Jan.

On 9 Jan. one mine was swept off Brest and one off Bayonne.

Channel Coast:

Patrol positions were not taken up owing to the moonlight and other weather conditions.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Westbound convoy 475 completed the passage to the Hook. Five convoys totaling 67,560 G.R.T. were escorted through the waters round Zeeland. On 9 Jan. a harbor defense vessel in Borkum roads was slightly damaged by gunfire from an enemy plane.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Seven planes from No. 18 Group were spotted in the forenoon and one plane in the afternoon.

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According to radio intelligence, the Russian destroyers "B" and "H" and submarine S "14" were out in Northern Waters during the day.

At 1245 our air reconnaissance sighted 2 destroyers in the northwestern part of the Faroes. Aerial photographs showed 4 small freighters, 13 coastal and fishing vessels in Thorshavn at 1250.

Own Situation:

Thirty-five ships were escorted north and thirty-three south. Twelve were delayed awaiting escorts.

The weather observation ship HESSEN reported her crankshaft broken in AB 2470, repairs impossible. Submarine U "965" has been dispatched to the scene and will probably reach her during the evening of 11 Jan.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

One ground mine was swept in the northern outlet of the Sound and one off Gdynia.

A mine detonated at a depth of 58 meters when destroyer Z "25" was passing southwest of Bruesterort. Her engines were damaged and she will have to put into dock.

Group North/Fleet intends to use the minelayer ELSASS for further "Bachstelzen" training.

Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

At 1348 submarine U "731" sighted three steamers in AL 8421, course 65°, proceeding at high speed. She was unable to maintain contact. Submarine U "666" heard noises in the hydrophone from two fast vessels in AL 4582, thought to be on course 70°.

The long-range reconnaissance Ju 290 plane which started on a flight for Group "Borkum" on the night of 9 Jan. did not detect anything in the operational area between 0400 and 0830. On return its radar gear was found to be defective. Two more Ju 290's were also out from 1230 to 1630 and from 1930 to 2330,

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but without success. Working on the assumption that the convoy made an evasive movement to the west, the patrol line will be shifted to extend from CF 2427 to 2357. In good weather the submarines with 3.7 cm. guns (five boats) are to operate on the surface by day, even if the enemy is sighted.

Once more it is obvious that the number of long-range reconnaissance planes is completely inadequate.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Small formations made daylight attacks on altogether nine construction sites in the occupied west area. They were without any particular success. Two "Typhoons" were shot down by anti-aircraft. Thirty enemy planes were reported over the Dieppe - St. Quentin - Namur area during the night. A few bombs were dropped on the Erla Works in Brussels. Ten more planes were over the Bordeaux area and 10 over the French Mediterranean coast.

Reich Territory:

In the evening 25 planes entered the Cologne area and dropped a few bombs on Cologne, Solingen and the airfield at Venlo. In the early morning ten enemy planes penetrated into the area west of Berlin. Reports on damage done are not yet to hand.

Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force was busy on reconnaissance and at 0830 sighted a convoy of 7 freighters with fighter escort and 6 patrol vessels on course 310° 170 miles northwest of Benghazi. Possibly this was only part of the larger convoy consisting of 26 freighters with 2 cruisers and other escort vessels which was observed at 1645 on course 350° 70 miles southeast of Malta.

Another convoy of 60 steamers with 2 cruisers and 4 destroyers was sighted at 1355 on course 250° 25 miles north of Mostaganem.

According to an aerial photograph a third convoy of 10 freighters, 1 tanker and 4 escort vessels on course 30° was off Catania at 0925. Finally 6 freighters and 2 patrol vessels were seen at 1550 near Ras el Tin on southerly course.

For further information see Enemy Situation, Central Mediterranean.

On 10 Jan. at dusk 38 torpedo bombers and two shadowing planes

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were dispatched to Cape Tenes against another eastbound convoy of 26 steamers observed in CH 8438 at 1037. Eleven planes reached the target. Five ships totaling 32,000 G.R.T. were hit; one of them was observed sinking. Five of our planes failed to return.

At noon 100 Fortresses with fighter escort came in from the Foggia area and again attacked Sofia. The raid was concentrated on German offices and the Legation. Heavy damage was caused in the city. Simultaneously 30 enemy bombers with fighter escort attacked Skoplje. Seventy-six German and Bulgarian fighters went up and reported twelve enemy planes shot down for certain, 8 more probables.

Only fighter-bombers were up over the Italian front; two of them were shot down.

Smaller formations also attacked St. Margherita (Riviera), Ancona and Piombino.

At 2210 between 40 and 50 planes renewed the attack on Sofia. Reports received so far show that one raider was shot down by anti-aircraft. For the report from Group South on damage inflicted during the enemy air raid on Sofia on 9 Jan. see teletype 1542.

Eastern Front:

Our Air Force operation on the morning of 10 Jan. against the enemy landing north of Kerch resulted in the sinking of several landing craft.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

Between 1926 and 2208 on 9 Jan. British vessels were located in CH on six occasions, mainly off Cartagena.

The WARSPITE was out of Gibraltar from 1020 to 1545, obviously for trial runs. At 0700 one convoy consisting of 54 freighters and 6 tankers, escorted by 3 destroyers and 3 corvettes, entered the Mediterranean from the Atlantic. Fog prevented close observation.

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The spotting and attack on the eastbound convoy off Cape Tenes have been dealt with under Aerial Warfare.

Own Situation:

At 1320 one enemy submarine was sighted 15 miles southsouthwest of Cannes. Two convoys (seven steamers totaling 5,570 G.R.T.) were escorted along the south coast of France.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

So far the enemy battleship and carrier formation has not been spotted again. Besides the convoys our photographic reconnaissance in the forenoon revealed the following ships in port:

La Valetta: 1 monitor, 2 light cruisers, 6 destroyers, 9 escort vessels, 1 frigate, 5 submarines, 5 L.C.T.s, 2 naval landing craft, 9 freighters, 1 hospital ship.

Marsa Scirocco: 3 battleships. As the photograph was taken on a slant on a very small scale the interpretation is uncertain. Possibly they are Italian battleships.

Augusta: 2 destroyers, 5 submarines, 3 L.C.T.s, 38 freighters (238,000 G.R.T.), 11 transports (70,000 G.R.T.), 5 tankers (30,000 G.R.T.).

On 9 Jan. increasing enemy air activity was observed on the Italian west coast; in the evening also in the Leghorn sector. Our convoy on passage to Piombino was raided five times by fighter bombers. On the night of 8 Jan. two vessels, probably destroyers, shelled Benedetto and sank two motor coasters near Ancona. On the following night Civitanova, Potenza and Recanati were again shelled by two destroyers. Our 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns at Recanati scored some hits.

Own Situation:

During the night of 9 Jan. the NIEDERSACHSEN laid mines off the Ligurian coast; the SAN GIORGIO and Siebel ferry "1" laid mines off Ancona. Minelaying off the east coast has had to be discontinued for the present as all the cranes in Ancona are out of action following an air raid.

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On 4 Jan. German Naval Command, Italy submitted the orders for the minelaying operations "Aalfangzeitbeginn", "Goldbutt", "Tintenfisch", "Makrele" to be carried out by the minelayer NIEDERSACHSEN. These barrages are intended to guard the still open approaches to the waters around Elba against submarines.

Operations Division pointed out to German Naval Command, Italy that UMB mines for anti-submarine barrages at 12 meters depth are in short supply. They should therefore only be laid in the immediate vicinity of our shipping lanes, where we can expect enemy submarines at periscope depth. West and southeast of Elba extensive operations by enemy submarines at periscope depth are unlikely; any submarines advancing to the Italian west coast will probably proceed at greater depths. German Naval Command was therefore directed to check up on the urgency of minelaying projects "Goldbutt", "Tintenfisch" and "Makrele".

Commander in Chief, Navy decided on 22 Dec. that vessels sailing alone are not to attempt to break through the Sicilian Channel from the western Mediterranean. Prior to his decision, the question had been thoroughly investigated and no possible solution found. All relevant data is contained in files 1/Skl I m.

German Naval Command, Italy, Quartermaster Division and Naval Intelligence Division were informed of this decision on 10 Jan. Quartermaster Division was requested to pass on the information to the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

In spite of partly unfavorable weather, there was quite brisk enemy air activity over the Naretna Estuary.

PT boats S "36" and "55" carried out their operation in the island area south of Split according to plan on the night of 9 Jan. The boats have reported their arrival in Velaluca with a prize. No details have been received as yet.

Admiral, Adriatic reported the code names for the operations to capture Brac and Solta. Operation against Brac "Morgenwind", against Solta "Morgenwind 2".

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon four PT boats were on westerly

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course north of Rhodes. At 1130 a surfaced submarine, likewise on westerly course, was sighted in the same area.

Own Situation:

During the night of 9 Jan. Salamis and the southern part of Eleusis Bay were raided by about ten enemy planes. There was no damage to military installations. Eleusis Bay was closed because of suspected ground mines. In all seven mines were swept.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Our air reconnaissance reported having sighted vessels of the Black Sea Fleet in Poti and Batum. Heavy ferry traffic was observed in the direction of the Baksy beachhead. In the early morning the Russians landed with 20 boats two kilometers east of Tarkhan on the coast of the Sea of Azov. Towards 0700 fifty more boats were at sea north of the landing point. The formation of landing craft was apparently dispersed by the weather, so that the landing was only partly successful. After shelling and dive-bomber attacks the boats withdrew leaving their troops behind.

Own Situation:

On 9 Jan. a battery of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion shelled a camp near Cape Panagia on the eastern side of the Kerch Strait; fires were seen to break out and lasted a long time.

Weather conditions forced the naval landing craft to withdraw from their patrol line in the Kerch Strait to Feodosiya on the evening of 9 Jan. One of them sank in high seas, another had to be beached northwest of Cape Chauda, the third reached harbor in a damaged condition. There will be no operations by PT boats, motor minesweepers and patrol boats on the night of 10 Jan. owing to the bad weather.

Two naval landing craft were damaged in the air raid on Ak Mechet on the forenoon of 10 Jan. One of them had to be beached.

The 150 ton crane drifted ashore on our coast east of Ochakov. A tug which drifted aground near Kinburn at the same time as the crane also refloated and was towed into Ochakov.

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The Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group A, in his report on the land fighting, stated that the enemy after landing near Cape Tarkhan succeeded in occupying the heights behind the landing site. At the Baksy beachhead the enemy attacks have generally ceased on the entire front.

d. Special Items:

Group South reported the Army's January transport demands as follows:

"aa) Black Sea:

Required for the Crimea 60,000 tons, including 11,500 tons fuel; tanker space and fuel can be supplied in full. Other supplies reduced to 33,000 tons owing to the lack of shipping space. All parties agreeable to this reduction. 500 tons daily required on the Danube - Odessa route. This can be carried by the available lighters, so long as the weather is favorable.

bb) Aegean Sea:

On the Piraeus - Salonika route 10,000 tons, Piraeus to western Greece 3,000 tons, Piraeus to Crete, Dodecanese, Samos, Mytilene, Lemnos 17,000 tons. Providing the available shipping space makes one round trip a month, these demands can be met. There is no tonnage available to supply the islands with the additional 54,500 tons requested by Quartermaster General, Army Group E.

cc) Adriatic Sea:

Supply requirements for 2nd Army Tank Command 40,000 tons, also a special supply of 80,000 tons for building up stocks; 25,000 tons of bauxite are to be shipped on the return run. As yet it is impossible to plan transport to the Adriatic. The islands must first be mopped up before regular sea transport can be organized. At present the steamers can take supplies only as far as Split. All the smaller vessels are without exception employed on operational duties to do with the sorties against the islands.

Operations Division sent the relevant information to Naval Liaison Officer attached to High Command Army, Army General Staff; Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy and Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer.

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VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The United States Secretary of the Navy has opened a campaign for speeding up the production of landing craft. 20,000 have already been manufactured and now a further 45,000 are needed to ensure the success of the invasion. The Under Secretary of the Navy declared that the invasion dates had been fixed. It must be expected that the landings would take place under the most difficult circumstances and there would inevitably be heavy losses.

Press reports state that British broadcasting and press organizations are already making intensive preparations for reporting when the second front is established.

In their joint December statement on the submarine campaign Roosevelt and Churchill declared that for various reasons, including greater caution on the enemy's part, fewer submarines were destroyed during this month. In 1943 shipping losses from submarine action were only 40% of the 1942 figures. The 1943 figures for building merchant ships were double the 1942 figures. Of the losses in 1943 50% occurred in the first three months of the year, 27% in the second three months and only 26% in the last six months.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Group West reported that the one reason why Concarneau was preferred to the more protected Brest as the readiness base for the torpedo boats was that training facilities there were better.

II. In accordance with the directive from Chief, Naval Staff, Quartermaster General checked how much time would be needed for the conversion of the naval landing craft so as to allow 10.5 cm. guns to be fitted. They discovered that it would take more time to change the armament on finished craft than to fit the next new constructions with the new guns. Quartermaster Division therefore gave orders that the next six naval landing craft to be constructed should allow for the installation of 10.5 cm. guns.

Chief, Naval Staff will find out whether the Fuehrer approves the use of these vessels as monitors.

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III. Commanding Admiral, Group West reported that the unloading of the BERNAU has been completed. The last train will leave at noon. The anti-aircraft guns, the forces belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, destroyer Z "37" and the anti-sabotage squads are to be released. The prohibited flying area has been re-opened. The BERNAU will move to dock at Pauillac on 12 or 13 Jan.

The speedy unloading was made possible only through the energetic assistance given by the 748th Infantry Regiment. Group West expressed their thanks to the Army. Chief, Naval Staff ordered a relevant report to be made to the Fuehrer.

IV. According to a report from the Naval Attaché, Madrid, two Spanish destroyers have sailed from Ferrol to render assistance to British sea rescue planes. Submarine Division has been informed.

V. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for preparation of maps showing the locations where the new RMK mines can be used. The maps are to be submitted to the Fuehrer.

There is to be an investigation into the question of whether "Zaunkoenig" torpedoes can be used in torpedo batteries. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division reported that until now torpedo batteries have been using only G 7 a torpedoes. The possibility of using G 7 e torpedoes will be examined.

On the subject of the anti-aircraft defenses of Pola, Quartermaster General reported that if the Air Force cannot supply reinforcements and the Navy have to rely on their own forces, the anti-aircraft batteries used for the defense of the heavy batteries near Hanstholm might possibly be withdrawn, although this action would not be in harmony with the demands of Field Marshal Rommel. Any weakening of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven is considered out of the question.

For the present Chief, Naval Staff would like to wait and see what the Air Force will do in Pola.

Quartermaster General further reported that the Air Force did not fully honor their promise to reinforce the anti-aircraft defenses of Toulon. The Navy cannot withdraw guns from elsewhere in favor of this area.

Quartermaster General also reported on the situation regarding the

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transfer of motor minesweepers and PT boats to the Adriatic. Fortunately the transfer has been effected comparatively quickly.

Commanding General, Armed Forces, South, with the agreement of Group South, requested the allocation of two naval artillery battalions for coastal defense in the Istrian area. Naval Staff's attitude on the matter will be found in the minutes of the discussion of 4 Jan. (See War Diary 10 Jan.)

VI. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported on the important Russian declaration on the Polish problem. The Russians have made their first concrete statement on their wishes regarding their western frontier. Their proposal is that the Polish eastern border should be drawn along the so-called Curzon line and Poland compensated in the west at Germany's expense.

In a highly restricted circle

VII. Army Situation:

After heavy preliminary shelling the enemy attack on the Baksy front began on the forenoon of 10 Jan. About 2,000 men landed near Cape Tarkhan. Our counter-attack to destroy the new beachhead has begun.

The enemy again attacked near Nikopol and moved forward in several places. In the Kirovograd area we withdrew our defense line according to plan. Near Vinnitsa we succeeded in driving the enemy spearhead back over the Bug.

The Hungarian troops withdrew from the Sarni area. Three of our infantry battalions have been encircled by the enemy and have orders to fight their way through to the west. Heavy fighting was reported from the Recicza area.

VIII. Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean reported that there are no submarines operating in the Eastern Mediterranean at present. Of the boats in the Western Mediterranean submarine U "616" is still fully operational. Five boats will be ready in Toulon between 17 and 21 Jan. One of them has a new commander and the passage through the Sicilian Channel is not considered a suitable first assignment.

One boat will be ready in Pola on 12 Jan. Another boat has been delayed following an air attack. As both these boats have new

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commanders they also cannot be considered fully operational on their first assignments.

Submarine U "616" will start on her passage to the eastern Mediterranean and for the present operate off the Cyrenaican coast. The two boats which are being readied in Pola are to operate off the Palestine coast and later, if so required, in the Crete area. The dispatch of more boats into the Eastern Mediterranean will depend upon the development of the situation.

Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean pointed out that intensified operations in the Eastern Mediterranean would leave the Western Mediterranean empty over a prolonged period, as battle-exhausted boats cannot return via the Sicilian Channel. In any event the passage through the Sicilian Channel is no easier than the passage through the Straits of Gibraltar. With regard to docking facilities Pola can at best take only four boats and Salamis only one.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed to the plans. A relevant directive will be sent to Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is to be informed accordingly and copy sent to Group South. Copy of the order 1/Skl I u 104/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

Special Items

I. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff forwarded an excerpt from Field Marshal Rommel's report on the readiness of our defenses in Artois. The excerpt deals with the questions concerning the Navy. Operations Division passed on the information to Quartermaster Division and Chief, Naval Communications Division (copies to General Naval Administration Bureau and Naval Ordnance Division) and asked them to investigate the matter and submit their comments as soon as possible. Copy of the order 1/Skl 94/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

II. Doubts have arisen about whether the present command organization on the coast (West Area), meets the requirements for defense against a major enemy landing. The reasons for these doubts are as follows:

1. In November 1943 Commander, PT Boats submitted a basic study on the defensive role of the PT boat arm in the west area. This work - the outcome of differences in opinion between Group West and Commander, PT Boats - also represented an attempt on

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the latter's part to clarify the principles of command in the coastal approaches. This question has already been discussed. (See War Diary, 20 Dec. 1943.)

2. At the beginning of December Group West submitted a directive dealing with operations by naval forces in the event of a landing and laying down the broad lines of cooperation between naval forces and coastal artillery. The study of this directive leads one to ask whether the necessary close cooperation does not require a joint command, or at least two commands located in the same place and accustomed through practical experience to work together.

3. At the beginning of December the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy held a war game based on the event of a major enemy landing in the west area. In the course of the game it was suggested that we should check up on whether the present command organization is the best fitted to direct operations in the coastal approaches.

Naval Staff is of the opinion that conditions in the coastal approaches have changed in that now, in contrast to the earlier situation, the defense against landings commands priority over all other tasks. Should it become apparent that the present organization has not the necessary striking power to cope with a major enemy landing, then it must be changed with all speed. As a precautionary measure the change might be tried out in small sectors, so that we do not miss valuable lessons with regard to operations, tactics, training and organization.

Operations Division has passed on these considerations to Quartermaster Division and proposes to discuss the matter with Organization and Mobilization Branch before starting the requested investigation. Copy of order 1/Skl I op 857/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

III. Underwater Obstacles Branch informed Operations Division on the development of the remote firing device A 4. It is a simplified acoustic device for moored mines. As it is both highly sensitive and at the same time extremely accurate in hitting the target, it can be used at depths of up to 35 meters. At this depth the simple device without an amplifier will achieve hits even on small ships. Large ships have activated the device when set at as great a depth as 40 - 45 meters. The final aim is to fit them for use at depth setting of up to 50 meters. The enemy will have great difficulty in clearing such mines.

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In the first place he will have to use deep sweeping gear, and in the second place, as the mine cannot be cleared acoustically from a distance, he will have to use mechanical sweeping gear and risk the danger to the towing vessel.

In the opinion of Naval Staff this new device represents a great step forward in the development of the moored mine with remote firing. Most important, with its sensitivity to distant objects, it solves the problem of a channel mine that is not affected by current and tide. Underwater Obstacles Branch have therefore been asked to bend all their energy towards its perfection, so that the EMF mines with A 4 firing can be used in the Channel and Skagerrak this spring.

IV. Torpedo Branch reported on the development of a submerged single tube suitable for all G 7 torpedoes and intended for use as a simplified torpedo battery. Operations Division was waiting for this report before making a decision on a number of requests from operational stations for torpedo batteries. Investigations by Torpedo Branch and operational stations prove that the setting up, and more especially the maintenance of the tube, provide exceptional difficulties with regard to seamanship, and also the delicate mechanism is very vulnerable to the increased effects of aerial bombs under water. In view of these drawbacks it is hardly worthwhile to continue experimenting with new developments and constructions at a time when the capacity of the torpedo arm is already fully extended. Torpedo Branch is of the opinion that, pending further developments, the Navy will have to go on using the present type of construction with a concrete protective cover, or the type of underwater "Ideal" battery to be ready shortly. Torpedo Branch points out that the remote controlled PT boat, as developed and tested by Armed Forces High Command, may be used as a substitute for the simplified battery. Another substitute at present under examination is a simple torpedo launching gear which, fixed on pierheads or bridges, can serve to strengthen the harbor defense. In addition an Italian radio remote controlled torpedo seems suitable for use in coastal defense.

V. Naval Intelligence Division culled the following from the situation reports of Army General Staff, Foreign Armies, West dated 5 and 9 Jan.: A credible report mentioning an imminent decrease in U.S. forces in Iceland in favor of the British and African theaters, seems to indicate that forces are being concentrated for an attack on the continent and that operations against Norway will be postponed or at any rate reduced to a smaller scale. Reliable reports from Great Britain about the

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arrival of more troops from Canada confirm our previous impression that the forces in England are constantly being strengthened.

The enemy is greatly increasing his activity along the entire Italian front and fresh troops have replaced battle-weary units. As the enemy has plentiful reserves of fresh troops the exchange does not seem to indicate anything out of the ordinary, but it emphasizes that we must expect the attacks to continue over a long period. We have received a reliable report that three large British formations of picked troops belonging to General Montgomery's 8th Army have been withdrawn from the Italian front. Unconfirmed reports state that they have been transferred to Syria and Great Britain. So far no troop transports have been observed passing through the Straits of Gibraltar.

Naval Intelligence Division has evaluated all these reports from the Mediterranean but does not think it can give any clear picture of the present disposition of enemy forces as there is no continuous air patrol over the principal ports. Also there is now some uncertainty on the whereabouts of the RENOWN and NELSON. Naval Intelligence Division repeated its urgent request for air patrol over Oran, Algiers, Bizerta, Malta and Alexandria.

According to an intelligence report, the Chief of the Spanish Intelligence Service, General Martinez Campos, has declared that a Frenchman calling on him claimed that after a landing on the French Mediterranean coast in mid-February he would take up a command in the civil administration at Toulouse. General Martinez Campos was not sure about whether there was some ulterior purpose behind this report. However, he stated that a pincer offensive in the Mediterranean-Bordeaux area could be expected in February.

Another intelligence report from Barcelona, dated 9 Jan., also mentions that an attack on the French Mediterranean coast near the Spanish frontier may be expected about the middle of February.

An intelligence report from shipping circles in Lisbon states that enemy air raids will concentrate on the Baltic area in the coming weeks: The main targets will be Warnemuende, Peenemuende, Rostock and Danzig.

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Situation 11 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

A Reuter report states that a German blockade runner from Japan was scuttled by her crew between Ascension and the African coast when Allied warships appeared. 145 of the crew were taken prisoner (BURGENLAND).

2. Own Situation:

Going by dead reckoning, Naval Staff calculates that on 18 Jan. convoy HX 275 will be in BC 49, SC 151 in BD 52, ONS 27 in BC 28 and ON 220 in AK 71.

Radiogram 2020 informed the RIO GRANDE of these results and pointed out that as a general rule the westbound convoys make avoiding movements to the north, the eastbound convoys to the south. They are thus delayed behind the calculated schedule. The RIO GRANDE is to allow for this when fixing the time to pass point "Vera".

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Only three planes were detected flying over the Bay of Biscay. One British vessel was located in BE 8588 at 0905 and one in AL 6561 at 1154.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Two mines were swept in the La Pallice area.

On 10 and 11 Jan. four boats belonging to the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla carried out training exercises in the waters off Concarneau.

One submarine was escorted in and one out.

Channel Coast:

There was no patrol or escort work owing to the moonlight.

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On the night of 11 Jan. the minelaying operations by the 2nd, 6th and 8th PT Boat Flotillas north of the Humber were broken off because of the weather.

On 5 Jan. Group West reported on the progress made with laying alarm minefields in shallow waters. All LMB mines with old-type firing devices which are available in the area are to be used, except for 120 to be held in reserve for fouling harbors. First of all 40 barrage sections, each of three miles, are to be prepared in the Ostend - Cherbourg area. As they have only 1,200 LMB mines available, the Group requested that, if possible, they should be allocated an additional 3,600 to 4,000 mines.

The following vessels have been selected to do the minelaying and will be fitted out accordingly: the motor minesweeping flotillas stationed in the Channel, the 2nd Gun Carrier Flotilla, motor minesweeper tenders, armed fishing vessels and other vessels of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, available torpedo and PT boats, and if the situation permits, 1935 type minesweepers of the 2nd, 6th and 8th Minesweeper Flotillas or fast escort vessels which will have to be transferred from the Bay of Biscay into the Channel.

The planning and construction of dependent fore-shore barrages, which will consist of old French depth charges, is under way as a separate project. Special plans will be made for the northern coast of Brittany.

Naval Staff informed Group West that we can give them the additional allocation of 3,600 to 4,000 LMB mines in monthly consignments of 1,200 to 1,500, so long as they can guarantee to provide storage and maintenance. They were also instructed to make plans for large-scale RMK minelaying to begin in April.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Convoy 476 from Elbe to Hook of Holland started out at 1400 with five steamers under heavy escort.

Eight convoys totaling about 94,000 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland and the Ijsselmeer.

2. Norway, Northern Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nine planes were detected over the North Sea.

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At 2215 submarine U "739" reported from AF 5534 that she was being continuously located. Subsequently four fast vessels passed over her at high speed. According to hydrophone bearings they were PT boats on course 120°.

2. Own Situation:

A harbor defense boat ran aground south of Hammerfest. At 0936 the steamer SELMA exploded in Oslo Fjord with the remaining ammunition and became a total loss. The cause has not yet been discovered.

Twenty-seven ships were escorted north and 36 south. Twenty-four ships were delayed awaiting escorts.

In order to combat the increasing danger from submarines in the Stadtlandet area, Naval Command, Norway plans to lay two barrage sections southeast and southwest of Svinoey, the operation to be designated as NW 105.

Operations Division issued the following information:

1. If EMF mines are used, the barrage may also be effective against surface forces. This will hinder communication between the inner leads and the outer passage immediately east of the Stadtlandet declared area. Therefore the exact location of the barrage is also to be reported to Group North/Fleet and their opinion obtained.

2. UMB mines are not available; more EMF mines can be allocated if necessary.

Group North/Fleet received the following directive on 10 Jan.:

"1. It is intended to increase the number of submarines in Norway to 30. The capacity of the dockyards will thus be extended to the utmost.

2. The boats must be employed as profitably as possible. Under the present set-up with the patrol line off Bear Island, the boats get used up in long waiting periods at sea. When the convoys do appear, the boats are no longer fully ready for action and on their return from operations require long periods in dock. From their present position they have very little space and time left for the actual operations against eastbound convoys. It would be more profitable to keep the boats in harbor at short readiness and send them out immediately the

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traffic has been spotted. They should then be placed as far west or east as possible to allow them ample space for their maneuvers.

3. This policy will require adequate daily air reconnaissance. In our opinion it will be sufficient if a few planes equipped with radar sets fly a daily patrol north of Iceland and in the southern Barents Sea. The patrol should be the length of a convoy's daily run.

4. Group North/Fleet is to check the reconnaissance possibilities with 5th Air Force and decide on the appropriate submarine operations."

Naval Command, Norway had previously sent a request to Group North/Fleet asking for the assignment of submarines for defense against landings and attacks on enemy submarines. Group North/Fleet was doubtful about the success of submarine operations against submarines. Against this, Naval Command, Norway brought up instances from the last and this present war and pointed out that our submarines would have infinitely more favorable conditions off our own coast than off the enemy coast. Naval Command, Norway thinks that, apart from shortage of forces, there can be no reasonable grounds for refusing his request and in his view with the present conditions in submarine warfare we are not short of boats.

Naval Staff considers that submarine operations against submarines do not hold out very favorable prospects as only chance successes can be expected. The present situation demands that as many submarines as possible should remain in the Atlantic. Naval Command, Norway is to be informed to this effect and it will be pointed out that Commander, Submarines, Norway has already received reinforcements and now has a total of 24 boats plus three trial boats with new conning towers, and that this number will be further increased to 30. This should strengthen the defense against landings considerably. The relevant correspondence will be found in files 1/Skl I and III/1.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

A mine-exploding vessel cleared a ground mine north of Revsnes but was herself damaged. Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

At 1819 the westernmost boat of Group "Borkum", submarine

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U "305", sighted a convoy in CF 2452. At 2132 the boat was driven off by a destroyer but shortly afterwards was able to report the convoy on a northerly course in CF 2423.

Submarine U "758" reported bombing and machine-gunning by three carrier-based planes at 1020. Strong defense by carrier-based planes is to be expected. The boats were given orders that by day they are to proceed surfaced only when they are in a favorable position in relation to the convoy, they are to submerge if planes appear.

The detection of the convoy proves that it passed unobserved through the areas reconnoitered on 10 Jan. It would be wrong to assume that it made an avoiding movement to the west, as this would mean that it proceeded at more than nine knots.

The operation failed because the air reconnaissance, although it drew on all available forces, still had not enough planes and did not detect the enemy. The submarines were therefore not in a good position. Although one of them contacted the convoy they were so far apart that the others did not catch up.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

There are no reports of important enemy flights into the west area and no reports of German air activity.

2. Reich Territory:

Between 1030 and 1425 several hundred bombers with strong fighter escort flew over central Germany and penetrated to Gardelegen, west of Wittenberg, east of Halle and north of Cassel. The enemy flew in waves of up to 100 bombers. The main body of the escorting fighters flew as far as Muenster, a few of them as far as Hanover. Our defending fighters prevented the operation from taking full effect. The last attacking wave turned back near Meppen. A fair number of the planes turned back in Hanover. Our fighters, including heavy and night fighters, flew 550 missions. 136 enemy planes were brought down for certain and 39 probably brought down; 47 of our planes failed to return. The targets were the town and the Ago aircraft factory at Oschersleben, the town and the Junkers factory at Halberstadt, the Lutter factory at Bienrode and the town area of Bielefeld. Other bombs were dropped on Osnabrueck, Meppen, Wattenstedt and the Waggum airfield.

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This day raid, in which the enemy obviously went all out, can be regarded as a definite failure.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

At 1519 our air reconnaissance observed 3 battleships, 1 carrier, 2 cruisers and 5 destroyers on course 150°, 40 miles northnorthwest of Alexandria and about 20 merchant ships on the same course five miles to the east of this formation. Evidently the battleship/carrier formation has again been detected.

According to information from Air Force, Operations Staff, this report is a visual observation by a young crew. A certain amount of reserve therefore seems justified. Air Force Command, Southeast was given orders to fly reconnaissance over Alexandria on the night of 11 Jan. and to repeat the reconnaissance over the area between Alexandria and Port Said on the forenoon of 12 Jan.

We shall be specially interested to learn the nationality of the warships and the names of the battleships and the aircraft carrier.

For further reconnaissance evaluations see under Enemy Situation Mediterranean.

The enemy carried out a day raid on Ancona and Savona. His operations in the Italian front area still consist mainly of fighter-bomber activity in front of our right flank.

Air Force Command, Southeast reported a raid by 100 Fortresses with fighter escort on the harbor of Piraeus at 1312. Anti-aircraft defense brought down one plane. For damage see under Own Situation Aegean Sea.

By day thirteen more enemy planes were observed in the Aegean and five in the Tirana area, also three south of Bar. Towards evening fifteen planes were over the waters off Piraeus, probably minelaying. One of them was brought down by anti-aircraft guns. About 2230 fifteen four-engined planes renewed the attack on Piraeus harbor.

Two divisions of four-engined planes totaling altogether 350 planes, were observed on the airfields in the Foggia area. Approximately 150 of them are ready for action. They are exclusively U.S. planes. As there have been no more night flights into the Italian area it is presumed that the British

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night formations have been withdrawn to England. Two divisions of British four-engined planes have been transferred home from the Benghazi area.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0700 on 10 Jan. two naval landing craft and seven landing craft of an unidentified type put out from Gibraltar into the Mediterranean.

At 0715 on 11 Jan. a convoy of 16 ships put out from Gibraltar into the Atlantic.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Detailed interpretation of the photographic reconnaissance over La Valetta on 10 Jan. showed 2 cruisers of the Dido class, 5 destroyers, 10 escort vessels, 2 submarines, 2 LCT 350, 5 LCT 250, 1 hospital ship, 1 transport and 4 freighters. The three vessels in Marsa Scirocco look like battleships but their type cannot be recognized.

There are no further reports about the convoys reported on 10 Jan. between Malta and Benghazi. Two submarines were patrolling off Savona at 1732 on 10 Jan.

Own Situation:

On 10 Jan. a combat group of naval landing craft brought down two planes near Civitavecchia. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest gave orders that one gun is to be kept

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at readiness at Giulianova, Civitanova and Recanati to prevent shelling of the coast by enemy destroyers.

Submarine U "642" was given the longitude between CJ 7825 - 7714 as her operational area, submarine U "616" the area to the west as far as the longitude CH 9189.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

In addition to the damage already reported, the steamer DIANA (3,346 G.R.T.) was damaged in dock during the air raid on Pola on 9 Jan.

PT boats S "36" and S "55" have put into Velaluca with a partisan vessel. As they entered they were attacked by two planes. Some of the crew were casualties. Subsequently the boats were continuously raided by groups of eight to ten planes. S "55" caught fire and sank after the detonation of two torpedoes. A nearby sailing vessel which was carrying ammunition, possibly the prize, caught fire. S "36" was slightly damaged and sailed for Cattaro with both crews.

One Siebel ferry and four infantry landing craft transferred from Trieste to Trogir.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 1900 an enemy submarine was sighted four miles west of Levitha. Three of our auxiliary sailing vessels (SEERAEUBER Group) engaged British PT boats in Livadia Bay from 0300 to 0400. The SEERAEUBER and the VERA had to be beached. The ESTE was sunk while lying at anchor. The SEERAEUBER put into Castello (Rhodes) with German soldiers on board.

The enemy air raid on Piraeus was concentrated on the minesweeper harbor. Three minesweepers (RD "9", GA "43" and GA "54") were sunk and others were damaged. The submarine pens and the administrative building of the naval fitting-out depot were destroyed.

An auxiliary sailing vessel was sunk by an enemy submarine off Andros on the evening of 10 Jan.

c. Black Sea:

Our forces were not out owing to the weather.

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There were no convoys. The attempt to salvage the 150-ton crane east of Ochakov has been unsuccessful so far. A tug is missing, she probably sank.

Submarine U "23" put into Galatz for period in dock.

A radiogram sent by Admiral, Black Sea to Group South revealed that according to a communiqué issued by Commanding General, Armed Forces, Transnistria, Odessa might be threatened by an enemy tank spearhead in the near future. Admiral, Black Sea proposed Constanta as the new location for the Quartermaster Staff.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The TASS agency has been authorized by the Russian government to make the following statement:

"The London declaration issued by the Polish Exile Government on 5 Jan. contains inaccuracies, some of them touching the question of the Russo-Polish frontiers. The incorporation of the western part of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia into the territory of the Soviet Union was not a violation of Polish interests. On the contrary this act laid the foundation for a firm friendship between the two nations. The Soviet Government again proclaims that it is striving to create and maintain lasting good-neighborly relations with Poland. The opportunity to do so is now offered. The new Poland will arise not by the conquest of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia but from the return of the 'ancient Polish territories' from Germany. Poland's eastern frontier can be fixed in accordance with an agreement to be reached with the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Government does not regard the 1939 frontier as unchangeable. The districts with a predominantly Polish population can be given to Poland. But it is in the west that Poland must extend her frontiers. The Polish Exile Government in London 'has proved itself incapable of organizing active resistance against the German invaders within Poland itself'."

The British press comment is that "the door leading to a reasonable solution of the problem is not closed".

According to a report from the German Embassy in Tokio, the majority of the population of the Philippines is not pro-Japanese. U.S. propaganda is fostering hopes that the country will again be occupied by the Americans. There are frequent local Filipino uprisings outside Manila and the larger cities.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Communications Division reported:

An enemy plane brought down on 11 Jan. was found to be equipped with a 3.4 cm. radar set, which according to a prisoner's statement was introduced in January 1943. Our 9 cm. radar set has therefore already been out-maneuvered. All appropriate measures with regard to transmitting and receiving have been initiated.

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II. Quartermaster General reported on the favorable results of the underwater towing trials with submarines. 70-ton hulls were used.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for these trials to be repeated using hulls with the displacement provided for in our final plans (about 200 tons).

III. Chief, Naval Staff is of the opinion that the prominence of estimates in the statistical survey of landing space compiled by Naval Intelligence Division very much mars the reader's first impression. For the time being the survey will not be presented to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff. There is to be another check-up on what the Americans and British are producing in the way of landing space.

IV. Quartermaster General reported that, providing Reichsminister Speer approves, the Air Force plans to withdraw four 8.8 cm. batteries from a roller bearing factory in Northern Italy, now destroyed, and transfer them to Pola.

In a Highly Restricted Circle

V. Army Situation:

The defensive battles on the eastern front are still continuing. The enemy has changed to bold methods and is abandoning his old positions so as to use the men and materials for mobile operations.

Our counter attacks in the Vinnitsa area are succeeding.

In the Pripet area mobile enemy forces have advanced far to the west and are threatening formations of the 2nd Army from the rear.

Our counter attack in the Vitebsk area gained little ground.

Chief, Army General Staff thinks that we must fall back to the line of Lake Peipus and abandon the Dnieper bend, thus releasing five or six divisions, and then withdraw to the line of the Bug. A thrust on Riga would be a serious danger. The Fuehrer's decision about the Lake Peipus line will be made on 1 Feb. The general situation on the eastern front is serious.

Special Items:

I. On 3 Jan. 1944 Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff

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issued directives for reconnaissance of enemy preparations for the formation of a second front in the west. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West is to direct the reconnaissance. Naval Intelligence Division is requested to send Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section periodical reports on all important reconnaissance results.

The possibility of forced reconnaissance in the form of naval operations against southern English ports is to be investigated.

Operations Division informed Group West and ordered them to make the required investigation. Copy as per 1/Skl I op 861/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

II. On 11 Jan. the Reichsminister and Chief of the Reich Chancellery informed the Reich Ministries and offices under the direct command of the Fuehrer about the imminent defensive operation in the west.

The information (as per 1/Skl 1274/44 Gkdos) has been passed on to Quartermaster Division.

III. Following the general order forbidding criticism of the achievements of the Fascist Party, its organizations and status in Italy, the Fuehrer issued the following order for the Armed Forces:

"All departments and members of the Armed Forces must refrain from any criticism of the achievements and status of the Italian Fascist Party in their official reports and also in private conversation and correspondence. Such matters concern only those offices whose duties include the submission of political reports. These offices are responsible for taking due security precautions to ensure that the contents of their reports do not become known to unauthorized persons."

This Fuehrer order was received from Chief, Armed Forces High Command on 9 Jan. On 12 Jan. Operations Division passed it on to Group Commands, Commanding Admirals of Naval Commands, German Naval Command, Italy and Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean.

IV. A report was received from Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West giving his opinion on the employment of Italian crews on vessels of the 4th Patrol Boat Flotilla. Report was ordered by Chief of Staff, Naval Staff on 14 Dec. 1943 (see War Diary 14 Dec.). Copy as per 1/Skl 616/44 Gkdos, see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

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Commanding Admiral, Defenses West has some doubts about the reliability of the Italians, especially the officers, mainly on the score of their conception and performance of their duties. No clear verdict can be given on this point at present, particularly on their political reliability. Nevertheless every effort is being made to realize the ordered objective of handing over the 4th Patrol Boat Flotilla to the Italians. The final verdict depends on the results attained by the re-training program and the measures ordered by Group West. These provide that effective immediately Italians of all ranks who have undergone re-training will relieve 50% of the German crew on boats engaged on active operations under German command. The purpose of this measure is to weed out unsuitable elements, improve the reliability of the others and enable us to reach a definite verdict. If the policy proves a success, the percentage of Italians will be increased. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West states in conclusion:

"Even with optimum results from the re-training and educational program, the operational value of the 4th Patrol Boat Flotilla will decrease as the number of Italian personnel increases. The shortage of forces also entails heavy demands on trawler flotillas. Whether Italian crews will be able to stand up to the average of up to 25 days a month at sea still remains to be seen."

V. Armed Forces High Command, Intelligence Division, Secret Intelligence Section, Naval Liaison, submitted a report from an American engineer on the use of smoke shells in combatting submarines, also an agent's report culled from U.S. Naval Staff circles on tactics to be used by planes when attacking submarines.

Copy as per 1/Skl 1238/44 geheim in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

VI. From information available to Operations Division it seems that the greatest damage in recent air raids was done by fire. This again emphasizes the importance of air raid precautions as a supplement to active defense. In many cases the one reason for the widespread destruction was that the small forces, which could have got the fire under control, had they been there in time, were not available or - often the decisive factor - had no suitable leaders to set them to work to the best advantage.

Operations Staff believes that the transfer or employment of a small number of passive defense forces would be a decisive measure which would enable us to keep a basis for naval warfare.

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Quartermaster Division was asked to investigate this matter and inform Operations Division as to how far the requests for passive defense for naval bases, etc. have not been met and under what conditions - meaning the abandonment of similar demands for other sectors - we can partially meet them.

VII. Naval Intelligence Division submitted report No. 1/44 dated 5 Jan. 1944 in the series Enemy Situation Reports. Copy as per 1/Skl 863/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, File "Enemy Situation Reports, Naval Intelligence Division". Special attention is drawn to Section III, which deals with the course of the war against merchant shipping.

Situation 12 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Nothing to report.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Only one plane was detected over the Bay of Biscay. However, a large number of British vessels was located in the rendezvous area. For details see Daily Situation.

At 1947 on 11 Jan. our air reconnaissance sighted a merchant ship in CP 2539.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One mine was cleared in the La Pallice and one in the Brest area. Otherwise nothing to report.

Channel Coast:

Four ground mines were cleared east of Cherbourg. On 11 Jan. four ground mines were cleared one mile west of the Le Havre approach buoy. This is the first time that enemy mines have been discovered off Le Havre.

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The patrol positions were not taken up because of moonlight. There were no convoys.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

As a result of the stormy weather on 11 Jan. a large number of drifting mines was sunk by gunfire. The Harbor Defense Flotilla, Wilhelmshaven alone accounted for 32 mines. A ground mine was cleared north of Ijmuiden. From 2245 to 2320 enemy PT boats were near our patrol positions west of the Hook of Holland; however they did not let themselves be drawn into an engagement with our patrol vessels and turned off.

Convoy 476 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland dropped anchor in Borkum roads on the night of 11 Jan. and continued its passage at 1000.

In the evening a huge fire broke out in Esbjerg harbor. A warehouse containing grain and equipment belonging to the Naval Administration and Supply Office was destroyed. The cause has not yet been discovered, presumably it was sabotage.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Twelve planes were detected over the North Sea, their reconnaissance was concentrated in the direction of the Norwegian coast.

Own Situation:

On the forenoon of 11 Jan. six enemy planes were reported dropping bombs in the Petsamo area. In the afternoon there was an exchange of fire between the batteries while a convoy was being taken into Petsamo. No damage was caused on the German side. On the afternoon of 12 Jan. two enemy planes flew over our northbound convoy near Buholmen; on being attacked by gunfire they withdrew. In the afternoon an attack on two patrol vessels near Stadtlandet by seven enemy planes was repulsed.

The supply flight for the weather operation "Bassgeiger", planned some time ago, was successfully carried out. About 0800 the weather ship HESSEN was taken in tow by submarine U "956" in

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AB 1690.

Forty-six ships were escorted north and 47 south. Fourteen ships were delayed awaiting escorts.

The Commander of the TIRPITZ will take over the duties of Commanding Admiral, Task Force.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, a convoy of 50 to 60 ships escorted by 5 cruisers, 1 battleship, 2 aircraft carriers and 1 destroyer flotilla is expected in Londonderry between 12 and 15 Jan. The convoy comes from New York and was assembled near St. John.

2. Own Situation:

On 11 Jan. submarine U "953" of Group "Borkum" fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a corvette but she was proceeding too slowly. On 12 Jan. submarine U "382" fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a destroyer in CF 2180 and heard a faint detonation three minutes fifty seconds later; presumably the torpedo was a pistol failure.

Otherwise nothing to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

Nothing to report.

2. Reich Territory:

Nothing to report.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

No reports to hand on our missions.

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The enemy raided airfields and transport installations in the Italian area. The raids in the front area by heavy fighter-bombers and carrier-based planes were again concentrated on our right flank.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast fourteen planes were reported on daylight reconnaissance in the Aegean and four in the Durazzo area. A few bombs were dropped on Corfu.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0100 a large convoy of at least 29 laden freighters went through the Straits of Gibraltar on westward passage. Fourteen freighters, 2 tankers, 2 destroyers and 2 corvettes of this convoy put into Gibraltar.

At 1110 Tres Forcas reported a large vessel, apparently a battleship, at a distance of 20 km. She was making for the Atlantic.

Own Situation:

A steamer of 1,700 G.R.T. was escorted off the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

No further news was received about the battleship formation in the Alexandria area reported by our air reconnaissance. A report from the Naval Attaché, Istanbul received from Adana states that the warship formation which put out from Gibraltar on the night of 5 Jan. was proceeding via Algiers, Bone and Malta to Taranto, where four more vessels which left Gibraltar between 8 and 10 Jan. were expected. The aircraft carrier is to remain in Sicilian waters. A large convoy bound for Bari-Barletta with British troops is due to put out from Gibraltar between 12 and 15 Jan. The troops' equipment indicates plans for a landing

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operation. A concentration of small vessels and landing craft has also been observed in the Brindisi - Barletta area. Reports also mention concentrations in the Manfredonia - Brindisi area. These include a Greek formation in which there is talk of an imminent liberation of their homeland.

Operations Division has passed on this report to Armed Forces High Command, Army and Air Force and the appropriate Naval Commands, with the warning that it should be treated with reserve.

On the evening of 11 Jan. our air reconnaissance observed a brisk traffic of merchant ships and landing craft carrying supplies between Sicily and southern Italy. Destroyer escort was observed off Salerno. Ten landing craft were also reported near Ischia.

According to photographic reconnaissance roughly 500,000 tons of shipping space were in Augusta on 11 Jan.

Own Situation:

On the night of 9 Jan. the steamer MEDICIO proceeding from Trieste to Venice was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine.

For the report from German Naval Command, Italy on naval transport work on the Italian west and east coasts in December 1943 see teletype 2035. The available transport space was not used to the full as the flow of supplies was blocked owing to the break in the Brenner route.

Submarine U "616" attacked a westbound convoy of one destroyer and three steamers in CH 9394 and between eleven and thirteen minutes later heard three detonations and very loud sinking noises. The boat thereupon started on her return passage. This success report must be checked, as the running times are rather long.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Nothing to report.

Group South submitted their plans, dated 1 Jan. 1944, for the coastal artillery in the area under Admiral, Adriatic. These plans have been thoroughly checked and it was pointed out that

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the most essential protection of the Adriatic east coast will not be secured until they are carried out. Not only are the batteries necessary for defense against landing attempts, they are also particularly important for the protection of the shipping lanes between the coast and the islands. Supplies are almost entirely dependent on the sea route.

Operations Division informed Quartermaster Division that the demands made by Group South must be recognized as fully justified. In order to secure the protection of the Dalmatian coast and the shipping traffic carrying bauxite and supplies, personnel must be assigned to man at least some of the captured batteries. Although Naval Staff realize that more personnel cannot be released for this duty, they emphasize the urgent need. Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch was asked to exhaust all possibilities in order to meet the present emergency.

The order as per 1/Skl I op 932/44 Gkdos. is to be found in the files Naval Staff, Fleet Operations Section.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to a report from the Naval Attaché, Istanbul, two Italian battleships passed through the Suez Canal as early as mid-December. They were proceeding south, bound for the Indian Ocean. Other Italian vessels are reported in Suez and Port Tewfik; only six small vessels have remained in Alexandria.

If this report is correct, the two ships would be the new battleships ITALIA and LITTORIA, as the three vessels of the CAVOUR class were previously observed in Marsa Scirocco, although the photographic reconnaissance was not quite beyond question.

Own Situation:

A late report states that an auxiliary sailing vessel was sunk by an enemy submarine in the Mytilene area on 8 Jan. To conceal her identity the submarine ran up sail.

Further reports on the enemy air raid on Piraeus state that in addition to the losses already known, three small steamers which were laid up and about 30 auxiliary sailing vessels were burnt

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out, damaged or sunk. In the course of the evening raid a great number of the bombs dropped fell on the sites damaged during the noon raid. Naval anti-aircraft guns brought down one plane in the afternoon and one in the evening.

There was also a late report of air raid on Zante carried out by seven enemy planes at noon on 11 Jan. There was no damage to the harbor. Planes were dropping mines in Lavrion harbor and off Mercantile harbor (Rhodes) on the night of 11 Jan. and in Syra harbor on the night of 10 Jan. One mine was cleared in Syra harbor.

The motorship DRACHE and torpedo boat TA "17" with two motor minesweepers were employed in transporting troops between Piraeus and Milos.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence three submarines were at sea.

Own Situation:

Three naval landing craft will be out in patrol line in Kerch Strait on the night of 12 Jan. At noon on 11 Jan. the oil harbor of Ochakov was raided by eight enemy planes under fighter escort. A lighter ran aground. Early on 12 Jan. a naval victualing store in Odessa was destroyed by a bomb hit.

Convoy work has begun again.

Reports on the land fighting state that hill 133.3 on the Baksy front has been recaptured. Although the enemy threw in strong forces he did not succeed in widening his penetration.

The Operations Staff of Group South moved to an alternative position on the evening of 11 Jan. All departments were reported in full working order early on 12 Jan. It is expected that the teletype and telephone communication will be in order on the night of 12 Jan.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The Tass News Agency, continuing its comments on the Russo-Polish frontier question, has explained its views on the so-called Curzon line rejected by the Poles in 1920. There was no fair boundary until 1939. According to United Press, Government circles in Washington have made it clear that for the present they do not wish to comment on the Russo-Polish boundary question. The British press on the other hand is continuing its efforts to induce the Poles to give in.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General reported on the directive from Chief, Naval Staff containing the Fuehrer's orders that every effort is to be made to get on with the construction of sheltered positions for 3,000 guns and anti-tank artillery in the Atlantic Wall and have them ready for action by 30 April 1944.

Copy of the directive as per 1/Skl 1108/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. X.

Chief, Naval Staff has explained to General Jodl that he cannot give any assistance in this matter, as according to a Fuehrer directive it is not intended that Commander in Chief, Navy should have any say on the construction of the coastal defense in the area of Commanding General, Armed Forces, West. It is obvious that the subordinate naval commands will endeavor to assert the naval viewpoint against the army commands.

II. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported that Marshal Chakmak resigned from his position as Chief of the Turkish General Staff on 12 Jan. In view of previous statements that a Turkish entry into the war was out of the question as long as Marshal Chakmak remained at his post, his resignation rouses some misgivings, although it is also stated that he is to take up a new appointment as Deputy or Military Adviser to the President of the Republic.

III. Chief, Enemy Situation Branch, Naval Intelligence Division reported on the production figures for landing craft. According to reliable statements the figures for American production alone

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amount to 66,000, of which 25,000 might be finished. This latter figure was used as the basis for the estimates contained in the survey of transport space available for landings. There is, however, no evidence on the numbers of the different types of landing craft and the estimated figures were based solely on the available observation reports.

Taking tactical and geographical conditions as their guide, Intelligence Division working together with Operations Division, have drawn up a scheme showing the distribution of landing craft of various sizes through the operational areas. The scheme also takes into account the fact that sighting reports have shown that there are extremely large numbers of small landing craft along the English coast.

In a Highly Restricted Circle

IV. Army Situation

12 Jan. was a day of heavy fighting on the entire eastern front. Our defense in the Dnieper bend was very successful; the enemy was cleared from the Bug. The situation in the central sector, where an enemy tank spearhead is advancing on Rovno, is less favorable. In the Vitebsk area, however, we scored a full-scale defensive success. The enemy, who had assembled for a decisive major attack, was definitely repulsed. Our dive bombers contributed to this success. Our defense was also fairly successful in the Nevel area.

There was continued heavy fighting on the Italian front.

V. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division

a. Re the directive from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff about the threat to the Gironde and the French south coast. This question will be discussed later when Operations Division have worked on it.

Chief of Staff commented that as yet he was unaware of the immediate causes of this directive. At any rate Naval Staff have no alarming reports indicating a move in this direction. However, such an operation seems very likely in view of the importance of the Mediterranean position. Following the conquest of Italy a foothold in southern France would cut off the Iberian peninsula and make the Allies secure. The question of the protection of Gibraltar would also play a part. It

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should not be supposed that this operation against southern France will cut out an invasion from across the Channel.

The question of a landing in Portugal must also remain open. It is important to remember that the enemy will not attack in one place only. The trend of political events points rather to the southeastern area. The situation on the southern part of the eastern front, the resignation of Chakmak and other facts should not be left out of consideration.

b. According to a report from the Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group B, with effect from 12 Jan. Field Marshal Rommel is acting as Commanding General, Armed Forces, West for four weeks in place of Field Marshal Rundstedt, who is on leave. Rommel's main principle is that the enemy must not be allowed to develop the attack after a landing. Consequently his plans provide for strong fortification of the coastal strip to a depth of several kilometers. This strip must be a unified resistance zone containing numerous defense positions, dense minefields and some flooded areas. The Army has begun the necessary work and regrouping of forces. The main requests to the Navy are:

1. There must be no further decline in the fighting strength of available weapons and full use must be made of the fighting strength of newly allocated batteries.

2. Steps must be taken to ensure that the enemy cannot use any ports which he may capture for a period of at least several weeks.

On paragraph 1. the Naval Liaison Officer proposed that personnel combed out in accordance with Fuehrer directive 51 should be left in the area to man the new batteries and that in the event of invasion the naval artillery officers undergoing re-training should be returned to their batteries instead of being used in the emergency formations.

On paragraph 2. the Naval Liaison Officer proposed that we should make use of the large stocks of mines belonging to the Air Force and transfer them to the vicinity of the harbors. Experience goes to show that large harbors cannot be made completely useless by blasting the installations. It is therefore more important to achieve the complete closing of the approaches over a period of weeks than to make some of the installations unusable for years and yet leave others intact.

The problem will be subjected to further study.

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c. The question of submarine operations in the northern area is to be discussed with Commanding Admiral, Naval Group North/Fleet on 14 Jan.

Special Items

I. In view of the present situation in the areas of German Naval Command, Italy and Group South, Operations Division does not think it expedient to set up emergency formations in these two commands. There is already such a shortage of personnel that every man in the Navy must be engaged in naval tasks. Apart from that, partisan activity and the transport situation have created such difficult conditions for the rearline services that the men engaged on these duties cannot be moved to take up other tasks, particularly as a landing will put a heavy strain on them in any case.

Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch will be informed to this effect by 1/Skl I op 76/44 Gkdos. Chefs. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. A summary of information on the enemy obtained from radio intelligence and decoding during the week 3 to 9 Jan. 1944 is contained in Radio Monitoring Report 2/44.

Situation 13 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Enemy Situation:

According to an Attaché report, a fully-laden tanker escorted by a destroyer and proceeding on a northerly course passed within sight of Las Palmas at 1000 on 12 Jan.

At 1500 the armed British steamer DEIDO put into Las Palmas with engine trouble. The escorting destroyer turned off to the south.

According to radio intelligence there continues to be plenty of urgent traffic on the Freetown broadcast and on the Freetown - Pernambuco direct line. Probably there is lively patrol activity in the Freetown area. Radio traffic in the Cape and Falkland area was normal.

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Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

II. Situation West Area

Enemy Situation:

No planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay in the forenoon, eight planes were detected in the evening.

From 1259 to 2213 there were twelve locations of British and Allied vessels in the rendezvous area.

Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Commander in Chief, Navy has expressed his special appreciation of the excellent work done in unloading the OSORNO. This achievement ensured the safe delivery of the cargo and thus materially helped the production of armaments and the war effort as a whole.

Naval Staff submitted this appreciation to Group West; Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Section III and the motorship BORDEAUX.

One mine was cleared in the Bayonne area and one off Brest. A French fishing boat struck a mine and sank west of St. Nazaire.

The MOEWE sailed from Concarneau to Brest for short repairs at 2400 on 13 Jan.

Channel Coast:

The patrol vessels did not take up their positions.

Otherwise nothing to report.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Convoy, escort and mine clearance work was carried out. Forces belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North played a great part. Eight mines were cleared in the convoy routes passing through the Heligoland Bight.

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Convoy 476 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland completed its passage. Convoy 1207 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe, consisting of five steamers, put out at 1630.

Eight convoys with 118,111 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland. The steamer IDA which arrived damaged in Dunkirk on 25 Dec. has continued her passage to Flushing under heavy escort.

Admiral, Netherlands requested the allocation of 5,000 RMK mines as an urgent minimum requirement for the coastal area threatened by a landing. Naval Staff approved the request and informed Naval Command, North that it is planned to supply the same number for the west coast of Jutland.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Nine planes were detected over the North Sea. One Allied vessel was located in AN 2120 at 1621.

Own Situation:

At 1530 on 12 Jan. patrol boat "5703" ran aground in Roervik harbor. At 1128 and 1138 on 13 Jan. an enemy plane attacked a sea-going convoy off Feistein. The attack was unsuccessful and the plane was shot down.

According to a report from the Intelligence Station Bergen, at 1030 on 12 Jan. two semi-submerged submarines were sighted on northwesterly course two miles southwest of Egeroey light. Submarine chasers were sent out on 13 Jan. but their patrol was without result.

Twenty-two ships were escorted north and sixteen south. Thirteen remained awaiting escorts.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

One ground mine was cleared north of Swinemuende. Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

Enemy Situation:

According to an announcement from the U.S. Navy Department,

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two more of our submarines have been sunk in the southern Atlantic by U.S. planes.

Trinidad reported sighting a submarine in ED 5593 at 1705.

Own Situation:

Submarine U "260" will proceed to the area off Reykjavik and submarine U "386" to the North Channel. As the areas have not been patrolled by submarines for a year, a surprise success is possible.

Group "Borkum" has been dispersed.

Submarine U "953" is to operate off Casablanca.

There are no success reports to hand.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Thirteen planes flew over the Dunkirk area by day and machine-gunned the airfield at Amy. One Typhoon was brought down. Six of our planes were lost on training and transfer flights.

In the evening 13 of our planes carried out a nuisance raid on London, two Me 410 failed to return.

Reich Territory:

From 0200 till noon about 300 balloons with trailing ropes and gasoline cans attached drifted into Reich territory as far as the line Ingolstadt - Ammersee. Some of them reached Salzburg.

There were nuisance bombing raids on the western part of the Reich on the night of 13 Jan. Bombs were dropped on Aachen, Rheinhausen, Recklinghausen, Duisburg and Coblenz. Of the eighteen bombs dropped on Essen, seven hit the Krupp factory area.

Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force were out on reconnaissance.

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The enemy carried out a daylight raid on battery positions in Orte and a large number of our vehicles were damaged. Strong formations attacked three airfields in the Rome area. Eleven of our planes were destroyed and fourteen damaged. Eleven of our fighters were also slightly damaged. Five of the raiders were brought down for the loss of five of our planes.

200 enemy ground attack planes and 55 fighters were over the front area; one of them was brought down by anti-aircraft.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast enemy reconnaissance activity was observed in the Dubrovnik, Durazzo and Salonika areas and over the Aegean Sea. Ten enemy planes raided anti-aircraft positions on Rhodes. There was no special damage.

Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

Special Items:

Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has issued an order on the training of Army officers for duty as additional fire control officers. In view of a possible enemy landing in the western area the matter is urgent. The 3rd Air Force has been ordered to carry out the training in courses lasting seven to ten days. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West will decide whether naval officers are also to be called up for the courses. For decision and copy of the directive see teletype 1645.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

Following our inquiry, intelligence reported that agents had confirmed that the battleships and cruisers sighted on 5 and 6 Jan. belonged to the United States. The transport convoy, which was likewise reported, was accompanied by seven U.S. warships, but these did not call at Gibraltar.

At 1400 on 12 Jan. two vessels, probably torpedo cruisers, put into Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

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Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from North Africa, the Allies are having great difficulty in assembling the shipping space in Corsica which they require for the landing of the 4th American Division near Pisa. The main obstacles are the bad weather and the mines off Bastia.

At 1110 our air reconnaissance sighted a convoy of 25 freighters accompanied by 8 escort ships on easterly course west of Bizerta, also 6 freighters east of Bizerta (course not given). An aerial photograph of Alexandria taken on 13 Jan. could not be interpreted, as it was taken at an angle. Another reconnaissance is planned for 14 Jan.

Own Situation:

Submarine U "380" reported firing a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a destroyer belonging to an eastbound convoy in CH 7587 at 0034 on 11 Jan. A detonation was heard after 14.6 minutes.

At 0728 on the same day the boat fired a spread of three torpedoes on a westbound convoy and reported hearing a detonation in the convoy after 15 minutes. After such a long running time a success seems unlikely.

Enemy air activity destroyed one tanker barge in Civitavecchia and one in San Stefano.

About 1100 on 12 Jan. our ground attack planes and fighters raided five of our own naval landing craft off the mouth of the Tiber - this in spite of the fact that due warning of their presence was given. Fortunately the attack was unsuccessful.

While two enemy destroyers were shelling Civitavecchia from the sea on the night of 10 Jan. the naval anti-tank artillery observed ten hits. Smoke was coming from one destroyer and she turned away.

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On 11 Jan. the naval anti-aircraft battery Benedetto brought down an enemy plane.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

At 2120 on 11 Jan. Split was shelled by two enemy vessels. There was no damage. The shelling was renewed at 2130 on 12 Jan. and an auxiliary sailing vessel was sunk. About 2300 on 11 Jan. a destroyer (presumably) fired 15 cm. shells on Markarsta east of Brac.

In the enemy air raid on the same harbor on the afternoon of 12 Jan. two harbor defense boats were damaged, one Siebel ferry was put out of action by a direct hit but remained afloat.

Naval Staff fully agrees with the views held by Group South on the importance of the islands of Vis and Lagosta (see War Diary 9 Jan.). The occupation of the islands will hinder the forwarding of supplies by sea from Italy and assist our fighting against the partisans.

Operations Division sent an appropriate comment to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy with copy to Group South. A note was added to the effect that this comment in no way changes the order of priority for permanent occupation as reported by Naval Staff on 19 December.

The operation "Morgenland 2" was carried out without making contact with the enemy.

Torpedo boat TA "22" is again operational.

Torpedo boat STELLA POLARE was commissioned as TA "36".

In view of the increased enemy air raids of the past few days Admiral, Adriatic again emphasized the urgency of his repeated demands for fighter protection and heavy anti-aircraft. This will become all the more important as the operations against the islands continue and the sea transport starts up in the near future. The harbor installations at Zara have already been battered effectively. The losses in ships and material in the day raids have assumed serious proportions. The destruction of these shipyards on the Northern Adriatic, valuable both for new building and repairs, and further damage to the Dalmatian harbors must paralyze our operations in the

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entire Adriatic area and bring serious consequences for all three services. (See radiogram 1220.)

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy air activity over the Aegean Sea was also lively and unfortunately for us successful. Two minesweepers and one fishing smack were attacked and sunk near Hydra.

In Mykonos submarine chaser "2153" was considerably damaged.

Two mines were seen to be dropped in Kalymnos harbor on the evening of 12 Jan. Another mine was dropped off Naxos on the night of 12 Jan. On the forenoon of 13 Jan. a detonation, apparently a ground mine, occurred at the western breakwater in Salonika harbor.

c. Black Sea:

At 2315 on 12 Jan. a naval landing craft on passage from Sulina to Sevastopol sighted an enemy submarine coming to the surface 40 miles west of Eupatoria. On being shelled she submerged.

On the forenoon of 13 Jan. a plane machine-gunned Ak Mechet harbor. There were casualties on a submarine chaser.

The boats on patrol in the Kerch Strait had nothing to report for the night of 12 Jan.

On the afternoon of 14 Jan. four PT boats put out for operations against enemy shipping south of Tuapse, but had to turn back owing to weather conditions.

The submarine chase west of Eupatoria also had to be broken off owing to weather conditions. For the same reason a convoy planned to sail under cover of the Crimean coast on the night of 13 Jan. had to be postponed. A large convoy consisting of one tanker and two steamers was taken from Sevastopol to Constanta without special incident.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The Russo/Polish question is still the main topic of public discussion on the enemy side. Statements published in the American press are opposed to the compensation of Poland at the cost of East Prussia, as this would only sow the seeds for a new war.

President Roosevelt has asked Congress to approve a budget of 100 billion dollars to cover expenditure till 30 June 1945. Of this sum 90 billions are for war expenditure. It is assumed that the war will last the entire fiscal year 1945, that is until 30 June 1945.

The compulsory military service bill demanded by Roosevelt has generally been received favorably, and there can be no doubt that it will be passed.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. In future Operations Division will compile weather forecasts for Great Britain covering each four-day period. Forecasts are to be drawn up with particular reference to the landing question and other plans.

II. The Rumanian Government renewed its request for the allocation of PT boats. Beginning April 1944, Naval Staff propose to allocate in all four PT boats and two motor minesweepers - the PT boats at the rate of one per month. We also have a request from Finland for four motor minesweepers and General Talvela would like to discuss the matter with Commander in Chief, Navy in person.

In view of our own pressing needs Naval Staff cannot give unreserved approval to any handing over of motor minesweepers.

An allocation of PT boats instead of motor minesweepers would be a more feasible proposition, especially if we could postpone the date of delivery to Rumania by two months. A complete refusal of the two requests is inadvisable for political reasons.

In the meantime Chief, Naval Staff wants to wait for the visit of General Talvela and then try the suggestion of substituting PT boats for motor minesweepers. Although Chief, Naval Staff thinks that we should give the Finns priority over the

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Rumanians, he nevertheless agrees with Naval Staff's proposal re delivery to Rumania, as their requests were submitted quite a long time ago. Details on the matter are to be found in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

III. The chairman of the Shipbuilding Commission regrets that Naval Staff are delaying the start of the construction of the destroyers type 42A and the torpedo boats type 41A by bringing forward new requests.

Quartermaster General explained the history of these requests. Naval Staff cannot reject substantial improvements which came up during the planning.

IV. Deputy Chief, Naval Intelligence Division

The Foreign Office has received and passed on strictly confidential reports on Turko-British discussions, also a directive to the British Ambassador in Ankara. He was instructed to keep on with the negotiations with the Turks. Great Britain still intends to draw Turkey into the war. If need be the negotiations must be protracted until the invasion on the continent starts. Britain is to demand the right to occupy the air bases on 15 Feb; the assistance in the way of armaments required by the Turks is to be completed by 1 May. The air bases are necessary for the launching of operation "Saturn". The British consider a Bulgarian/German attack on Turkey improbable. The Turks cannot be informed about the Allied plans until they have entered the war. They have then to occupy the Aegean islands belonging to Greece except for the Dodecanese and the Chachalta line.

V. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy informed us that Foreign Armies West thinks that the enemy plans to carry out his main attack in the western area. Chief of Staff does not think we have any authentic basis for conjectures about political differences between the Russians and Anglo-Americans on the subject of an operation against the Balkans. No evidence has been brought forward either for or against such differences. We cannot base our assessment of the enemy plans on what is no more than speculation.

Chief, Naval Staff is another who does not believe that the British and the Americans will land in one place only.

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In a Highly Restricted Circle

VI. Report from Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section

After conversations with Auxiliary Cruiser Section on 10 Jan. Group West submitted a proposal for dispatching the blockade runners TANNENFELS, HIMALAYA, FUSIYAMA and ELSA ESSBERGER from the French Atlantic coast. The first essential is that the weather must either be very unfavorable for enemy take-offs and landings or preclude flying altogether. Group West has requested Commanding Admiral, Submarines to assign two more submarines to a position on about 25° W to observe weather conditions. In order to attract as little attention as possible the blockade runners are to commence their westward passage on different courses without escort by destroyers or torpedo boats. Light naval forces will stand in readiness in their usual training areas, the torpedo boats in BF 55, the destroyers in BF 94, so that they can give assistance as inconspicuously as possible.

Group West's plan is that the first blockade runner to be definitely detected by the enemy Air Force should turn about at a favorable opportunity and try to hoodwink the enemy into thinking that she is on her return passage. She is to be picked up by destroyers and torpedo boats as quickly as possible. This measure is fairly certain to divert the enemy's attention from the other three blockade runners. On the whole Naval Staff agreed with the Group's plans on the routes to be used by the blockade runners. The general line is that at dawn on the second day they should be steering deceptive courses such as might be used by the enemy shipping. The northernmost ship is to proceed from Brest in a northwesterly direction so that she will be on WSW course off the exit of St. George's Channel early the next morning. The southernmost ship is to sail just out of sight of land off the Spanish north coast. By day she will proceed on southerly, by night on southwesterly courses and thus make her way into the Atlantic between the Azores and Madeira.

Chief, Naval Staff consented to the plan but reserved final judgment pending his conference with the Fuehrer.

VII. Report by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy reported that the Fuehrer, who is anxious about the enemy threat to the

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Aegean, is expecting increased activity by our submarines in this area. Submarine U "616" on passage to the east has used up all her torpedoes in action against the enemy and is returning to Toulon. She must be replaced by the next boat to be at operational readiness. The decision on the transfer of PT boats from the Adriatic to the Aegean Sea rests with Group South, who will decide the matter when all boats in the Adriatic are again operational, i.e. they can postpone their decision until the end of February. Chief of Staff pointed to the rising shipping losses in the Aegean Sea. Chief, Naval Staff declared that this state of affairs makes it essential to devote our resources to the production of vessels which can act as transports. He is to inform the Fuehrer on these Aegean problems in his next report.

VIII. Army Situation

The continued enemy attacks on the Crimea were repulsed. We gained a defensive success near Nikopol. The major defensive battle in the Kirovograd area still continues. The counter-attack launched by our 3rd Armored Corps is making headway.

The situation in the Pripet area is less favorable. The small number of troops we have there are retreating under heavy enemy pressure and attempting to hold the enemy on the Stir line, the front line of World War I.

Very heavy fighting is reported from the 2nd Army area south of Minsk. Our troops have retreated behind the Pripet river. The situation is not clear. Activity near Vitebsk has decreased.

The fighting is also continuing in the 16th Army area. Enemy attacks extended north of Veliki Luki.

According to information received from General Staff, Foreign Armies East, the Red Army in the Far East has two Army Groups at its disposal, one in the Vladivostok, one in the Lake Baikal area, in all about 800,000 men.

The heavy fighting on the Italian front continues.

After the conference came the discussion between Chief, Naval Staff and Commanding Admiral, Fleet. Chief of Staff and Chief, Operations Division with his Chief, Operations Branch, also Chief of Staff, Group North/Fleet took part.

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Admiral Schniewind set out his opinion on the question of the commitment of the surface vessels and further training for the destroyers and torpedo boats. The report was based on a paper filed under 1/Skl 135/44 Gkdos. Chefs, in file 1/Skl I op VIII, 1. Further copies were passed to Quartermaster Division.

After hearing this report Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that all its proposals regarding equipment and personnel should be reviewed and as far as possible a decision made according to the wishes of the Fleet. But before deciding on any measure, due consideration must be given to its repercussions elsewhere.

On the December operations Chief, Naval Staff remarked that it was highly unfortunate that we should hardly ever again find such favorable situations as prevailed during the operations of the SCHARNHORST and the action in the Bay of Biscay. We shall never get any different sort of support from the Air Force. If we could not take advantage of these two opportunities, we shall not be able to profit from future similar occasions.

Operations in the course of the enemy landings would only be suicide, if indeed the enemy so much as gives us a chance to attempt them.

Chief, Naval Staff was therefore not certain about the wisdom of the proposal to move the PRINZ EUGEN into the Skagerrak. For the meantime he feels inclined to assign the ship to the Task Force. The decision on this point must be made by the beginning of March. He has given orders for the submission of a draft proposal for the execution of this move, so that he can be well-briefed before reporting to the Fuehrer.

Special Items

I. Operations Division has noticed that when various questions concerning the Adriatic area (direction of shipping, formation of a transport flotilla, allocation of Siebel ferries) have had to be settled between German Naval Command, Italy, Group South/Admiral Adriatic and Quartermaster Division, the basic order from Quartermaster Division of 19 Nov. 1943 regarding the competence of the authorities in the Mediterranean area is not strictly followed by German Naval Command, Italy. On these occasions Quartermaster Division also seems to have neglected the clear-cut pronouncements of the basic order. Operations Division has therefore drawn the attention of Quartermaster Division to the frequent decisions, approved

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by the very highest authority, that the bulk of the transport work is to be carried out along the east coast of the Adriatic. The reasons for this decision still hold good. Quartermaster Division has been requested to reverse the decisions which were out of line with this ruling and for the future to adhere to the approved policy.

II. Report on Submarines as at 1 Jan. 1944

1. In commission on 1 Dec. 1943	419 boats
Commissioned in December	28 "
Withdrawn from commission in December	2 "
Losses in action in December	9 "
Losses at home in December	<u>0 "</u>
In commission on 1 Jan. 1944	436 "
add foreign boats: front-line service	2 "
home	6 "
Given to Japan	1 "
2. <u>Distribution:</u>	
Boats on operations	168 + 2 foreign
Boats under Submarine Acceptance Command undergoing training for operations	181 + 6 foreign
Training and experimental boats	<u>87</u>
	436 + 8 foreign
3. <u>Distribution of the operational boats:</u>	
Atlantic	130
Mediterranean	13
Northern Waters	19
Black Sea	<u>6</u>
	168

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4. Losses:

Expressed as percentages of the average number of boats on operations in December (preceding month in parentheses):

Atlantic	10.4%	(20.5%)
Northern Waters	0%	(0%)
Mediterranean	40%	(20%)
Black Sea	0%	(0%)
Percentage of the total number of operational submarines	5.2%	(9.8%)

III. Naval Staff have issued following directive to Naval Ordnance Division, Underwater Obstacles Branch:

"The following table contains a guide for the distribution of the RMK mines which we plan to manufacture near the laying sites:

1/5 Jutland coast

1/5 Holland coast

2/5 Channel area (Belgian/Northern French coast) and

1/5 Biscay coast (south of Gironde).

We must reckon on the fact that we shall probably have to go beyond the production figure of 25,000 mines provided for in our present plans. With this point in mind you are to plan another manufacturing site on the south coast of France (west of Marseilles). Further you are to investigate whether it is a practical proposition to set up centers in Germany suitable for the manufacture of separate parts (iron frames for the mine body, gas pipes for the tripod, boxes for the explosive charge) and/or complete mines, which can then be delivered to the more distant theaters (Black Sea, Central and Western Mediterranean) as they are required."

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Situation 14 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Portugal, the INDOMITABLE put out from Casablanca on 4 Jan. on southerly course. On the same day the French cruisers PRIMAUGUET and JEANNE D'ARC, 2 U.S. auxiliary aircraft carriers, 5 French submarines, 3 of them heavily damaged, and 6 LCT's lying in Casablanca.

At 1538 a British vessel was located in DH 5820.

2. Own Situation:

According to dead reckoning there is a certain danger that the RIO GRANDE may run into convoy HX 275.

The convoy will be on the following position lines:

On 18 Jan. from BC 44 to BC 72,

on 19 Jan. from BC 16 via 52 to 83,

on 20 Jan. from AJ 86 via BC 35 to BC 93,.

on 21 Jan. from AJ 65 via AK 79 to BD 49.

This convoy will probably move on the Great Circle through the center of the position lines.

Operations Division passed this information to the RIO GRANDE and issued the following directive:

"After passing point "Vera" make your way north behind HX 42 using zig-zag courses and reduced speed, especially at night, even if you do not reach point "Erna" until after 22 Jan. The boat will wait."

On meeting other vessels in the northern Atlantic, do not turn sharply away and withdraw as in other waters, but move off quietly on zig-zag courses."

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The following directive also issued to the RIO GRANDE:

"1. For your rendezvous with the submarine, besides the usual recognition signal, you will put up a clothes line with washing in a conspicuous place on the fore part of the ship if the weather is fair; if the weather is bad you will hoist fire hoses on the mast aft.

2. Only medium air patrol is to be expected on the entire route north of point "Vera", as our submarines have not appeared there for some time. Nevertheless it is essential to keep a sharp look-out and always follow an inconspicuous pattern of behavior."

Various foreign press and radio reports on the loss of the BURGENLAND have come to hand. Apparently she fired on an attacking plane and scuttled herself when warships came on the scene. 145 prisoners were taken to a Brazilian harbor.

According to press reports, 75 men from the ALSTERUFER were taken prisoner. Records at Operations Division show that there were 76 men aboard.

Naval Attache, Tokyo was asked to clear up and confirm the matter (see radiogram 1630).

Following directive issued to the CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN by radiogram 1631:

"Beginning on 26 Jan., each day at 1200 local mean time you will steer to a point five degrees farther east than point "Loeffel" and wait within a radius of 15 miles until darkness. Withdraw by night and repeat the same procedure the following day. For the present two submarines will be assigned there. After supplies have been taken over, until receipt of further orders you will wait at "Charlottenhof" and in the large grid square east of that point."

To assist the departure of the blockade runners, Submarine Division was asked to station one extra boat in BE 10 or BE 40 and one in AL 23 or 24 for about a week from 19 Jan. They are to send two weather reports daily.

A decision on whether we shall carry out the plan for the blockade-runner operation will probably be made on 18 Jan.

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Group West has drawn up orders for the sailing of the FUSIYAMA, ELSA ESSBERGER, TANNENFELS, HIMALAYA under date 10 Jan. and submitted them through Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section. Copy as per 1/Skl 126/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in file 1/Skl I k II.

Naval Staff gave approval subject to the following amendments:

a. As far as possible aim to have only one ship turn back if enemy planes detect our move.

b. The proposed courses Black and Red (the northernmost and second northernmost ships) are approved.

c. The proposed course Blue (third northernmost) is to be changed so that her night route runs from BE 6245 to BE 2838 and from there in a general southwesterly direction. The time schedule for the proposed course Red is to be adjusted accordingly.

d. The courses for the third and fourth days on the proposed course Yellow (the southernmost) must be laid out as courses due south followed by night courses in a southwesterly direction, that is from CF 6287, 5834, 8834 to DH 1422, continuing from there to the southwest.

e. Investigate whether the route of the southernmost ship on the second night can be changed so that it ends in BE 9655, giving her an approximately southern course for the following day.

Relevant directive issued to Group West.

Group West also submitted minutes of a discussion held on 11 Jan. at their headquarters between Naval Staff, Operations Division, Auxiliary Cruiser Section and the captains of the ELSA ESSBERGER and the FUSIYAMA. Subject was the sailing orders for the blockade runners. Copy as per 1/Skl 127/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in file 1/Skl I k II.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Sixty-seven planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay, mainly during the evening and night. The small number of flights on the preceding days is readily explained

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by the unfavorable flying weather over Great Britain. One Allied vessel was located at 0421 in 8470, one at 0934 in BE 5580, one at 1555 in BE 78, one at 1653 in CF 1610 and one at 2203 in BE 1350.

The SL convoys SL 137 to SL 143 were detected by radio intelligence but as so far there has been no sign of SL 144, which according to schedule should have left England on about 12 Jan.; an interruption in this service and in the OS counter-convoys seems likely. A similar occurrence was noticed prior to the Allied landing in North Africa in November 1942 when the last SL and OS convoys were under way about the middle of October.

According to an intelligence report received from England via Switzerland, on 12 Jan. Canadian and American troops, including special landing divisions, will begin a week of large-scale maneuvers in the area west of Plymouth. The maneuver area extends from a point west of Plymouth, where the main body of troops will leave the coast, along the coastal strip to Falmouth. Plan of maneuvers:

One British infantry division will defend the mainland. The invasion army will embark in Plymouth on 12 Jan. and with the support of U.S. bombers and fighters from the air bases at Callington, Tiverton and Lyndhurst will attempt to attack from the sea and break through the gun emplacements and defense positions.

At 1035 our air reconnaissance sighted altogether 14 steamers, 5 patrol vessels, 2 motor minesweepers and 20 M.T.B.s between Plymouth and the Isle of Wight (the M.T.B.s were off Salcombe), and towards 1500 11 steamers and 4 small warships in the area Lizard Head - Fowey - Plymouth.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One mine was cleared in the Brest area, one off La Pallice and one off the Gironde.

The steamer OSORNO docked in Pauillac. The MOEVE put into Brest at 0800. The JAGUAR and the GREIF carried out training exercises in Concarneau roads during the day. One submarine

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was escorted in and one out.

Channel Coast:

At 1230 a fishing smack struck a mine and sank 6 miles northeast of Dunkirk. Secrecy about the eastward passage of torpedo boats T "22" and T "23" will be preserved in the manner proposed by Group West. (See War Diary 6 Jan.) According to the plans of the Bureau of Naval Armament, Naval (Ship) Construction Division, the first boat will begin her dockyard overhaul at the beginning of February, the second not until the beginning of March.

Naval Staff therefore decided that the second boat is meantime to be placed at the disposal of Group North/Fleet for operations in the Skagerrak.

Copy as per order 1/Skl 141/44 Gkdos. Chefs, in War Diary, Part C, Vol. d.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

On 13 Jan. mine-exploding vessel "28" cleared five mines north of Borkum, one north of Norderney and one southwest of Heligoland. On 14 Jan. mine-exploding vessel "11" was heavily damaged by a mine north of Norderney.

Convoy 1207 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe is proceeding according to plan.

Four convoys totaling about 50,000 G.R.T. were taken through the IJsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland. In the evening enemy planes, who seemed to be dropping mines, were shelled by naval anti-aircraft batteries Borkum and Norderney.

Naval Command, North suggested that in view of the acute shortage of cable, instead of laying the dependent minefields as proposed in the Wielinger Channel, instructions should be given to the torpedo battery at Flushing to fire an MTA barrage if there is danger of enemy vessels approaching. The Command requested Naval Staff's approval of the plan and allocation of the MTA's.

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Naval Staff decided:

1. The MTA is not suitable for the purpose mentioned, as the spread is too great to guarantee an effective barrage. Besides the required number of MTA's will not be available for some time and their employment for defensive purposes cannot be justified.

2. As the site of the barrage is so close to the base, it is possible that ground mines may have to be laid by vessels. The LM mines necessary for this purpose can be kept ready as emergency stores.

Regarding the control over Danish fishing, it was learned that the Naval Special Operations Unit in process of formation is not yet in a position to take over this task. Naval Staff have therefore asked Armed Forces High Command, Intelligence Division, Secret Intelligence Section for information as to whether four suitable vessels available in the area of Commanding Admiral, Baltic, Defenses might be used for this duty. The assignments will be planned by Group North/Fleet.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Seven planes were detected over the North Sea in the forenoon and three in the afternoon. Radio intelligence discovered that the cruisers CUMBERLAND and NIGERIA are in the Scapa area.

Own Situation:

At 1150 twelve enemy planes unsuccessfully attacked a southbound convoy consisting of three steamers and submarine chasers UJ "1702" and "1701" near Lister. At 1158 five enemy planes gunned and torpedoed a southbound convoy consisting of three steamers escorted by minesweeper M "496" and patrol vessel VP "5307" near Lister. The ore steamer ENTRERIOS (5,179 G.R.T.) was sunk and VP "5307" was damaged. At 1238 the first mentioned convoy was again attacked by nine torpedo bombers. The ore steamer WITTEKIND (4,029 G.R.T.) was sunk during this raid. While warding off these attacks our fighters brought down five planes and shore and ship-based anti-aircraft guns brought down a sixth.

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Altogether 24 ships were escorted north and 30 south. Seventeen were delayed awaiting escorts.

A supplementary report from submarine U "957" reveals that she sank a destroyer in AC 5637 in the course of the operation against the PQ convoy on 28 Dec.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Sixty planes bombed our coastal area on the evening of 13 Jan. Material damage was slight. At noon on 14 Jan. our batteries shelled three towed convoys between Kronstadt and Lissi Noss. Very heavy return fire caused material damage to our ammunition stores and ready-use ammunition. At 1130 and 1430 two low flying planes gunned the command post of Naval Shore Commander R, the Staff Headquarters of the 530th Naval Artillery Battalion and the supply route. An enemy plane flew over Battery Dubnia at a height of 50 meters.

2. Own Situation:

Two ground mines were cleared in the inner Pomeranian Bight.

According to a Finnish report, the steamer DIONE was damaged in the Finnish Skerries on 10 Jan. after striking a ground mine. The area had been covered by a minesweeping plane fourteen times.

V. Submarine Warfare

Reports on enemy air attacks are on hand from four submarines in BE and BF. According to radio intelligence, at 2250 17 planes of No. 19 Group were dispatched against submarine U "212" which was sighted in BF 8321 at 2115.

Submarine U "621", which was attacked by an enemy plane in BE 50 on 13 Jan., suffered casualties and must return. Submarine U "426" which was raided in BE 6669 on 8 Jan. has not reported since.

At 0417 on 13 Jan. submarine U "471" attacked an armed vessel of 9,000 G.R.T. sailing independently on course 85° in AL 6712. She fired a spread of three torpedoes and a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo. A "Zaunkoenig" detonation and sinking noises were heard.

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VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

A strong formation with fighter escort attacked our advanced position at Valogne by day. In Belgium/Northern France a strong formation of about 400 planes with fighter escort flew over the Ostend, Amiens/St. Valery en Caux areas. Anti-aircraft positions and airfields were raided. In a fresh flight over the area Walcheren - Louvain - St. Valery en Caux between 1300 and 1600 planes, including 400 fighters, attacked some fifteen construction sites and the installations of the first defense zone. According to a report from Commanding General, Armed Forces, West the damage was slight. Three enemy planes were brought down.

Three of our planes raided London in the evening.

2. Reich Territory:

At noon a plane penetrated over Esbjerg and into the Stettin area.

On the night of 14 Jan. several hundred planes were over the Wittenberg, Eberswald, Frankfurt/Oder, Leipzig, Nordhausen areas. Bombs were dropped in the Air Force areas Westphalia and Hanover, in the outskirts of Brunswick and on places in the region of the Hermann Goering works. A report on our defensive successes is not yet to hand.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance over Bizerta. Interpretation of the photographs reveals 1 vessel, probably a PT boat (artillery), 6 LST's, 1 LCT 350, 1 tanker, 26 freighters and 12 coastal freighters. Bad weather prevented photographic reconnaissance over Alexandria.

Five steamers and five destroyers were at sea on course 120° 110 miles northnorthwest of Benghazi.

The enemy sent 144 ground attack planes and 123 fighter-bombers over the right flank of the Italian front. There were also enemy flights over our rear area. Two enemy planes were brought down by anti-aircraft guns.

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In the area Air Force Command, Southeast a strong formation escorted by fighters attacked the airfield at Mostar. Five planes were brought down, two of them by fighters. Seven reconnaissance planes were detected over the Aegean Sea.

Seven of our Stukas sank three ships of 200 to 300 G.R.T. in Lissa harbor.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

The WARSPITE, 1 FIJI class cruiser, 2 French torpedo cruisers, 2 auxiliary cruisers, 12 destroyers, 6 submarines, 46 freighters, 12 tankers were among the vessels lying in Gibraltar on the evening of 13 Jan.

On the forenoon of 13 Jan. an Italian destroyer and 5 Italian submarines put in from the Mediterranean and the FIJI class cruiser mentioned above put in from the Atlantic. On 14 Jan. 1 destroyer arrived in Gibraltar from the Mediterranean and 5 U.S. corvettes from the Atlantic. One Dutch submarine and 2 destroyers put out for the Mediterranean. Patrols in the Straits of Gibraltar have been strengthened.

At 0910 Tres Forcas sighted a convoy of 4 freighters and 1 destroyer on easterly course. They had put out from Gibraltar at 0400. At 0845 a corvette and 4 LCT's left Gibraltar for the Mediterranean.

Own Situation:

One steamer (4,580 G.R.T.) was escorted off the French south coast.

Minesweeper M "6024" was rammed by an Italian steamer and put into Genoa.

Group West asked for a statement on whether it is planned to transfer all PT boats at present in the Western Mediterranean

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to the Adriatic and if so whether additional PT boats will be transferred to the Western Mediterranean later. If such is the case, the Group plans to begin long-term preparations now. Other preparations which can be completed during the transfer period can wait until orders for the move are to hand.

Naval Staff confirmed that it is planned to transfer all boats into the Adriatic Sea and that as yet no date can be given for the transfer of additional PT boats into the Western Mediterranean. Naval Staff agreed to the Group's plans for making preparations.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance at 1850 on 13 Jan. 40 vessels, probably merchant ships or landing craft, 3 vessels thought to be cruisers and 5 patrol vessels were on northerly course 20 miles west of Naples, and at 2100 what looked like 7 merchant ships and 1 destroyer were 65 miles southwest of Naples, probably bound for this harbor.

Own Situation:

On 13 Jan. some of the workers at the Ansaldo shipyard in Genoa went on strike because of their food.

On 3 Jan. submarine U "642" sank a steamer of 7,000 G.R.T. in CJ 8395.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

A minesweeper was sunk at 2130 on 12 Jan. during the shelling of Split. The shelling seemed to come from a destroyer.

Submarine chaser UJ "205" was put into commission.

On 13 Jan. the steamer ARBOREA was set on fire by enemy planes off Sibenik.

The island of Solta is in our hands. The mopping up was completed without making contact with the enemy. Some places on Brac offered slight resistance.

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With regard to the strengthening of the anti-aircraft defense in the Adriatic, Naval Staff informed Group South (with copy to Admiral, Adriatic) that with our moderate resources we can only fulfill their demands for the eastern ports and shipyards to a limited extent. Group South is to report the objects needing protection in order of priority.

b. Aegean Sea:

A late report states that the enemy planes which attacked Monemvasia on the forenoon of 12 Jan. were beyond the range of our guns. Two auxiliary sailing vessels were sunk. On 13 Jan. a small convoy on passage from Mudros to Salonika was broken up by heavy weather. One escort vessel sank, another ran aground. The other vessels put into an emergency harbor.

For unknown reasons the Swedish government suddenly canceled the supply trip to the Cyclades by the Swedish steamer WIRIL, which was scheduled for 18 Jan. Admiral, Aegean thinks that their action may be connected with the concentration of enemy warships in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean reported that submarine U "543" put out from Pola for the Eastern Mediterranean on 12 Jan. as replacement for the returning submarine U "616", and the next boat to be ready in Toulon, probably U "230", will be sent to carry out the scheduled assignments.

Naval Staff have sent Admiral, Aegean 500 EMF, 300 EMR and 100 UMA mines as his January allocation. It was not possible to send him his requested quota of EMC and UMB mines; instead the allocation of EMF and EMR was doubled.

c. Black Sea:

In the afternoon our convoy putting out from Ak Mechet was raided by a strong enemy formation of more than 100 planes. One naval landing craft was damaged. Our defense had no success.

On the afternoon of 13 Jan. enemy guns unsuccessfully shelled a vessel which had run aground near Ochakov. Our guns returned the fire.

The large convoy was taken from Sevastopol to Constanta on the

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evening of 13 Jan. Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The Polish Exile Government propose to open negotiations with Russia, with Great Britain and the U.S.A. also taking part. So far the Anglo-American governments have made no official comment on this proposal.

Allied observers note that recent political developments are tending to make the states allied with Germany more than ever determined to fight to the very end on her side. This statement also holds good for Finland.

The U.S. Secretary of the Navy in a speech in Cleveland declared that it would be wishful thinking to assume that a breakdown on the German home front would soon end the European conflict. The present home front in Germany was very different from the last war.

U.S. Secretary of State Hull declared that an anti-U.S. bloc is now clearly forming in South America. The overthrow of two South American governments friendly to the Allies was very significant.

Rear Admiral Sparzani has been appointed Chief of General Staff of the Italian Fascist Navy.

Allied opinion in Ankara generally interprets the appointment of General Orbay as the new Chief of the Turkish General Staff as a stage in Turkey's preparation to make her decision not later than the spring. Orbay is associated with a plan to re-arm Turkey with Allied assistance.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. According to a report from the German Embassy in Dublin, the following are interned in Ireland: 69 men, including one midshipman and eight cadets from the destroyer Z "27"; the commander, two officers and 90 men from torpedo boat T "26" and six men from torpedo boat T "25".

II. Chief, Naval Communications Division reported that the Naval Radio Beacon Station at Seville had been searched, obviously after pressure by the British. The station has been shut down

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for the present. Contrary to former occasions no advance warning was given this time by the Spanish naval authorities. An unofficial warning was passed by a subordinate.

III. Quartermaster General:

a. There are still 414 auxiliary sailing vessels in the Aegean Sea, totaling about 27,000 G.R.T.

b. Following receipt of Naval Staff's opinion about operations by emergency formations as laid down in Fuehrer directive 51, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is to refrain from calling on class "C" units provisionally until 1 Mar. 1944.

In reply to inquiries Chief, Naval Staff again confirmed that the demands of naval warfare cannot take second place to the training of emergency formations.

c. Armed Forces High Command has issued regulations about the duties of the Military Police detachments. A point of interest to the Navy is that the combing-out of personnel to be done by these detachments will include naval units.

Commander in Chief, Navy has no objections to this procedure. It is understood that the Navy will be heard first in every case.

d. Armed Forces High Command takes the view that for obvious political reasons it is hardly possible for us to have a German in charge of the shipyard at Odessa.

Commander in Chief, Navy will talk with Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff and make it clear that no submarines can be built in Odessa unless a German is there to direct affairs.

e. Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has ordered the 2nd Air Force to transfer four heavy anti-aircraft batteries from Fiume immediately. They are to be used for the protection of the submarine base at Pola.

IV. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division:

The Fuehrer has given orders that the Japanese are to be given a free hand to copy the German armaments delivered to

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them. This decision thus rejects the objections raised by economic interests. It is incorrect to assume that the objections came from the Navy.

V. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division:

It is reported that the battleship DUKE OF YORK recently visited a Russian port on the Arctic. Possibly she was on her return cruise when she was used to protect the PQ convoy over Christmas.

Chief, Naval Intelligence Division passed on a report on invasion preparations, received from a specially reliable source. The report states that about 750,000 G.R.T. of shipping are assembled in western and southern ports.

In a highly restricted circle

VI. Army Situation:

The casualties we have suffered in our defense against the enemy penetration of the Crimea are such that we cannot fill in the gaps.

The enemy continued his attacks on the eastern front. Nineteen attacks were repulsed on a single day in the Nikopol area alone. The 8th Army Corps made a thrust, which after regrouping gained us about 20 kilometers of ground to the west. Heavy fighting broke out in the Uman area. Resisting fiercely the 2nd Army withdrew from almost complete encirclement and fought its way into new positions west of the Pripet. The enemy was thrown back over the Pripet.

Heavy fighting has again broken out in the Vitebsk area. The enemy was able to extend his penetrations in the 16th Army area, but the danger of a breakthrough has been removed for the present.

The enemy achieved a deeper penetration near Novgorod. The enemy attack southwest of Leningrad was also renewed and developed into an attempt to break through the positions of the 3rd SS Armored Corps. Fighting is still continuing in this area, but some anxiety is felt about the development of the situation.

In Italy the fierce battles in the Venafero and Cassino areas are still continuing. In some places we have had to withdraw

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our lines behind the Bernhard position. We have suffered considerable losses.

VII. Chief, Operations Division again reported on the further employment of surface blockade runners in accordance with the brief 1/Skl I g 1304/44 Gkdos. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

Fresh data on the situation with regard to raw materials differ from earlier figures in that they show that at a pinch about 250 tons of raw rubber monthly can cover our most urgent requirements. Hence in an emergency our present stocks of rubber plus the supplies brought in by the OSORNO could last till the freight submarines come into operation in the fall of 1945, provided that enemy action does not appreciably interfere with the manufacture of buna (synthetic rubber) in Germany. However, the Reich Deputy for Rubber and the Chief of Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare both consider it essential for us to procure fair quantities of rubber in the meantime. Chief, Naval Staff ordered that Chief, Operations Division should himself report to the Fuehrer on this matter.

Special Items

I. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff have issued a directive on construction plans in the southeastern area:

In view of the possibility of a major enemy landing in the area of Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast in the spring, all available labor must be employed primarily on the improvement of the roads and railways required for the supply services and movement of reserves, and on the strengthening of coastal fortifications. Other construction plans must take second place to these demands. Naval Staff was asked to state whether in view of the special difficulties involved in taking supplies to Salonika, the submarine base might be transferred to Volos, also whether any plans have been made for such a transfer. For copy see teletype 2100.

Quartermaster Division is to take the matter in hand.

II. Under date 4 Jan. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, submitted their view that the marked emphasis which the enemy is placing on his preparations for the formation of a second front in the west, serves to cloak the major attack on the fortress of Europe which will come elsewhere. Apart

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from Portugal the Balkans would seem to be the most likely theater. The main thrust will probably be concentrated against the west coast, approximately in the area extending from the Gulf of Arta to south of Split; the secondary thrust, which will come later, will push up through the Aegean towards Salonika. Probably in these circumstances Turkey will give up her policy of neutrality. To provide for this eventuality, the preparations against major landings in the southeast are to be checked and strengthened as follows:

Increase in the number of drafts from the area of
Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest;

drafts from the area of Commanding General, Armed Forces,
West and Commander, Replacement Army;

assistance from the Bulgarians.

In addition to these plans for drafts in the event of an enemy landing, steps are to be taken to improve the defenses.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy asked Naval Staff to examine this matter, submit their views and give an account of possible steps to be taken by the Navy.

After investigation Operations Division submitted the following opinion to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy:

"Naval Staff considers that the southeastern area, particularly the Adriatic and Aegean, is a distinctly weak spot in our defensive system. Matters are extremely difficult because transport facilities are poor and often interrupted, and the only way to improve them is to resume the sea traffic along the Dalmatian coast and from the Adriatic to the Aegean.

Bearing these facts in mind, after the Italian collapse in October 1943 Naval Staff decided to concentrate our strength in the Eastern Mediterranean and issued appropriate orders. (See 1/Skl I op 30089/43 Gkdos. of 28 Oct., copy to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy.)

In detail:

1. The following are at present on transfer from the western Mediterranean to the Adriatic or are scheduled for transfer:

two PT boat flotillas (11 boats)

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two motor minesweeper flotillas (13 vessels)
and, provisionally,

ten naval landing craft.

If the situation requires it, we shall attempt a reorganization of command and transfer part of these forces to the Aegean.

We cannot transfer any more forces, as we are continuing sea transport along the Italian west coast and this traffic must be protected.

We are using the Italian craft in our possession to build up the following units in the Adriatic:

One torpedo boat flotilla (6 boats)

one escort flotilla (6 vessels)

one submarine chaser flotilla (8 vessels)

a large number of harbor defense vessels.

2. Whether we can protect the west Balkan coast by mines depends upon how we mop up the islands; minelaying operations from the northern Adriatic into the area from the Gulf of Arta to Split are impossible at present. We are examining the possibility of minelaying operations from the Aegean with the vessels breaking through the Straits of Otranto. The material for these operations is available.

3. No improvement of the coastal defense can be effected by the withdrawal of forces from the area of German Naval Command, Italy. All the battery crews who can be released at all (there are unmanned batteries in the Adriatic area) have already been withdrawn. Nor can we count on any transfer of this kind in case "Gertrud" materializes - the naval tasks in the Ligurian Sea will remain even then.

Attention is drawn to the request submitted by 1/Skl 42406/43 Gkdos. on 19 Dec. for occupation of the Dalmatian islands by the Army."

III. Group South reported that they are not receiving adequate information on the development of the situation on the southern

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part of the eastern front. For the present the Group will not take any steps to transfer vessels from the Odessa area, especially as such a move in the original ("pre-treaty") Rumanian area requires previous approval from Armed Forces High Command..

The Group must receive their information from the Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group A. A note to this effect was sent to the Group with the comment that they are bound to receive information on important questions from Naval Staff.

IV. In accordance with a directive from Commander in Chief, Navy, Naval Ordnance Division, Torpedo Branch submitted a report containing data about the use of torpedoes against shallow draught vessels. For copy see teletype 0630.

Situation 15 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

On 8 Jan. the British Admiralty informed Allied merchant shipping: The warning system in the area BAMS 7 (Indian Ocean) has been changed. The new procedure is as follows:

a. A red warning indicates that one or more enemy planes are approaching or are in the area concerned; or that two or more unidentified planes are approaching the area simultaneously.

b. A white warning cancels the red one.

c. Both types of warning, red and white, (122 groups not deciphered).....They interpret as follows:

1. Approaching Calcutta - coastal area - and Burma and 18° N.

2. Approaching Vizagapatam - the area between 15° and 18° N and the east coast from(The last 140 groups have not yet been deciphered).

Naval Staff informed Naval Attaché Tokyo to this effect by telegram 0300.

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2. Own Situation:

Following directives issued to the RIO GRANDE:

"a. 1. According to dead reckoning ON 220 should be on the following position lines:

On 18 Jan. from AK 41 to BD 11,

on 19 Jan. from AJ 67 to BC 37,

on 20 Jan. from AJ 89 to BC 54.

The convoy will probably cruise in the southernmost third of the area denoted in the position lines, possibly even farther south.

2. Naval Staff recommends a break-through between HX 275 and ON 220 on 20 Jan. As the data are based on dead reckoning only, more precise instructions cannot be given. The ship must act according to the prevailing situation.

3. Endeavor to approach point "Erna" earlier than 24 Jan. as the next ON convoy is expected there on 25 Jan.

b. The submarine is to be informed by radiogram on:

1. Maximum continuous speed;

2. Condition of ship and engines;

3. Special requests and proposals;

4. Important experiences so far."

Naval Staff assumes that the WESERLAND will leave the waiting area on approximately 18 Jan. According to dead reckoning she will pass FV 13 about 25 Jan., cross the equator in FF 37 on 31 Jan. and pass DE 16 on 12 Feb.

Operations Division has informed Submarine Division accordingly and added the directive that the boats must be given due warning not to attack independently sailing vessels in the vicinity of the WESERLAND's route; the embargo on such attacks is valid for a period of from six days before until six days after the given passing dates. Copy of letter l/Skl Ik 144/44

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Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

With regard to the directive from Naval Staff on the courses for the blockade-runners (see War Diary 14 Jan.), Group West reported that the proposed amendment for course Blue would result in three courses being massed together. There can be no time interval between course Blue and course Red, if the "regatta principle" is to be maintained. The Group does not consider it advisable to have the third ship from the north sail independently one day before or after the other ships and requested that course Blue be left as proposed in the plans. The Group expects that one of the three northern ships will have to turn about and the others can then be directed as planned by Naval Staff.

Operations Division decided that the regatta principle is to be maintained and agreed that course Blue should remain as proposed by the Group. However if one of the three northern ships has to turn about, course Blue at 0800 on the third night must lie about 100 miles farther north than planned by Group West; otherwise the distance from the route taken by enemy vessels sailing alone is too large.

The Naval Attaché, Tokyo was given the following information in reply to his inquiry:

- "1. All information on surface and under water location and suitable counter-measures can be passed unreservedly to the Japanese.
2. Torpedo T V (Zaunkoenig) and all warhead pistols with the exception of Pi I and II are to be kept secret from Japan."

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Twelve planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. Seven enemy vessels were located in the rendezvous area between 0955 and 1655.

According to an intelligence report from London dated 7 Jan., about 100 Liberty ships of 7,000 to 8,000 G.R.T. are assembled on the west coast of England in the Barrow area for the transfer of troops and material.

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Photographic reconnaissance of Salcombe showed 12 skoots and landing craft, 20 craft more than 15 meters long and 12 smaller craft.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One submarine was escorted out.

At 1700 the steamer OSTERODE put out from St. Nazaire for Lorient.

Channel Coast:

Patrol positions were not taken up owing to the moonlight. There were no convoys. An EFA mine was cut near the Channel Islands and towed in. The planned torpedo operation by the 5th PT Boat Flotilla was canceled because of moonlight.

The 2nd, 6th and 8th PT Boat Flotillas, each with nine boats, are lying in Ijmuiden, the 4th PT Boat Flotilla with six boats is in the Hook of Holland, the 5th PT Boat Flotilla with seven boats in Cherbourg.

Special Items

Naval Staff plans to allocate 15,000 RMK beach mines to the area under Group West. These will be manufactured by the Todt Organization in the coastal area, if possible near the operational sites; the present quotas will be 10,000 in the limited Channel area and 5,000 south of the Gironde, the latter may possibly also be used along the Mediterranean coast. Relevant directive issued to Group West.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

One mine was cleared west of Hook of Holland, one west of Blaavands Huk and one west of Heligoland. Torpedo boats T "28" and T "29" started on their passage from the Elbe to the west.

Five convoys totaling approximately 97,000 G.R.T. were taken through the Ijsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland.

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Mine exploding vessel "11" put into Wesermuende (Bremerhaven) seriously damaged by a mine.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Fifteen planes were detected over the North Sea.

Own Situation:

At 1230 the towed convoy consisting of submarine U "956" and the weather observation ship HESSEN were in AB 6582 making for AB 9665.

No reports were received from Admiral, Arctic Coast. In the other areas 29 ships were escorted north and 44 south.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Beginning 0430 heavy gunfire from Leningrad and the Karelian coast covered our front. Heavy gunfire was also reported from the Oranienbaum pocket. Beginning 0800 a constant stream of enemy planes flew in low to attack. Brisk truck and sledge traffic was observed between Lissi Noss and Kronstadt and Oranienbaum.

Between 0508 and 0625 a mine detonation was observed west of Kurgolovo. There was brisk air activity over Tyters Island.

2. Own Situation:

While maneuvering the EMDEN into Libau, a Latvian tug was sunk and a German tug ran aground. Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, at 0859 an unidentified U.S. steamer reported a submarine in CJ 8686.

2. Own Situation:

Submarine U "377" attacked a searching group with a

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"Zaunkoenig" torpedo and heard a heavy detonation after nine minutes. On 13 Jan. submarine U "281" fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a patrol group in BE 8345 and heard a detonation after 13 minutes and 18 minutes later several dull thuds. Submarine U "953" sighted four destroyers in CF 6316.

Otherwise nothing to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

14 fighter bombers raided London in the evening.

There were only a few day flights over Holland, Belgium and northern France and there were no important raids.

2. Reich Territory:

255 of our fighters, including some heavy types, went up against the enemy raiding planes on the night of 14 Jan. and contributed considerably towards the failure of the enemy attack. From the stream of bombers between Muenster, Hanover and Brunswick they brought down 40 for certain and 11 probables. See Daily Situation for damage in the Brunswick district.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Our planes carried out reconnaissance. By day the enemy raided transport installations in the area east of Leghorn, and also Foligno and Prosto. The harbors at Civitavecchia and Savona were also attacked. Two enemy planes were brought down.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast 17 enemy reconnaissance planes were detected over the Aegean and about 20 enemy planes over the Adriatic. On the night of 15 Jan. twelve enemy planes were over the central Aegean Sea, probably dropping mines. Twenty planes attacked Salonika. The bombs fell near the military railway station.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

On the night of 14 Jan. a cruiser of the FIJI class put out from Gibraltar for the Mediterranean and a cruiser of the CAIRO class for the Atlantic. On the evening of 13 Jan. a battleship or a cruiser escorted by two destroyers entered the Mediterranean.

Own Situation:

One steamer (17,000 G.R.T.) was escorted off the French coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

Own Situation:

The strike in the Ansaldo shipyard at Genoa still continues. Motor minesweepers in the Gulf of Genoa were sent out against vessels which were landing agents. The operational headquarters of German Naval Command, Italy has begun the move to Montecatini (near Florence). Direction of operations from there will be started on 18 Jan.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

On the night of 13 Jan. a Siebel ferry had a brush with two enemy PT boats east of Brac. The enemy misfired two torpedoes. Otherwise nothing to report.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Beirut dated 12 Jan., the Allied fleet in Alexandria has been strengthened by three battleships and one carrier which is in need of repairs. The battleships are presumably on their way to the Far East.

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At 0300 a submarine sank an auxiliary sailing vessel north of Syra. At 1510 a submarine sank two small sailing vessels and damaged another auxiliary sailing vessel.

Own Situation:

Two of the attacking planes were probably brought down during the raid on a coastal defense boat near Hydra, reported on 13 Jan.

One mine was cleared in the Burtzi Strait.

The Naval Shore Commander, Dodecanese arrived on Leros on 13 Jan. and took over his duties.

A final report was made about the losses in the enemy air raid on Piraeus on 11 Jan.:

Sunk: 8 German and 1 former Italian minesweeper, 2 patrol vessels, 3 former Italian patrol vessels, 1 decoy ship, 1 motor boat.

Missing: (presumably also sunk): several motor boats, 2 oil lighters, 1 tug and some small Greek auxiliary sailing vessels. One crane was completely destroyed.

Naval casualties were 12 killed, 5 missing, 14 wounded. About 500 Greeks were killed.

The operation "Amsel" against partisans on the Peloponnese was completed on 15 Jan. as far as Naval Shore Commander, Peloponnese is concerned. The marines taking part in the operations have returned to their stations. There were no casualties.

c. Black Sea:

Shipping is held up at Nikolayev, as the Bug River is frozen. 104 vessels, two docks and two cranes have been withdrawn from Nikolayev since 5 Nov. Fifteen river lighters remained behind.

Submarine U "24" put out from Constanta for operations against the enemy. Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

According to Reuter, highly competent observers in Washington believe that the United States and Great Britain will urge the Polish Exile Government to accept the Russian proposal on the Curzon line. They do not think that Washington or London will be inclined to put forward any proposals of their own for a solution. "The Times" states that all the Allies must share in the task of setting up a firm barrier against the traditional German pressure to the east. The difference in the reaction of the smaller countries is shown up by an article in a leading Portuguese paper, which contains the words, "In face of the well-known Russian attitude Poland is a symbol which is attracting the eyes of the whole world".

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

Army Situation:

On the southern sector of the eastern front the continued heavy enemy attacks were generally repulsed. In the central sector the situation is unsettled, especially in the Pripet area. The situation near Vitebsk is under control. The major attack from Leningrad has made a breach of six kilometers in our front.

Otherwise no important reports or decisions.

Special Items:

I. According to a report from the Ostrow intelligence agency dated 6 Jan., a very reliable source gives the numbers of operational landing craft in Great Britain at the end of December as follows:

218 Mark II LCT's, 82 of them in the area north of the Thames; 317 Mark III LCT's, 67 of them north of the Thames; 488 LST's, 58 of them north of the Thames and 505 LCT's, 39 of them north of the Thames. There was no information on other types, i.e. mainly those to be launched from ships, as these are the concern of another department. The given figures do not, however, include those boats belonging directly to the American forces. About 25 per cent. of the above figures should be reckoned as reserves without crews.

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Naval Intelligence Division passed the following comment:

Judging by its source and content this report is fairly credible. The figures given for seagoing landing craft (488 LST's, 535 LCT's) differ from our own estimates (150 LST's, 1,800 LCT's) insofar as Ostrow mentions more LST's but fewer LCT's.

In addition to data about the numbers of the various types, the figures for the transport capacity of the available landing craft space are an important clue to the enemy plans. Assuming that the Ostrow figures are correct, the transport capacity expressed in transport units (1 LST = 30, 1 LCT = 6 transport units) is

15,300 for the figures given by Naval Intelligence
Division;

17,850 for the figures given by Ostrow.

Thus the latter are about 14 per cent. higher.

There still remains the question of the types of the landing craft "belonging directly to American troops". Possibly these may increase the Ostrow figures for seagoing landing craft.

Naval Intelligence Division considers that the Ostrow figures confirm their estimates so far as the transport capacity of the landing craft in England is concerned. The figures given for each type require further study.

The heavy concentration of LST's at the expense of LCT's (the Ostrow ratio is about 1:1, the ratio observed in the Mediterranean is 1:3), clearly shown in the Ostrow report, might indicate that it is intended to employ them in waters outside the Channel.

II. Admiral, Black Sea reported:

17th Army Command is at present working on a plan for the evacuation of personnel. There are two phases taking altogether twenty-five days.

First Phase:

Evacuation of about 100,000 supply troops. Duration 15 days. The northern and eastern fronts will be held during the first phase.

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Second Phase:

Duration altogether 10 days. The northern and eastern fronts will be withdrawn to the Eupatoria - Sarabusa - Alusht defense line, now being extended. Duration five days. This line to be held for two days. Evacuation of the last defense forces, three days. All available sea transports will be used and in addition there will be 200 transports by Junkers planes daily during the first phase and 300 in the second phase.

Situation 16 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, three large British warships put into Ponta Delgada on 13 Jan. and sailed again for Gibraltar on 16 Jan.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

II. Situation West Area

Enemy Situation:

Eight planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. One British vessel was located at 1650 in AL 8161, one at 1831 in AM 4120, one at 1845 in BF 4710 and one at 1845 in BD 3490.

Some of our PT boats were reported attacking between Lizard Head and the Isle of Wight on the night of 16 Jan.

Our reconnaissance reported four merchant ships of French nationality 110 miles southwest of Lorient on course 360° (?). (The questionmark appears in the German original, Tr.N.)

Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The steamer OSTERODE dropped anchor off Ile de Croix at

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0525. Three submarines were escorted in and four out. The 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with four boats put out from Brest for exercises and anchored in Benodet Roads in the evening. The MOEWE transferred from Brest to Concarneau.

Two mines were swept in the Lorient area, one in the Brest and one in the Bayonne area.

Channel Coast:

The 5th PT Boat Flotilla put out from Cherbourg at 2000 for torpedo operations in the Isle of Wight - Lizard Head area. They are scheduled to return to Brest.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Minesweeping was hindered by fog during the night. Mine-exploding vessels cleared one mine north and one south of Heligoland.

In the afternoon enemy vessels, probably PT boats, were located northwest of Flushing.

Torpedo boats T "28" and "29" put into the Hook of Holland. Convoy 477 from the Elbe River to the Hook of Holland, which sailed with five steamers at 1800, dropped anchor off the island of Wangerooge because of fog.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Ten planes were detected over the northern North Sea. Weather reconnaissance by one of our planes in the Jan Mayen area was without tactical result.

Nine planes were reported approaching from the Aalesund area, two from the Lister area. They did not attack.

Own Situation:

Reports from Admiral, North Norwegian Coast are not to hand. In the other areas seventeen ships were escorted north and four south.

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According to a report from Group North/Fleet, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has ordered the 5th Air Force to submit their opinion on Naval Staff's demand that the Air Force should assist submarines by resuming continuous reconnaissance against convoys in the northern area. The 5th Air Force have agreed in principle to carry out this task, providing that they receive suitable planes and fuel allocation; without these the reconnaissance is impossible. 5th Air Force is submitting a relevant request to Commander in Chief, Air Force.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

At 1831 one of our patrol vessels sighted a PT boat in AO 4153 (south of Oslo Fjord). The enemy turned off west at high speed.

Own Situation:

Three destroyers and other vessels belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic have been sent against the PT boat. Fog prevented our planes from starting. Mine-exploding vessels cleared a mine in the southern exit of the Sound.

On 15 Jan. the Danish steamer AXA sank off Endelave after an explosion.

In the area of Admiral, Baltic States the communication lines with Naval Shore Commander "R" have recently been frequently interrupted by reason of the land fighting, enemy partisan activity and stormy weather.

Otherwise nothing to report.

V. Submarine Warfare

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a British vessel checked a U.S. steamer in AK 8419 at 2345. Three minutes later the same steamer reported by SSS that she had been torpedoed.

Own Situation:

Submarine U "960" sank a steamer (8,000 G.R.T.) sailing alone in AK 8518 on northeasterly course, probably the one detected

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by radio intelligence. As a precaution Operations Division have asked Submarine Division to produce further particulars about this sinking, as it is strange that the letters forming the call letters of the unknown vessel are the same as those of the RIO GRANDE, although in a different combination. However, there is very little chance that the RIO GRANDE could be in the position given.

Otherwise nothing to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

A few planes flew over the occupied west area by day and attacked the Morlaix - Brest railway line. Some planes flew into the Nice - St. Raphael area from the south.

2. Reich Territory:

At midday about 70 enemy planes approached the Klagenfurt area from the south and attacked the district near the railway station. Aircraft works and leather factories were damaged. Fourteen soldiers on a leave train were killed. Our fighter defense brought down eight planes for certain and two probably.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance. A convoy consisting of 33 freighters with 1 auxiliary cruiser (probably) and 3 patrol vessels was sighted on course 260° 20 miles west of Alexandria. Ten stationary freighters were sighted off Alexandria. A convoy consisting of 10 freighters with 4 patrol vessels was on easterly course eighty miles north of Benghazi. A report on the photographic reconnaissance of Alexandria harbor is not yet to hand.

The enemy sent 225 ground attack planes and 125 fighters and reconnaissance planes over the Italian front area. Other formations attacked the cities of Orte, Decina, Savona and the Pisa, Villa Orba and Osoppo airfields.

During the night 15 to 20 planes carried out a nuisance raid in the Udine - Venice area. Our fighters and anti-aircraft brought down 15 planes, 5 of our fighters were lost.

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In the area Air Force Command, Southeast fourteen enemy planes were detected by day on reconnaissance over the Aegean Sea, six were detected by night in the Bar area. They were carrying supplies to the Balkan partisans.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report from Toulon, submarines are regularly proceeding along the coast between Cape Ferrat and Cape Sici. They are in constant communication with the coast between Monaco and St. Raphael. The most frequent are three "De Gaulle" submarines, which occasionally even put into small ports, such as Monte Carlo, Villefranche and Cape Ferrat, during the night. Money, arms and personnel are landed and taken off there.

This report is still being checked for reliability.

At 1645 on 15 Jan. a convoy consisting of 13 freighters left the Mediterranean.

At 1315 11 ships put out from Gibraltar. On 16 Jan. at 1645 50 ships (38 freighters, 8 tankers and 4 escort vessels) sailed for the Atlantic. Nine escort vessels joined them at Gibraltar.

Own Situation:

Two steamers (700 G.R.T.) were escorted along the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

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Own Situation:

Coastal patrol by motor minesweepers in the Gulf of Genoa on the night of 15 Jan. was without incident.

The harbor defense boat SAN GIORGIO put out from Venice to lay mines off the Italian east coast.

German Naval Command, Italy reported that Prince Borghese was detained on orders from the Duce because of military and political intrigues and indirect cooperation in the arrest of the Commander and Staff Officer attached to the Staff of the Regiment San Marco. Borghese is in the Duce's headquarters. An inquiry will be held under the direction of the Duce acting with the SS General Wolff. Thus Borghese will not accompany Ferrini on his visit to Commander in Chief, Navy. Lt. Cdr. Arillo has taken over the command of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla.

Details are not yet to hand.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

In the enemy air raid on Sibenik on 14 Jan. the tanker KIT with 70 cubic meters of Diesel oil and the motor minesweeper RG "243" with 23 cubic meters of gasoline aboard were bombed and sunk. On 12 Jan. the steamer GIGLIOLA on passage from Zara to Sibenik was shelled south of Zara by shore artillery belonging to the partisans.

The harbors and roads of Brac were found to be heavily mined and blocked by barrages. Apparently the enemy evacuated the island according to plan.

Torpedo boat TA "22" put into Trieste on 15 Jan.

Repeated detonations on Hvar indicate enemy blasting and preparation for evacuation.

b. Aegean Sea:

Towards 0300 on 15 Jan. an auxiliary sailing vessel was sunk by an enemy submarine north of Syra.

Admiral, Aegean submitted a summary of January losses of warships

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and merchant shipping to date. For copy see teletype 2030.

He emphasized that these daily losses of small vessels make it very difficult to carry out minesweeping and the supply position has considerably deteriorated. He repeated his request for a priority allocation of anti-aircraft guns and planes and suggested that the Arado squadron assigned to the Adriatic for anti-submarine patrol should be returned to the Aegean.

The motor ship DRACHE and torpedo boat TA "17" put into Piraeus from their minelaying operation at 1300.

Because of the weather, motor minesweepers R "211" and "495" have made for shelter, probably off Naxos or Kythnos.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence two submarines were at sea.

Own Situation:

At 1635 submarine U "20" probably sank an escorted tanker (1,500 G.R.T.) twelve miles northwest of Poti.

In the evening of 15 Sept. the living quarters and office buildings of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla at Sebastopol were burnt down.

The attempt to salvage the 150-ton crane which drifted ashore near Ochakov did not succeed. Further attempts were impossible because of the shallow water and formation of ice.

Weather conditions hampered the convoy service to the Crimea.

The Sea of Azov has begun to freeze and this has put difficulties in the way of landings on the north coast of Kerch. A fast cover of ice four to eight centimeters thick has been observed in the eastern part of Sivash Bay.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing to report.

Chief, Naval Staff and Chief, Operations Division have gone to Fuehrer Headquarters.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Under present circumstances the wishes of the Italian Under Secretary of State, Captain Ferrini, regarding the development of the Italian Navy can only be fulfilled to a very limited extent. As Ferrini's position is not particularly strong and we do not wish to handicap him by a refusal during his forthcoming visit to Commander in Chief, Navy, it would be well to inform him by letter that we can only meet very modest wishes. Chief of Staff ordered Quartermaster Division, Mobilization and Organization Branch to have a suitable letter ready for signature by Commander in Chief by 19 Jan.

In a Highly Restricted Circle

II. Army Situation:

The enemy attacks on the southern Dnieper front have noticeably slackened, obviously as a result of the severe losses during the past few days.

In the Kirovograd area our attack encountered a simultaneous enemy attack. Neither side gained any ground. In the 7th Army area we repulsed the enemy's surprise counter-attack, which was repeated fourteen times. There were strong enemy attacks on the Volkhov front. His attacks on the Northern Army Group were concentrated in the Leningrad area against the 50th Army Corps. They are in an extremely difficult position.

Special Items

I. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy passed on an order from the Fuehrer for a thorough investigation as to whether on 11 Jan. the naval forces in Piraeus were berthed and distributed about the harbor as laid down in previous

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orders. The losses in the air raid on Piraeus, reported in Situation 16 Jan., indicate an inexcusable crowding together in some berths.

If it is actually possible to disperse the ships, then the Fuehrer wants decisive action, and orders to this effect are to be issued to all posts concerned. Losses in the Aegean Sea have extremely far-reaching effects.

Operations Division has ordered Group South and Admiral, Aegean to make an immediate report. Copy of the order 1/Skl 1568/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

II. Regarding supplies to the Crimea, Operations Division, Situation Maps and Files Section has drawn up a table covering our own, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Turkish and Russian naval forces and showing the available transport space, amounts which can be carried and escorts which can be provided by each. Copy as per 1/Skl I m 1510/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIVa.

III. High Command, Navy plans to remove Dockyard Control Staffs and Naval Construction Inspectorates from the authority of the Main Committee for Ship Construction and thus again place these bodies under purely military direction. A final approval from the Main Committee is not yet to hand. Plans have also been made for the Deputy in Italy to set up a branch office in Istria to cooperate with a Dockyard Control Staff then to be set up at the headquarters of Admiral, Adriatic.

Quartermaster Division has passed on this information to Group South with copies to Admiral, Adriatic and German Naval Command, Italy. They added the comment that further orders would follow on completion of the negotiations with the main committee for Ship Construction.

IV. Group West drew attention to the fact that destroyer Z "27" is out of action and Z "24" and "32" are undergoing overhaul. With the enemy landing to be expected in the spring they asked if we could help them through this period of weakness by assigning two destroyers.

Naval Staff decided that further reinforcement of the west area is impossible. It could only be achieved by weakening the Skagerrak position, which is a long way from achieving the strength provided for in the plans.

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V. Armed Forces High Command, Intelligence Division, Secret Intelligence Section, Naval Liaison has passed the following very noteworthy report to all higher commands of the Armed Forces:

"An important personality in French economic life, a former prominent statesman who draws his information from Vichy, Spanish, Turkish and Swiss diplomatic sources has found that his facts on enemy plans for the spring of 1944 can be dovetailed to give the following summary:

1. Occupation of the southern part of the Pyrenees to cut off northeastern Spain.

2. Setting up of bridgeheads in the border area north of the Pyrenees in the vicinity of Hendaye and Port Vendres.

3. Diversionary attacks and commando raids on the Atlantic and Channel coasts, concentrating on the Dunkirk - Boulogne area where there is to be a mass penetration to some depth.

4. Diversionary attacks and commando raids on the Norwegian coast to put military and political pressure on Sweden and Finland. The Western Powers have decided not to begin their mass landing operation against the Atlantic Wall until the Russian advance reaches the Curzon line. Until then enemy operations will be limited in scope and the main objective will be to contain German forces and test out the fronts. In view of the development of events in North Africa, particularly the propaganda statements of Soviet representatives aimed at bolshevizing the Iberian peninsula, the execution of points 1 and 2 of this program would appear to be imminent.

This again brings up the question of the cutting off of the Pyrenees border, already mentioned as a probable objective for enemy operations in Naval Staff discussions in the spring of 1943.

VI. Naval Intelligence Division will inform the higher operational staffs of the Navy about excerpts from the Situation Report of Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West of 15 Jan. concerning the West Area and the Mediterranean. Copy as per 1/Skl. 1651/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, "Data on the Enemy Situation". Foreign Armies West writes as follows on the naval situation in the Mediterranean:

A longer stay in the Alexandria area by the enemy formation

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of three battleships and two aircraft carriers would indicate increased pressure on Turkey or plans against the Aegean Sea.

Naval Intelligence Division adds the following comment: The setting up of radio beacon stations manned by British instructors on Turkish territory (for the present not in Thrace) and the accumulation of war material emphasize the Allied efforts to use Turkey for their own purposes.

There have been no noticeable changes in the dislocation of Allied formations on the Turkish-Syrian border.

Situation 17 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Radiogram 2245 from Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE about the sinking of a U.S. steamer with callsign WLDU on the evening of 16 Jan. Message ran as follows:

1. The British vessel LSX reported: Am watching U.S. steamer WLDU, probable position at 2345 16 Jan. 52° 35' N, 35° 00' W.

2. At 2348 on 16 Jan. the U.S. steamer WLDU sent out SSS message: Torpedoed in 52° 35' N, 35° 00' W.

3. One of our submarines reported sinking a U.S. steamer at 0330 on 17 Jan. in AK 8518.

Naval Staff's opinion: To judge by these reports and other observations, independently sailing vessels are not infrequent in these waters. They are occasionally escorted by enemy forces. We have no more details. Our submarines have been instructed about the route to be followed by the RIO GRANDE and are forbidden to attack vessels sailing alone.

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The RIO GRANDE also received the following instructions for her passage north:

1. After the rendezvous with the submarine proceed to the new point "Anna".

2. Point "Anna" lies fourteen degrees farther north and four degrees farther west than point "Registertonne".

3. From point "Anna" steer for the ice limit in a general northerly direction. Until she reaches the ice boundary, the ship must sail a northeasterly course by day and thus make out that she is bound for Reykjavik. At night the resulting deviations from the true course must be corrected by northerly or northwesterly courses. She is to endeavor to reach the ice limit in grid square AD 70 or 40.

4. Departure from point "Anna" will be ordered when weather conditions are favorable.

Until the order is received, the ship is to remain within a radius of 150 miles from point "Anna"; any courses are permitted by night, by day the ship is to head for either Reykjavik or Newfoundland.

5. The departure from point "Anna" and the break-through are to be fixed so that the ship passes the narrowest places northnorthwest of the northwestern part of the island at night. Once the ice is reached she is to follow the line of the ice boundary. No deceptive courses unless sighted. In view of the danger from mines proceed through deep water as much as possible, avoid depths of less than 250 meters. Keep at least thirty miles from land and thus avoid danger of being located.

6. Use the reference points "Buche", "Zeder" and "Distel" as a guide for the course to be followed. These points need not be passed exactly. Course must be dictated by the ice boundary and the weather. The position of the points will follow in a separate radiogram.

The position of the reference points mentioned in paragraph 6 will be transmitted as follows:

1. equals grid square A D 4655

2. equals grid square A E 1455

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3. equals grid square A B 7555.

Group North/Fleet submitted operational orders dated 12 Jan. for the RIO GRANDE's break-through via Denmark Strait. Cover name "Wanderer". Keyword "Waldesruh". Copy as per 1/Skl 142/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in File 1/Skl I k.

Naval Staff issued the following directive to Group North/Fleet:

1. The transmission of the operational order is no longer possible, the most important points will be radioed.

2. All radiograms required for information of Group North will be transmitted by teletype "Senior Officers Only". Group North not to tune in and monitor radio band "Tibet" until separate orders received.

3. Group North/Fleet is to keep the Air Force informed and direct their operations. This order also applies to the period before the planes pick up the ship.

4. The ship will stand ready at the western exit from 25 Jan. and will begin the breakthrough when the weather is favorable.

The dates when she will arrive at point "Ahorn" and pass further points must therefore be worked out by dead reckoning. Weather conditions (east wind) can reduce her speed considerably.

5. Attempt the transmission of the code given in Appendix 3 when radio traffic load permits.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Seventeen planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. One British vessel was located in AL 6810 at 1452, one in AM 7350 at 1743, one in AL 9240 at 1910 and one in BE 3180 at 2040.

At 1800 our air reconnaissance sighted a convoy of from 15 to 30 steamers escorted by 2 light cruisers, 6 destroyers and 1 Liberator on course 250°, speed ten knots, 130 miles northwest of Donegal Bay (AM 4386).

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At 2224 one of our planes was shelled by heavy anti-aircraft in BF 5421. She was unable to discover who was firing.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla was on exercises in the Concarneau area and dropped anchor in the roads in the evening. The 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla, consisting of four boats, carried out target practice during the day and then dropped anchor in Benodet Roads.

One submarine was escorted in and four out.

Channel Coast:

Six boats of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla carried out a torpedo operation against a westbound convoy west of Lizard Head; the enemy was detected and attacked, but poor visibility and destroyer action prevented observation of the result. The flotilla arrived in Brest at 0130. For brief report see teletype 1507. Their operation against an eastbound convoy planned for the night of 17 Jan. has been canceled because of the weather.

A ground mine was swept west of Jersey. Escort and convoy duty were canceled because of fog.

From 1828 to 1944 we shelled an enemy target in the sector northwest to northeast of Calais. Firing was by radar and the results were not observed.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Following an improvement in the weather convoy 477 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland resumed its passage. Convoy 1209 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe has been postponed for twenty-four hours.

Naval Command, North supports the intention of Admiral, Denmark to reinforce the coastal defense with 700 captured Danish mines and lay a remote-controlled foreshore barrage running ten kilometers north from Blaavandshuk. For details see teletype 1020.

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2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Six planes were detected over the northern North Sea in the forenoon and three in the afternoon.

Own Situation:

Admiral, Arctic Coast reported an exchange of fire in the Petsamo area at 1645 on 13 Jan. when a convoy was being taken to Kirkenes. On 14 Jan. two enemy planes unsuccessfully gunned a patrol vessel in the Vardoe area.

At 1025 on 17 Jan. an eastbound convoy was attacked with an aerial torpedo which missed. In the evening of 16 Jan. the steamer FEODOSIA touched ground in Farsund. At 0845 on 17 Jan. the steamer OLDENBURG rammed and sank the harbor defense vessel "NB 12" in the Westby Fjord barrage.

Destroyer Z "33" put out from Narvik bound for Harstad at 0900.

Submarine U "956" with the weather ship HESSEN in tow was picked up by her escort and is making for Tromsoe.

Twenty-seven ships were escorted north and sixteen south. Twenty-three were delayed.

Naval Command, Norway reported to Naval Staff with copy to 5th Air Force:

The loss of two valuable ore steamers on 14 Jan. must be put down mainly to inadequate fighter defense; in spite of all the efforts of the 5th Air Force there has been no reinforcement of fighter strength in southern Norway so far. As far as we know the 5th Air Force has again requested Air Force, Operations Staff for fighter reinforcements. They ask us to support their request by pointing out that losses on the Arctic coast could largely have been prevented by a strong fighter defense and that the enemy will very probably increase his activities against our convoy traffic to southwestern Norway.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Nothing to report.

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V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a convoy (AP) from England was under way at 2355.

The U.S. steamer "WSZW" reported a submarine in MF 37 (Indian Ocean) at 1755. This report was canceled at 1907. At 2115 the same steamer reported a submarine in MP 29.

2. Own Situation:

At 1701 a weather plane belonging to Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, sighted a convoy of from 25 to 30 ships with 8 escort vessels (see Enemy Situation West Area) in AM 4386 on 250°, probably a KMS convoy. The report did not reach Commanding Admiral, Submarines until after the plane landed at 0200 on 18 Jan. Reconnaissance and operations against the convoy are planned for 18 Jan.

Submarine Division submitted an operational order for submarine U "218". Her assignment is to carry out extensive minelaying at the northern entrance to Paria, the harbor and roads of San Juan and Port Castries.

Copy as per 1/Skl 187/44 Gkdos. Chfs, in Files 1/Skl IE.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

By day only slight enemy activity in the occupied west area. There were no night raids of any consequence.

2. Reich Territory:

No flights by enemy planes.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance and at 0555 observed a convoy of thirty freighters five miles northeast of Mersa Matruh, probably on westerly course.

There was lively enemy activity on the right flank of the Italian front, one plane was shot down. The enemy also carried out

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raids on railroad installations in Orte, Viterbo, Arezzo, Chiaravalle, Pontosieve and Prato. Heavy damage was caused in places. These systematic attacks on railroad communications in Central and Northern Italy constitute a considerable danger.

There were other attacks on the electricity works and radar installation at Grosseto and on the harbor at Savona. The pier was hit and the tanker SPLENDOR (18,000 tons) set on fire. At 2115 our reconnaissance sighted 10 ships proceeding at high speed on easterly course west of Gaeta Bay and also ten smaller ships proceeding on northerly course through the bay.

During the night several enemy planes were over the Gulf of Venice but did not attack; twenty planes attacked targets in the area between Leghorn and Pisa with bombs and machine-gun fire. A convoy off Civitavecchia was attacked by enemy planes (number not known).

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast two reconnaissance planes were reported over the Aegean Sea, two over the Strait of Otranto and one over the waters off Bar.

Reports on German air activity are not yet to hand.

4. Eastern Front:

On 16 Jan. our planes flew 1,017 missions, twelve of them were brought down. Forty enemy planes were brought down, two of them by anti-aircraft.

VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

The GUS convoy passed through the Straits of Gibraltar heading for the Atlantic on 16 Jan. The nine escort vessels which put out for the Atlantic are U.S. corvettes.

At 0900 Ceuta sighted a convoy of 31 medium-sized freighters with 12 escorts bound for the Mediterranean, presumably the KMS 38 convoy. A cruiser of the CAIRO class which entered Gibraltar on the night of 15 Jan. sailed for the Mediterranean at 1230. On 16 Jan. a torpedo cruiser of the TROMP class put in to Gibraltar.

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At 1655 on 17 Jan. Cape Spartel sighted 7 ships, probably 2 freighters and 5 warships, 24 miles out to sea and heading for the Mediterranean.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, Naples sent out keywords "Wolf 2" and "Wolf 1" to an unknown addressee. The radiograms were repeated in the broadcast from Algiers.

Own Situation:

With effect from this evening German Naval Command will be directed from Monte Catini.

The harbor defense vessel SAN GIORGIO laid mines off Ancona.

According to a situation report from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest the steamer FRATELLE MERI (330 G.R.T.) sank in the air raid on Savona on 15 Jan. Three open sailing vessels were also damaged.

The strike in the Ansaldo shipyard in Genoa has spread to the branch shipyards at Voltri, Sestri and Sampierdarena. The ostensible reasons are found in complaints with regard to food and wages. According to German Naval Command, the real cause is political.

Escort work on the Italian west coast is being carried out without incident and according to plan.

3. Area Naval Group South:

Adriatic Sea:

On the night of 14 Jan. Rojewo was shelled from the sea with fifteen rounds of 8.8 cm. No damage was done. Mist prevented us from recognizing the enemy.

At 2330 on the same day the harbor and town of Durazzo were

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shelled by two vessels, probably destroyers, with sixty rounds of 10.5 cm. This shelling was also without effect. The 623rd Naval Artillery Battalion returned the fire.

At noon and on the evening of 16 Jan. the area southwest of Udine was heavily bombed. On 17 Jan. there was lively enemy air activity in the whole of the coastal area. Twenty-four planes attacked the town and harbor of Zara, where slight damage was caused. Two bombs were dropped on Durazzo.

The island of Brac is in our possession. The operation against Hvar will start on 18 Jan., keyword is "Walzertraum". One vessel of the Coastal Defense Flotilla, Pola sank in the night of 16 Jan. after a collision. The Staff of Admiral Adriatic have begun their move from Belgrade to Abazia; the transfer will be carried out in stages until 21 Jan.

Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 0755 our reconnaissance sighted an eastbound convoy of thirty freighters with four destroyers 120 miles west of Alexandria.

Visual reconnaissance did not observe any battleships or aircraft carriers in Alexandria on the afternoon of 16 Jan. One British vessel was located in CO 5230 at 1106.

About 1000 a submarine was sighted north of Kos. A minesweeping plane swept four mines in Salonica Bay. The coastal defense vessel "GR 56" ran ashore north of Kos. Four armed fishing vessels from the Dardanelles put into Khios on the forenoon of 15 Jan.

Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

Own Situation:

In the forenoon Kamysh Burun and Ivanbaba were attacked. A naval landing craft in Kamysh Burun was slightly damaged.

There were no important incidents during the operation by naval

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landing craft in the Kerch Strait on the night of 16 Jan.

The steamer HELGA which was transferred from the Aegean to the Black Sea, will move from Constanta to Sevastopol.

In view of the situation in the eastern area Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff refused Naval Staff's request to employ large air transports over a short period for the movement of troops, thus permitting a solution of the leave question. There can be no prospect of an operation of this nature in the near future. Armed Forces High Command asked us to continue to transfer personnel by every possible way, to report on the numbers already transferred and the numbers which can probably be transferred in the future.

Relevant directive has been issued to Group South.

Naval Staff learned from a monitored radiogram from Group South to Admiral, Adriatic that the Quartermaster of Army Group A was again complaining about the amount of supplies transported by sea. Admiral, Black Sea is going to Odessa to straighten out this matter. The Group thinks that the difficulties may arise from natural causes, weather, etc., as well as technical reasons. Naval Staff informed Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff at Fuehrer Headquarters (see teletype 1200).

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

The Russian Government has declared that the Polish Exile Government refuses to accept the Curzon line as her future boundary. Russia for her part declines negotiations with a government which has shown that it does not wish to establish good neighborly relations with the Soviet Union. Poland's first step will probably be to consult the governments of Great Britain and the U.S.A. According to Reuter, the U.S. Government has now offered the Russian Government its good offices in acting as intermediary between Russia and Poland.

Pravda is publicizing a rumor that Ribbentrop is either holding or has already held conversations with Anglo-American representatives in a town on the Iberian Peninsula. This extraordinary statement by Moscow is evidently connected with the Anglo-American stand on the Russo-Polish question and has caused a considerable sensation in British and American public opinion.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

Army Situation:

On the whole we maintained our positions on the southern and central parts of the eastern front and achieved considerable defensive successes. Enemy thrusts from Leningrad and the Oranienbaum pocket have created a tense situation. Our Peterhof coastal sector is in danger.

The relevant situation report from Admiral, Baltic States has not yet come to hand.

Otherwise no discussions and decisions of importance.

Special Items:

I. According to a telephone report from Chief, Operations Division, now at Fuehrer Headquarters, the Fuehrer has not approved the sailing of the blockade runners. For the present Operations Division is to inform Group West that "Regatta" will not take place and promise further directives.

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II. The Fuehrer has informed Commanding General, Armed Forces, West that effective immediately he is authorized to declare either part or whole of an already designated area on the French and Belgian coasts as a combat zone. Copy of directive as per 1/Skl 1979/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II b.

III. Armed Forces High Command fixed the following keywords for preparatory measures for the event of large-scale enemy landings:

- a. Large-scale landing in northern and central Norway (keyword "Falke"),
- b. " " " in Denmark (keyword "Hanna"),
- c. " " " in the west:
 - aa. Channel coast (keyword "Blume 1"),
 - bb. Mediterranean coast (keyword "Blume 2"),
- d. " " " in northern Italy:
 - aa. Ligurian coast (keyword "Marder 1"),
 - bb. Adriatic coast (keyword "Marder 2"),
- e. " " " Southeast:
 - aa. Adriatic coast (keyword "Forelle 1"),
 - bb. Aegean (keyword "Forelle 2"),
- f. Special case: Attack against Bulgarian territory by violation of Turkish neutrality (keyword "Gertrud").

The preparatory measures will be set in motion when Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff sends the relevant keyword by teletype to High Command, Navy, Operations Division and/or Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff.

IV. Naval Staff has informed Group South and German Naval Command, Italy that there will be no emergency formations in these two areas, as it is thought that personnel are so few that every member of the Navy must be employed on naval tasks. Apart from this an enemy landing will put an increased burden on the rearward services and partisan activity and transport

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conditions will aggravate their difficulties.

V. On 13 Jan. Group West forwarded report of Commander, PT Boats dated 7 Jan. on preparatory measures to be taken in the event of a large-scale enemy landing. Copy in files 1/Skl I op as per 1/Skl 168/44 Gkdos. Chfs. His report contains a suggestion that his Operations Staff should be transferred to the command post of Group West, a move which, in face of our imminent danger, should be regarded as a precaution to be taken now. Naval Staff requested the Group's opinion on this suggestion.

The report also raises the question of torpedo equipment for PT boats and this matter will be looked into by Quartermaster Division.

VI. Group North/Fleet passed on the comments and experience reports of Group West and the Commander of the 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla on the actions of 28 December. These emphasize the fleet's demand for torpedo boats with higher speed. Copy as per 1/Skl 1671/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

VII. Charts showing number of our ships and ships sailing in our service damaged by enemy action in December 1943 are filed under 1/Skl I E 1655/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Shipping Losses".

VIII. The Navy's fuel and Diesel oil supplies have tended to rise over the past few months, as there are no allocations to the Italian Navy and the policy of strict quotas is being maintained.

Our stocks at 31 Dec. 1943 were 226,000 cubic meters of fuel oil and 106,000 cubic meters of Diesel oil.

Diesel oil will continue to be very short, as the high demands made by the Army preclude any increase in the allocation to the Navy. The tanker situation is causing marked anxiety. A detailed survey is contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. IX.

IX. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy sent a brief informative report on the situation under date 12 Jan. It deals with the eastern front and the withdrawal of its northern flank, also the problems arising in the Mediterranean. There is also a brief study by General Staff, Foreign Armies

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West on the subject of British plans for tactical concentrations and a report by Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest summarizing his experiences of enemy landing operations in the Italian area. Copy of the report OKW/W.F.St. op (M) 77089/44 Gkdos. Chfs. is contained in War Diary, Part C, Vol. a.

X. On 13 Jan. the German Ambassador in Madrid learned from the Irish Minister there that the British and Americans will not attempt invasion until 15 Feb. at the earliest. The Irishman believes that the attack will come in three places. One of the thrusts will be directed against France. Other reports in Madrid would seem to indicate that the invasion might be attempted as early as between 20 and 30 Jan.

According to an intelligence report from Lisbon, troops assembled in the west Channel ports are first to occupy the islands of Alderney, Guernsey and Jersey, at the same time forming bridgeheads north of Granville, between Cherbourg and Cape Barfleur and near Brest. Troops from the area Portsmouth, Brighton, Shoreham, Hastings and Newhaven are to attack between Boulogne and Dieppe. Troops from the area between Dover and Lowestoft are to land near Nieuport and La Panne. At the same time naval and air forces are to make feint attacks on St. Nazaire, Lorient, Nantes, La Rochelle and Rochefort. Plans have been made for further landings between Perpignan and Narbonne and between Cannes and Frejus, other feint attacks are to take place between Marseilles and Toulon. Date of execution unknown.

XI. Naval Intelligence Division has compiled the most important enemy reports and commentaries on the loss of the SCHARNHORST and the engagement in the Bay of Biscay on 27 and 28 Dec. Copy as per 1/Skl 2515/44 geheim in War Diary, File "Scharnhorst".

Situation 18 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, two U.S. warships are due to call at Punta Delgada on 17 Jan. to take on supplies. Another warship is expected on 25 Jan.

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2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE about the enemy situation on the northern route in the following directive:

"For some time past convoys to Russia, termed PQ convoys, in the opposite direction QP, seem to have been sailing at intervals of two weeks. The next convoys from the Shetland-Faeroes area should sail on 21 Jan. and 5 Feb. So far no convoys have been observed sailing from Iceland this year. Some vessels sailing alone will probably leave Iceland for Murmansk and the RIO GRANDE should pretend to belong to this category. Inconspicuous behavior is the best protection on the whole route. There is no evidence about patrolling in the Denmark Strait. Presumably there are occasional patrols and therefore the passage should only be attempted in poor visibility. We are allowing for some delay at this stage, as local conditions will give a better forecast than we can give here. Advice on weather conditions will follow."

All blockade runners were informed by radiogram 2341 of the award Knight of the Iron Cross to Captain Hellmann of the motorship OSORNO. Naval Staff informed Group North/Fleet about what excerpts from their operational order for "Wanderer" should be sent by radiogram to the RIO GRANDE. The reference to point "Ahorn" contained in this order will be omitted since there are now fresh instructions for a rendezvous with a submarine at another point not far away. In paragraph 12 of the order the 500 meter limit was changed to 250 meters, as the ship must definitely cross the 500 meter line at two places on her route, and one must expect that a merchant navy captain will keep very strictly to the letter of his orders.

There must be no exchange of recognition signals between ship and plane until point "Eiche" is reached, otherwise the ship might accidentally be compromised.

Naval Staff agreed with the proposal from the Naval Attaché, Tokio for the transfer of the two "Arado" planes with flying and ground crew to the southern area. They are to act as escorts for our frontline submarines in Penang. The Japanese Navy is expected to give permission.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Only one weather plane was detected over the Bay of

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Biscay. One vessel was located in AM 7920 at 0130, one in AL 6310 at 1139, one in BE 8790 at 2220 and one in BE 3710 on 19 Jan. at 0256.

At 1803 our air reconnaissance, using a ship detecting set, located a convoy in AL 6293 and at 2258 reported a ship carrying two lamps on easterly course in BE 6372.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with four boats moved from Benodet to Brest. The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with four boats is also sailing for Brest. One submarine was escorted out.

Channel Coast:

Two mines were swept in the Calais area. The discovery of these mines and suspicion of others caused the postponement of the sailing of the steamer WALKENRIED from Boulogne to Dunkirk. PT boat flotillas were not in action.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Two mines were swept north of Juist, two north of Ameland, two west of Den Helder and seventeen north of Terschelling. The position where the seventeen mines were swept is the same as that determined by bearings from 1140 to 1700 on 15 Jan.

Convoy 477 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland completed its passage. Convoy 1209 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe sailed with three steamers.

Torpedo boats T "28" and T "29" are to start their westward passage from the Hook of Holland at 0100 on 19 Jan. and for the meantime go as far as Dunkirk. Four convoys totaling about 50,000 G.R.T. were taken through the Ijsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Six planes were detected over the North Sea. One

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British vessel was located at 1250 in AF 7921.

At 1600 some vessels, probably PT boats, entered Boek Fjord. There are no further details.

2. Own Situation:

At 0730 motor minesweeper R "302" ran aground on the eastern side of Lophavet.

Forty-seven ships were escorted north and twenty-three south. Twenty-four ships were delayed awaiting escorts. The weather ship HESSEN was towed into Tromsøe.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

On 17 Jan. heavy foot and sledge traffic was observed in both directions between the Karelian coast, Kronstadt and Oranienbaum. The enemy occupied the Narva-Krasnoe Selo supply route near Kipeni.

2. Own Situation:

One mine was cleared east of Fehmarn and one in the Fehmarn Belt. Naval Shore Commander "R" transferred his Operations Staff to the 50th Army Corps in Ivanbaba. At 2100 he was ordered to move to Nikolayevka on the Gatchine - Narva railroad line.

In view of the enemy situation the Army requested that the 2nd and 3rd Company of the Naval Special Operations Unit "Ostland" be withdrawn from the Luga Bay area and sent into action in the breakthrough area, probably in the Oranienbaum pocket.

Admiral, Baltic States has approved this request.

The 50th Army Corps approved the transfer of Battery Peterhof. The battery will be withdrawn to Hungerburg; Naval Shore Commander "R" has been made responsible for anti-aircraft defense for the radio station.

Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff at Fuehrer Headquarters also sent a communication on the evacuation of the area under Naval Shore Commander "R" and added that further orders are to be issued by Army Group North. Naval Staff sent relevant

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information to Naval Command, Baltic and Admiral, Baltic States.

V. Merchant Shipping

After settlement of the preliminary economic questions with the competent ministries Naval Staff has agreed to allow ten to fifteen Dutch fishing smacks to fish from Wesermuende (Bremerhaven). They are permitted to enter the German, German-Danish and Danish fishing areas.

VI. Submarine Warfare

The air reconnaissance at 1800 in AL 6376 was incomplete because the ship detection set was covered with ice. We have no information about the course. Hence we cannot be sure about whether this is the expected westbound convoy. Submarines of Group "Ruegen" received orders to proceed against the enemy at maximum speed and not to submerge until after daybreak. No reports at all were received from this group during the night of 18 Jan.

A small fast convoy on westerly course passed over submarine U "571" in AL 9843. She fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a destroyer and heard a torpedo detonation twelve minutes later.

Submarine U "960" reported details on the sinking of the steamer in AK 8518 on 17 Jan.

Although the steamer was similar to the RIO GRANDE, she had her second mast just in front of the bridge and her three masts were of equal height. If these observations are correct, then she was not the RIO GRANDE.

Submarine Division submitted an operational order for submarine U "214". She is to carry out extensive minelaying in the approaches to the harbor and the roads at Casablanca and Rabat. Copy as per 1/Skl 189/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in file 1/Skl I.E.

VII. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

No air activity of any significance.

Reich Territory:

No enemy flights.

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Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance flights. Four destroyers were sighted shelling the coast off the Garigliani Estuary, one light cruiser and three destroyers were sighted in the Gulf of Gaeta at 1037.

The enemy attacked harbors, communications, airfields and other places in central Italy. For details see under Daily Situation.

From the area Air Force Command, Southeast 2 enemy reconnaissance planes were reported over the Aegean Sea and 3 south of Bar, also 9 planes taking in supplies to Balkan partisans.

Eastern Front:

On 17 Jan. we sent 820 planes up over the eastern front. Thirty-one enemy planes were brought down, two of them by anti-aircraft fire. Four of our planes were lost.

VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0030 Ceuta reported that a warship, probably a cruiser, had passed on her way east.

Own Situation:

Three steamers totaling 9,800 G.R.T. were escorted off the French south coast. Enemy fighter-bombers attacked a small convoy off Tropez, but failed to do any damage.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

In the night of 17 Jan. enemy landing craft put troops ashore north of the Minturno Estuary. There was a cover of shelling from the sea, probably from destroyers. The Air Force observed four enemy destroyers engaged in shelling in the Gulf of Gaeta three miles southwest of the Garigliano Estuary. It was difficult to recognize the landing at first, as on the same night a group of boats from the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla

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were sent from Terracina against the Bay of Naples and our own group had been warned that they might appear off the coast.

At 1037 1 vessel, thought to be a heavy ship, 1 destroyer and 4 small vessels were reported in the Gulf of Gaeta. Course was not stated.

Own Situation:

On 17 Jan. there was very heavy fighter-bomber activity on the entire Italian west coast. Savona harbor was damaged. The tanker SPLENDOR temporarily caught fire. In Nettunia only four of the loading sites for the landing craft can be used.

Civitavecchia was attacked seven times. The fighter-bomber attacks on Savona and St. Tropez were repeated on 18 Jan. A freight barge was damaged in an air raid on a convoy near Leghorn. In the night of 17 Jan. a group of naval landing craft engaged two enemy gunboats off Viareggio. Hits on the enemy vessels were observed. The same night four assault craft of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla were out on the west coast but had to break off their operation owing to the weather. On their return passage they were forced away by motor gunboats escorting an enemy landing formation. While taking evasive action two of the Italian PT boats collided and one of them was sunk. Plans have been made to repeat the operation on the night of 19 Jan.

In the evening the minelayer NIEDERSACHSEN and three motor minesweepers put out from Spezia to lay mines.

The steamer PACE, beached off Vada, was sunk by enemy planes. In the night of 16 Jan. a motor coaster and a harbor defense vessel sank in a storm off Ancona.

There was an explosion in the ammunition testing station near Viareggio on 17 Jan. The cause was probably sabotage.

The strike in Genoa still continues.

All motor minesweepers and PT boats are transferring to the Adriatic Sea.

Submarine U "343", whose last report on 8 Jan. from CH 7343 ran: "Under attack from a plane, unable to submerge, request fighter cover", reported again at 0559.

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3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Enemy Situation:

A report from Admiral, Adriatic states that there are gaps in our air reconnaissance of the Adriatic Sea and the Italian east coast harbors; in particular the reconnaissance of what vessels are in harbor is inadequate. Recent weather and heavy enemy fighter defense have added to the difficulties. There cannot therefore be any guarantee of early warning of concentrations of landing craft and transports. So long as there are no radar sets, there is always the possibility of surprise.

Own Situation:

The steamer SPALATO which was beached became a total loss after being hit by a bomb. Operation "Walzertraum" has been postponed to 19 Jan.

Battery Giaccone is ready for action with three 15 cm., one 1.3 cm. twin-barreled and one 2 cm. anti-aircraft gun.

b. Aegean Sea:

Convoy traffic in the Aegean Sea has been suspended because of the continuing bad weather.

At noon on 16 Jan. one plane was brought down in the enemy air raid on two auxiliary sailing vessels in Tira. Coast patrol vessel "GA 64" was destroyed by surf while lying at anchor off Kos.

Following the directive from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Admiral, Aegean reported:

"1. On 11 Jan. naval forces were distributed about the berths as ordered. Orders for the dispersal were given some time ago and were put into execution as far as possible under the prevailing conditions. Consequently there was no damage or loss of large merchant vessels or warships in the raid.

2. The warships lost are exclusively auxiliary sailing vessels and patrol vessels under repair or conversion,

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or else captured Italian vessels (small steamers and auxiliary sailing vessels) which could not be moved. All ready vessels left port when the alert was sounded.

3. Vessels under repair were tied to their berths, so that they could be near to the workshops and under the supervision of the Flotilla Engineer. This secures repair with the minimum delay. It is impossible to repair these small vessels on the roads as is done with steamers.

4. Most of the losses were caused, not by bomb hits, but by an oil fire which spread over an entire harbor basin. Although everything possible was done, the attempts to get out the ships belonging to the Port Commander and the flotilla were only partially successful, since the fire spread very quickly and the crews of the Greek tugs were missing - they made off when the alarm sounded.

5. Contrary to the figures reported in Situation 15 Jan., our losses were not more than twenty-five auxiliary sailing vessels with a total capacity of about 750 tons."

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, 1 freighter of 3,000 G.R.T., 2 passenger ships of 4,000 G.R.T. and 1 coastal vessel of 500 G.R.T. were sighted on the Turkish north coast. According to radio intelligence, two submarines were in the operational area.

The interpretation of aerial photographs of 18 Jan. showed the following:

In Tuapse: 4 motor minesweepers, 2 small motor gun boats, 7 small armed vessels, 3 PT boats, 3 small freighters, 7 coastal vessels, 1 floating crane, about 15 boats and just outside the harbor 1 motor minesweeper with her gear out.

In Sochi (Dachovskii): 6 motor minesweepers, 2 motor gunboats, 7 small armed vessels and 10 boats.

In Cape Adler: No ships.

In Primorsko Artarski: Ice.

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In Novorossisk: A floating dock of 5,000 G.R.T., previously sunk by our Air Force, had been raised at the pier.

In Ghelenjik: Mist prevented any interpretation of the photographs. No large ships recognizable.

Own Situation:

Four motor minesweepers have taken up position in the southern Kerch Strait on a patrol line running from Feodosiya. Three PT boats are operating against enemy shipping in the Tuapse area and to the south.

A towed convoy proceeding from Odessa to Sevastopol was repeatedly attacked by enemy planes west of Eupatoria in the forenoon. No losses were reported.

Enemy air raids on Kamysh Burun and Ivanbaba were without result. Submarine chaser UJ "101" was attacked and damaged by an enemy plane. One of the two attacking planes was brought down, the submarine chaser was towed in.

Otherwise the convoy traffic was carried out as planned.

With regard to the land front Admiral, Black Sea reported that the enemy attack against the advanced position north of Kerch collapsed in face of our defensive fire.

IX. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

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Items of Political Importance

There is a general feeling of uneasiness in the Anglo-American press on the nature of the Russian answer to the Polish Exile Government's declaration. Comment in the neutral press goes further. A leading Swiss newspaper states that Russian intentions go against the spirit, if not the letter, of the quadripartite negotiations on the Russo-Polish conflict. It would seem that Great Britain and the U.S.A. are not to be consulted on this very important and pressing European problem. This brings a fundamental principle of the Moscow and Teheran conferences into question. The Swedish press also reports that Washington must realize that these actions by the Kremlin definitely represent a defeat for British foreign policy. It is further reported that Washington frankly admits that the United States is at present in no position to exert pressure on Stalin. The lowering effect on U.S. prestige with the smaller nations is clear.

Churchill returned to London on 18 Jan. and was given a great ovation in the House of Commons. He declared that he was not contemplating any change in his duties and that he wished to make an early statement on the general progress of the war.

The representative of the Ministry for Economic Warfare stated in the Commons that his department had taken measures to secure preference in the purchase of tungsten from the Iberian Peninsula and chromium from Turkey and thus prevent German buying in these countries. He refused to reveal further government measures in this direction.

Reuter states that the U.S. railroad strike has been settled.

The Australian Prime Minister has declared that Australia needs a protective chain of islands to the north. In the defense of these islands Australia would have to cooperate with Great Britain and other powers such as the Netherlands for the Dutch East Indies, Portugal for Timor, the U.S.A. for U.S. possessions and France for New Caledonia and the New Hebrides.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General reported on the protest received

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from Group West against the withdrawal of the Battery Greville to the Esbjerg area. It was suggested to the Group that 38 cm. guns of the same type as those planned for St. Pol should be set up near Greville. The Group's opinion was requested.

II. There is to be a conference with the Commanding Admirals of the Navy at command post "Koralle" on 11 and 12 Feb.

III. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division, Bureau of Naval Armament requested information on tactical tasks in view for midget submarines and one-man torpedoes. Operations Division pointed out that the plans are at present being worked out at Group North/Fleet. Lieutenant Commander Kemnade from Quartermaster Division has been assigned as Liaison Officer between Armed Forces High Command and Group North/Fleet for all matters to do with these small craft.

In a Highly Restricted Circle

IV. Army Situation:

The southern part of the eastern front was comparatively quiet. The situation southeast of Minsk is not clear. It is now quite plain that we scored a defensive success in the heavy fighting in the Vitebsk area, but our casualties were high.

The severe fighting in the Volkhov area still continues. In the Leningrad area the enemy is fighting continually in the attempt to break our coastal front. If this plan succeeds, we shall inevitably have to withdraw our front to the line of Lake Peipus.

In Italy the main fighting continues in the southern part of the front.

Special Items:

I. The Fuehrer has decided that if the situation so demands, Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest is to have unrestricted authority over all members of all branches of the armed services, also the Waffen SS, who are in the Italian area and are fitted to take part in the land fighting.

Operations Division has informed German Naval Command, Italy accordingly. Order as per 1/Skl 1768/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

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II. The Fuehrer has ordered:

"1. Effective immediately the following heavily fortified coastal defense areas in the area under Commanding General, West will be officially designated fortress areas:

A. In the area under Commanding General, Armed Forces, Netherlands:

Ijmuiden and Hook of Holland.

B. In the area under 15th Army Command:

Dunkirk, Boulogne, Le Havre.

C. In the area under 7th Army Command:

Cherbourg, St. Malo, Brest, Lorient, St. Nazaire.

D. In the area under 1st Army Command:

Gironde Estuary North and South.

2. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West will designate the limits in agreement with the General in command of Engineering Works and Fortresses.

3. Where necessary the Fortress Commanders will be appointed by the Army Personnel Office.

4. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West will not receive any reinforcements to man the fortresses. As before the fortresses are to be manned with forces drawn partly from the fortress manning troops and partly from the division manning the relevant coastal defense sector.

5. The Fortress Commanders are hereby given the same authority for their fortress areas as the Fuehrer order of 17 Jan. 1944 gave to Commanding General, Armed Forces, West for the "combat zones". In addition special directives will follow for the fortresses of Ijmuiden and Hook of Holland. Within the fortress area the Fortress Commanders are empowered to exercise judicial authority over all members of the three armed services and the Waffen SS, the Todt Organization and the German Labor Service, all civilian administrative offices and the French civilian population.

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6. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West is to supply the fortresses with food, ammunition, fuel and goods of all kinds as directed in the plans."

III. In view of the possible development of the situation, Group South reported on the readiness of the PT boats - the only vessels of importance for active operations:

"a. 3rd PT Boat Flotilla: One boat in the Aegean and one in the Adriatic at restricted readiness.

One boat a total loss at Corcula.

Three boats in Venice for engine overhaul to be completed on 5 and 10 Feb. respectively.

One boat with her stern torn off, can hardly be repaired.

Three boats on transfer or in process of assembly, two of them will require a long period in dock.

b. 7th PT Boat Flotilla: On transfer or in process of assembly in Venice, should apparently be completed by the end of February.

c. 24th PT Boat Flotilla: Eight minesweepers on transfer or in process of assembly in the Adriatic; out of four minesweepers in the Aegean, two are ready, one not ready till 21 Jan. and one not ready for an indefinite period."

IV. On 18 Jan. the Japanese Liaison Officer sent the following message on the Timor question:

"The Japanese Government is working on the principle of maintaining neutral relations with Portugal at all events. We try to avoid all friction. The Japanese keep the Portuguese colony of Macao supplied with food and coal. Four hundred thousand yen have been placed at the disposal of the governor of Timor. The ban on telegrams was recently lifted. The Portuguese Government in Timor is permitted to send uncoded telegrams to Portugal. The Japanese Government recently gave permission for Portugal to send a representative to study conditions in Timor.

It was necessary to adopt strict treatment towards the Portuguese so as to ensure security for operational measures. It has been

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discovered that the Portuguese have been in communication with the enemy, allegedly with the connivance of the governor of Timor. For example it was reported that on several occasions the movements of Japanese troop transports were communicated to the enemy. For this reason the Portuguese have had to be restricted in their freedom of movement. However, these measures were carried out with great caution with due regard for international relations.

The Portuguese Government has expressed the opinion that the Japanese measures cannot be described as an act of self-defense. On the other hand they have explicitly stated that the occupation of Timor has not furnished any grounds for a declaration of war against Japan.

Tokyo thinks that the Timor problem is resolving itself and will not again become acute. The Japanese Minister in Lisbon has been informed of the matter and is to take up conciliatory negotiations with the Portuguese Government."

The concessions mentioned in the first paragraph should in general fulfill the Portuguese demands. It should be borne in mind that Ambassador Ritter asked Chief of Staff to bring up the Timor question with the Japanese, so that the matter should be settled on our terms, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would not be in a position to do this. Subsequently Chief of Staff discussed the matter with Vice Admiral Abe who promised to work along these lines. (See War Diary 24 Dec. 1943.)

V. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division sent us the following opinion held by the Iranian Military Attaché in Ankara:

"1. The Turkish Government does not desire to strengthen its occupation of Thrace. Occupation is already strong.

2. With the launching of the second front Turkey will at once turn over air and naval bases to the Allies.

3. The Iranian Military Attaché is convinced that Turkey will make war on Germany in April or May 1944.

4. The official Turkish announcement that Turkey has placed air and naval bases at the disposal of the Allies will be made after the actual event."

VI. Naval Intelligence Division submitted Enemy Situation

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Report No. 2/44 on 15 Jan. Copy as per 1/Skl 2154/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Enemy Situation Reports, Naval Intelligence Division".

Situation 19 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

On 19 Jan. the Naval Attaché, Tokyo proposed that the WESERLAND should be given orders to make a complete change in her camouflage before a new breakthrough attempt and referred to the "Amsi" list of ships compiled by Naval Intelligence Division. Operations Division appreciated this suggestion.

Naval Staff has informed the WESERLAND that it is presumed that she has changed her camouflage as ordered and that the search for another camouflage model has so far been unsuccessful. She was instructed that if GLENBANK should be compromised through aircraft sighting she should use FORRESBANK for the time being. Refer to "Amsi", chapter describing suspicious ships.

Group North/Fleet was informed by telegram "Senior Officer Only" of the directive radioed to the RIO GRANDE on 17 Jan. Order 1/Skl I k 184/44 Gkdos. Chfs, in files 1/Skl I k II.

Submarine Division will be informed that the plans for the sailing of the blockade runners have been canceled so that there is no need for the assignment of two weather observation submarines.

Likewise Group West will be given fresh instructions to cancel all the preparations for the operation. The captains are to be told that recent experiences have proved that the breakthrough via the Bay of Biscay involves too great a risk and the operation is therefore canceled. The transfer of the ships for purposes of unloading is to be arranged in agreement with the Naval Station

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Bordeaux. As far as possible ships laden with cargo should not be massed together in Bordeaux.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Twenty-eight planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. Between 1143 and 2302 eight locations of British vessels were reported from the rendezvous area. According to radio intelligence two British vessels reported one of our shadowing planes in CG 5843 and BF 2517.

At 1010 our air reconnaissance sighted twenty fishing vessels 20 miles south of the southern point of Ireland and machine-gunned two of them. No reconnaissance reports are on hand from Air Commander, Atlantic Coast.

According to an intelligence report of 16 Jan., the three main assembly areas for the invasion troops in southern England are gradually being evacuated. Relatively speaking there is no secrecy about this move and the British seem to be trying to create the impression that the invasion will take place in the very near future. The agent, who is considered very reliable, thinks that for the present we can expect minor raids, the large-scale landing will come later.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with four boats transferred from Concarneau to Brest during the night of 18 Jan.

Two submarines were escorted in and two out.

Channel Coast:

Seven mines were swept northeast of Calais.

The operation of the 5th PT Boat Flotilla scheduled for the night of 18 Jan. was not carried out. The boats transferred to Cherbourg and while on passage were sent against unidentified targets located in BF 2863.

In the evening the convoy MUENSTERLAND (covername "Walkenried")

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proceeded eastwards from Boulogne according to plan.

Group West has agreed with the plan to transfer Commander, PT Boats to Paris. Space has been prepared in the building formerly occupied by Commanding Admiral, Submarines.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Convoy and escort work and minesweeping were carried out according to plan. A mine was swept north of Terschelling. Convoy 1209 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe has almost reached its destination. Torpedo boats T "28" and "29" resumed their passage from Hook of Holland to Dunkirk at 0100.

Three convoys totaling 75,843 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland.

Special Items:

Re the scope of the authority of Group North/Fleet, which after taking over the Naval Commands, will include the general direction of the entire operational area, Naval Command, North has reported that it is essential to define the respective spheres of authority. In the event of attack, according to Fuehrer Directive 51, it will be necessary to direct the following assignments which will require preparatory measures:

1. Operations of the defense units of the 5th Coast Patrol Force east of Borkum.

2. Operations of the defense units of the 1st and 5th Coast Patrol Forces and of naval forces in the waters west of Borkum as far as the western and southern boundaries of the area under Naval Command, North.

3. Mining operations for the protection of the coasts, harbor approaches and river mouths in the entire area.

4. Operations of harbor defense flotillas and units of Commander, Motor Boats in the entire area.

5. Operations of coastal and anti-aircraft artillery against sea, land and air targets.

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6. Local operations of all naval units ashore in the home area.

Further details will be dealt with by Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Ten planes were detected over the northern North Sea and nine over the northern rendezvous area.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Command, Norway thinks that some error may have been made in the reported observation of enemy vessels in Boek Fjord on 18 Jan.

Forty-two ships were escorted north and twenty-two south. Twenty-six ships remained behind awaiting escorts.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

According to a report from the Naval Attaché, Stockholm, preparations are apparently being made in Lysekil for a new operation of transport PT boats during the next new moon period. Sufficient cargo for 5 PT boats is stored in this harbor.

2. Own Situation:

No special reports are to hand from the Baltic approaches and the western Baltic.

Naval Shore Commander "R" has transferred to Nikolayevka.

The enemy broke through in several places from the Oranienbaum pocket in the direction of the supply route near Kipenyi, where he occupied the cross-roads. He drove wedges into the center and left flank of the 215th and 170th Infantry Divisions and the right flank of the 126th Infantry Division and, most important, into Krasnoe Selo. In view of this situation Army Command issued orders for the abandonment of the areas occupied by the 9th Air Force Field Division and the 126th Infantry Division.

The 126th Infantry Division and the 9th Air Force Field

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Division and probably the Naval Artillery Command, Kronstadt Bay are attempting to unite to push their way south. The Naval Command is tactically under the 126th Infantry Division. The Army thinks that the breakthrough may well succeed, as fresh troops are now starting out from the south to meet them.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Submarine U "530" reported from the Caribbean Sea that she probably sank a tanker (10,000 G.R.T.) in EB 97 on 26 Dec. On 29 Dec. she was damaged after being rammed while submerged in EB 98.

On 19 Jan. at 0830 submarine U "390" met four steamers steering west in AL 3984 and definitely observed a hit on a C III steamer. A second T 5 torpedo detonation occurred after seven minutes.

An operation against the ON convoy is planned for Group "Ruegen" for the evening of 20 Jan.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

There was very little air activity on either side and no incidents of importance.

Reich Territory:

There were no enemy flights.

Mediterranean Theater:

Apart from his activity over the front the enemy continued and intensified his attacks on airfields in Italy. See Daily Situation for details.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast minor enemy reconnaissance activity was reported over the Aegean Sea and off the Thracian coast.

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Eastern Front:

246 of our planes were sent up over the eastern front. One of our planes was lost, seven enemy planes were brought down, five of them by anti-aircraft.

In the Stavanger area four Mosquitoes fired at a W 34 plane towing a target. The plane was damaged but landed safely. A BV 138 hydroplane was machine-gunned at her berth. Three of our fighters went up but failed to contact the enemy.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

No special reports to hand.

Own Situation:

Two convoys totaling 5,200 G.R.T. were taken along the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At 0757 air reconnaissance sighted 1 cruiser and 4 destroyers in the Gulf of Gaeta and at 1625 4 vessels, probably destroyers, and 2 transports proceeding at high speed on easterly course.

The minelayer NIEDERSACHSEN carried out the mining operations as planned. In the night of 18 Jan. three assault craft of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla were sent out into the Gulf of Gaeta. They had no success and only sighted motor gun boats.

Submarines U "223" and U "230" put out from Toulon. For the present they will be operating in the Gulf of Gaeta.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

According to a report from Air Commander, Albania,

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4 medium-sized warships, 3 PT boats and 2 merchant ships stood on southeasterly course eight miles west of Himara (Southern Albania) at 1225.

Velaluca on Corcula was shelled by three enemy vessels on the night of 18 Jan. Two to three enemy planes, probably engaged in minelaying, were reported west of Himara. During reconnaissance for the operation against the islands two auxiliary sailing vessels were sunk by Coastal Infantry Battalion Brandenburg.

The operation against the island of Hvar was started according to plan in the early morning. Prisoners state that the harbors of Hvar have been mined.

PT boat S "36" sailed from Cattaro for Pola in the afternoon.

b. Aegean Sea:

Submarine chasers "2125" and "2126" ran aground near Cape Della Sabia while on passage from Kos to Leros on the night of 18 Jan. "2126" refloated and was towed in to Kos with a damaged rudder.

Bad weather severely interfered with shipping. A tug sank east of Salamis. There were casualties among the crew. Otherwise nothing to report.

c. Black Sea:

The operation of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla southeast of Tuapse and the motor minesweeper operation in the Kerch Strait on the night of 18 Jan. were without incident. Three naval ferry barges took up patrol line in the Kerch Strait on the night of 19 Jan. Three PT boats are in immediate readiness in Ivanbaba.

The new armor protection on the bridge of submarine chaser "103" (war transport) stood up well under gunfire in an enemy air raid on 18 Jan.

Submarine U "19" put in to Constanta on 19 Jan.

Group South has emphasized to Admiral, Black Sea and his Commander, Convoys that the danger from enemy air raids makes it essential to disperse the warships and merchantmen lying in the harbors as much as possible.

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With reference to the development of the war at sea and the land fighting, Admiral, Black Sea has sent a suggestion to Quartermaster Division proposing changes in organization, which should economise and simplify the work:

1. Office of Naval Shore Commander, East Crimea to be disbanded; the whole of the Crimea to be put under Naval Shore Commander, West Crimea as Naval Shore Commander, Crimea.

2. The staff released when Naval Shore Commander, East Crimea is abolished to be transferred to a new Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine stationed in Odessa and entrusted with the supervision of the entire coastal defense in Transnistria, Rumania and Bulgaria; the German naval base and offices there to be under his command.

3. Commander, Convoys to be changed to Commander, Coast Patrol Force, Black Sea; the German Naval Command to be included as Staff Section of the Coast Patrol Force, the duties of the Commander, Convoys to be turned over entirely to Commander, Coast Patrol Force. Copy as per teletype 1/Skl 1779/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

This matter will be pursued by Quartermaster Division.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Burma:

Increased fighting is beginning on the present line of the Burma front. There have been minor enemy attacks on the land front. The enemy Air Force seems to be preparing a land offensive by making numerous attacks against the Japanese hinterland.

Solomons - New Guinea:

The Allied Air Force is continuously attacking Japanese strong points and positions on New Guinea, New Pomerania, New Mecklenburg and the Solomons. The Japanese Air Force is holding back and generally keeping to the defensive. They achieved a considerable success on 17 Jan. when they brought down 102 out of 200 planes attacking Rabaul.

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Items of Political Importance

Press reports state that Moscow intends to create a fait accompli by holding a plebiscite in the occupied Polish territories west of the Curzon line, similar to the one already carried out in eastern Poland. This would inevitably lead to an Anglo-American fiasco in the Polish question.

According to Transocean, Churchill declared on 17 Jan. that before the middle of March the world would witness the greatest military operations ever known in history. Eisenhower is reported to have told a press conference that the invasion preparations are well advanced.

Eden has informed the House of Commons that the British Government has renewed its serious protest to Madrid about a Spanish "Legion" fighting on the German side.

Chief, Naval Staff and Chief, Operations Division returned from Fuehrer Headquarters. The minutes of the discussions as per 1/Skl 224/44 Gkdos. Chfs. are in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VII.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General reported that at the conference of the Shipbuilding Commission, Subcommittee Landing Craft held on 18 Jan., it was stated that the production of standard lighters could not begin before 1 Jan. 1945.

II. Chief of Staff, Commander in Chief, Navy reported that Director General Merker has an appointment with Commander in Chief, Navy today. The purpose of his visit is to express his anxiety on the question of meeting the deadlines in the prefabrication of the new submarines and request a quick decision to the effect that the repair program be postponed in favor of new construction work.

III. Chief, Organization and Mobilization Branch, Quartermaster Division reported that the Commander in Chief, Navy has agreed to the dispatch of the following letter to Under Secretary of State Ferrini:

"Mr. Under Secretary of State:

I thank you for your memorandum about the reconstruction of the Italian Navy, sent to me via Commanding Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy.

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However, prior to our meeting fixed for 28 Jan. 1944, I think it would be well for me to make some general statements which may assist your approach to this conference.

I consider that your plans to build up the Italian Navy at this present time are too far-reaching. For the most part they should be regarded as an ultimate goal, which with the means at your present disposal cannot be reached for some time to come. The attempt to achieve them immediately can only result in set-backs. The reconstruction of the Italian Navy must come stage by stage, starting from a small but well-laid foundation.

It would considerably interfere with the operational activities of the German Navy, now the only positive factor in naval warfare in the Mediterranean, if in the present situation large forces and other equipment, which otherwise would mostly be used to maintain and strengthen German operations, were to be tied down to further these very far-reaching reconstruction plans which cannot bring any immediate military return.

It is therefore essential that the first stage of the reconstruction of the Italian Navy should be left strictly to the scale agreed upon between the High Command of the German Armed Forces and the Italian High Command. Compliance with this condition not only serves the interest of the new Italian Navy, but also the common prosecution of the war, for it is in this way that the Italian Navy can again play a part in operations with a minimum of delay. These operations will have to be carried out under German command.

At present, for example, the following plans cannot be put into practice:

Taking over of dockyards and arsenals;

Taking over of command posts on the coast;

Establishment of naval units, with the exception of coastal patrol and transport units and special weapons of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla.

Schools and training courses will have to be constantly adapted to the current needs of the reconstruction of the Italian Navy.

I am pleased to have this opportunity of discussing all these

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questions with you. I shall endeavor to assist you in your work of reconstruction in which I am deeply interested.

I send you my most heartfelt respects and ask you to accept my best regards.

Signed: Doenitz."

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

IV. German Naval Command, Italy submitted a supplementary report on Borghese's arrest.

Grossi has been called to Spezia. The Italian commands are anxious for the disarmament of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla. German Naval Command, Italy considers that this plan would considerably interfere with our own operational opportunities and has taken steps to prevent its execution.

Commander in Chief, Navy ordered investigation about whether Commanding Admiral, Group West approved Grossi's trip to Spezia. He also ordered support for the efforts of German Naval Command, Italy to keep the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla under SS Lieutenant General Wolff. If need be the matter should be taken up via Armed Forces High Command.

V. On 17 Jan. Group North/Fleet reported:

There has been an investigation into the question of whether the patrol positions for submarines waiting to come out of the Bear Island Passage for concentrated attack on PQ convoys can be brought farther southwest, thus enabling the boats to extend the duration of their operation. Results are as follows:

1. As there are naval and air forces operating from Iceland against the submarines, the patrol line cannot be moved farther southwest than approximately the line grid square AB 4856 to 8814. Operations against PQ convoys would then last about a day and a half longer.

2. If the reconnaissance is to be carried out by submarines only, we shall need about 10 boats in these waters, as under the present ice conditions the enemy has a large area in which he can take evasive action. We can expect that reconnaissance by planes and searching groups will lead to extensive evading movements. With 10 submarines operational

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in January and 15 in February, this means that in January all, in February two-thirds of the ready boats are at sea. The plans for increasing the number of submarines in Northern Waters to a total of thirty are only gradually taking effect.

3. Adequate air reconnaissance cannot be expected until the arrival of the reinforcements requested by the 5th Air Force. It must also be remembered that the air reconnaissance will not be on the flank of the line of submarines, it must be ahead of them, so that even if later flights are canceled because of weather conditions, the convoy can still be spotted before it meets the patrol line. To sum up, the submarines must keep to their position in the Barents Sea area until there is a decisive increase in their numbers or adequate air reconnaissance to satisfy the Navy's demands.

Chief, Naval Staff commented that Naval Staff's view of having a limited number of submarines on operations presupposes a certain amount of cooperation from air reconnaissance. Chief of Staff reported that an investigation is being made at present to determine to what extent the Air Force can meet these requirements. The decision about where to place the submarines must depend on the outcome of this inquiry.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed.

VI. Quartermaster General reported that following the request by Naval Staff, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff decided against the inclusion of the naval coastal batteries in the long-range shelling operations.

In the afternoon Commander in Chief, Navy will be present at the shipping conference in Stettin.

Special Items:

I. Following the directive from Naval Staff (see War Diary 12 Jan.), the question of forced reconnaissance of the southern English ports has been considered by Group West, who reported:

"The Group does not see any possibility of forced reconnaissance against southern English ports with the vessels at its present disposal. It is out of the question to employ submarines. PT boats can only be employed by night; at this stage in the development of location it is difficult enough even to approach

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the convoy lane; to get as far as the ports undetected is impossible. Penetrating into the harbors must therefore inevitably involve severe fighting with very high casualties. There can only be very limited observation while in action on a dark night and the picture would be incomplete. To gain anything we should have to make a simultaneous reconnaissance of several ports, and even if we took the risk the value of the operation would be slight and entirely out of proportion to the sacrifice involved. In spite of the present high losses of reconnaissance planes, air reconnaissance of the enemy ports would be cheaper and more effective than PT boat reconnaissance."

Naval Staff is not giving any comment for the present.

II. Group West reported that the conference between Air Commander, Atlantic and the Navy for the discussion of joint operations would take place in Angers on 31 Jan. and 1 Feb.

III. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Quartermaster Division has issued the following directive:

"I. In view of the seriousness of the transport situation in the Aegean Sea, the Fuehrer demands drastic action by Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast, who has been given full powers to put the following measures into force immediately.

1. The air transport space available in the area of Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast is to be concentrated primarily in the Aegean. It is to be used to forward troops and supplies as the Commanding General may direct.

2. The sequence of priority for all air and sea transports to the Aegean islands is as follows:

a. Troop movements whose exclusive purpose is to reinforce the island defenses. These have first claim on air transport. Even if there are disadvantages, the exchange of troop detachments must stop immediately.

b. Emergency supplies for Crete about 6,300 tons per month, for Rhodes and the southern Sporades about 2,300 tons per month. Exact allocation to be determined by Army General Staff, Quartermaster General and Commanding General, Armed

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Forces, Southeast.

c. Prisoners are to be transported by every available means, including those unsuitable for troop transports; all ships returning from the islands to be used.

d. Leave personnel to be transported by air, on warships and troop transports.

e. Other urgent supplies.

3. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast is to appoint a representative with the duty of seeing that all means of transport are put to best use, keeping to the given order of priority. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast is to investigate whether the Sea and Air Transport Organization already existing in Athens is competent to do this task, otherwise there must be an immediate reorganization or change of personnel.

II. A report was made to the Fuehrer on the supply and transport situation in the Aegean Sea, also on well-founded complaints from the troops garrisoning the islands about insufficient leave and differentiation between the services. The Fuehrer has ordered Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast to take energetic steps to see that nothing else takes up the transport other than the priority categories and that the existing restrictions affect each man on the islands equally, without regard to his service or rank. In particular the backlog of personnel scheduled for leave on the Greek mainland is to be expedited by employing air transport space."

The matter has been placed in the hands of Quartermaster Division.

IV. According to a report from Air Force, Operations Staff, Naval Liaison Officer, Field Marshal Rommel has raised the question of whether the Navy could use the Air Force mines stored in the west area and thus shorten the supply route. The Inspector for aerial mines at 3rd Air Force is to go into this question at the beginning of this week. Air Force, Operations Staff requested information about how many mines the Navy requires and if it is necessary to use the stocks of the 3rd Air Force.

Naval Staff replied:

1. The Navy does not intend to use the front line stocks

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of the 3rd Air Force. Mines will be transferred from the Air Force to the Navy only in case of evacuation.

2. Transfer of about 5,000 aerial mines from home stocks of the Air Force is desirable.

V. Minelaying Experimental Command reported:

New EFA mines have been found on the Danish coast. Designation EFA 2. The old type is named EFA 1. The EFA 2 is less sensitive to the motion of the sea and therefore does not need to be set so deep, perhaps a few meters below surface. As they are less sensitive to nearby detonations, the mines can be laid closer together.

VI. According to information received from Naval Ordnance Division, Underwater Obstacles Branch, a time-setting device has recently been found in British ground mines. So far only isolated ground mines with time-setting device have been salvaged; however, the earlier assumption that the enemy will not land on coasts fouled with ground mines no longer holds good. (For example mines off the PT boat bases on the Dutch coast, Le Havre and Cherbourg).

Naval Staff passed on the relevant information to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; Naval Liaison Officers attached to Air Force, Operations Staff and High Command Army, Army General Staff.

VII. Operations Division passed on information to Quartermaster Division, Bureau of Naval Armament, Naval (Ship) Construction Division and Research, Inventions and Patents Branch, Projects Sections with copy to Armed Forces High Command, Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare, about a plan to create additional transport space by using floating hulls, towed by submarines, in traffic between Germany and Japan. Copy as per 1/Skl I ga 7351/43 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. X.

VIII. The Intelligence Service submitted the following report from a reliable agent from Madrid. The report is dated 18 Jan. and the subject is the main attack of the Allied forces on Europe:

"It has been decided to start the attack about 15 Feb. 1944 using all available strength of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The date may be postponed for a few days if the weather proves

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unsuitable. The attack is to take place:

1. From Corsica against the Mediterranean coast (main attack in the Cannes area), various other attacks including one near Marseilles.

2. From England against the French Atlantic coast, main attack in the La Rochelle area, minor attacks in other places along the French coast.

3. By way of Belgium and Holland in the direction of Aachen.

4. A large landing force is to be sent against Wilhelmshaven and Cuxhaven, attack to be directed against Hanover and Hamburg, aim is to penetrate into the heart of Germany to reach Berlin. Main body of American forces to be concentrated in this attack.

5. Against Denmark at Johannesburg.

The proportion of American to British forces in these operations will be 3 to 1. In the attack against France the Allies count on strong support from French partisans whom they estimate at 200,000. The terrorists will first destroy the railway lines and junctions and then cooperate with parachute troops."

The agent received these reports:

a. through a counsellor of the British embassy in Madrid, with whom he was friendly. Statements originally came from Sir Samuel Hoare,

b. from the Turkish embassy in Madrid

c. and from the Anglo-American Consulate General in Barcelona.

The agent asserts that he is in a position to report the exact date of attack seven to eight days in advance, but at the same time he emphasizes that this information may also be another Anglo-American attempt at deception.

The American Ambassador Hayes, when talking with the Chilean Ambassador in Madrid on 10 Jan. 1944, was very pessimistic on the chances of success of these operations. He thought that

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from a military point of view it would be better to employ Anglo-American troops in Russia proper.

Situation 20 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Following directive issued to the RIO GRANDE:

1. Expect to meet German planes of the types FW 200, BV 138 and Ju 88 after entering Denmark Strait. Do not exchange recognition signals, otherwise your security may be compromised.
2. After the RIO GRANDE crosses 15° W on her eastward passage (eastern exit of the Strait), Naval Group Command North/Fleet or Admiral, Northern Waters in Narvik will take over command.
3. You will proceed on your passage from point "Distel" by way of new point "Eiche". "Eiche" lies 09° 05' east of point "Distel".
4. You will be met at point "Eiche". Further details will follow.

Armed Forces High Command, Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare and Foreign Section III will be informed by memorandum 1/Skl I k 201/44 Gkdos. Chefs. on the Fuehrer decision canceling the sailing of the blockade runners from the west area. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. I.

One inevitable consequence of this decision is that there can be no surface blockade runners from Japan to Germany in the winter 1944/1945, as there are no ships available in Japan. The decision about the ships now lying in the west area will come later.

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Naval Group West has been ordered to confer with Harbor Office Bordeaux and arrange to transfer the ships for unloading. An assembly of laden ships in Bordeaux is to be avoided. Armed Forces High Command, Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare and Foreign Section III have been asked to initiate the necessary measures for unloading and inform all other offices concerned.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Forty-nine planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. Seven British vessels were located in the rendezvous area. At 0835 Aultbea radio station sent out the keyword "Porter" to eleven places in the home area and at 0930 the keyword "Ale 48" to an outgoing convoy.

At 1044 our air reconnaissance sighted 2 transports, each of 6,000 G.R.T., heading east in BF 2289 (southwest of Plymouth), at 1045 8 landing craft on southwesterly course near Land's End, at 1047 1 merchantman near Lizard Head and at 1250 3 minesweepers on westerly course southeast of the Isle of Wight. At noon the following vessels were sighted in the southern part of Portland harbor: 2 escort vessels, 1 destroyers, 7 mine vessels, 8 PT boats, 8 LCT's and other craft. At 1357 9 merchantmen (each 5,000 G.R.T.) were on easterly course ten miles southeast of Portland.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Minesweeper M "4218" got caught in the La Pallice net barrage on 18 Jan. and stood high and dry at low tide. One mine was swept in the Lorient area. At 1100 destroyer Z "32" sailed from Bordeaux for technical trials and gunnery exercises. She is scheduled to return on 22 Jan.

Channel Coast:

The 5th PT Boat Flotilla put into Cherbourg at 0600.

Following their move from the Hook of Holland to Dunkirk, torpedo boats T "28" and "29" came under long-range shelling while passing through the narrow part of the Channel.

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Subsequently the boats were attacked by enemy fighter-bombers. Torpedo boat T "28" was damaged when water flooded the boiler room; the two boats put into Le Havre at 0625. Detailed reports have not yet come in.

The convoy with the steamer MUENSTERLAND (WALKENRIED) was set on fire by enemy long-range shelling northwest of Blanc Nez while on passage from Boulogne to Dunkirk. The steamer ran aground in fog. The shelling started at 0508 and lasted till 0700. In the third of 46 salvoes the ship received a direct hit on the bridge. A later hit put the engine and emergency rudder out of action. Eight of the crew were killed and ten are missing. Out of a total of seven ships transferred from the west area to the east this is the third large ship to be lost. Four have completed the passage. For a short report from patrol vessel "1506" on convoy WALKENRIED see teletype 1210.

Our batteries returned the enemy fire from 0512 to 0717 with 41 rounds of very heavy caliber. Poor visibility prevented observation of results.

The 2nd, 6th and 8th PT Boat Flotillas are scheduled to carry out a torpedo operation against a southbound convoy tonight, the 5th PT Boat Flotilla is to operate against a westbound convoy and the 4th and 9th PT Boat Flotillas are to lay mines along the English east coast.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Convoy 1209 completed the passage from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe. Eight convoys with about 69,000 G.R.T. were taken through the IJsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland.

At 1823 naval anti-aircraft battery Heligoland brought down one returning plane. The coastal listening stations Terschelling - Borkum and Heligoland reported heavy thuds during the evening. Enemy minelaying is suspected.

Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon eighteen planes belonging to No. 18 Group were detected on reconnaissance over the Norwegian coast and

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central North Sea and eight planes later on. The operation by our PT boats in the convoy lane between Southwold and Orfordness was observed by radio intelligence during the evening. Presumably British coastal forces were already given warning in the evening.

Own Situation:

At 1130 mine-exploding vessel "139" and the northbound convoy consisting of the steamer EMSLAND, escorted by one patrol vessel and three submarine chasers, were attacked by fifteen enemy torpedo bombers west of Stadtlandet. The EMSLAND was hit and beached near Ervik. The crew left the ship. The mine-exploding vessel brought down one enemy plane, the submarine chaser two. Gunfire caused casualties on two submarine chasers, both of which were slightly damaged.

At 1135 seven enemy torpedo bombers attacked a southbound convoy of two steamers escorted by two minesweepers near Kis (Stadtlandet); the attack was repulsed.

At the same time the minelayer SKAGERRAK, which was steering south under escort by two minesweepers, was attacked by eight torpedo bombers ten miles south of Egersund. The SKAGERRAK sank after being hit by an aerial torpedo. 118 members of the crew of 127, including the commander and the officers, were rescued. The SKAGERRAK and the escort vessels brought down three enemy planes. Our formation was escorted by two fighters and one BV flying boat. Two Mosquitoes again gunned Stola airfield.

For advance combat report from the Commander of the SKAGERRAK, see teletype 1020. For brief combat report from submarine chaser "1802" see teletype 2400.

Destroyer Z "33" put into Tromsø on 19 Jan.

Twenty-nine ships were escorted north and forty-four south, eighteen remained behind awaiting escorts.

Group North/Fleet having agreed with the plans for a barrage near Stadtlandet put forward by Naval Command, Norway (see War Diary 15 Jan.), Naval Staff approved the proposal and allocated the necessary material.

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IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

At 1230 the Finnish listening station on Hogland reported noises, probably from a submarine. At 1255 they moved west and disappeared.

Own Situation:

Two mine detonations were reported off Kiel Bay. One EIM/A mine was cleared in the Bay of Pomerania. Twelve minesweepers are on patrol against submarines west of Nashorn.

The Batteries "Bismarck" and "Ustluga" will be dismantled immediately as agreed upon with Army Group North. The Army Battery "Konnoje" will move into the position occupied by Battery "Bismarck". Instead of the 2nd and 3rd Companies of the Naval Special Operations Detachment "Ostland", the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion "Ustluga" has been made available for action in the evacuation area of the 9th Air Force Field Division, the 126th Infantry Division and the detachments of marines.

The withdrawal of the naval formations from the position in Kronstadt Bay was successful. The formations are assembling in Nikolayevka and Gachina for transport to Hungerburg. The batteries and defense positions were blasted in good time.

V. Submarine Warfare

Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

Own Situation:

Submarine U "1062" reported a search patrol by four destroyers in AF 44 and by six destroyers in AE 85. If this observation is correct and there is a systematic patrol in these waters, blockade running on the northern route will be out of the question. A thorough check-up has been ordered.

Air reconnaissance for the operation by Group "Ruegen" was without result. Two Ju 290 will repeat the reconnaissance on 21 Jan.

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VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Nothing to report.

Reich Territory:

In the evening Berlin was raided by between four and five hundred bombers which came in from over the North Sea. Compared with damage done in earlier raids this attack must be described as medium heavy. The bombing was concentrated on the eastern half of the city. For details see Daily Situation.

A few nuisance planes dropped isolated bombs on Duisburg, Duesseldorf and the Cologne area. The report of our defensive successes is not yet to hand.

Mediterranean Theater:

In the Italian area the enemy continued his raids on harbors, transport installations and airfields in undiminished strength.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast thirteen reconnaissance planes were observed over the Aegean Sea and eleven in the area of Valona and Bar - Podgorica. Ten Spitfires dropped bombs north of Durazzo.

Eastern Front:

On 19 Jan. 160 of our planes and 360 enemy planes were up over the eastern front. Weather was poor. Two of our own fighters were lost. Thirteen enemy planes were brought down, four of them by anti-aircraft.

Our fighters brought down two of our own planes while defending the minelayer SKAGERRAK against enemy air attacks.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon of 19 Jan. the French cruiser JEANNE D'ARC put into Gibraltar from the Mediterranean and sailed for the Atlantic in the afternoon. In the afternoon of 19 Jan. a FIJI cruiser left on easterly course.

Own Situation:

A steamer of 650 G.R.T. was escorted off the French south coast. At 1535 six bombers with fighter escort attacked one of our submarine chasers south of Toulon. The vessel suffered slight damage but no casualties. Two planes were probably brought down.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

No special reports.

Own Situation:

At 0030 an enemy submarine unsuccessfully attacked a minesweeper in the Gulf of Genoa.

On 17 Jan. a blockship sank on even keel, probably as a result of sabotage. In the night of 17 Jan. a tug, one tank barge, one motor coaster and another tug engaged in salvage work ran aground near Varda. Naval anti-aircraft reported having brought down a plane near Recanati on 16 Jan.

The anti-aircraft combat group "Grunewald" reported having brought down one plane near Benedetto on 16 and one on 19 Jan.

German Naval Command, Italy completed the transfer to Montecatini.

An intelligence report states that there is a rumor in Milan that partisans in Northern Italy are to carry out extensive activity in cooperation with the Anglo-Americans. There will also be a general strike. Date 20 to 30 Jan.

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Submarine U "343", which did not send any reports between 8 and 18 Jan., brought down two attacking enemy planes for certain in CH 7384 on 8 Jan. and a third one probably. The submarine reported that she was obtaining good results with the 3.7 cm. gun.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

On 18 and 19 Jan. the enemy carried out continuous bombing and gunning attacks on Ploca, harbor installations, ships and anti-aircraft positions. A motor coaster was burnt out. Further raids were carried out on Corcula and a stranded motor coaster. One of the two grounded motor sailing vessels was set on fire by an attacking enemy plane.

According to a report from Admiral, Adriatic Sea, Tito partisans are using the harbor of Senj thirty kilometers northeast of Fiume as a supply base.

PT boat S "36" put into Cattaro.

b. Aegean Sea:

The enemy planes which raided Salonika in the night of 15 Jan. also mined the bay. A minesweeping plane swept a mine in the harbor on 19 Jan. Submarine chaser "2125" which ran aground during her passage from Kos to Leros sprang a leak in the night of 19 Jan. and must be counted a total loss.

Group South transmitted a report from Admiral, Aegean dated 13 Jan. It states that the promise made to Army Group E to the effect that 25,000 G.R.T. steamer tonnage would probably be available on 20 Jan. cannot be met, and that the repair period for the ships has been considerably extended as a result of the air raids on Piraeus on 11 Jan. The deadline when the ships will be ready cannot yet be given. For details see teletype 1600.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

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Own Situation:

At 2015 the towed convoy Feodosiya - Sevastopol was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine near Cape Meganom.

The 1st Battery of the 631st Naval Artillery Battalion shelled seven lighters east of Kerch on the afternoon of 19 Jan. According to air reconnaissance one lighter was set on fire.

The patrol in the Kerch Strait was without incident. The operation by four motor minesweepers in the southern Kerch Strait planned for the night of 20 Jan. was broken off early owing to the weather.

Motor minesweeper R "165" ran aground north of Sulina but floated again undamaged.

No special reports on the land fighting.

Group South reported that a total of 82,526 tons was transported by sea in the Black Sea area in December 1943 compared with 93,316 tons in November; of this total 37,857 tons were transported to the Crimea. See teletype 1620 for details.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing special to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. The situation report containing news of successful enemy air attacks on our convoys in the Norwegian area brought up the question of arming the escort forces with 3.7 cm. guns

The increasing lack of shipping space in the home area compels us to resort to the requisitioning of Danish tonnage. For the present four ships have been requisitioned. We plan to use two of them as submarine targets. Two will be given to Admiral, Landing Craft and Bases, who will return two fairly large ships to the merchant service.

II. Quartermaster General:

Commanding Admiral, Submarines and Naval Command Baltic have agreed to take measures which will help to disperse the heavy concentration of submarines in the home area. Quartermaster Division has approved the increased requirements of fuel (1,700 tons monthly) which this measure will entail, also the construction of seven new bunkers for crews. The dispersal creates considerable difficulties for the schools and training units.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that the entire problem should be thoroughly re-examined by anti-aircraft defense specialists working in cooperation with Commanding Admiral, Submarines.

III. Quartermaster General, reporting on the condition of coastal defenses in the Adriatic, proposed that the now very large areas of the Naval Shore Commanders on the Italian east coast and in Dalmatia should be sub-divided. Additional personnel will only be required in Dalmatia. The only way to meet the recent request from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest asking Commander in Chief, Navy for the assignment of further Naval Artillery Battalions to the Adriatic, is to fall back on the Norwegian area and withdraw the personnel of one battalion with four batteries, replacing them by spare personnel from the area of Naval Command, Norway. This

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battalion would also have to furnish the nucleus for a second one, which would have to be filled up with spare personnel gained by cutting down the requirements in the home area. In this way Group South, who made a pressing request for altogether four and a half battalions, could at least receive the personnel for two battalions and the most urgent requirements for the Dalmatian and Thracian coasts could be satisfied.

Chief, Naval Staff decided that for the present the measure is to be carried out only to one half of the proposed extent, i.e. half a battalion will be withdrawn from the Norwegian area and one full battalion sent to Group South.

IV. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division obtained confirmation from Commander in Chief, Navy that the Navy does not as a general rule assist firms engaged in constructing submarines with transport; naval transport facilities are provided only in emergencies. He went on to report on the request from Director General Merker who is at present asking for 300 technical experts for submarine construction. These are to be secured by a comb-out of industrial technicians. Altogether 2,300 men originally allocated for military service in the Navy are involved. Chief, Naval Ordnance Division does not think we can refuse the request of the Main Committee, as they are apparently finding it difficult to meet the dates for submarine construction. Commander in Chief, Navy agreed in principle and will make further arrangements with Chief, General Naval Administration Bureau.

V. Regarding the production of midget submarines and one-man torpedoes Chief, Naval Ordnance Division requested decision on whether these craft are to be fitted out for torpedoes or limpet mines. Chief of Staff commented that the investigations into tactical considerations have not yet been completed. Chief, Naval Staff decided that they are to be equipped to use both mines and torpedoes. The Shipbuilding Commission has already received orders to construct fifty of these midget craft.

In a highly restricted circle:

VI. Army Situation:

The large-scale battle in the area south of Minsk is already in its fifth day. The General Staff estimates that the enemy must have suffered 190,000 casualties since 5 Jan.

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In the Northern Army Group area Novgorod fell.

VII. Chief of Staff reported that Group North will conclude their war game by the end of this month. Chief, Naval Staff agreed that Group North should later give a report on the final discussion of the war game. Report will be given in the command post of Naval Staff.

Special Items:

I. Naval Staff informed Army General Staff, Naval Liaison Officer that Commander in Chief, Navy in his report to the Fuehrer stated that the Navy can transport 45,000 tons per month to the Crimea. If plans for new constructions are carried out, this figure can possibly be increased to 50,000 tons when the winter is over, so long as freight space is fully utilized and there is no sizeable loss in shipping or increased enemy activity.

II. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division passed on a report from a Chilean officer recently arrived in Santiago after taking part in a one-year naval gunnery course in the United States. Copy as per l/Skl 2564/44 geheim in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V. The report contains extraordinarily interesting statements on artillery and torpedo firing in the U.S. Navy. It states that depth charges with a depth setting on the fuse can be dropped to a maximum depth of 600 feet.

Further details are withheld pending thorough examination and evaluation of the report.

III. An order for mining operations in the event of evacuation of our ports was issued by Naval Staff as per I E 1782/44 Gkdos. Copy in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

IV. A summary of information on the enemy learnt from radio decoding and intelligence in the period from 10 to 16 Jan. 1944 is contained in Radio Monitoring Report No. 3/44.

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Situation 21 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Sixteen planes belonging to the Azores squadrons were spotted on missions.

The Intelligence Service submitted a report from the Ostrow agency dated 24 Dec. 1943 dealing with the dispatch of British naval forces to the Indian Ocean. It is difficult to make out these moves; press reports purposely exaggerate them in order to intimidate the Japanese. The lack of sufficient bases should hamper these large-scale transfers. The harbors in India and Ceylon are unprotected and not very suitable as supply bases. The docks and piers at Kilindini and Durban are overburdened and too far away, the same is true of Simonstown and Aden. We can say with some degree of certainty that the following have been transferred to the Indian Ocean:

- a. Four light vessels of the South African station,
- b. one LONDON class cruiser from the Mediterranean,
- c. all DIDO class cruisers from the Mediterranean,
- d. some old type destroyers,
- e. the RESOLUTION and the ROYAL SOVEREIGN.

It is reported that the NELSON passed Port Said in the direction of the Red Sea at the beginning of December.

- f. Apparently only small numbers of sloops, corvettes and escort vessels were transferred. On the other hand, following the disappearance of the merchant raiders and with the reduced danger from submarines, large numbers of escort forces have been released from convoy duties and probably withdrawn to the Mediterranean.

2. Own Situation:

Following directive issued to the WESTERLAND:

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"In case the camouflage models so far assigned have been compromised, use the KING EDGAR, call letters GKBM, as camouflage model. Changes: Fixed rail with thirteen rather large water portholes. Masts a little taller, thick set funnel. Engine superstructures open on both sides. Only two hatches on the after deck. No superstructures on the poop. There is no pole mast at the after edge of the last hatch. Cruiser stern."

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Forty-six planes of No. 19 Group were detected over the Bay of Biscay. From 1202 to 2102 nine locations, on each occasion one British vessel, were made in the rendezvous area.

At 1020 our reconnaissance reported five destroyers in AM 7169 on 60° and at 1231 seven merchant ships in AM 1230 on 280°.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

One submarine was escorted in and seven out.

Channel Coast:

The following late report was received on the westward passage of torpedoboats T "28" and "29" on the night of 20 Jan. Both boats were damaged by splinters in the long-range shelling. South of Cape Gris Nez they recognized an impending attack by enemy PT boats in time and took avoiding action. In a raid by seven enemy fighter-bombers two or three near hits on T "28" caused leakages. Water and fuel oil burst into the boiler room and the auxiliary engines broke down. One of the attacking planes was probably brought down. For brief combat report from T "28" see teletype 1150.

Enemy planes bombed and machine-gunned the wreck of the steamer MUENSTERLAND during the forenoon of 20 Jan.

At 1620 on 20 Jan. two mines exploded simultaneously in the V-shaped barrage of the overseas harbor at Cherbourg. Patrol vessel V "712" sprang a leak and sank in shallow water.

The 2nd, 5th, 6th and 8th PT Boat Flotillas broke off their sortie

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on the night of 20 Jan. owing to the weather. The 2nd, 6th and 8th PT Boat Flotillas put into IJmuiden, the 5th PT Boat Flotilla into Cherbourg. According to radio intelligence, the enemy sent destroyers against the PT boat flotillas.

The 4th PT Boat Flotilla carried out minelaying and then put into the Hook of Holland.

Special Items:

Prisoners' statements reveal that on one occasion in the year 1942 (no precise date given) eight vessels from a convoy were sunk between Start Point and Lyme Bay by our mines. A naval radio operator captured at Leros described how eight barrage balloons belonging to these ships are spread over an irregular area and apparently anchored in the sea. This success may be put down to the surprise UMB mining operation by our PT boats in August 1942. The incident shows that the enemy knows how to keep his losses through mines secret, so that frequently we only learn about them after a long time. Naval Staff sent this information to Commander, PT Boats with copies to Group West, Naval Intelligence Division and Chief, Radio Monitoring Reports, Communications Intelligence Branch and pointed out that so long as naval operations are carried out with a definite purpose and with perseverance, lack of news furnishes no adequate reason for doubting their success.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

On the night of 21 Jan. minesweeping off the Dutch coast was canceled because of stormy weather. Fourteen minesweeping planes were out by day and swept one mine in AN 95/78.

Convoy 1211 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe sailed at 1630 with four steamers. Three convoys with about 38,500 G.R.T. were taken through the IJsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland.

In the afternoon enemy planes were shelled by naval anti-aircraft in the coastal area of the Netherlands and the Heligoland Bight both on their outward and return flights. Isolated explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped on IJmuiden, the Wilhelmshaven sector and the Brunsbuettel district. The radar sets were jammed in all sectors.

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Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Eleven planes were detected over the North Sea.

According to air reconnaissance, 5 merchant ships of 8,000 G.R.T., 10 merchant ships of 6,000 G.R.T. and 5 other vessels, probably destroyers, were in Murmansk. In Kola Bay 25 merchant ships of about 91,400 G.R.T., 1 tanker and 1 ice-breaker were made out by aerial photography.

According to an agent report received by the 5th Air Force, a convoy is to put out from Reykjavik on 20 Jan. This may possibly be a PQ convoy.

2. Own Situation:

Thirty-two enemy planes attacked the harbor and airfield at Kirkenes with 100 explosive and incendiary bombs in the afternoon of 20 Jan. Ammunition belonging to an Army coastal battery was hit.

On 21 Jan. an enemy torpedo bomber attacked our westbound convoy south of Rolvsøey. The torpedo missed.

Communication with Admiral, Arctic Coast was interrupted and there are no reports from this area. In the other areas twenty-nine ships were escorted north and twenty-two south.

In view of the agent report about a convoy, Air Commander, North (West) will carry out a reconnaissance of a convoy's daily run in the waters 06 East 39 to 16 West 36 as far as either side of Jan Mayen every day from 22 to 24 Jan. Depending on the weather situation the reconnaissance area may be transferred farther south. Shadowers will be held in readiness.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

2. Own Situation:

One mine was swept in the southern exit of the Sound.

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There are no reports on the enemy from the land front in the area of Admiral, Baltic States. So far 8 officers and 370 men from Combat Group Schenke have been collected together and they are now in Hungerburg. There is no news of the 6 officers and 100 men who are still missing.

The plane belonging to the PRINZ EUGEN crashed in Gdynia dock at noon.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1131 Air Commander, Atlantic Coast reported a convoy of seven merchant ships on 280° 180 miles southwest of the Faroes.

2. Own Situation:

There has been no evidence of the ON convoy expected by Group "Ruegen". Our reconnaissance reported five destroyers in line abreast in AM 7167. Otherwise nothing special to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

At midday our planes carried out photographic reconnaissance over the English south coast. They flew over Portsmouth, Southampton, Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) and Dartmouth. For details see Daily Situation. Naval Intelligence Division will evaluate the photographs.

The enemy flew several missions into the occupied west area and strong formations with fighter escort attacked construction sites, transport facilities and airfields and the advanced position at Valogne. Reports received so far indicate that our defenses brought down nine planes.

Our first large-scale attack on London took place in the evening and night of 21 Jan. There were two waves, the first consisting of 227, the second of 217 planes. Details have not yet come in.

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Reich Territory:

Between twenty and twenty-five enemy planes flew into the Rhine-Westphalia industrial area during the evening and between 300 and 400 planes flew into the Magdeburg area via the North Sea - Hamburg - Bremen. A medium-heavy raid was carried out against Magdeburg. For details see Daily Situation. No reports are yet to hand on the number of planes brought down.

Mediterranean Theater:

At 0300 on 22 Jan. our reconnaissance observed the enemy shelling the coast near Nettuno and landing near Anzio with about 300 landing craft.

The enemy sent up 360 ground attack planes and 220 fighters over the front area, mainly on our right flank. He also continued his attacks against railroad stations and airfields.

Reports from the area of Air Force Command, Southeast state that 11 planes were engaged in armed reconnaissance over the Aegean Sea, 2 planes north of the Strait of Otranto and 10 in the Croatian area. Forty-seven enemy planes raided Fiume on the night of 21 Jan. Nine planes were reported supplying partisans in the Balkan area.

Eastern Front:

On 21 Jan. 98 German and 50 enemy planes were up over the eastern front. In the night of 21 Jan. three planes, probably couriers, were reported flying east over Sogne Fjord and one courier plane flying east over the Skagerrak. The 5th Air Force carried out photographic reconnaissance of Murmansk and Kola Bay. For evaluation see Enemy Situation, Northern Waters.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0425 convoy UGS 29, consisting of 36 freighters under escort by 3 destroyers and 5 gunboats, passed through

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the Straits of Gibraltar on its way east. At 0530 8 freighters and 1 destroyer passed through the Straits heading for the Atlantic. In the night of 20 Jan. a Dutch torpedo cruiser put out from Gibraltar for the Mediterranean and an auxiliary cruiser left for the Atlantic. A cruiser of the CAIRO class put in from the Atlantic. Cape Spartel reported that 4 and later on 6 destroyers have been carrying out patrols since the morning of 19 Jan.

At 0830 on 21 Jan. a convoy of 22 freighters escorted by 1 cruiser, 1 destroyer and 3 corvettes stood eight miles north of Alboran on westerly course and at 1800 a convoy of 26 freighters, 2 destroyers and 4 gunboats was eleven miles north of Tres Forcas, also on westerly course.

Own Situation:

While on passage from Genoa to Marseilles the steamer DAUPHINE (9,716 G.R.T.) was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine and planes. One steamer (850 G.R.T.) was escorted off the French south coast.

The islands of Porquerolles, Levant and Port Cros were occupied by the Army. Altogether they used one battalion.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

In the night of 18 Jan. unidentified vessels, thought to be destroyers, shelled the coast south of Civitanova. Probably these were the same vessels which sank two northbound motor coasters south of San Giorgio.

Own Situation:

In the afternoon of 20 Jan. fighter-bombers twice raided Savona. The French destroyer VALMY received two direct hits, fire broke out but was extinguished. The French destroyer LE HARDI was slightly damaged.

Italian assault craft failed to contact the enemy during their sortie in the night of 18 Jan. The operation was broken off because of engine trouble. The operation planned for the night of 20 Jan. was canceled.

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3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Operation "Walzertraum" was carried out. There was no enemy resistance after the landing. Most of the island was mopped up. Except for one small part, the island of Hvar is in our hands. At 2200 on 20 Jan. torpedo boat TA "22" and coast patrol boat G "107" were given orders to reconnoiter the waters round the island of Rab.

According to a report from the 2nd Army Tank Command, parts of the Yugoslav overseas brigade have attacked the islands of Uljan and Pasman. The garrisons are hard-pressed.

Torpedo boat TA "22" and coast patrol boat G "107" will ascertain the extent of the enemy operations.

Naval Shore Commander, Dalmatia will transfer to Split.

According to a report from Admiral, Adriatic the partisan situation on the Istrian peninsula makes Pola unsuitable as a supply center. Although the anti-aircraft defense has been weakened, Fiume will continue to be the base for the supply traffic of the 2nd Army Tank Command.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 0749 a British vessel, probably a submarine, was located about 55 miles south of Kalamata. At 1500 on 19 Jan. an Army patrol sighted a submarine and two seaplanes off Pyrgos (west coast of Peloponnesus).

Own Situation:

Positions of our forces:

PT boat S "54" Rhodes, motor minesweeper R "195" Milos, three submarine chasers in the Dodecanese, all other vessels of the 9th Torpedo Boat Flotilla, 12th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, 21st Submarine Chaser Flotilla and the 24th PT Boat Flotilla in the Piraeus.

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c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

The mining operation planned for the 1st PT Boat Flotilla was postponed because of the weather. Otherwise no special incidents.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing special to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing special to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Commenting on the situation report by Chief, Operations Branch, Chief, Naval Staff once more emphasized the necessity of re-laying the submarine net in the Gulf of Finland immediately, as this area is not frozen over owing to the mild winter and Kronstadt Bay is navigable with the help of icebreakers. Every possible measure must be taken to prevent enemy submarines from penetrating into the Baltic. (See under IV, Situation.)

II. Quartermaster General reported that submarine pens will have to be constructed in Volos because they can be tunneled in the rock there, while in Salonika large amounts of concrete would be required and it is impossible to transport these quantities there. Representatives of Naval Shore Construction Division and Quartermaster Division, Submarine Section, together with the Todt Organization, are at present studying the possibilities on the spot.

Special Items:

I. On 18 and 20 Jan. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West issued detailed instructions on the basis of the Fuehrer directive of 17 Jan. which empowered him to declare coastal sectors of the western area as a combat zone.

On this point and on the directive from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff on the fortresses in the west area issued 19 Jan., Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch comments:

"1. The unlimited authority transferred to Commanding General, Armed Forces, West virtually cancels the instructions contained in the Fuehrer Directive No. 40 as far as the combat zones are concerned. Commanding General, West or on his orders the Commanding Generals of the Armies have unlimited authority to order any change in the command organization for coastal defense which they may think necessary. Contrary to the Fuehrer order of 17 Jan., which laid it down that this

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comprehensive authority may not be delegated lower than the Army Commands, the second Fuehrer order (signature Jodl) assigns this same authority to the fortress commanders. Often there are several fortress commanders in the area of a naval shore commander; they are subordinated to the naval shore commander in rank, but have the same status in the organizational structure.

We must therefore expect that in future the claims of naval warfare on the coast will have to do without the practical backing afforded in Fuehrer Directive No. 40. Such support is essential when these claims have to compete with demands from Army Commanders aimed simply and solely at furthering the interests of land tactics.

2. We already have the first example. At his inspection of Ostend harbor the Commanding General of the 15th Army gave orders that the new constructions in the shipyards there should be stopped in order to economize on labor. Repairs may continue.

Admiral, Netherlands objected and queried the competence of the Army Command to deal with these matters. Group West protested to Commanding General, Armed Forces, West who promised to point out to the Commanding General of the Army Command that he might well be exceeding his authority in ordering this measure."

II. On 20 Jan. Admiral, Baltic States reported that Batteries "Bismarck" and "Ustluga" had been dismantled. Following this report, Chief of Staff, with the concurrence of Chief, Naval Staff, telephoned to Admiral, Baltic States and pointed out that after the abandonment of the area under Naval Shore Commander "R", the Navy's most urgent task would be to defend the south coast of the Gulf of Finland against outflanking enemy landings. The defense of the Baltic Sea - a task to be accomplished by tenaciously holding on to newly ordered positions - is a vital matter for the Navy. The Fuehrer has recognized this fact and this, together with political considerations, provides the reason for the order to defend every foot of territory in the area of Army Group North. Chief, Naval Staff does not intend to interfere with the reported measure, but expects due regard for this viewpoint.

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Situation 22 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

A U.S. steamer (call letters KGZE) sent SOS message from AL 5485: "Heavily damaged, sinking."

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE about the intercepted message, quoted above, also about the plan to transmit weather reports for the area north of 55° N between 45° and 20° W. Weather reports and forecasts for 22 and 23 Jan. were radioed. There should be very favorable weather for a breakthrough on 22 Jan. The RIO GRANDE was therefore advised that if the meeting takes place today, she should proceed without unnecessary delay. Easterly winds 5 to 6 are also to be expected on 23 Jan. in Denmark Strait, heavy cloud and mostly moderate or poor visibility with snow showers. A new low from the west is not yet recognizable.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon one plane from No. 19 Group was detected. British vessels were located in AL 6430, 5860, 9589, 5590, one vessel in each position.

At 1220 our air reconnaissance spotted one merchantman (2,550 G.R.T.) on 90° and at 1740 in AM 4778 one merchantman of up to 10,000 G.R.T., one destroyer and one patrol vessel.

Evaluation by Naval Intelligence Division of the photographic reconnaissance of southern English ports on 21 Jan. showed that the following vessels were in Portsmouth, Southampton, Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) and Dartmouth (figures given are totals):

Naval Forces	2 battleships (decoys or old French vessels)
	2 cruisers
	11 destroyers

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6 escort vessels

11 submarines

Landing Craft 7 fairly large craft, probably LST's

35 LCT's, 66 of them in Southampton

2 LCI's

149 auxiliary landing craft

386 small boats (mostly harbor craft and yachts), rowing boats and fishing craft

Merchant Ships 2 transports

1 pleasure steamer

18 freighters.

This is a normal complement of warships. As we do not know what vessels were in Portland, Devonport, Plymouth and Falmouth we cannot give a complete evaluation of the warship situation.

As far as landing craft are concerned, the number of LCT's has risen to a slight extent in comparison with earlier observations. As commando troops are stationed in the area Southampton - Portsmouth - Isle of Wight, the number of LCT's observed there does not call for any comment. Neither does the number of auxiliary landing boats, especially as it is extremely probable that barges and similar harbor vessels have here and there been included in these figures. The number of small boats observed does not furnish any reliable evidence, as most of the small landing craft are probably stored ashore.

There were very few merchant ships in the harbors. They cannot be considered a part of the reserve tonnage mentioned in the agent reports.

Naval Intelligence Division does not think that there is any sign of a concentration of landing craft and large shipping space which would point to any progress in the invasion preparations. However, no final evaluation is possible until

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we have a reconnaissance report on the other southern English ports.

According to an intelligence report from Portugal dated 21 Jan. several hundred landing craft of different types have been in Milfordhaven Bay and Pembroke and also fairly large concentrations of troop transports in Belfast and Mull Sound.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Nothing special to report.

Channel Coast:

Patrol, minesweeping and escort duties were not carried out owing to stormy weather.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Convoy 1211 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe has almost completed its passage. Convoy 478 from the Elbe to the Hook of Holland has been postponed for 24 hours because of the weather.

One mine was swept in front of the convoy off Den Helder. Three convoys totaling 28,499 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland. In the night of 21 Jan. strong enemy air formations were shelled by anti-aircraft guns in all sectors from northern Holland to Brunsbuettel, both on their outward and return flights. Wilhelmshaven and Wesermuende (Bremerhaven) each reported bringing down one plane.

The Ijmuiden nitrogen plant will not be operating for three weeks because of bomb damage caused on 21 Jan. On 21 and 22 Jan. a number of drifting balloons with incendiary charges were brought down over Dutch territory.

Norway, Northern Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Six planes were detected over the northern and

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central North Sea. In the forenoon of 20 Jan. batteries on the Fisher Peninsula shelled an engineer barge and the Petsamo strongpoint with 118 rounds. Our batteries replied with 116 rounds. A gun and searchlight belonging to battery Sensenhauer were hit.

A Russian plane reported one of our convoys off Honningsvaag at 0615.

2. Own Situation:

On 21 and 22 Jan. there was brisk enemy air activity in the Arctic Coast area. Seventy-five bombs were dropped in the Kirkenes area and five in the Petsamo area. On both days our eastbound convoy was unsuccessfully attacked by enemy torpedo bombers off North Cape and Nordkyn. The naval battery in Petsamo brought down one plane.

Destroyer Z "33" left Tromsø for Alta at 0900.

Thirty-four ships were escorted north and fifty-eight south. Nine ships remained behind.

Special Items:

a. In view of the enemy Air Force successes off the Norwegian southwest coast, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, has ordered the 5th Air Force to transfer the heavy fighter squadron of Me 110 planes from the Kirkenes - Petsamo area to Trondheim. The fighter forces released there are to be moved further south to the Stavanger - Lister area. The air situation makes it impossible to assign fighter forces from the Reich.

b. In order to be in a better position to satisfy the Navy's demands for reconnaissance and ice observation for "Wanderer"'s homeward passage, Air Force, Operations Staff has ordered the transfer of one BV 222 flying-boat from the western area to Trondheim. The transfer was scheduled for 22 Jan. So far we have not received any report that it has been carried out.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, the transport PT boat GAY CORSAIR has put into Lysekil and will leave again either tonight or tomorrow night.

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2. Own Situation:

One mine was swept in the northern exit of the Great Belt. Convoy, minesweeping and escort work in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic was carried out without incident.

In the area of Admiral, Baltic States the 2nd Company of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion started from Ustluga for frontline service.

The anti-aircraft gun emplacement of Battery Dubnia was damaged in an enemy air raid and the crew suffered casualties.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic informed Naval Staff on the meaning of the keyword "Isolani" issued by this command. The word will give the signal for all available minesweeping forces to operate in flotillas on different routes. (See teletype 1902.)

Naval Staff has asked Naval Command, Baltic for their opinion on the possibilities of a breakthrough by Russian submarines and the present strength and effectiveness of the net and the barrage patrol in the Gulf of Finland. Naval Command, Baltic was also requested to check the possibilities for immediate repair and buoying up of the net and strengthening of the barrage patrol.

V. Submarine Warfare

The air reconnaissance for Group "Ruegen" was not exhaustive. Of the four planes assigned two could not go up because of technical difficulties.

Otherwise nothing special to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

There was only slight enemy air activity by day and none at night..

A later report on our air raid on London in the night of 21 Jan. states that the first attack in the early evening apparently came as a considerable surprise and only moderate defense was

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encountered over the target. The raid was carried out at a height of 700 to 1,700 meters. The second raid took place towards 0500 and met with strong defense. Good results were observed in both raids. Nevertheless we lost thirty-eight planes, fourteen of them over home territory.

Reich Territory:

No enemy air activity. In the air raid on Magdeburg forty-six enemy planes were brought down for certain and fifteen others probably. Six of our fighters were lost.

Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force was primarily engaged in attacking the enemy landing fleet in the Anzio area. Land observation confirmed that a formation of ground attack planes sank 4 landing ships of 3,000 G.R.T. and 7 landing craft; 1 steamer and 1 transport were damaged. Fog in the area of Northern Italy prevented our reconnaissance on 21 Jan. and severely curtailed it on 22 Jan. It was therefore flown by the 3rd Air Force. Bomber Wings 26 and 100 and two more bomber groups from the area of Air Force Command, Southeast were assigned to the 2nd Air Force for attacking the landing operation.

210 enemy ground attack planes and fighter-bombers and 320 fighters and reconnaissance planes were up over the Italian front. Three of these planes were brought down by anti-aircraft. Strong enemy formations continued their raids on airfields in the central and northern Italian area. Five planes were brought down by anti-aircraft in the Rome area. For details see Daily Situation.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast twenty-five planes were observed on armed daylight reconnaissance in the Aegean Sea and north of the Otranto Strait. In the night eight to ten enemy planes were reported dropping bombs and probably also mines off Salamis and Kalamaki.

Eastern Front:

On 21 Jan. our planes flew 381 missions over the eastern front, the enemy 480. Eight enemy planes were brought down, one of our planes failed to return.

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VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

In the evening of 21 Jan. a convoy of 30 ships put into Gibraltar from the Mediterranean. In the night of 21 Jan. a convoy of 14 ships passed through the Straits from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic. In the afternoon of 22 Jan. a convoy of 23 freighters, 1 tanker and 1 transport left Gibraltar for the Atlantic.

According to an unconfirmed intelligence report, the VALIANT, QUEEN ELIZABETH, RENOWN with the ILLUSTRIOUS and UNICORN sailed from Scapa for Gibraltar on 30 Dec.

If this report proves correct, the heavy ships which appeared in the Mediterranean on 5 Jan. may have been this formation.

Own Situation:

An enemy submarine and later six enemy planes unsuccessfully attacked one of our convoys under escort by three submarine chasers southwest of Cape Camaret. Two convoys consisting of three steamers (18,838 G.R.T.) were escorted off the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At 0050 loud engine-noises were heard north of Nettuno. At 0145 Nettuno reported shelling from surface forces. At 0200 a similar report came in from Civitavecchia. At first German Naval Command, Italy thought that it must be an action directed against the two important supply ports. Reports from our air reconnaissance later showed that the shelling was only the preliminary for a large-scale enemy landing on a wide front which took place in the early morning south of the Tiber Estuary up to Torre Asture. Judging from the number of transport and landing craft observed, three to four divisions will probably land in the first wave. The following naval vessels have been spotted so far: 1 aircraft carrier, 4 cruisers and roughly 20 destroyers. No battleships could be detected for certain.

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Our reconnaissance failed to observe either the assembly of the landing fleet or its approach. The landing therefore met with no resistance and took place in the very area from which the Army troops intended to combat enemy landings were recently withdrawn and sent to the southern front.

Own Situation:

In view of the enemy landing, orders were given to blow up the harbor of Civitavecchia. Demolition work was begun.

Commander, Submarines, Italy sent submarines U "230" and "223" to CJ 59, the southern part of CJ 56 and CJ 91. Naval Staff informed Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest, who urgently requested the dispatch of the submarines, that they would reach the Nettuno operational area within thirty hours.

An operation by three boats of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla against the Nettuno beachhead has been planned for the night of 22 Jan. No other naval forces are available.

An enemy submarine which was sighted at 0730 off Sestri Levante was destroyed by submarine chaser "2210".

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

On 21 Jan. a Siebel ferry was set on fire by enemy planes off the northeast coast of Hvar.

On 22 Jan. the tanker DONATELLA (250 G.R.T.) was sunk by a direct hit during an enemy air raid on Trogir. Escort vessel "107" was likewise heavily damaged in repeated raids by enemy planes and put out of action.

According to a report from Admiral, Adriatic, our troops have evacuated the island of Uljan. According to an agent's report, the enemy occupation should be regarded as the preliminary for a British landing in the Zara area. Pasman is threatened. Apparently all the islands between Lussin and Pasman are in enemy hands. It is reported that a partisan detachment left Rab on 20 and 21 Jan. in five motor vessels with one hundred men in each. They headed in the direction of Vis.

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In an enemy air raid on the port and town of Fiume in the afternoon of 21 Jan. the oil harbor was set on fire. The shipyards were heavily damaged.

b. Aegean Sea:

Nothing special to report.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

One submarine was detected southeast of Sulina and one southwest of Eupatoria.

At 2200 on 21 Jan. several small craft, evidently minelayers, were located sailing at a distance of 2,500 meters from each other east of Feodosiya. The located position and the shipping channel were searched by three motor minesweepers, but there was no result.

Own Situation:

In the evening of 21 Jan. the batteries of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion shelled enemy vessels anchored at the southern point of Kossa Chushka and in Kolonka.

Patrols in the Kerch Strait in the night of 21 Jan. were without result. In the night of 22 Jan. the 1st PT Boat Flotilla, consisting of six boats, is to lay mines south of the Tuapse harbor approach.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Burma:

Very brisk enemy air activity continues. An Allied report states that there was a heavy air raid on Bangkok on 20 Jan.

According to a British report, a British submarine has sunk a Japanese cruiser north of the Malacca Straits. The same boat reported the sinking of three large Japanese supply ships. The position of the sinking was not mentioned.

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New Guinea:

Allied bombers have lately made repeated attacks on Amboina harbor.

An Allied report states that eight Japanese ships were sunk in an air raid on Rabaul harbor.

According to an Allied report, Allied fighters brought down twelve out of fifty Japanese fighters in an air battle over New Guinea. Three of their own planes were lost.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing special to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

Following his check-up Chief, Naval Intelligence Division submitted the chart showing what he considers the probable distribution of enemy merchant shipping and landing craft space in European waters. The chart will also be sent to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, Naval Liaison Officers to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff and High Command Army, Army General Staff, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Foreign Armies West and Group West and Group South. Copy for Naval Staff, Operations Division as per l/Skl 2334/44 geheim in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Distribution of Allied Landing Space".

Otherwise no special reports or decisions.

Special Items:

I. The 3rd Air Force has requested Group West for their opinion on the value of laying mines with the new firing devices AA, AD and DM in the event of enemy landings. The 3rd Air Force was thinking of first using the new firing devices off our coast. The Group has made it clear that they cannot support this plan and voiced the opinion that aerial mines with the new firing devices should only be used off the enemy coast. This would, of course, inevitably mean that the mines would become known, but in view of the possibility of a large-scale operation by many more planes than were scheduled for the mining offensive in the fall of 1943, we could put up with this disadvantage. The Group asked for approval of this opinion and proposed that Naval Staff, together with Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff, should again approach Armed Forces High Command on the question of using the new firing devices immediately before the start of a definitely recognized large-scale enemy landing. In view of the decisive effect on enemy operations the compromise of the new firing devices could be justified provided that Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff does give orders that all available planes are to be used. For the

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event that Armed Forces High Command should give their consent, the Group made some proposals for the execution of the operation. They think that the ruthless mass commitment of the Air Force on a mining offensive, starting at the earliest about two weeks before the likely date for the landing and necessarily continuing during the invasion, should achieve some decisive effect.

Naval Staff shares the Group's opinion that one cannot justify the use of the new firing devices in defensive barrages designed to prevent an enemy landing. An additional objection to those quoted by the Group to 3rd Air Force is that fairly large enemy vessels with a corresponding magnetic effect will probably only be proceeding slowly when they come close to our coast, so that there will be no pressure wave to touch off the fuse box. On the other hand it is doubtful whether the enemy will use long line gear off the coast. Consequently the M or MA fuse, also the AA 1 fuse, seems to promise better results.

Naval Staff also agrees with the Group that the employment of the new firing devices off the enemy coast as a defense against an acute landing danger could be considered and the risk of compromising them taken, since such a course would achieve decisive results. However, there are some doubts about whether at such a critical stage the available planes can be released in large numbers for a long period. At the start of a landing they will probably have to be used in direct action - bombing and gunning - against the invasion forces at sea and on land. Hence there is still the danger that the new firing devices, which will become effective only after being continuously employed on a large scale, will be wasted and react against us in the near future.

In considering their employment against jumping-off ports on the south coast, it must be remembered that in this area the depth of water leaves only relatively short distances suitable for ground mines. Bringing the mines close to the coast makes it almost certain that they will not long remain a secret. As soon as the enemy recognizes the pressure box principle, he can easily outmaneuver this type of firing device by cruising at minimum speed. Therefore we must insist that mines are laid also off the west coast ports, at all events the Bristol Channel, if possible also Liverpool, the Thames and Humber,

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which have long approaches and are easily fouled with ground mines. Moreover these harbors are used as transit ports for the United States and are therefore especially valuable targets.

In face of the imminent danger of a landing operation, Naval Staff will no longer rigidly insist on their earlier conditions for approving the employment of the new firing devices by the Air Force, in particular the condition regarding the main minelaying areas will be dropped. (The earlier conditions were:

- a. strong forces to be used (at least 100 planes every second night);
- b. minelaying to be over a long period (at least two months);
- c. main minelaying area to be off western ports.)

Naval Staff will therefore again contact Air Force, Operations Staff and if necessary, Armed Forces High Command.

Naval Staff will inform Group West accordingly and request them to study the possibilities for Navy and Air Force minelaying operations, using the various firing devices, off the invasion ports on the English south coast. Results to be submitted in map form. The possibility of employing the firing device AD 104 should be carefully investigated. At the same time Group West is to submit proposals for the appropriate changes in the earlier plan of operations for the mining offensive in the fall of 1943. Naval Staff approves the division of the operational areas between the Navy and Air Force as proposed by the Group.

In the meantime Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has informed Naval Staff, Operations Division and Aerial Mines Inspectorate that there are no plans for laying mines with pressure box devices, as strong forces cannot be released for this purpose at present.

Evidently Aerial Mines Inspectorate had already made some similar proposal to Air Force, Operations Staff.

Furthermore Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff notified us that he intends to make unrestricted use of pressure box firing devices in the event of an enemy landing in the west or north, and requested approval for this plan.

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In reply to this communication Naval Staff sent Air Force, Operations Staff their opinion as set out above on the employment of mines with new firing devices. Copy of teletype 1/Skl I E 242/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI.

Group West will receive a copy of the letter to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff.

II. Although the ships were duly dispersed according to plan, there were heavy losses of warships and merchant vessels in the harbor and on the roads during the air raid on Piraeus on 11 Jan. The losses were primarily caused by an extensive oil fire.

The Group Commands, Naval Commands, German Naval Command, Italy, Commanding Admiral, Submarines and Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean were again directed to check up on the measures taken and issue firm instructions to the responsible authorities.

III. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy submitted a comment to be added to the report by Chief, Naval Staff to the Fuehrer on 18 Jan. Subject is the withdrawal of the northern flank of the eastern front and possible evacuation of the Crimea. Copy as per 1/Skl 252/44 Gkdos. Chfs, is contained in file "Points discussed at Conference 18/19 Jan. 1944".

IV. Naval Intelligence Division has issued the following assessment of the enemy situation dated 22 Jan.:

"1. A very reliable agent reports from England that plans have been made to launch the invasion against France both from England and from the Mediterranean. The operation against the French south coast is for purposes of diversion and will start before the main attack, the direction of which is not given. The agent names the end of January as the earliest possible deadline for the completion of preparations in England.

At this juncture we might quote a report from a reliable source stating that the Allies are pressing heavily on Turkey to consent to their occupation of Turkish air bases to begin on 15 Feb. The same source mentions a possible diversionary attack in this area to be directed against the Aegean. Possibly there may be some connection between the occupation of the air bases and this attack.

Naval Intelligence Division thinks that the number of landing

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craft and amount of large shipping space available in England would permit a large-scale operation in the western area at any time. If the two operations were to run together, the landing craft kept available in the Mediterranean - after allowing about 25% for vessels needed in Italy for supply purposes - would only be able to transport about five landing units. In an attack against the French south coast these would only suffice to tie down forces.

2. The whereabouts and nationality of the heavy ships (three battleships, one carrier) last sighted off Alexandria on 11 Jan. still remains a mystery. Presumably they are still in the Eastern Mediterranean.

3. Agents repeatedly name Corsica as a base for enemy attempts at invasion in the Western Mediterranean. Reconnaissance reports show that there are very few merchant ships and hardly any landing craft in Corsica. According to the Army General Staff, the troops there do not amount to more than one French infantry division and relatively weak Anglo-American forces, so that agent reports are claimed to be unfounded."

V. The Military Attaché, Tokyo reported on information received from the Japanese General Staff:

"1. A reliable source from England reports that a landing on the European continent has been planned for 5 Feb. The purpose is to probe German defenses and discover new weapons, distribution and strength of air defense. The real landing is to take place at the end of February.

2. A conference of the foremost Soviet leaders was held in Moscow on 13 Jan."

VI. The Intelligence Station, Naval Command North submitted a report dated 12 Jan. on an interrogation of six prisoners of war of the British Navy, who were captured in Italy in November 1943. The report contains statements about sunk and damaged British warships and merchantmen, decoys, organization of landings, conditions in Yugoslavia and Italy, "Hedgehog", etc. Copy as per 1/Skl 2187/44 geheim in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Data on Enemy Situation".

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Situation 23 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Fourteen planes belonging to the Azores squadrons were detected on missions.

2. Own Situation:

Following directive issued to the RIO GRANDE:

"1. On 16 Jan. a westbound convoy was in the North Channel and may be in grid square AK 57 or 73 today.

2. RIO GRANDE will therefore sail north at once; the rendezvous point has been moved 150 miles north. The submarine has orders to wait at point "Erna" till 1800 and then proceed to the new northerly rendezvous.

3. If the RIO GRANDE has already met the submarine, the turning over of supplies, etc. must be completed quickly or a new rendezvous arranged."

The weather forecast states that the wind in Denmark Strait will swing north, the snow showers will be less frequent and there will be a general improvement in visibility. This change in the weather does not seem to favor the breakthrough.

Another directive was therefore given to the RIO GRANDE along with the weather report. She has been ordered to wait at point "Anna" as laid down in instructions and not to proceed north independently unless her commander thinks that the weather offers her good chances for a breakthrough.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Only two planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay in the afternoon. Eight British vessels were located in the rendezvous area.

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2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Six mines were swept by mine-exploding vessels, minesweepers and minesweeping planes.

Minesweeper M "4218" was raised and towed into La Rochelle harbor.

Channel Coast:

Convoy, escort and minesweeping work was not carried out because of stormy weather.

Group West reported that previous orders have been amended so that a barrage N 5 a is to be laid instead of the barrage N 9. The new barrage position is to close the gap known to be used by enemy PT boats. The barrage position reported by Group West lies very little more than a mile from the barrages N 6 and N 5 which will not become inactive until 15 Feb. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section informed Chief, Operations Branch, Group West by telephone of this danger threatening our forces. A check-up of the situation was promised. There are no objections to the cancellation of plans for barrage 9 off Cherbourg.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Patrols did not take up their positions because of stormy weather. Minesweeping was called off for the same reason. Convoy 1211 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe completed the passage. Convoy 478 Elbe to the Hook of Holland was again postponed because of the weather.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Four planes belonging to No. 15 Group and eleven planes belonging to No. 18 Group were detected on missions.

2. Own Situation:

Strong enemy air formations approaching the Kirkenes

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area dropped a dud bomb which hit the motor minesweeper tender WESER. The leak was temporarily closed by an emergency repair. The motor minesweeper tender HILLE ran aground near Stavanhauk Light. Destroyer Z "33" put in to Alta.

Twenty-one ships were escorted north and thirty-two south. Fifteen ships remained behind.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

No special incidents in the Baltic Sea entrances.

One ELM/J mine was swept in the Bay of Pomerania. In the evening of 22 Jan. motor minesweeper R "75" was rammed by submarine U "350" near Hela and sank. The steamer KLEOPATRA ran aground off Nargoen. On 22 Jan. a Finnish motor boat, carrying Finnish soldiers, one sailor and three civilians, was seized by the customs patrol in Tagga Bay. On 23 Jan. the boat's crew overpowered the guards and fled with all the Estonian customs men.

Battery Ustluga has been dismantled. At the Army's request, parts of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion stationed in Ustluga have been put at the disposal of the 3rd SS Armored Corps in the operational area south of the Oranienbaum pocket. Seven officers, 9 warrant officers, 40 non-commissioned officers and 186 men are included. The Narva - Kingisepp and Reval - Narva railway lines were blown up in several places by the enemy.

Following the directive from Naval Staff, Naval Command, Baltic transmitted their evaluation of the situation as given below:

"1. An extension of solid ice as far as the west coast of Lavansaari is not to be expected for the end of January. With temperatures around or below zero (Celsius) there is no ice forming at present. No pronounced drop in temperature is expected during the next few days. There will be no strong formation of ice until there is a fundamental change in the weather in the west. At present we have no indications of such a development.

2. Large submarines might perhaps be able to break through with the help of icebreakers. The continuously

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stormy weather with poor visibility gives us little chance of observing the sea area. The breakthrough, however, is not very likely as there are so few boats in Lavansaari that we have no reason to suspect diving practice there and this is one of the necessary preliminaries for a breakthrough.

3. Effectiveness of net barrage: In December the parts of the main net barrage which were left were still in the original barrage direction. In very many places it is no longer effective against submarines on the surface but probably still effective against them when submerged. The last attempts at repair (buoying up) did not bring any perceptible results in spite of the long period devoted to the work. Presumably the barrage has become less effective meantime. We do not consider that attempts at repair and buoying-up of the old barrage would serve any useful purpose and apart from that, all net layers and net tenders of the Net Flotilla, Center are in dock for repairs. These should be completed by 15 Feb. 1944; subsequently the vessels will be loaded for laying a new barrage. It is absolutely essential to instruct all responsible stations to get repairs completed strictly within the stipulated period.

4. In this situation adequate patrol of the "Nashorn" area is urgently necessary in order to force the submarines to submerge, thus bringing them against fully effective minefields and the still partly effective net; similarly we need air reconnaissance and patrol of the "Nashorn - Seeigel" area.

5. Net patrol at present consists of 6 minesweepers of the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla and 12 armed fishing vessels. Of these 4 minesweepers and 6 armed fishing vessels are in position. They are not really effective unless the weather is good. Locating conditions have been reported as good. As the weather is mostly poor, the general degree of effectiveness is low, especially without reconnaissance vessels or planes placed well out to detect approaching submarines in good time. Armed fishing vessels have to put into port when there is a seaway of more than 4 - 5, minesweepers at seaway 6 - 7.

6. Further reinforcements from forces of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic are not possible at present. It is proposed to postpone the dockyard period for the four minesweepers of the 25th Minesweeping Flotilla, due to begin at Koenigsberg

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in mid-February, until mid-April when the 3rd Minesweeping Flotilla becomes operational again. The dockyard period for the first four vessels of the 25th Minesweeping Flotilla will start according to schedule at the beginning of February. If the remaining four vessels of the 25th Minesweeping Flotilla do not go into dock until the middle of March and the two vessels placed at the disposal of Minelaying Experimental Command are released to Reval at the latest on 10 Feb., then four vessels will be available there. The 3rd Patrol Flotilla will turn over three vessels until 10 Feb., so that there will be five vessels on patrol in the interim period. Hence a change in the date of dockyard period and the release of the vessels by Minelaying Experimental Command is requested.

7. In order to make sure that submarines do not break through, considerably more vessels must be employed. The only way to do this is to transfer vessels from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic and this can only be done at the cost of abandoning measures designed to intercept blockade runners in the Skagerrak, i.e. patrols off the Swedish coast and in the intercepting position. The 1st Group of the 17th Patrol Flotilla, consisting of nine whale-catchers equipped with revolving directional hydrophones and echo-ranging sets, will then become available for the Gulf of Finland. A decision is requested.

8. Commander Minesweepers, Baltic has reported that the experiences of the preceding year seem to indicate that the listening report from Hogland on 20 Jan. is a case of mis-observation."

Naval Command, Baltic further reported:

"1. With the enemy placed as at present in the inner Kronstadt Bay, he can use icebreakers to bring large and small naval vessels and transport vessels without interference westwards through the ice - relatively thin this winter when the boundary of fast ice is off Kapshepel - and thus carry out operations in the Gulf of Finland. Under present conditions there is no possibility for a landing in the Koporia and Luga Bays.

2. Ice situation 23 Jan.: In the river mouth and the harbor of Hungerburg, fast ice about 15 cm. thick. Narva Bay free of ice. Along the coast from Konoie, about three kilometers of ice, open in places. At Kurgolovo, west and northwest shore and drift ice, north and east ice-free.

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The fast ice in the Luga mouth can bear loads. Shore ice two miles wide along the inner Luga Bay. Shore ice fifty meters wide at Lipovo and Ruchi. Shore ice twenty meters wide at Kolgambia. Shore ice 300 meters wide at Dubnia, and in the inner Kaporja Bay shore ice about two miles wide, in front of it ice-slush in places. Temperature of water at Odenholm 2.5°, Reval 2.2°, Eckholm 2.2°, Hungerburg 0.0° Celsius.

3. The importance of the Kurgalovo and Kolgambia peninsulas is again emphasized. From here one can recognize an enemy approach in good time. Planes can be sent out on missions at an early stage, etc. This is a very important factor, as our former observation posts on Kronstadt Bay are now in enemy hands. If the enemy can take the peninsulas, he is in a position to assemble his vessels for sweeps without any risk of observation or interference from us. At the same time he can see what we are doing."

V. Merchant Shipping

a. In view of the expected decline in the ore supply from Scandinavia, Naval Staff considers it essential to continue the ore traffic from eastern Spain. Without question this involves a risk, but as there is plenty of unprotected shipping in the Western Mediterranean and the danger to crews in the event of an enemy attack is comparatively slight, we feel this course is justified. Naval Staff passed on this opinion to the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping with a request for his comments and outline of his plans.

The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping also thinks it necessary to continue the ore traffic from eastern Spain, thus enabling 20,000-30,000 G.R.T. to be shipped monthly from Valencia and Sagunto. Sufficient shipping space is available. In view of the increased likelihood of enemy interference, plans had been made to establish a shuttle service with Spanish ships to Barcelona and from there with Mediterranean ships to Port Vendres or Sete. Now that the Bachi ships are no longer available it is doubtful whether these plans will materialize. Ships of the Mediterranean line will have to load directly in Valencia and Sagunto. In order to lessen the risk, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping urgently requested High Command, Navy to give them adequate armament or other suitable protection.

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Naval Staff will take steps to minimize the risk as much as possible. However, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has been advised not to count on the regular execution of a major transport program, at best he should reckon that isolated ships will come through from time to time.

b. Brief Report No. 1/44 of the series "Foreign Merchant Shipping" contains information compiled by Naval Intelligence Division on arrival of ships in Argentine ports, government direction of Argentine merchant shipping, sale of U.S. vessels to the U.S.S.R., construction of concrete lighters in the U.S. and on the design for a new type of ship. Copy as per 1/Skl 2815/44 geheim in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Foreign Merchant Shipping".

VI. Submarine Warfare

As the weather prevented air reconnaissance, we have no evidence on the sailing dates of the convoys. Radio intelligence indicates that there may have been a change in schedule.

Submarine U "66" has been assigned the Guinea coast as her new operational area. After receiving supplies U "178" will operate in large grid square KG and U "510" in large grid squares LC and MS, U "168" will operate in large grid square LC and carry out most of her activities off Colombo during the new moon period.

VII. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

In the afternoon strong enemy formations were over Belgium and northern France and dropped bombs on airfields and a construction site near St. Omer. Our fighters brought down two planes.

Reich Territory:

In the evening between thirty and thirty-five enemy planes came in from the west over western Germany and dropped bombs on Munich - Gladbach, Duesseldorf, Aachen and some rural districts. Immediately after their approach several formations entered the Northern Italian area, also about forty planes entered the Klagenfurt, Graz and Marburg area by four routes. Some returned by the route they had come, others by way of Hungary. It is

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reported that bombs were dropped on a Hungarian town.

Mediterranean Theater:

For evaluation of reconnaissance see Enemy Situation Mediterranean.

Fighter-bombers were sent against the enemy landing formation and scored a direct hit on an LST. At dusk 55 bombers attacked, 21 of them reached the target and 25 were driven off by fighters. Eleven of our planes are reported missing or destroyed. It is reported that as a result of the raid a destroyer was sunk, a cruiser and a destroyer damaged and another destroyer probably sunk.

As on previous days the enemy sent fighter-bombers and ground attack planes over the Italian front area. A strong enemy fighter screen is active over the landing area. Our anti-aircraft guns reported seven planes brought down.

A strong enemy formation with fighter escort raided Siena but did no real damage. Other bombs were dropped on the harbor of Marina di Pisa.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast armed reconnaissance was detected over the Aegean by day and night. In the evening ten to twelve planes dropped bombs on Piraeus. They probably mined the waters in this area. Our anti-aircraft guns succeeded in bringing down one plane.

Eastern Front:

On 22 Jan. our planes flew 999 missions over the eastern front without loss. On the same day 310 enemy missions were observed, twelve planes were brought down.

In the 4th Air Force area planes carried out photographic reconnaissance of Anapa and Taman. No special discoveries were made. The evaluation of the photographic reconnaissance of the Kola Estuary on 20 Jan. showed altogether 27 freighters totaling 154,000 G.R.T. and 2 tankers totaling 12,500 G.R.T. between Murmansk and north of Wajenga.

VIII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea1. Area Naval Group West:Enemy Situation:

At 1815 a convoy of 18 large transports, escorted by six warships, passed twenty-two miles off Cape Spartel heading for the Mediterranean.

Own Situation:

At 1800 an enemy submarine shelled a coastal strip four miles south of Cannes. The fire was returned by our guns. Two boats carried out a search off Toulon.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:Enemy Situation:

Fighter planes reported only slight activity at the northern beachhead in the Anzio area between 0800 and 0900, heavier traffic at the southern beachhead. Vessels of various sizes were at sea. The planes distinguished unloading and shuttle traffic. At 1015 the 2nd Air Force reported a formation of ships off Ostia (number unknown) proceeding at high speed on northerly course and at 1115 fourteen vessels off Civitavecchia on northwesterly course. The Air Force has not confirmed the report about the aircraft carrier reported in the beachhead area on 22 Jan. The afternoon reconnaissance observed 15 large transports 3 miles southeast of Nettuno and 50 to 70 vessels at the beachhead 12 miles north of Nettuno. An Army report states that there was a fresh landing at noon 12 to 15 km. southeast of Gaeta.

Mist and strong enemy fighter reconnaissance prevented reconnaissance over the Corsican coast and east of the Strait of Bonifacio and in the sea area Otranto - Syracuse from bringing in any result. The aerial photograph of Augusta harbor showed remarkably few vessels compared with 10 Jan.

At noon 10 freighters and 6 passenger ships with 6 escort vessels were 180 miles northwest of Benghazi, making for Malta.

Own Situation:

The harbor of Civitavecchia has been evacuated.

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Demolition work is in progress.

Naval Staff informed Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean that a further landing is to be expected in CJ 5284 lower center and submarine U "371" is to be dispatched there. If this forecast proves wrong, Commander, Submarines is free to send the boat where he chooses in the present landing area. Submarine U "371" had to return to Toulon because of a break-down.

While on her way to lay mines in the night of 22 Jan. the minelayer DWARSLAEUFER was in contact with enemy PT boats north of Piombino. The operation is now scheduled for the night of 23 Jan. The minelayer NIEDERSACHSEN with two motor minesweepers also departed from Porto Ferrario for minelaying.

Torpedo boats TA "23", "24" and "27" broke off their minelaying operation ahead of time.

Four naval landing craft on passage from Ercole to Nettuno turned about off Nettuno and broke through to Civitavecchia.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Details about the enemy air raid on Fiume on 21 Jan. are contained in the situation report of Admiral, Adriatic. For copy see teletype 1805. Otherwise no special incidents.

Admiral, Adriatic sent Naval Staff copy of the plan of the 2nd Army Tank Command to take Vis during the next new moon period (middle of Feb.). Plans have been made to use all warships and auxiliary vessels at the disposal of Admiral, Adriatic on this operation. He has therefore given orders that everything possible is to be done to get all vessels concerned operational by this date.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 0821 one of our submarines sighted an enemy submarine on northnorthwest course twenty miles west of the southern tip of Rhodes. At 1300 several enemy planes were over Kos. They dropped bombs but did not cause any damage.

On 22 Jan. enemy planes bombed Piraeus. There was slight

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damage to military installations. Two auxiliary sailing vessels were sunk. One plane was reported brought down for certain and one probably brought down. In the course of a raid on Navarino by four enemy planes in the afternoon of 23 Jan. another plane was reported probably shot down. Our heavy anti-aircraft guns, formerly Italian, are severely handicapped by faulty ammunition. British planes mined Kalymnos Sound. The passage has been closed. In Porto Lago a tug with a floating crane struck a mine in the inner part of the harbor. The tug sank, the crane was damaged and beached.

Three auxiliary sailing vessels belonging to the Group "Seeraeuber" returned to port after an engagement with enemy PT boats off Rhodes.

c. Black Sea:

Towards 2130 on 22 Jan. about two to three thousand (? in original German) Russians landed on the northern breakwater of Kerch. A naval battery shelled five boats, one of them caught fire, a second was driven back. Russian shore batteries returned the fire and silenced two of the guns of our battery. As protection for the inner Kerch Bay three naval landing craft were sent off on patrol from 2230 on 22 Jan. to 0215 on 23 Jan. Flares were dropped and the bay was light as day but no enemy vessels were sighted. Although our batteries had been warned about the operation in good time and our vessels kept on sending recognition signals, they were repeatedly shelled by our own guns and received slight damage. The enemy shelling from the direction of Tusla remained without result. Four motor minesweepers in the patrol line in the southern Kerch Strait did not sight anything. On their return passage they were gunned by two Russian fighters. Three naval landing craft will take up patrol positions in the night of 23 Jan.

Despite the unfavorable weather the 1st PT Boat Flotilla duly carried out their minelaying unobserved in the Tuapse area.

Submarine U "20" started on her return passage from the operational area. Submarine U "24" reported being shelled by a coastal battery northwest of Poti. She was undamaged.

Convoys to the Crimea were carried out according to schedule.

Admiral, Black Sea, reporting on the land fighting, stated that

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the enemy attacked our southern flank with strong forces at the same time as he landed on the northern breakwater. He penetrated our main defense line and thrust forward to the railway line running from the northern breakwater to the stockyards. We have launched a counter-attack. The troops which the enemy landed are at present cut off.

IX. Situation East Asia

No reports to hand.

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Items of Political Importance

The U.S. Government has sent a note to Moscow offering their good offices in negotiations with the Polish Government. The London "Times" comments that this note will be a test case. Stalin must now show whether he was in earnest about the Foreign Ministers' declaration that all questions should be jointly discussed.

According to Reuter the Democratic National Committee has unanimously approved a resolution urgently requesting Roosevelt to remain "the great humanitarian leader of the world".

Chief, Naval Staff has gone to Flensburg and Muervik on a tour of inspection.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division called attention to several pointers that the reports of recent weeks about Anglo-American large-scale landings in the western area and in Italy are being circulated for the deliberate purpose of misleading and camouflaging the enemy's real plans. For instance one notes General Montgomery's statement that he is taking three crack British divisions from the Italian front home with him. From the military standpoint it is very unusual for a higher commander to make a public statement about the disposition of troops, and it may well be calculated to deceive us.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. Following the telephone conversation with Chief of Staff (see War Diary 23 Jan.), Admiral, Baltic States sent the following assessment of the situation:

"Due to the continuing thaw there is only shore and floe ice in the Kopia and Luga Bay area and therefore at present no danger of large-scale enemy landing operations. In any case the inshore waters are rocky and shallow and landings

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would only be possible in a few places (on either side of the Dubnia Peninsula, Peipia harbor, Ruchi, Lipovo and the inner Narva Bay). The enemy could use icebreakers to bring vessels from Kronstadt Bay through into the Gulf of Finland. No naval forces are available for action against them. The naval batteries cannot do more than hinder enemy movements in inshore waters. By itself coastal defense by naval guns and marine infantry detachments is not sufficient protection against landings or shelling by naval forces. The critical time will come when fast ice able to carry loads begins to form or when there is a complete thaw. At present the strength of the Navy's coastal defense is as follows: On 120 kilometers of coastline about 1,700 men with four 10.5 cm. guns (Army coastal battery), three 15 cm. guns (Army coastal battery), two 10.5 cm. guns (Polish origin), five 7.62 cm. guns (Russian origin), two 4 cm. anti-aircraft guns, twenty-eight 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns, thirteen 5 cm. mortars, forty heavy machine guns, sixty light machine guns, also an SS combat group of about 500 men. These forces are insufficient to meet an enemy attacking in several places, particularly as we can expect a simultaneous land attack from the direction of the Oranienbaum pocket. We do not know here whether the Army is holding further units in readiness for action in threatened positions. Air reconnaissance and reports to hand so far do not give us any reason to suspect that the Russians are preparing operations of this kind. There are still only a few small vessels in Lavansari harbor. If Russian vessels are detected putting out of the inner Kronstadt Bay, the Air Force must take immediate action or at least hold planes in readiness.

Furthermore in the present situation it is intolerable that naval coastal defenses should be weakened, but we are continually receiving orders from Second Admiral, Baltic Station and High Command, Navy, General Naval Administration Bureau, Recruitment Division for men to be drafted to the 31st Manning Division and the Coastal Control Office, Lovkolovo. Second Admiral, Baltic Station maintains that the skeleton staff required for a Coastal Control Office is about 25 men. According to this estimate the entire area of the Coastal Control Office, Lovkolovo with its three Port Control Offices should require about 100 men; including its earlier complement and reserves for the Leningrad area it now has 245 men. Similarly we are ordered to draft experienced men to the Special Operations Unit, 31st Manning Division and hence we are always training new recruits, a fact which weakens the effectiveness of the detachment.

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In the territory of Admiral, Baltic States there are no other units available for the area. We request a general order prohibiting drafting of men employed in the coastal defense of this area. The 18th Army Command and the 3rd SS Armored Corps, who are responsible for this section of the front, have been informed about this assessment of the situation."

Copy of this report as per 1/Skl 2280/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

The assessment of the situation by Naval Command (see War Diary 23 Jan.) calls for decisions on the employment of forces. The issues are being examined at Naval Staff who are basing their considerations on the fact that at present the requirements of the Gulf of Finland have precedence over those of the Skagerrak.

III. Quartermaster General reported: As foreseen by Naval Staff, the time is now approaching when the continual shipping losses and the completely inadequate facilities for new constructions and repairs in the Aegean area will make it impossible for us to meet transport requirements any longer. It has been learnt unofficially that General Warlimont when reporting on this matter to Chief, Armed Forces High Command, remarked that the Navy were not taking all conceivable steps to improve transport conditions. Quartermaster Division intends to counter this unjustified reproach. For this purpose Chief, Shipping and Transport Branch, Quartermaster Division is to visit Commanding Admiral, Naval Group South so that they can confer with the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping and go into the problem thoroughly on the spot.

IV. Chief of Staff reported that according to information from the Naval Liaison Officer at High Command, Army, Army General Staff the measures for the evacuation of the Crimea are being studied.

Chief of Staff, continuing his report, stated that Commanding Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy, telephoned him during the evening of 23 Jan. and asked that if Naval Staff are planning to use his torpedo boats, which have neither the requisite speed nor armament, for operations against the landing forces, he should be given written orders. We do not intend to issue any such directive. It must be left to his judgment to decide to what extent the strength of his forces permits their commitment on the all-important task of weakening the enemy.

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Special Items:

I. The War Diary of Commander, 4th Destroyer Flotilla for the period from 16 to 27 Dec. 1943, submitted to Naval Staff on 23 Jan. gives a vivid picture of the commitment of the flotilla in the operation of 25 to 27 Dec. and is of value for the commentaries. In particular we learnt some fresh details which throw a certain amount of light on the tactical plans of the Commanding Admiral, Task Force. One significant fact is that when the flotilla broke apart, destroyer Z "38" took up a wrong position in the patrol line with the result that the Flotilla Commander mistook her for an enemy destroyer for quite some time and at 0925 reported her as such to Commanding Admiral, Task Force. Another significant fact is that the submarine commanded by Dunkelberg reported the convoy in AB 6640 at 0130. This report which was not intercepted by Naval Staff explains the course of the reconnaissance patrol ordered by Commanding Admiral, Task Force.

Commanding Admiral, Task Force evidently thought that the destroyers were standing very close to the convoy. This possibly explains why at first he did not make any preparations to draw in the destroyers when the engagement with the enemy cruisers began.

Operations Division has made use of this new data in compiling the final account of the operation, now nearing completion.

II. Minelaying Experimental Command reported that a new non-contact mine with mooring rope had been found near Den Helder. Designation EFA/A. From now on this mine previously designated EFA is to be called EFA/J. The mine has acoustic non-contact firing similar to the ELM/A mine.

This seems to show that the enemy has beaten us in producing an acoustic moored mine. How good it is, particularly as regards its sensitivity to sea motion and response to potential targets, remains to be seen.

III. In reply to our inquiry Admiral, Adriatic sent in his opinion on the reliability and efficiency of the Croatsians in his command area. His comments, which are entirely negative, are contained under 1/Skl 4340/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

IV. On 24 Jan. Naval Intelligence Division informed the

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higher commands of the Navy and the interested commands of the other two services about their assessment of the enemy situation. They passed on the evaluation of the photographic reconnaissance of the southern English ports.

Reconnaissance of the new beachhead south of the Tiber has not yet shown the amount of shipping space and number of landing craft employed in the operation. Most of the troops landed certainly belong to enemy units in the Italian area. Probably Palermo or Naples and/or Salerno were the jumping-off ports. So far we have not observed any heavy forces defending the landing point.

Situation 24 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports to hand.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE on the ice limit. According to an Air Force report of 23 Jan., this runs from AD 2875 through AE 1451, AE 1241 to AE 1222. From there on medium floe ice runs in an easterly direction and extends south as far as AE 3735. The ship must break through as far north as this floe ice permits.

The weather report for 24 Jan. and the forecast for 24 and 25 Jan. were also passed to the RIO GRANDE. While the weather prospects for 24 Jan. previously seemed to be promising for a break-through on 25 Jan., the cloudy weather with frequent snow showers and mainly medium visibility is now expected to continue in the southern part of Denmark Strait with probably clear weather in the northern part. This change in conditions which do not now favor a break-through is due to an unexpected infiltration of cold air from the far north and the formation of a high at the eastern exit. However, owing to variable flying conditions for the weather planes, meteorological information during the last few days has been scanty. Naval Staff advised the RIO GRANDE to be guided by her own local

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weather observations and if they are similar to those given her by Naval Staff, she is recommended to stand on and off east of Greenland.

Radiogram 1710 from Naval Staff to the RIO GRANDE also gave the continuation of the maps of grid square 1870 G which she has on board.

Group North/Fleet has been informed on the enemy situation report (see War Diary 23 Jan.) sent to the RIO GRANDE and on the ice limit reported by the Air Force.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Two bombers and nine sea rescue planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. British vessels were located in the rendezvous area five times during the day.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The transfer of the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla to Cherbourg was postponed until the evening of 25 Jan. The convoy OSTERODE was also delayed for 24 hours.

Two submarines were escorted in and two out.

Channel Coast:

The rough sea prevented minesweeping, escort and convoy work.

According to a report from Group West, repairs to torpedo boat T "28" will take at least four months. The Group drew attention to the dangers to which the boats are at present exposed when passing through the Channel.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Patrol positions in the Heligoland Bight and off the Dutch coast were not taken up because of stormy weather.

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Minesweeping and convoy and escort work were hampered.

The Finnish steamer WIIDES ran aground on the Nordergrunden in the night of 23 Jan. and sank.

Convoy 1213 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe set out with five steamers at 1700, however winds blowing at strength 8 compelled her to put in at Den Helder.

Three convoys totaling 39,000 G.R.T. were taken through the waters round Zeeland.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Nine planes belonging to No. 18 Group were detected over the North Sea in the forenoon and six in the afternoon.

2. Own Situation:

At 1820 on 23 Jan. our westbound convoy was unsuccessfully attacked by a submarine near Tanahorn. The submarine was hit by gunfire. At 2030 this convoy again sighted a submarine near Nordkyn and forced her to submerge. Submarine chase was without result. At 2130 on 23 Jan. minesweeper M "437" was rammed by a harbor patrol vessel northwest of Haugesund. Both vessels were damaged.

The steamer EMSLAND, damaged by an aerial torpedo on 20 Jan. and beached near Stadtlandet, broke in two. The cargo is being salvaged.

Fourteen ships were escorted north and thirty-five south. Four remained behind.

Commander, Submarines, Norway reported six submarines in position in the Bear Island passage, two at operational readiness in Hammerfest, one in Narvik and four on passage to the operational area. One submarine returning from the Bear Island passage to Hammerfest to take on supplies, one returning to Narvik for a relief for the commander.

In view of the changed ice situation and the increase in the number of submarines, Commander, Submarines, Norway plans to station nine boats in a line running from the ice limit

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through AB 4970 to 8857. Plan to take effect on 25 Jan.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

An intelligence report states that plans have been made for the DICTO and the LIONEL to time their break-out to coincide with a large-scale British operation against the islands off Frederikstad.

2. Own Situation:

Our forces did not take up the intercepting position against blockade runners because of weather conditions.

So far weather conditions have prevented the salvaging of the steamer KLEOPATRA aground near Nargoen. Otherwise no special incidents were reported from the entire Baltic Sea area.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic submitted the operational order for laying the protective barrages R 1, R 2, R 3, R 4 as anti-sweep protection for the Skagerrak declared area. Keyword "Dorothea". Copy as per 1/Skl 223/44 Gkdos. Chfs. is contained in file 1/Skl I Nord.

The operation will be carried out from Kristiansand South by the minelaying units ROLAND and BRUMMER with an additional destroyer for the barrages R 1 and R 2. Two destroyers and three minesweepers will act as escorts. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic will direct the operation, the commanding officer of the BRUMMER will be in command of the minelayers. The Flotilla Commander or the Senior Commander will be in command of the escort forces. In case of enemy action or unforeseen situation Commander, 6th Destroyer Flotilla will take over command of the entire formation.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence convoy ON 221 was probably in the Irish Sea during the morning.

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2. Own Situation:

No special reports to hand.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

By day numerous enemy planes flew over Holland, Belgium and Northern France. Three formations each of 400-500 planes with fighter escort were reported. They attacked construction sites and airfields. Two planes were brought down by anti-aircraft, nine others crashed. We cannot say how many of the planes were brought down by anti-aircraft fire and how many by fighters.

Only a few isolated planes flew over Western France.

Reich Territory:

Between 1030 and 1300 600-700 enemy planes (bombers with heavy fighter escort) flew into the Aachen area. At this point they were evidently recalled because of bad weather in England. Altogether only about 150 bombs were dropped in the country districts of Dueren and Aachen. Our defense brought down 7 planes for certain and 6 probably. Following reports of enemy flights 575 of our fighters went up over Reich territory, and owing to cloud, some of them were taken for enemy formations and alerts were sounded, e.g. in the Greater Berlin area. Nineteen of our fighters were lost. This high figure is explained by the surprise meeting of the German night fighter formation with the strong enemy fighter formation.

Mediterranean Theater:

In the afternoon 15 fighter-bombers were over the Anzio-Nettuno landing area and scored two hits on a freighter (2,000 G.R.T.). At dusk 43 bombers flew to the same area and all reached their target. We lost 11 planes. Three destroyers and 1 steamer of 5,000 G.R.T. were sunk, 1 steamer and 1 landing craft transport of 7,000 G.R.T. heavily damaged, 2 other steamers not so heavily damaged.

According to reports received so far 52 bombers were up on night missions. They sank a freighter of 10,000 G.R.T. and probably sank a freighter of 5,000 G.R.T.

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The enemy increased his fighter cover and patrols in the Nettuno - Anzio area. He sent about 50 fighter-bombers over the front area to attack our left flank. In the night of 24 Jan. night fighters carried out nuisance raids in the Genoa - Milan - Verona area.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast the usual air reconnaissance activity was observed in the Aegean Sea and the Greek coastal areas. In addition several planes were reported to be laying mines in the waters near Kos.

Eastern Front:

On 23 Jan. our planes flew 1,185 missions over the eastern front, 2 of them were lost. 1,048 enemy flights were observed. Fifteen enemy planes were brought down.

In the course of the day the 5th Air Force reported eleven enemy planes in the Sogne Fjord area, they did not attack. A FW 200 plane which made a reconnaissance flight in Denmark Strait did not sight any enemy vessels.

VII. War in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

The convoy which Cape Spartel reported at 1815 on 23 Jan. did not put into Gibraltar and we can safely assume that it entered the Mediterranean with eighteen large transports. The misty weather on the night of 24 Jan. made observation in the Straits of Gibraltar difficult. On 24 Jan. Tangier and Ceuta sighted a few single transports putting into Gibraltar. They were evidently stragglers from the large convoy.

Own Situation:

A convoy of 9,800 G.R.T. was escorted off the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Our air reconnaissance reported:

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At 0800 northwest of Anzio 3 vessels probably destroyers, 10 landing craft, west of them 20 vessels including landing craft and warships.

At 1030 a destroyer on easterly course in the Bay of Gaeta.

At 1100 6 landing craft on the beach five miles north of Anzio.

At 1200 4-6 miles south of Nettuno 1 cruiser, 6 destroyers standing on and off, some of them firing. There was lively activity at the southern beachhead; 6 large vessels, probably LST's, were unloading on the beach.

According to a report from German Naval Command, Italy there is no confirmation for the Army report of a new landing near Gaeta.

According to radio intelligence, the British hospital ships ST. ANDREW, LEINSTER and ST. DAVID were bombed by our planes 80 miles south, and 20 and 25 miles respectively southwest of Nettuno on the afternoon of 24 Jan. Fire broke out on board the LEINSTER and she put into Naples. The ST. ANDREW also put in there. The ST. DAVID sank.

Own Situation:

The minelaying operations "Forelle" south of Elba and "Karpfen" east of Giannutri were carried out during the night of 23 Jan. On this occasion the minelayer DWARSLAEUFER repulsed several attacks by enemy PT boats and observed a hit on one of them. Following damage from enemy gunfire and also from the storm, the DWARSLAEUFER had to take refuge in Leghorn. The naval landing craft standing by the DWARSLAEUFER disappeared from sight during the engagement and ran aground in heavy weather near Vada at 0700.

A harbor defense vessel on position near Sestri Levante engaged an enemy PT boat and observed a hit.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

PT boat S "36" carried out reconnaissance of the bays and ports of Vis. The defense on the island has been

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strengthened by building improvized gun emplacements mainly on the east side. There are several Italian boats in the harbors of Komiza and Vis. There is continuous shipping traffic between the island and the Italian coast.

In the night of 23 Jan. torpedo boat TA "22" was fired on by artillery and machine-guns from the southern point of Pasma and from the mainland on the opposite side. She returned the fire with both heavy and light guns. It may possibly have been shelling by our own forces. Coast patrol boat G "107", heavily damaged in Punto Nika on 22 Jan., is a total loss.

Air Force Anti-Aircraft Battalion 281 consisting of four batteries was transferred from Fiume to the Pola area.

b. Aegean Sea:

On 24 Jan. our air reconnaissance sighted the submarine discovered by Army patrols on 19 Jan. twenty miles southeast of Pyrgos on the west coast of the Peloponnesus. She was lying about 50 to 100 meters offshore with a list to starboard and leaking oil heavily. Traces of dragging were to be seen on the beach. The gun on her deck was still in place.

At 0900 two enemy PT boats were off Trianda on the north coast of Rhodes; they turned off after being shelled by heavy 15 cm. anti-aircraft guns.

Three auxiliary sailing vessels were sunk in the enemy air raid on Piraeus on the evening of 22 Jan. From 0130 to 0340 on 24 Jan. twelve enemy planes dropped a few bombs which caused slight damage to billets. In the forenoon the minelayer DRACHE, torpedo boats TA "16" and "17" and a motor minesweeper put in to Piraeus.

c. Black Sea:

According to radio intelligence, movements of small enemy vessels were detected along the entire Caucasian coast. Four vessels, probably submarines, were detected in the operational area. On 23 Jan. the enemy made a heavy air raid on batteries of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion along the Kerch Strait. An anti-aircraft gun shelter and a searchlight were destroyed. Naval landing craft remained

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undamaged in the enemy shelling of Kamysh Burun on 24 Jan. Some of the crew were wounded when a submarine chaser was gunned in Ak Mechet harbor.

Ochakov and Pervomaisk were shelled and machine-gunned, but no damage was done.

Towed convoys and naval landing craft transports were delayed because of the weather. Other convoy work was carried out according to plan.

About the land front, Admiral, Black Sea reported that by hard fighting the breakthrough area on the southern flank was appreciably narrowed and a continuous defense line formed. Enemy casualties were very high, our own considerable. In the night of 23 Jan. barrage fire off Kerch northern breakwater forced three enemy boats to turn about. The 17th Army Command thinks that the attack against the entire front will continue and concentrate on the southern flank. At present the Army Command is not in a position to bring up more forces. According to a report from the Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group A, they also are unable to do anything in this respect.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing special to report.

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Items of Political Importance

Nothing special to report.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. In view of the new situation in Italy brought about by the enemy landing in the Rome area, we have postponed the visit of Under Secretary of State Ferrini to Commander in Chief, Navy and Naval Staff.

II. Army Situation:

The enemy took the port of Kerch. One Infantry Division is being transported by air to the Crimea. An enemy attack is expected at the Perekop Isthmus.

The enemy made a surprise attack and succeeded in making a breakthrough 10 km. wide in the Kirovograd area. Near Uman our encircling forces again compelled the enemy to pull in his troops. In the 2nd Army area the large-scale battle near Bobrisk continues. The situation is tense.

Army Group North is engaged in hard and continuous fighting against a greatly superior enemy. No clear picture is possible. The 50th Army Corps is completely exhausted after nine days of fighting and has been driven back ten kilometers. The 3rd SS Armored Corps is being subjected to heavy enemy pressure in a southwesterly direction. We are bringing up two divisions from the Vitebsk area. The situation is extremely tense.

Special Items:

I. With the unusually mild weather we can expect opportunities for operations on Lake Peipus as early as the second half of February, and it is therefore imperative to expedite the formation of the Lake Peipus flotilla. The Army has made preparations to defend the southern part of Lake Peipus (Lake Pskov) and their plans provide for the commitment of eighteen combined operations boats, twelve landing craft and twenty-four heavy assault craft.

The shifting of the northern part of the eastern front is

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another reason for getting the flotilla on Lake Peipus operational as soon as possible.

Quartermaster Division has been requested to get through the necessary preparations as quickly as possible and notify Operations Division on completion.

II. Following directive, likewise necessitated by the mild weather, sent to Naval Command, Baltic (copy to Group North/Fleet):

"1. Owing to the weather we cannot expect the inner Gulf of Finland to be blocked by ice to the extent we counted on when drawing up earlier plans. The development of the land fighting may necessitate the withdrawal of the Army front.

2. Naval Command, Baltic is to ensure adequate patrol of the inner Gulf of Finland. The patrol work in the Skagerrak at present done by the 1st Group of the 17th Patrol Flotilla can take second place to this task. Therefore:

3. Agree with suggestion contained in MOK Ost Op 01704 Gkdos. paragraph 7, (see War Diary 24 Jan.). A decision on the dockyard period for the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla will follow. None of the six minesweepers at present in the Gulf of Finland to be withdrawn until decision received."

III. The following directive dealing with measures to be taken in the event of large-scale enemy landings issued to Group North/Fleet, Naval Commands, Baltic, North and Norway and Group West:

"1. Having regard to the expansion of the submarine arm, the training vessels of the Fleet are not to be committed unless the training area is directly threatened. Thus the preparations denoted by the keyword "Wallenstein" will not take place automatically unless case "Hanna" becomes a fact.

2. In case of "Falke" and "Blume 1" the commitment of training vessels will take place only at the express orders of Commander in Chief, Navy. Commitment will be ordered if the demands of the general situation justify an interruption in submarine training. Naval Staff will issue keyword indicating when Group North/Fleet is to take over command.

3. In case of "Falke" apart from the commitment of

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naval forces from Northern Waters and the Skagerrak and perhaps from the Baltic, we plan to transfer two PT boat flotillas from Holland to the Trondheim area. Group North/Fleet is to see to the preparations at the bases.

4. Group North/Fleet, working together with Naval Command, North and Group West, is to go into the question of whether in case of "Blume 1", the naval forces at present in the Skagerrak and Baltic Sea could carry out operations from the North Sea bases against the eastern flank of the probable enemy landing area. Report of investigation to be submitted.

5. Group North/Fleet working with Naval Command, Baltic (see Skl Qu A II Mob. 182/44 Gkdos.) is to make appropriate preparations for readying the vessels assigned to schools and inspectorates, in particular those suitable for minesweeping and escort work, so that they can be used to strengthen the defensive formations in any threatened area."

IV. In order to ensure the swift and smooth working of the counter-measures ordered by Supreme Command in case of a large-scale enemy landing in Europe, Armed Forces High Command has issued a summary of things to be done in the event of "Blume 1" and "Blume 2":

- a. during the period of tension when a landing is expected;
- b. when it is definitely recognized that a landing operation is under way.

Copy as per order 1/Skl 1983/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, File "Large Scale Enemy Landings".

V. On 22 Jan. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy informed Quartermaster Division of a request by Commanding General, Armed Forces, Norway to Chief, Armed Forces High Command for the abolition of the posts of the three Commanding Admirals with their staffs and the handing over of their duties to the Naval Shore Commanders. In his opinion the Naval Office at Oslo is also superfluous. Quartermaster Division submitted the following comments for the preliminary discussion at Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff:

"The posts of the Commanding Admirals cannot be abolished for

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the following reasons:

1. They are indispensable as Naval Commanders in coastal waters. A transfer of these duties of command to the Naval Shore Commanders would split up the command organization in coastal waters too much and apart from the actual duties, the small number of defense forces makes this measure intolerable. With regard to personnel, more people would be required for duty with operational staffs (eleven Naval Shore Commander areas).
2. They are indispensable as intermediate authorities in the area command (as far as naval warfare is concerned); otherwise too many departments would have direct access to Naval Command.
3. They are likewise indispensable as the representatives of the interests of Naval Staff on the coast against continuous attempts at interference by the Army. The request for the assignment of naval staff officers to local army commanders, presumably in command of an Army corps or division, speaks for itself. This is an attempt to create the refused joint command by including naval warfare under the direction of the Army.

It makes no difference whether questions to do with shipping and transport are dealt with at a Naval Office which is subordinated to Naval Command or at a shipping branch of Naval Command; however, there is no such thing as a shipping branch of Naval Command. It is a well-known fact that the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping who is directing merchant and supply shipping cannot do without the cooperation of a naval organization. Therefore the question Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping or Naval Office does not arise. In the thirty-nine ports in Norway occupied by the Navy there are only five Naval Offices. Where there are no Naval Offices, the Port Commanders look after shipping questions. Naval Command, Norway does not regard the naval office at Oslo as superfluous, and does not know anything about the request from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Norway. Nor has any similar request been received here. Such demands only serve to reveal a very limited insight into the interests of the Navy."

VI. Minelaying Experimental Command reported:

"A new type of ELM mine has been salvaged near Brest, designation ELM - JA 8. The firing mechanism is touched off in response to sound-waves reaching it from a certain direction after the

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mine has already been activated by the magnetic field from an enemy ship. The magnetism must activate the mine before the sound-wave reaches it."

Possibly the noise-box might again be used against this mine, so long as there have been previous successful attempts at sweeping the ELM/A st and ELM/JA 7. How useful the noise-box will be, will depend upon how many mines of each type are used. So far we do not know how the types are mixed.

VII. The Japanese Naval Attaché has given a verbal report to Operations Division on the conference of all Japanese Military Attachés in Europe, held in Budapest in the middle of January. Copy of the minutes as per l/Skl I k 2304/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

VIII. Commanding Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy reported:

"This morning Borghese arrived in Spezia with Grossi. Apparently he has orders from the Duce to investigate the reasons for the arrest of Bedeschi and Tortola on the spot; he will return to the Duce's Headquarters tomorrow. Ferrini was surprised at these orders and went to Headquarters immediately to learn the reason."

Here we have no picture of the background to these events.

IX. On 23 Jan. Naval Staff wired to Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest:

"We must regretfully inform you that thorough investigation has shown that the Navy's personnel situation does not permit the assignment of another Naval Artillery Battalion for Italy. This decision is taken with the knowledge of Commander in Chief, Navy."

Situation 25 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

The weather forecast states that it will be cloudy south of 65° N with good visibility decreasing to the north

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to about three miles; north of 65° N - particularly in Denmark Strait - there will be patches of fair weather with mainly good visibility.

Following information and directive sent to Group North/Fleet:

"1. The report from the ice reconnaissance plane in the night of 23 Jan. led us to hold up "Wanderer" after she had already been ordered to begin her breakthrough in what a previous forecast had claimed would be favorable weather. So far we have no confirmation that she did actually meet the submarine.

2. With a view to supplementing our uncertain information, you are to give immediate orders to the weather submarine in the Jan Mayen area to move westwards up to 10° W and if possible send a plane on weather reconnaissance in Denmark Strait tonight."

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Seven planes were detected over the Bay of Biscay. Between 1530 and 2346 there were four locations of British vessels, one on each occasion.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The convoy OSTERODE was again delayed and the transfer of the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla from Brest to Cherbourg postponed owing to the weather.

One submarine was escorted out.

Channel Coast:

There was no convoy or escort work owing to the weather. Otherwise nothing special to report.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Weather was stormy. Nothing special to report.

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There were no convoys.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Six planes were detected over the North Sea in the morning and two in the afternoon.

2. Own Situation:

There was an exchange of fire between batteries on the Fisher Peninsula and our own batteries in the night of 24 Jan. immediately before a Petsamo convoy went through.

At 1130 the tanker MIL (244 G.R.T.) sank off Echeröy probably after striking a mine

Thirty-one ships were escorted north and seventeen south. Thirty-six ships were delayed awaiting escorts.

Naval Command, Norway passed on a report from the 5th Air Force that with their present strength it is absolutely impossible for them to provide protection for the berths in Alta Fjord, as otherwise escort work, protection for air force ground organization and targets of importance for war economy must suffer to an intolerable degree. They have neither suitable forces nor the necessary ground organization to use night fighters in this area.

Action against the PQ convoy:

At 0958 submarine U "965" reported a destroyer proceeding at high speed on easterly course in AB 6675.

At 1046 submarine U "956" reported a convoy proceeding at moderate speed on easterly course in AB 6683.

Commander, Submarines, Norway sent the submarine group "Isegrimm" against this convoy. Group has ten boats.

Group North/Fleet presumed that the PQ convoy passed through the Bear Island Passage at noon and that obviously this must be the same convoy whose departure from Reykjavik on 20 Jan. was notified in an agent report to 5th Air Force. Planes of the 5th Air Force flew reconnaissance from 22 to 24 Jan., but as nothing

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was sighted they broke off under the assumption that the report was wrong. According to dead reckoning however, the convoy must have passed through their area during the period when continuous reconnaissance was being flown. It will thus be seen that with the number of planes available continuous reconnaissance by the Air Force does not unfailingly detect convoys.

Guided by past experience and the increase in radio traffic, Group North/Fleet assumed that the QP convoy had likewise already sailed or would shortly do so. Air reconnaissance against both convoys was not available unless "Wanderer" was temporarily postponed. Group North/Fleet was of the opinion that operation "Wanderer" must either be completed in four days at most or should not be carried out until after the completion of the QP and PQ operation - in other words it should be postponed eight to ten days. The Group deduced from Naval Staff's directive to "Wanderer" that the breakthrough could not be carried out immediately and suggested that if such were the case, the Air Force and submarines should immediately intensify their attacks against the convoy and preparations for "Wanderer" be postponed until the completion of the operation against the convoy.

Naval Staff informed Group North/Fleet that the measures ordered for "Wanderer" must be regarded as imperative and despite the attack on the convoy must be put into execution.

Group North/Fleet reported that the destroyers in Alta Fjord have been put on two hours' readiness, although at present possibilities for their commitment are not clearly recognizable. On this point it must be borne in mind that Commander, Submarines, Norway in a brief report on the SCHARNHORST also took the view that our own destroyers can be a hindrance to submarine operations. In the present situation the main attack on the convoy must be carried out by the submarines.

Naval Staff shares this opinion.

The submarines achieved the following successes:

At 1105 and again at 1140 one "Zaunkoenig" torpedo on a destroyer. Detonation was heard.

At 2012 submarine U "278" sank a steamer of 7,000 G.R.T. with a spread of three torpedoes against the convoy.

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At 2303 submarine U "957" sank a destroyer.

At 2313 submarine U "425" fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo against a destroyer. Detonation was heard.

The weather in the operational area is favorable for submarines. South to southeast wind, strength 3 to 5, visibility in general less than one mile increasing to five. Showers.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

No special reports to hand.

2. Own Situation:

No special incidents were reported from the area
Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

The steamer KLEOPATRA, which ran aground near Nargoen, has sunk. Salvage work on the cargo will begin when the weather improves.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a convoy, presumably ON 221, was detected at 1115 in the Oversay area.

2. Own Situation:

At 0740 submarine U "545" sighted a destroyer in
AL 3899.

Submarine U "386" has been operating in the North Channel for two days. She was observed at 2115 on 23 Jan. and anti-submarine measures were started immediately. In the night of 23 Jan. the submarine probably sank a vessel belonging to a patrol group. A detonation was heard after two minutes forty-seven seconds. The boat then withdrew.

Air reconnaissance for Group "Ruegen" was without result.

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VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Fairly large formations of fighter-bombers and twin-engined planes, also numerous fighters, were reported on daylight missions over Holland, Belgium, and Northern France. They attacked construction sites, airfields and defense installations in the Valogne area but did not do any special damage. A Typhoon plane was brought down by anti-aircraft guns. Our fighter defense did not have any particular success.

During the evening and night thirty-five planes were reported on missions over western France. Valogne was bombed.

Reich Territory:

In the evening a few single planes entered the Aachen - Saarbruecken area and dropped bombs.

Mediterranean Theater:

At 1756 on 24 Jan. planes of the 2nd Air Force out on a mission reported an aircraft carrier under escort by three destroyers fifteen miles southwest of Nettuno. Air Force Operations Staff was so dubious about the report that they did not pass it on. So far there is no confirmation and as yet no comment from 2nd Air Force.

On 25 Jan. nineteen fighter-bombers were out on daylight missions over the landing area and caused bomb damage to two steamers. There was heavy patrolling by enemy fighters in the Anzio - Nettuno area.

The enemy attacked Amelia and the Carsoli railway station in the Rome area and his fighter-bombers were increasingly active on the right flank of the front area.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast our planes carried out reconnaissance over the southern Adriatic.

The enemy was observed on reconnaissance over the Aegean Sea and Strait of Otranto and he flew supplies to the Balkan partisans in the evening. Between twelve to fifteen

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Spitfires machine-gunned Cape Pali near Durazzo. One raider was brought down by anti-aircraft.

The 2nd Air Force received orders from Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff to reinforce the patrol of Italian waters and carry out an intensified search for signs of further enemy landings. The patrol is to concentrate on Naples, also Palermo and the northern coasts of Sicily and Corsica and Sardinia. Besides daylight reconnaissance against the most important enemy ports and coasts, night reconnaissance, if possible using ship detecting gear, is specially important in the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic Seas and on the two seaward flanks of the Italian front.

Air Force Command, Southeast received orders to increase reconnaissance over the Adriatic Sea especially the harbors on the southeastern Italian coast (Brindisi and Bari).

Besides the combat forces of the 2nd Air Force Division already mentioned, the 1st Squadron of the 33rd Long-Range Reconnaissance Group has been assigned to the 2nd Air Force to strengthen its reconnaissance forces. The 3rd Air Force has orders to draw on other forces for reconnaissance work in its Mediterranean sector.

Eastern Front:

On 24 Jan. our planes carried out 1,700 missions over the eastern front. We lost eleven planes. About 800 enemy planes were observed, 43 of them were brought down.

The 4th Air Force flew reconnaissance over Poti and the Chopi Estuary.

The 5th Air Force reported that it was impossible to fly reconnaissance against the PQ convoy as the planes were unable to start.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At noon on 23 Jan. the French transport CHAMPOLLION

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put into Gibraltar from the Atlantic and put out again in the evening under escort by three destroyers.

At 2331 a British vessel was roughly located in CG 1940.

Own Situation:

No special incidents.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At noon on 24 Jan. our planes made a photographic reconnaissance of Anzio harbor. Two LST's, 4 LCT's, 3 LCI's and 1 LCM were distinguished.

Outside the harbor there were 7 destroyers, 34 small vessels, 6 PT boats, 5 LCI's, 4 LCT's, 3 LCE's, 10 large and 24 small LCT's, 3 LCI's and 3 LCM's and 4 freighters totaling about 27,000 G.R.T. Sixty tanks and 300 motor vehicles were counted ashore on the beachhead west of Anzio. At 1756 on 24 Jan. 1 aircraft carrier and 3 destroyers were sighted 15 miles southwest of Nettuno. On the morning of 25 Jan. 18 large vessels and destroyers stood 25 miles west of Anzio heading for the coast, 6 large ships and destroyers were 10 kilometers west of the beachhead on course west and 20 small ships 15 miles west of the beachhead on course towards the shore.

At 0930 a convoy consisting of 20 large vessels was reported 15 km. west of the beachhead and 30 large and 50 small landing craft south of the beachhead. No vessels were detected in the coastal strip 40 km. wide running from the beachhead to Civitavecchia.

Formia and Torres Scauri were shelled from the sea.

Own Situation:

So far there are no reports of any real fighting activity from the landing area.

The motor minesweepers which were operating in the Piombino Straits on the night of 24 Jan. against a formation of PT boats protecting the flank of the enemy landing forces,

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failed to contact their opponents. The operation was broken off at an early stage owing to the weather. Two offensive minelaying operations by the 11th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and torpedo boat TA "23" were planned for the night of 25 Jan. but had to be postponed for 24 hours because of the weather. The former Italian torpedo boat RIGEL has been commissioned as TA "28". German Naval Command, Italy plans to commission the former Italian torpedo boat ERIDANO as TA "29" in mid-February. Equipment and crew will be German.

According to a communication from Armed Forces High Command, at the orders of the Fuehrer the province of Rome has been included in the operational area of the 10th Army Command. Order is effective immediately.

Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean reported that submarine U "371" put out for the Western Mediterranean on 24 Jan. She will be the third submarine and will proceed north of Corsica to the Nettuno landing area.

At 1110 submarine U "230" attacked two destroyers in CJ 5941 with a salvo of two torpedoes and a 'Zaunkoenig' torpedo. The detonation and sinking noises detected by hydrophone seem to indicate that both destroyers were sunk. Submarine U "453" missed when she fired a Zaunkoenig torpedo on a patrol vessel in CP 3429.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

According to an intelligence report of 21 Jan. based on personal observation from Brac, major war vessels are lying on the coast of the island of Vis, but not in the harbors of Vis and Komica. According to the same report, the enemy plans to hold on to Vis at all costs and thus be in a position to recapture the Dalmatian islands. This operation will be preceded by a bombardment lasting several days and the subsequent landing will take place under cover of shelling from naval units.

On the engagement reported by torpedo boats TA "23" and "22", Port Commander, Zara reported that the shelling was carried out by our own island garrison on Pasman and one of our own batteries on the mainland. They did not see the recognition signals from our boats.

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Uljan is occupied by strong partisan forces. The operation against Uljan will be repeated by torpedo boat TA "22" in the night of 25 Jan.

b. Aegean Sea:

Apart from enemy air activity no special incidents.

Group South reported that the December total for supplies transported in the Aegean Sea

was 38,747 tons
compared with November total of 49,013 tons.

The main reason for the drop was the lack of escort forces in the first half of the month. See teletype 0830 for details.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, three submarines were at sea in the operational area. In the afternoon of 24 Jan. planes were seen to be dropping mines off the northwestern entrance of Ak Mechet harbor. Enemy planes raided Ak Mechet without causing casualties or damaging craft. The convoy consisting of war transport KT "25" and mine tender MT "2" on passage from Sulina to Sevastopol was attacked by a torpedo bomber. The torpedo was a misfire. The enemy made further unsuccessful attacks on the Odessa - Sevastopol convoy. Three bombs were dropped.

Own Situation:

The night of 24 Jan. was quiet in the Kerch Strait. Naval landing craft and motor minesweepers lying in readiness were not in action. Following the loss of the northern breakwater at Kerch the Port Commander's detachment took up a new defense line within the city. All guns of the 4th Battery of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion were put out of action, replacements are on the way.

Group South reported that the Bulgarian auxiliary sailing vessel MARITZA was stopped on 24 Jan. off Cape Kaliakra by a motor minesweeper and brought to Constanta on the grounds that she was not authorized to be in the operational area.

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According to an intelligence report she was taking Jews from Rumania to Turkey. On the forenoon of 25 Jan. the Rumanian Fleet Commander notified Group South that the MARITZA and another ship were expected in Constanta and that orders from Marshal Antonescu to the Rumanian naval forces stated that assistance was to be given in evacuating the Jews.

Group South therefore ordered German Naval Command, Constanta to release the vessel and crew but at the same time advise the Rumanian naval forces and the Bulgarian Naval Command that a ship in the operational area without authority and not notified must inevitably and quite justifiably be seized and might well have been destroyed. This will certainly be the line of action for the future. The conduct of naval operations in the Black Sea rests entirely and solely with Admiral, Black Sea and the danger to our own vessels and those of our allies makes any different procedure in the declared operational area impossible. The Group requested a decision on the opportuneness of the moment for the evacuation of Jews from Rumania to Turkey. They are of the opinion that such a movement is not without risks from the political and military standpoint.

Naval Staff has submitted this matter to the Foreign Office. See War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII for details.

Lieutenant Colonel Metz of the General Staff who was sent to Sofia by Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West, has submitted a report on the effects of the air raids on Sofia. According to him real panic prevailed among the civilian population, the military commands and the civil authorities on 11 and 12 Jan. Copy of the report under 1/Skl 2348/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV a.

VIII. Situation East Asia

No special reports to hand.

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Items of Political Importance

Swedish press reports state that the government of the U.S.S.R. has declared its willingness to negotiate with a new "democratic" Polish exile government. An essential condition is that the Curzon line must remain the eastern border of Poland.

Reuter reports that an Argentine Foreign Office communiqué states that the Argentine Government has decided to break off diplomatic relations with the Axis powers.

Chief, Naval Staff returned from Flensburg - Muervik to command post "Bismarck".

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. According to the special forecast of landing weather, the alternating west to southwest weather conditions are expected to continue in the west area during the coming week. In all probability there will not be any period with favorable or possible flying and landing conditions lasting over three or four days.

Details of the forecast will be sent to Group West and Group North/Fleet with copies to Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West and to Chief, Naval Meteorological Service, Hydrographic and Meteorological Division.

II. Special Weapons Division reported on further developments in the Borghese case, as described in the report from German Naval Command, Italy. A further report was made on Ferrini's intention of relieving Captain Sestini as Liaison Officer at German Naval Command, Italy.

Chief, Naval Staff stated that Commanding Admiral, German Naval Command, as the officer on the spot, is the only one in a position to pass judgment on these questions and all decisions must be left to him.

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III. Chief, Naval Staff took up a similar viewpoint on the report by Admiral, Adriatic on the unreliability of the Croatian Navy.

IV. For details on the conclusion of the new German-Swedish agreement on the resumption of the Swedish Gothenburg traffic, see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

V. Deputy Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported that so far he has had no confirmation of the Reuter report on the severing of diplomatic relations between the Argentine and the Axis powers.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

VI. On orders from the Fuehrer under date 28 Dec. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff listed the preparations already in hand for measures which can be quickly put into operation in whatever place a large-scale enemy landing may come. Naval Staff and Air Force, Operations Staff were directed to outline and prepare the measures which might be taken in the various theaters towards strengthening the defense against a large-scale enemy landing and to report their plans for each area, so far as this had not already been done (Denmark, West Area). Copy of the directive from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff under 1/Skl 4092/43 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Provisional File "Large-Scale Enemy Landings", and in File 1/Skl I Op. VI, 6 "Enemy Landings" ("Hanna", "Falke", "Blume 1").

Under date 2 Jan. 1944 Naval Staff issued a directive to Group North/Fleet, Naval Command Baltic, Naval Group South, Naval Command, Norway, Naval Command, North, Group West, German Naval Command, Italy with copies to Submarine Division and Quartermaster Division ordering them to submit relevant suggestions by 10 Jan. 1944. (Order 1/Skl I op 4092/44 Gkdos. in file 1/Skl I op VI, 6.)

The suggestions are contained in this same file:

from Naval Command, Norway as per 1/Skl 80/44 Gkdos. Chfs.,

from Group North/Fleet as per 1/Skl 81/44 Chfs.,

from Naval Command, Baltic as per 1/Skl 87/44 Chfs.,

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from Naval Command, North as per 1/Skl 102/44 Chfs.,
from Group West as per 1/Skl 93/44 Chfs.,
from German Naval Command, Italy as per 1/Skl 105/44 Chfs.,
from Group South as per 1/Skl 166/44 Chfs.

These reports were evaluated by Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division in the course of a comprehensive examination of the problem and the resultant study approved by Chief, Naval Staff. The copy of the report on the matter to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is contained under 1/Skl I op 205/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in File 1/Skl I op VI, 6, copy of the conclusions in War Diary, Part C, Provisional File "Large-Scale Enemy Landings".

VII. Further on the same subject:

a. Under date 8 Jan. 1944 Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff issued directives for reconnaissance of enemy preparations for setting up other fronts in the Mediterranean area. Air Force Operations Staff, Naval Staff and Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division were requested to put all equipment required for this reconnaissance at the disposal of the Mediterranean Commands or to make their own arrangements for dispatch. As before, reconnaissance of Portugal and Turkey is to be carried out following consultation with Commanding General, Armed Forces, West and Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast respectively. Foreign Armies West, Naval Intelligence Division and Air Force Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section were requested to transmit all reconnaissance results which seem to be of any importance to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section.

Copy of the directive as per 1/Skl 1151/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Provisional File "Large-Scale Enemy Landings".

Naval Intelligence Division passed on this information and directive to Group South and German Naval Command, Italy.

b. Naval Staff passed on the directive from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff on preparations for countermeasures against an enemy landing in Portugal to Group West, German Naval Command, Italy and Submarine Division on

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16 Jan. Copy of the relevant teletype 1/Skl I op 111/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Provisional File "Large-Scale Enemy Landings".

VIII. Chief, Organization and Mobilization Branch, Quartermaster Division reported on the state of the emergency formations. They consist in all of more than 100,000 men (about 40,000 men each in Groups A and C, 24,000 men in Group B). Steps have been taken to ensure that the employment of men from Group A will not mean any direct interference with training or other activities of naval forces.

Chief, Naval Staff gave orders that Group A should again be sifted to make sure that there will not be even any indirect interference with naval warfare. The Fuehrer has agreed with Chief, Naval Staff on this point. Furthermore the procedure for setting these measures in motion is such that the decision for their adoption, either in part or as a whole, rests with Naval Staff.

IX. Report by Chief, Mine Warfare Section, Operations Division upon the re-opening of the question of employing mines with new firing devices. His statement was in accordance with description of events under entry 23 Jan. Chief, Naval Staff agreed.

X. Army Situation:

The main fighting on the eastern front is in the area of Army Group North. We are retiring under heavy enemy pressure. Gachina is surrounded. The situation is extremely critical.

In Italy, troops landed by the enemy have taken Aprilia in the Rome area.

XI. Report by Chief, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section, Operations Division on the air situation in January 1944.

Special Items:

I. On 14 Jan. (24? Tr. N.) High Command Army, Army General Staff transmitted the following communication to Army Group A:

"Commander in Chief, Navy at a Fuehrer Conference on 17 Jan. reported that the Navy can transport 45,000 tons a month to

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the Crimea and, provided nothing interferes with plans for new constructions, can possibly increase this figure to 50,000 tons once the winter is over. A necessary condition is that the shipping space must be fully used, and there must be no sizable losses or intensified enemy activity.

Furthermore a detailed report on the entire supply situation on the Crimea was made to the Fuehrer.

His decision was that the earlier directive on the holding of the Crimea remains in force. Replacements will be supplied continuously, but the general situation makes it impossible to bring up six combat battalions."

Copy of this teletype was brought to the attention of Naval Staff by Naval Liaison Officer at High Command, Army, Army General Staff.

II. German Naval Command, Italy reported the following excerpts from the battle directive issued by Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest:

"a. The enemy has landed about three divisions south of the Tiber with the object of attacking the 10th Army from the rear and taking Rome.

b. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest will defend the central Italian area and guard the coasts against new landings.

c. The Navy will use every available weapon against enemy naval forces and shipping, especially at the beachheads. Minefields are to be greatly extended as laid down in previous instructions. The coastal traffic is to be protected and its freight capacity increased, so that in the event of a railroad breakdown the supplies can be taken by the sea route."

German Naval Command, Italy communicated its own plans to Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest and Naval Staff as follows:

"The landing on the Italian west coast and plans against the Iberian Peninsula indicate that the enemy intends to make the Western Mediterranean his main field of operations. With the vessels at present available to the Navy, it is impossible to prevent enemy landings or to put difficulties in their way.

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Offensive action and defense in the area south of Elba requires all available motor minesweepers, former Italian torpedo boats and Italian PT boats. The lack of German PT boats is most severely felt, as apart from submarines they are the only possible weapon for effectively attacking enemy supply ships at the beachheads and lying at anchor. With the danger from PT boats and planes steadily growing, it is becoming increasingly difficult to protect our own supply convoys. Even now we can hardly meet the request from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest for increased supplies. During the day enemy PT boats are constantly observed immediately off the coast between Leghorn and Spezia and enemy destroyers north of Elba. The latter fact throws a vivid light on further difficulties to be encountered by the supply service. The general situation and the tasks on hand necessitate the following requests:

1. Approval for commissioning the former Italian fast torpedo boats TA "29" and "30" thereby making up the 11th Torpedo Boat Flotilla to five fast and three slow torpedo boats, also the fast escort boat SG "15".
2. Return of the 7th PT Boat Flotilla and the minesweepers; if necessary another PT boat flotilla to be brought down via the southern French canals.
3. Group leader boats for the 1st Transport Flotilla to be put in service as soon as possible.
4. Resumption of the naval landing craft construction program in the Western Mediterranean. The employment of heavily armed naval landing craft, which can be continually sent up from the southern French area, means a saving of protective forces.
5. Commissioning of transport ships with naval crews."

Operations Division passed these requests from German Naval Command, Italy to Quartermaster Division and asked that if at all possible, they should be met. We cannot, however, permit the return of the 7th PT Boat Flotilla or the minesweepers. Similarly we cannot yet send down another PT boat flotilla by way of southern France.

III. In accordance with the directive from Chief, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division issued order dated 23 Jan. giving Group

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South an additional Naval Artillery Battalion. This consists of

- a. half a Naval Artillery Battalion - four batteries - from Norway,
- b. sufficient personnel to man half a Naval Artillery Battalion - four batteries - without specialists. These have been provided by economies in personnel in Germany,
- c. staff and subordinate staff from Germany.

The Naval Artillery Battalion (new designation: Naval Artillery Battalion 540) is to be employed in the Adriatic area either as a unit or divided up. No more forces can be allocated. Hence it will not be possible to assign Naval Artillery Battalions to the Salonika area and the coasts of Bulgaria and Thrace.

IV. Naval Staff will bring the special war experiences of Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest to the notice of Commander, PT Boats, Groups West, North and South, Naval Commands, Norway, North and Baltic and German Naval Command, Italy. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest reports that unloading points are extremely heavily protected by enemy PT boats (artillery).

V. Naval Intelligence Division has drawn up charts showing changes in the distribution of heavy naval forces, also merchant shipping and landing craft space in Europe as compared with 10 Jan. 1944. Copy as per 1/Skl 2949/44 geheim in War Diary, Part D, Provisional File "Distribution of Allied Landing Space".

VI. In their evaluation of news Naval Intelligence Division reported on the commitment of British aircraft carriers and auxiliary carriers during landing operations, also on the commitment of special submarines. Copies as per 1/Skl 3358 and 3359/44 geheim in War Diary, Part D, Reports "Evaluation of News on Foreign Navies".

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Situation 26 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

According to an intelligence report, the U.S. Navy is now using warships resembling cruisers and carrying two turrets with two large guns very far forward. From the turrets to the stern there are only two cranes visible on deck. These vessels of about 4,000 to 5,000 G.R.T. are transporting planes on and below deck. These are then transferred to aircraft carriers at sea.

Naval Intelligence Division requested Armed Forces High Command, Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division to follow up this matter.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE that so far the submarine has not reported that the meeting has taken place. The submarine will wait up to and including 28 Jan.

The RIO GRANDE was also informed that a new PQ convoy consisting of seventeen merchant ships and three destroyers was detected at 1650 in AE 2647 on course 30°, speed eight knots.

Information on the weather and forecast was also passed on. Naval Staff added that the trend of the weather is regarded as favorable for a breakthrough, and we are no longer dubious about the wisdom of continuing the voyage. Judging by the forecast for 27 Jan. the bad weather is expected to continue for the time being.

Commander, Submarines, Norway reported to Group North Fleet with copy to Naval Staff that submarine U "312" engaged in weather observation for "Wanderer" will be standing in AB 71 towards noon on 27 Jan.; he asked whether there is a ban on attacks against ships sailing alone, and if so when it comes into force.

Group North ordered U "312" to transmit weather reports each night at different times and from various positions in AE 32 and 35. The Group also requested information as to the

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earliest time when "Wanderer" may be expected in Denmark Strait. This question is very important in view of Air Force operations against convoys, since at present most of their reconnaissance planes are assigned to "Wanderer". It is also important in view of the prohibition of attacks against ships sailing alone issued to the weather submarine.

Naval Staff replied that so far we have no reports of a meeting between the submarine and "Wanderer". Hence her position is not clear. We are expecting her to pass point "Zeder" at the earliest on 28 Jan. but most likely at a later date. Further Naval Staff directed that air reconnaissance for "Wanderer" still takes priority and that, effective immediately, the weather submarine must not attack vessels sailing alone in Denmark Strait and the waters east of the Strait between 66° and 71° N.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

No air activity was observed over the Bay of Biscay. One British vessel was located at 0917 in BE 8380, one at 1407 in CG 8285, one at 1551 in DJ 1417, one at 1905 in AM 5550, one at 1911 in AL 9310 and one at 1920 in AM 7720.

At 1230 our air reconnaissance reported a convoy made up of eighteen merchantmen and one tanker in AM 5191 on southerly course and at 1250 when visibility was poor, merchantmen sailing singly on northerly course. Obviously they belonged to a convoy.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Owing to the stormy weather only one patrol position was taken up.

At 1430 the convoy CSTERODE put out from Brest.

At 1600 the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla consisting of five boats started on passage from Brest to Cherbourg.

Two submarines were escorted in and one out.

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Channel Coast:

The weather situation prevented any operations by our forces. Otherwise nothing special to report.

Group West plans to lay barrages of ground mines with new firing devices to protect our routes off the coast of Flanders, as mines with time-setting of 200 days cannot be delivered in the near future. The barrages are meant to serve as protection against landing attempts and against the enemy PT boats which operate in this area unhindered. Although these barrages are beyond the range of our guns and radar installations, the minelaying operation seems well worth while as the enemy cannot sweep the mines. Plans have been made to strengthen the barrages by laying mines equipped with time settings nearer the coast at a later date. Three barrages, each three miles in length, are to be laid between barrage OK 5 and longitude 2° 30' E. With the interests of Commander PT Boats in mind, we cannot lay barrages east of this line. The Group requested approval of the plans and allocation of 330 LMB mines with AA 1 and AA 2 firing devices.

Naval Staff generally approved the laying of ground mines with AA 1 or AA 2 firing devices without time-setting in the area mentioned. Having regard to the sensitivity of the AA 1 firing device, Group West was directed to lay the barrages wherever possible on sandbanks or in shallow waters (30 meters at most). Plans are to be submitted. Requested mines will be allocated.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Some of the patrol positions were not taken up because of the stormy weather. There was no convoy or escort work and no minesweeping.

A convoy totaling 16,767 G.R.T. was escorted through the waters round Zeeland.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1650 our air reconnaissance spotted a new convoy of seventeen merchantmen and three destroyers on northerly

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course in AE 2674 (Iceland Sector).

Eleven planes were spotted over the North Sea.

At 0132 one British vessel was located northeast of North Cape. British radio traffic between England and Murmansk has increased considerably. According to radio intelligence, the Russian destroyer "H" was at sea at 0800. At 1925 submarine M "119" received a very urgent radiogram from Polyarnoe.

2. Own Situation:

At 1808 when the Kirkenes convoy was passing through, there was an exchange of fire between our batteries and the batteries on the Fisher Peninsula. We fired 87 rounds in reply to 211 from the enemy. Single enemy planes approached the Vardoe and Kirkenes area.

In the Namsos area our southbound convoy was attacked at 1100 by an enemy submarine. The torpedo was a misfire. In the Stadtlandet area eleven enemy planes bombed and machine-gunned a northbound convoy at 1130. There were numerous casualties. Patrol vessel "5908" which was hit by a bomb went out of control and is being towed to port.

Forty-nine ships were escorted north and eighteen south. 40 ships remained behind awaiting escorts.

Attack against the PQ convoy:

Contact with the enemy was kept up till 0442. The convoy's last position was reported to be in AC 4646, course 100°. So far there have been no reports of enemy planes or warships larger than destroyers.

At 0016 submarine U "360" fired a spread of three FAT torpedoes on the convoy.

The report on hits scored has still to be cleared up since part of the radiogram was unintelligible.

At 0020 submarine U "716" fired a spread of three torpedoes on some steamers overlapping each other and sank one of them for certain.

At 0147 submarine U "360" reported having scored a hit on a

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destroyer with a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo. So far nine of the twelve submarines operating against the convoy have contacted the enemy.

At 0442 contact lost. At 1355 submarine U "425" regained contact for about 20 minutes in AC 5483. Showers prevented any further contact for the rest of the day.

During the day Group "Isegrimm" was on the patrol line from AC 5797 to 6477. A new line is being taken up from AC 8251 to 9155.

At 1105 our reconnaissance again spotted the convoy in AC 4666 on course 100°. At 1330 our air reconnaissance reported a convoy of fifteen ships escorted by destroyers and torpedo boats in AC 8989 on course 310°; it was either a QP convoy or a movement of ships from Archangel or eastern ports to Murmansk.

At 1650, as already reported, our air reconnaissance also spotted what seemed to be a fresh PQ convoy in AE 2645.

According to attack reports received so far, on 25 and 26 Jan. our submarines:

- a. sank two steamers each 7,000 G.R.T. and one destroyer,
- b. reported two steamers each 7,000 G.R.T. and one destroyer, all believed sunk,
- c. reported having heard detonations of four destroyers and one ship belonging to the convoy.

Group North reported that Admiral, Northern Waters proposed to dispatch the 4th Destroyer Flotilla against the disabled ships from the convoy. Beginning at dawn on 27 Jan. they are to comb the grid squares AB 6644 and AC 45, 46, 54 up to 30° E. The Group does not consider this operation as very promising, since they can only comb a relatively small area, and such action is not essential as the combing can be done by submarines and planes. Owing to inadequate air reconnaissance there is no clear picture of the enemy situation. The PQ convoy is probably escorted by cruisers. We must reckon that a PQ convoy is now under way. A joint operation by destroyers and submarines in the same area does not serve any useful purpose; besides the destroyers must be kept ready for

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operation "Wanderer". The Group therefore proposed to reject the suggestion from Admiral, Northern Waters. Naval Staff agreed with this refusal on the grounds that the operation with only a few destroyers would not be profitable, especially in view of "Wanderer"; however, we notified Group North/Fleet with copy to Admiral, Northern Waters that in future there may well be operational possibilities in Northern Waters for the Task Force. Copy of the relevant order 1/Skl I op 272/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. II a.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

At 0750 and again at 1155 a plane flew low over Battery Dubnia and dropped three bombs, all of which were duds.

2. Own Situation:

Following the withdrawal of the 17th Patrol Flotilla, Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic is to suspend the measures for intercepting blockade runners as from 0500 on 27 Jan. There will no longer be any patrolling off the Swedish coast or at the intercepting position on the eastern border of the Skagerrak declared area.

The motorship PROBSTEI (350 G.R.T.) was rammed in Kiel harbor by a submarine coming to the surface. She was heavily damaged. The steamer DUALA of the 26th Submarine Flotilla was hit by a practice torpedo and arrived in Pillau with a list; there were no casualties.

Naval Command, Baltic passed on information to Naval Staff about a directive to Admiral, Baltic States ordering very strict and continuous radar watch of the Gulf of Finland. Copy as per 1/Skl 2561/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

V. Submarine Warfare

Submarine U "271" sighted a fast convoy in AL 9046 and fired a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo at a destroyer; a hit was heard after eleven minutes. At noon air reconnaissance spotted a southbound convoy in AM 5168, obviously the MKS convoy. The southerly submarines of Group "Ruegen" will take up a patrol line from AM 7132 to 7628 until 1830 on 27 Jan., this new group will be called Group "Hinein". The northerly submarines

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of the former Group "Ruegen" under the name Group "Stuermer" will enter new operational areas in AM ready to attack the ON convoy. According to radio intelligence, this convoy was in the North Channel on 24 Jan. and we are presuming that it is taking the northern route.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Single enemy planes approached the coast and several formations entered the western area by day and dropped bombs in the area south and southsouthwest of Abbeville. In the night of 26 Jan. we had only two reports of enemy planes entering the Toulon area from the south, they did not attack.

Reich Territory:

No air activity.

Mediterranean Theater:

The 2nd Air Force flew reconnaissance of the sea area near the beachhead. For evaluation see Enemy Situation, Central Mediterranean.

By day seventeen FW 190 planes attacked the beachhead and damaged two steamers. Eighty-one planes carried out further attacks at dusk and in the evening. Seventy planes reached the target and sank 2 landing boats and probably a freighter; 2 cruisers, 4 destroyers, 1 landing craft and 8 steamers were damaged. Eight of our planes are missing. Twenty-six other bombers were out on missions during the night of 26 Jan.

The Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group E reported that four enemy planes were shot down by our fighters in the enemy air raid on Sofia. Three other four-engined bombers crashed or made emergency landings.

Eastern Front:

On 25 Jan. 1,326 enemy missions were observed; 44 planes were shot down, 2 of them by anti-aircraft. Our planes flew 1,574 missions - 3 of them were lost over enemy territory and 2 over our own.

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The attack on the PQ convoy in the operational area of the 5th Air Force has already been reported.

Eleven planes attacked one of our convoys; two Beaufighters were shot down by our fighters.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

In the course of the afternoon 11 freighters, 2 tankers with 6 corvettes, later 12 freighters, 1 tanker and 4 escort vessels put out from Gibraltar heading for the Atlantic. At 1900 in poor visibility the two groups were spotted from Tangier; they had apparently been joined into one convoy. From 1940 to 2130 Ceuta sighted 27 large ships' silhouettes, four of them very large, passing from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic.

In the afternoon a CAIRO cruiser coming from the Mediterranean put into Gibraltar. A transport with troops on board put out from Gibraltar for the Atlantic with two escorting destroyers.

Own Situation:

A convoy totaling 4,550 G.R.T. was escorted off the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon of 25 Jan. three warships shelled Terracina in the Gulf of Gaeta. From 0742 to 2014 on 26 Jan. radio intelligence picked up continuous traffic between the warships engaged in shelling the coast and the beachhead.

More landings were observed at the Nettuno beachhead. According to air reconnaissance about 20 to 25 transports, 200 to 230 landing craft and 4 destroyers were standing off Nettuno, for the most part to the southeast. Ten destroyers steering west 35 miles west of Nettuno were sighted, also an enemy formation which included 6 destroyers on course 80°

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30 miles southsoutheast of Cape Circeo. About noon there were 6 landing craft on northnorthwesterly course west of the island of Ponza.

According to air reconnaissance, there was a convoy coming from the east in the Malta - Benghazi area. Air reconnaissance in the Ancona - Termoli - Barletta area did not sight anything.

Own Situation:

On 25 Jan. a freight barge ran aground south of Leghorn owing to engine trouble.

The bad weather on 26 Jan. prevented any movement of small vessels.

The post of Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean was handed over to Captain Hartmann by Rear Admiral Kreisch.

On 23 Jan. German Naval Command, Italy reported on their plans for laying barrages south of Elba, east of Giannutri and between Elba and Capraja Island and on the east coast between Ancona and Recanati and between Rimini and Ravenna.

At present German PT boats are blocked in Mortizza near Piacenza. Their passage will be delayed because of the need for dredging. Some Italian PT boats are fog-bound in Piacenza. Three more of the PT boats allocated to the 10th PT Boat Flotilla will be ready for action on 31 Jan. at the earliest.

On 25 Jan. German Naval Command, Italy reported:

"Our plans for interfering with enemy naval forces in the landing area are as follows:

1. Mining operations with all available vessels. Whether the mines can be laid directly off the beachhead depends upon whether we have uninterrupted and thorough air reconnaissance.

2. Operations by fast torpedo boats against landing forces, again dependent on uninterrupted air reconnaissance.

3. Continuous operations against PT boats which have recently been appearing in the Piombino Straits, evidently for flank reconnaissance. These operations are to be

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carried out by groups of naval landing craft and where available motor minesweepers.

4. Operations by former Italian PT boats when equipment and personnel are ready, at the earliest at the beginning of February.

5. Operations by motor minesweepers of foreign origin as torpedo carriers - torpedo tubes must first be installed.

6. Operations by Special Weapons of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla - dependent on their state of readiness."

Naval Staff passed on the relevant information to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy).

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Torpedo boat TA "22" patrolled from Uljan to Pasman during the night.

Chief, Supply and Transport, Adriatic reported that the Army commands have sent in demands asking that most of the harbor installations of Trieste should be destroyed as soon as possible and the smaller emergency ports on the Istrian Peninsula made useless. Such destruction work would seriously endanger supply operations for the east and west coasts of the Adriatic.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 2100 on 25 Jan. and at 0300 on 26 Jan. one submarine was sighted northwest of Chios and one south of Nikaria. Towards 1930 on 26 Jan. there were two enemy PT boats north of the northeast point of Rhodes; they were shelled by 15 cm. batteries. On 26 Jan. enemy planes were active on reconnaissance over the Aegean Sea, bombs were dropped on Kythera, Cape Sideron, Naxos, Paros and Chios. Two coastal patrol vessels were engaged in defense near Paros.

PT boats S "601" and "603" on passage from Piraeus to Cattaro put into Corfu. Both boats were damaged in an air raid off Corfu. PT boat S "54" postponed her transfer to Salonica until 27 Jan. because of the bad weather.

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c. Black Sea:

Submarine U "20" put into Constanta after operations. Convoys to the Crimea were carried out as planned. The submarine chase west of Eupatoria was stopped because one of the submarine chasers developed engine trouble. A bomb which one of our planes dropped by mistake damaged the southern breakwater and the building containing the Port Commander's offices at Kerch. One 2 cm. anti-aircraft gun was put out of action, three men were killed.

No special incidents were reported from the patrol line.

VIII. Situation East Asia

According to a report from the Military Attaché at Bangkok, the number of U.S. submarines operating off the Chinese and Japanese coasts has been estimated at 27. The submarines are concentrated off the northern point of Hondo, in Tokio Bay, off the entrances to the harbors of Osaka and Shimonoseki, west and east of Formosa, off the Japanese naval bases on the Truk Islands and off Rabaul.

Otherwise no special reports received.

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Items of Political Importance

Reuter gives an official announcement that Russia has not accepted the U.S. offer to mediate in the Polish controversy.

In the House of Commons Eden declared that the British Government's attitude on the Polish frontier question is unchanged. The British Government does not intend to approve any territorial changes made during the war unless they take place with the free consent and full agreement of the parties concerned.

Chief, Naval Staff is going to Fuehrer Headquarters to take part in General Reinicke's conference on pre-military training and education and to discuss current questions.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General in his report on General Talvela's visit to Commander in Chief, Navy stated that the Finnish request for motor minesweepers was refused. Instead Commander in Chief, Navy offered four PT boats and emphasized that these were better suited for offensive operations. So far we have not received any statement from Finland.

II. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division reported that confirmation has meantime been received that Argentina has broken off diplomatic relations with the Axis powers.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. Army Situation:

In the Kirovograd area the enemy again succeeded in making a breakthrough in our lines on a front 13 km. wide. Fighting has again broken out in the Beresina swamp. Our Leningrad front was pushed back a considerable distance to the south. It seems that we are no longer capable of offering any resistance on the former sea front and the way to Narva is open to the enemy.

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Italian Front:

Apparently six to seven enemy divisions have so far been put into action in the landing area south of the Tiber; it seems that half of them were brought up from North Africa. In its manner of execution the landing resembles the one near Palermo.

Special Items:

I. Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff has made a suggestion that the joint conference of the Air Force and the Navy in Angers should be used as an opportunity to discuss common problems of a general nature to do with training of the Air Force for operations at sea and cooperation with the Navy. Those taking part should therefore be drawn from as wide a circle as possible. The Air Force has promised that besides representatives of the commands in the west area the Generals responsible for the technical development of the various weapons will be present. Naval Staff fully approves the suggestion and has requested Group West to give orders that in addition to those already down to take part, Commander, PT Boats and Training Unit, Fleet should also send representatives.

II. Foreign Affairs/Intelligence Division under date of 10 Jan. submitted a report from Intelligence Station, Hamburg of 30 Dec. 1943 on the Prize Officer's account of the capture and sinking of Prize 1 belonging to the battleship GNEISENAU (Norwegian motor tanker BIANCA) by the British battleship RENOWN, and also his experiences as a prisoner of war in Great Britain and Canada. Copy of report as per 1/Skl 3826/44 Geheim in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

III. Army General Staff does not think that any special operational significance need be attached to the fact that a convoy of transports carrying about 30,000 men entered the Mediterranean from the Atlantic on 23 Jan. They believe that the convoy is bringing up replacements for casualties sustained, but the numbers are not sufficient even to offset the drain on forces brought about by the withdrawal of several formations from the Mediterranean to Great Britain.

Naval Intelligence Division will pass on excerpts from the Army General Staff's situation reports of 23 and 25 Jan. to

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the higher commands of the Navy. Besides the commentary quoted above, the reports deal with the operational aim of the enemy forces landed at Nettuno and also with indications that Turkey is increasing her war readiness. Copy as per 2588/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, Vol. "Data on the Enemy Situation".

Situation 27 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

Nothing to report.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff informed the RIO GRANDE about the convoy spotted at 1217 on 26 Jan. in AE 3354 on 30°, speed 10 knots.

Following directive issued to the RIO GRANDE:

"The ship will be met at point "Eiche" by at least two destroyers and escorted to Narvik. Should she fail to meet the destroyers at the arranged point, the ship will report her plans to Admiral, Northern Waters and then proceed alone. She is to put into Narvik by way of And Fjord or Vest Fjord. In view of the danger from submarines, planes and our own mines she must not enter the Norwegian inner leads except under escort or following receipt of a directive.

Group North will be informed of this directive to "Wanderer".

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Eleven planes belonging to No. 19 Group were detected on missions. The area they were making for could not be determined.

At 1731 a British vessel was located in AL 6250. At 1242

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an Allied war vessel was located in BE 2960 and in BE 1834 at 1820.

At 0455 our air reconnaissance using ship detecting gear spotted a convoy in AM 4938. At 0955 the same convoy was sighted and was found to consist of 20 merchantmen, 1 destroyer and 3 patrol vessels on course 230°.

At 1115 a second convoy consisting of 32 ships and 5 destroyers was sighted and reported on courses between 30° and 50°.

At 1720 a fresh reconnaissance, using ship detecting gear spotted a convoy of 55 merchantmen and 9 destroyers in AM 4879 on westerly course, speed 8 knots, and at 1750 a second convoy of 34 ships, 5 destroyers and 3 patrol vessels in AM 7346 on course 50°.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

The convoy OSTERODE put into Morlaix and the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla into Cherbourg.

At noon mine-exploding vessel "162" and submarine chaser "1420" were fired at by seven enemy fighter-bombers off Lorient.

Two submarines were escorted in and five out.

Channel Coast:

Patrol positions were not taken up owing to the rough sea and fog. There was no minesweeping.

The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla, consisting of five boats, started to transfer from Cherbourg to Le Havre; the convoy OSTERODE continued its passage from Morlaix to Jersey.

Group West has approached the Inspector of Ground Fortifications, West with a view to an agreement on fitting in the laying of RMK mines with the Army's plans for underwater barrages. Since both projects will require considerable quantities of concrete, Group West proposes to install mine cases in all concrete underwater obstacles and has requested Naval Staff and Army Group B for basic approval.

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Naval Staff approved the contact established between Group West and Inspector of Ground Fortifications West. The low water line is the dividing line between Army and Navy. Group West was informed that its allocation of RMK mines will be 15,000 not 25,000.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Patrol positions off the Dutch coast were not taken up because of the stormy weather. There was no minesweeping.

Only one convoy of 2,200 G.R.T. was taken through the IJsselmeer.

At 0730 a boat of the Rhine Flotilla was rammed near Dordrecht by a Dutch steamer and later beached.

In the morning twelve to fourteen bombs were dropped on the IJmuiden blast furnaces and caused heavy damage.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Fourteen planes belonging to No. 18 Group were spotted over the central North Sea.

According to radio intelligence, at 0819 a Russian plane reported one of our convoys near Vardoe and also reported what ships were in Petsamo, Kirkenes and Vardoe. At 1047 Warlamovo airfield informed Russian planes that one of our submarines was in AC 5924. In the forenoon British vessels including warships carried on lively radio traffic with Murmansk.

Own Situation:

At 1525 a southbound convoy was attacked by a Mosquito in AN 3165.

Nineteen ships were escorted north and forty south. Twenty-five remained behind in Kristiansand and six in other ports. Inquiries are being made as to the cause of this hold-up in Kristiansand.

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Naval Command, Norway and Commanding Admiral, Task Force consider that it is urgently necessary to organize the defense of Alta Fjord under a tactical command subordinated to Naval Shore Commander "F".

Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch is to look into the matter.

Operation against the PQ convoy:

On 26 Jan. two sailors belonging to a sunk Liberty ship of 7,000 G.R.T. were rescued; from their statements it appears that the convoy consists of 15 ships, 3 of them tankers. The ships are carrying planes, tanks, automobiles and medical supplies. The escort consists of about 15 destroyers and 10 corvettes, but no planes. The convoy left Scotland for Murmansk on 8 Jan. Apparently other survivors tried to escape to the south in auxiliary sailing vessels.

The operation against the convoy was continued with 10 and later on with 12 submarines. Submarine Division had to decline the request from Group North/Fleet for assignment of submarines U "546" and U "852" for operations against the convoy in Northern Waters, as these boats are of the types IX C and IX D 2.

The submarines did not contact the convoy again. At 1100 our air reconnaissance reported the enemy in AC 8656 on course 190°. In view of this situation, and particularly as a new PQ convoy was reported approaching from the Iceland area, the submarine operation was called off at 1041. For the present seven submarines have been dispatched against this new convoy; they are to be on position in the patrol line AB 5643 to 9155 at 0600 on 29 Jan. Five submarines were released to Hammerfest to refuel and take on more torpedoes; they are scheduled to leave again immediately.

According to a report by Air Commander, North (Baltic), at 1010 the convoy which had been under attack still included 12 merchantmen under escort by 9 destroyers and 9 corvettes. Comparison with the strength of the convoy on sailing as given in the prisoners' statements shows that 3 merchantmen, 6 destroyers and 1 corvette are missing. One must also remember the possibility that some of the vessels lost may have been replaced by vessels from Murmansk.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

No special reports were received from the area under Commanding Admiral, Defenses Baltic.

Naval Command, Baltic passed on a report from Admiral, Baltic States stating that orders had been given to withdraw the Army left flank to the Hungerburg line. Accordingly an order for the dismantling of the coastal batteries in Luga Bay was issued at noon. Two guns belonging to Battery "Bismarck" and Battery "Ustluga" together with equipment are being sent to Ruchi by rail. The remaining guns of Battery "Bismarck" and Batteries "Kurgulov" and "Konoye" are to be moved by truck to Kunda and Reval. Batteries "Dubnia", "Lipovo", "Ruchi" and, if urgently required, also Battery "Konoye", have been placed at the disposal of Combat Group "R" for possible use in the land fighting. Orders have been given to blow up the harbors.

V. Submarine Warfare1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, a convoy (TQ) from America was in the area east of 40° W at 1012 on 26 Jan.

2. Own Situation:

From the Indian Ocean submarine U "532" reported the situation in the operational area on 10 and 11 Jan. She made unsuccessful attacks in LO 27 and 28 on a fast steamer and a net protected ship sailing in ballast. An attack in LC 95 against an independently routed ship with three escort vessels did not meet with success. On 26 Jan. a freighter (7,500 G.R.T.) on southeasterly course was sunk in MS 79.

In the North Atlantic our air reconnaissance spotted the southbound convoy expected for submarine Group "Hinein" at 1529 in AM 4892 on southwesterly course. At 1715 the convoy consisting of 55 ships and nine destroyers was in AM 7212. Its general course must therefore be west. At 1630 nine boats of Group "Hinein" were ordered to surface and proceed at maximum speed against the convoy. Shadowing by plane was broken off at 1800 without the boats having been able to pick up the homing signals. Shortly after midnight on the night of 27 Jan. the convoy was spotted in AM 7126 by another

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shadowing plane. At noon the Air Force also shadowed a northbound convoy (see Enemy Situation, West Area), which was also picked up again in AM 4917 shortly after midnight.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

There was slight enemy air activity by day over Holland, Belgium, western and northern France. The planes started from England. A raid on the IJmuiden gasoline plant was reported. At noon 170 four-engined planes with fighter escort penetrated into western France from the south. The airfield at Salon in the Marseilles area and the airfield at Istres were attacked and considerable damage inflicted. Other attacks were directed against the airfield at Montpellier. See Daily Situation Report for details. Our fighter defense shot down 8 planes for certain and probably 5 others; anti-aircraft guns shot down 2 planes for certain.

2. Reich Territory:

Between 1920 and 2030 several hundred planes flew over the North Sea to Berlin. In the late evening 15 enemy planes were reported from the Trier - Aachen area. Reports so far show that the raid on Berlin caused moderately heavy damage. It was concentrated on the industrial plants on both sides of the river Spree in the east and southeast of the city. See Daily Situation Report for details on further damage.

In the evening 15 to 20 enemy planes flew over the North Sea to Skagen and Roem.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

One merchantman and three landing craft were damaged by hits when our bombers were in action in the latter part of the night of 26 Jan. On 27 Jan. 68 fighter-bombers were in action; they sank one large landing craft and damaged three freighters and another landing craft. Our fighter escort shot down two enemy fighters. Thirty-one bombers continued the attack against the landing fleet in the night of 27 Jan. One steamer was hit, three others probably hit.

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The enemy sent up a barrage of 460 fighter-bombers over the land front and 120 fighters were concentrated over the right flank and at the beachhead. There were also attacks on the Valmontone railroad station near Rome, railway installations in Orte, the railway bridge across the Tiber in Castiglione, the Terni railroad station, etc.

In the area Air Force Command, Southeast eleven enemy planes were reported over the Strait of Otranto. During the night single planes were over the waters off Bar, Bucharest and Ploesti. They also flew supplies to the partisans in the Balkan area.

4. Eastern Front:

On 26 Jan. there were 260 enemy flights over the eastern front, our planes flew 444 missions. Two of our planes were lost, eleven enemy planes were shot down.

The 5th Air Force was engaged in reconnaissance against PQ convoys. For results see Situation Northern Waters, Operation against the PQ convoy.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

Increased patrol activity was observed in the Gibraltar area.

At 0015 Tangier reported 44 ships and 6 escort vessels, possibly more, making for the Atlantic.

An intelligence report contains a statement from the captain of a Portuguese motor vessel, who maintains that 12 U.S. transports carrying troops put in to Casablanca on 20 Jan.; they were escorted by 1 aircraft carrier and 4 destroyers. Troops and war material were disembarked immediately. The escorts left on northerly course. All vacant quay space at Casablanca has been taken up by planes, mainly bombers.

Own Situation:

So far eight enemy planes have been reported shot down in the raid on the Marseilles-Montpellier area.

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At 1834 warning of submarines was given off St. Raphael Bay. So far we have no details.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to a report from Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest 250 landing craft, 80 transports, freighters and landing vessels with strong destroyer escort landed a second big wave at the beachheads on 26 Jan. The landing operations, centered on Anzio, are now in full swing.

On 27 Jan. our air reconnaissance sighted 27 transports, 50 to 70 landing craft, and 1 transport on fire three miles south of Nettuno. At 0840 between 12 and 15 ships were sighted making for Anzio. According to radio intelligence a British vessel, probably a submarine, was lying 50 miles southeast of Toulon at 2031. Fire control traffic was again observed between vessels engaged in shelling the coast and a fire control post ashore.

At 1902 Port Commander, Benedetto reported numerous lights and motor noises at sea going off in a northerly direction, and again at 2115 at least 15 vessels were reported off the coast firing star shells.

Own Situation:

The patrol vessel SAN GIORGIO laid mines southeast of Ancona according to plan.

Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean had nothing special to report.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, at 0205 a British patrol vessel lying five miles south of Bari requested immediate tug assistance.

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Own Situation:

When putting out for her operation against Uljan-Pasman, torpedo boat TA "22" came under machine-gunfire from Zara and star shell fire from the coast. There was no previous request for recognition signals - this in spite of the fact that she had reported her plans. The surprise element was lost and the operation was unsuccessful.

Plans have been made to have two patrol vessels carry out a check sweep in the Mezzo Channel in the night of 27 Jan.; they are to start from Pola under escort of torpedo boat TA "22" as leading boat.

b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Between 1930 and 2050 two PT boats lying two to three miles northwest of Rhodes were shelled by our 15 cm. battery. The results could not be observed. A partisan attack on our Battery Kephallonia on 26 Jan. was repulsed. There were no casualties on our side.

Own Situation:

On 26 Jan. one out of the four Spitfires which attacked PT boats S "601" and "603" south of Corfu was shot down.

Torpedo boats TA "14" and "16" transported 350 Italian prisoners of war from Leros to Piraeus.

The sailing of PT boat S "54" to Salonika was postponed for another 24 hours.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

At 1300 five PT boats put out from Ivanbaba for operations against enemy shipping on the Caucasus coast

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southeast of Tuapse. The results have not yet been reported.

On 26 Jan. Ochakov came under mortar fire from Kinburn and machine-gunfire from two bombers. There was no damage to military installations.

We received a correction to the report of 26 Jan. It now appears that the air raid on the southern mole at Kerch was not a mistake by our planes but an enemy attack.

The net barrage at Yalta was relaid.

VIII. Situation East Asia

Nothing to report.

Items of Political Importance

According to Reuter the Soviet refusal of the U.S. offer of mediation leaves Russo-Polish relations at a deadlock. The "New York Times" described the rejection as a serious matter. It means that Russia also rejects the line of development introduced by the Moscow and Teheran declarations. Time presses for a solution. The Polish Government in London should declare its willingness to negotiate on the basis of the Curzon line.

It is pleasing to learn that, as expected, the enemy side is having to face difficulties which must put the strength of the coalition to a severe test, as they touch questions of principle which are far more important than the actual matter in hand.

In an interview the Spanish Foreign Minister emphasized Spain's clearly defined policy of neutrality and described all instigators of sabotage as enemies of Spain. Obviously his remark was directed at us.

Chief, Naval Staff returned from Fuehrer Headquarters to command post "Bismarck".

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Chief, Naval Staff stated that he does not wish any pressure to be put on Rumania for the return of the Italian midget submarines, as our sole interest in the matter is that Rumania should meet us in the question of command and direction of the Odessa yards. No other requests are to stand in the way of this demand.

II. The Fuehrer has issued the following order to Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest with copies to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff and Naval Staff: "The 'Battle for Rome' will flare up in the next few days. This battle is of decisive importance for the defense of central Italy and the fate of the 10th Army. But there are even more important issues at stake. The Nettuno landing is the start of the invasion of Europe planned for 1944. The enemy intends to tie down strong German forces, wear out their strength and

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gain experience for future operations in a theater as far removed as possible from the base in England, where the main body of invasion troops still stands ready. Every soldier of the 14th Army must therefore know the importance of the battle in which he is fighting.

It is not enough to issue clear orders for correct tactics. Every officer and man of the Army, Navy and Air Force must be inspired with a fanatic's will to come out of this battle victorious and to hold on until the last of the enemy is destroyed or pushed back into the sea. He must be filled with a holy hatred of an enemy who is fighting a ruthless war of extermination against the German nation, who does not shrink to use any weapon, who has no higher ethical purpose but only seeks to wipe out Germany and with her the whole culture of Europe.

The fighting must be hard and no quarter given either to the enemy, or to any commander or detachment who should fail in this decisive hour. The enemy must realize, as he did in the fighting in Sicily, on the Rapido river and at Ortona, that with Germany's fighting strength unbroken, the major invasion in 1944 is doomed to failure and can only be a blood-bath for the British and American soldiers."

III. Quartermaster General:

a. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has requested consideration of the question of whether more batteries can be set up along the French west coast south of the Gironde and along the south coast. The aim is to repel any possible pincer attack.

Some batteries are available, but no personnel to man them. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for these batteries to be turned over immediately and a relevant report made to Armed Forces High Command. Group West will check the personnel situation.

b. Trials with submerged towing hulls, using a 700-ton hull, cannot be carried out immediately. For the present there will be a trial with a 300-ton hull.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

IV. Report by Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section on Group West's plan for the laying of alarm barrages. There

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are to be thirty-one barrages 3 miles long, one barrage 2.2 miles, one 2 miles and one 1 mile. The barrages are to be laid in case of emergency. Group West will give orders for the laying of each section without over-strict attention to first or second priority. This should ensure that due regard is paid to the interests of Commander, PT Boats as dictated by the current situation. Altogether 3,697 mines are needed, of which 1,200 LMB mines are available with MA 1 a, MA 1 and M 1. Ostend, Dunkirk, Boulogne, Dieppe, Le Havre, Isigny and Cherbourg are scheduled as loading ports. All vessels available in the Channel area, particularly gun carriers, armed fishing vessels and motor minesweepers will be used as mine carriers. If necessary, torpedo boats, minesweepers type "35", fast escort boats and PT boats will also have to be employed.

Naval Staff gave general approval to the use of emergency barrages as alarm measures against landing attempts. The barrages are not to be laid until orders from Group West are given and Naval Staff is to be informed by first priority message. Of the new firing devices the AA 1 and AA 2 types may be used to a limited extent. 2,500 more LMB mines are to be allocated to Group West.

Chief, Naval Staff gave his consent.

Mine Warfare Section further reported that the first preliminary discussion about the new firing devices had been held between Group West and the 3rd Air Force.

Group West reported that it had been laid down that if invasion seems imminent and landing fleets are known to be concentrated in the jumping-off harbors, all our planes will be sent up on bombing operations. When that happens, it will be impossible to send up strong forces to carry out an effective minelaying offensive using mines with new firing devices. Therefore a mining offensive must be started at a date early enough to leave adequate forces for this purpose for a period of at least two months. Naval Staff assumes that the invasion will start either in the near future (in February) or at the end of the mud period in the east, i.e. not before May. Hence, it is proposed to carry out a two months' offensive, starting about the middle of March, with all available forces of the Air Force and Navy operating against the probable jumping off ports on the south and southeast coasts and also against the western ports within reach (at any rate the Bristol Channel) and the

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PT boat bases on the Humber.

Chief, Naval Staff agreed.

Naval Staff is to contact Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff and again point out that the offensive must be carried through according to plan, using every possible machine, since it is certain that the secrecy of the new fuses will be compromised during the operations, particularly those off the invasion bases, and we cannot take the responsibility for this expected setback if there is no all-out offensive. Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff will be requested to give us his comments and report the number of forces available in March.

Group West will be informed that the reported plans have been approved and that Commander, PT Boats is to arrange his preparations so that if necessary the operation can take place before 15 March. The Group is to report the earliest possible date. From the very start Naval Staff has emphasized that the operation must be carried out in full because there is this danger of compromise which can lessen or destroy its effectiveness. The Fuehrer fully appreciates this view.

IV. The Acting Japanese Naval Attaché has requested the Japanese Admiralty to use more Japanese submarines to bring goods to Germany on the grounds that there are to be no more blockade runners from Europe.

V. Chief, Naval Staff reported that the Commanding Generals of the Army Groups and Armies who were present at Fuehrer Headquarters did not put forward a rosy view of the situation at their conferences but definitely thought there was a positive solution. General Jaenicke was quite confident in his statements on the situation in the Crimea. As we wish to employ our gun carriers to prevent the enemy making use of the Sivash, it is proposed to dredge a channel for combined operations boats, Siebel ferries and naval landing craft. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for Group South to go into the matter with the 17th Army Command.

The Fuehrer emphasized to Commander in Chief, Navy that he is absolutely determined not to let Russia gain access to the Baltic. He also demanded naval reconnaissance against a landing on the French west coast. Chief, Naval Staff promised this. Relevant directives are to be issued to Group West.

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Special Items:

I. Following the loss of the minelayer SKAGERRAK, Group North submitted a request for the minelaying formation to be made up again to six ships by the immediate assignment of a new minelayer to be commissioned with the survivors from the SKAGERRAK. The LOTHRINGEN, at present a target ship flying the Reich service flag, was mentioned as being particularly suitable.

Operations Division reminded Quartermaster Division that they set great store on keeping six minelayers permanently in commission, especially as the assignments for these ships will probably go on increasing during the course of the year.

Quartermaster Division was therefore requested to investigate the possibility of transferring the LOTHRINGEN and adapting her for this purpose. Failing that, they are to designate a suitable ship similar to the minelayers of the LOTHRINGEN type which can be made available within a reasonable time.

II. With regard to the construction of a submarine yard and naval base at Constanta, Chief, Submarine Section, Fleet Branch, Quartermaster Division reported from Bucharest that funds are now assured. The Rumanian Navy Department is asking for our cooperation so that the pens can also be used for Rumanian submarines. The German proposed site, just south of Constanta, has been rejected; the Rumanians want to continue with the development of a site ten miles north of Constanta near Cape Media, where they had begun to build a submarine base and then dropped the work on the outbreak of war. There is little chance of our being able to persuade them from their plans. Their intervention means that our plans for building must be extended and it will be very difficult to carry them out. Another report has been promised.

III. On the subject of the conference in Angers Commanding Admiral, Naval Group West has pointed out that the scheduled discussions hinge on the operational needs of Group West, Commanding Admiral, Submarines and Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, and these will be considered with particular reference to incidents in past operations. Special circumstances prevent Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, 3rd Air Force and Group West from sending senior officers as representatives. Therefore Naval Staff agree with Group West that the conference is not a suitable occasion for the attendance of generals of

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the Air Force. We have asked Air Force, Operations Staff not to extend the scope of the discussions and proposed a new conference at a later date to settle fundamental questions viewed in a broader setting.

IV. In view of the change in the situation, German Naval Command, Italy has requested the early return of submarine chasers "2207" and "2221" which were turned over to the 6th Patrol Flotilla at the beginning of January. At that time their return was ordered for 1 March. Naval Staff recognizes that with the 6th Patrol Flotilla at its present strength, the request is justified. Group West has been ordered to return submarine chasers "2207" and "2221" immediately to German Naval Command, Italy.

The 6th Patrol Flotilla is to report the transfer. Copy of order 1/Skl 2685/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. D.

V. The representative of the Rumanian Navy Department for the procurement of war material from Germany has stated that he wishes to have 500 magnetic mines for planes, 500 barrage mines for planes, 500 ordinary barrage mines and 1,500 drift mines.

The barrage mines are to be used by planes minelaying at sea and on the Danube.

Operations Division was asked by Bureau of Naval Armament to confirm the requirements.

Naval Staff laid it down that mines for use by planes can be turned over only by the Air Force. EMC can be used as ordinary barrage mines. However, there can be no allocation of these from Navy stores at present. Similarly it is out of the question for the Rumanians to place a direct order with the manufacturers, as these firms are taxed to the utmost to meet the requirements of our own minelaying program. Naval Staff does not consider minelaying off the Rumanian coast to be particularly urgent at the present moment. Should the situation change, Naval Staff will divert suitable mines for the protection of the Rumanian ports and these can be counted as a delivery to Rumania. The German Navy has no drift mines except for a small remaining quantity of periscope mines.

Operations Division has no objections to the handing over of licenses and drawings of drift mines.

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VI. Intelligence on the enemy gained from radio intelligence and deciphering during the period 17 to 23 Jan. is contained in Radio Monitoring Report No. 4/44.

Situation 28 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

The submarine reported that she did not meet the RIO GRANDE and had left the waiting position. Naval Staff has no clear information on the position of the RIO GRANDE. She will be informed to this effect and directed to take the first favorable opportunity during the next three days to send a short signal outside the zero beat on her position at noon, if she is south of the latitude of "Anna". The measures for bringing her in will remain in force as though she were in Denmark Strait.

Group North/Fleet will be informed accordingly.

The weather forecast for Denmark Strait will be transmitted to the RIO GRANDE.

The RIO GRANDE's failure to make the rendezvous arouses serious anxiety.

The Japanese Intelligence Officer reported that a Japanese submarine is operating southeast of Ceylon. Beginning 10 Feb. a second submarine will be operating southeast of Oman. From the middle of February on two to three submarines are to operate near Ceylon and in the Bay of Bengal. The Japanese Admiralty plans to commission the new submarine J "52" as replacement for TANNE. (Code name for a Japanese transport submarine - Tr.N.) The boat is due to depart from Singapore by about the end of March. Her operational range is greater than that of KIEFER (another Japanese transport submarine, Tr.N.), therefore she will not require supplies. The

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Japanese officers who were to have sailed for Germany on the submarine TANNE will leave for Europe on the last Italian transport submarine sailing from Singapore.

Operations Division is to inform Submarine Division accordingly.

II. Situation West Area

Enemy Situation:

Thirty-nine planes belonging to No. 19 Group were spotted over the Bay of Biscay. Planes of this group reported one merchant ship on course 300° about 90 miles southsouthwest of Brest and two merchant ships on the same position on course 40°.

From 1100 to midnight eight British vessels were located in the rendezvous area.

Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 1155 minesweeper M "024", on a check sweep for ground mines off Ile de Croix, struck a mine and sank.

Mine exploding vessel "135" struck a mine and sank off St. Nazaire. Both crews were rescued. Two submarines were escorted in and two out.

Channel Coast:

Patrol positions were not taken up because of the rough sea. The convoy OSTERODE anchored at Jersey. It will proceed to Cherbourg in the night of 28 Jan. The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla will carry out minelaying operation N 2. The 5th PT Boat Flotilla will carry out the torpedo operation against the westbound convoy in Plymouth Bay on the same night if weather conditions and reconnaissance results are favorable.

Four destroyers of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla are scheduled to go on exercises west of point "Rose" on 29 and 30 Jan.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

A late report from 27 Jan. states that between 1900 and

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2000 the enemy bombers on their way to attack Berlin dropped about a hundred explosive and numerous incendiary bombs into the sea near Heligoland. Naval anti-aircraft guns shot down three enemy planes near Heligoland and Borkum. Mines are suspected near Tyboroen and Hansted.

At 1020 the steamer JOH. SCHULTE (5,334 G.R.T.) with a cargo of coal, struck a British aerial mine and sank in the Weser estuary. A mine exploding vessel had swept a British aerial mine at the same position. There was no escort work or minesweeping in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North because of the stormy weather. Patrol positions were not taken up for the same reason.

Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Eleven planes were spotted over the northern North Sea.

Own Situation:

On 26 Jan. eight mines and explosive buoys were swept southwest of Vardoe.

At 1401 on 28 Jan. a westbound convoy was attacked by an enemy submarine in AC 7367. The steamer SCHULTE (5,056 G.R.T.) was sunk.

At 0800 on 27 Jan. harbor defense vessel "45" was rammed near Langholmen (south of Bergen) and was beached in a sinking condition. Fourteen ships were escorted north and thirty-two south. Twenty-nine were left in Kristiansand South and fourteen in Stavanger.

Operations Against Convoys:

The convoy which was attacked on 26 and 27 Jan. is being counted as PQ 25. Convoy PQ 26 is expected in AB 8190 at 1500 on 28 Jan.

At 1345 our air reconnaissance reported PQ 26 in AB 8143 on course 70°, speed 10 knots. It consists of 14 merchantmen, 1 cruiser and 7 destroyers.

Commander, Submarines, Norway plans to send seven submarines

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on patrol line from AB 5738 to 9157 and commit four submarines from Hammerfest. Further he requested permission to attack independently routed ships also north of 70° N, east of 5° E on 29 Jan.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

Nothing special to report.

Own Situation:

No special incidents in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

On 28 Jan. the steamer BRAKE ran aground near Ust Dvinsk breakwater.

Admiral, Baltic States reported that the withdrawal movements on the Luga Bay are proceeding according to plan. Movement of trucks has been seriously delayed due to road congestion and weather conditions. The harbor installations at Peipia, Ruchi and Ustluga were blown up and all buildings and dwellings from Peipia to Konoe demolished according to plan. The harbor installations at Gdov on the east coast of Lake Peipus are also in process of demolition.

Naval Command, Baltic States transmitted a report from Admiral, Baltic States on the situation early on 28 Jan. For the meantime the batteries are being withdrawn without ammunition as only 38 out of 77 vehicles of the truck column have passed Narva on their way to Hungerburg. Others got stuck in the swamps and were blown up. All 2 cm. guns with armor-piercing ammunition and the captured Russian anti-tank guns have been prepared for anti-tank operations. Special instructions, incorporated in the withdrawal orders, have been issued to Coastal Control Office, Lovkolovo and Special Operations Unit, Baltic States. The Customs Frontier Patrol is to assemble on the west coast of the Kurgolovo Peninsula and join the Group. The battery crews from Ustluga and the staffs of Naval Artillery Battalions 532 and 531 have been combined to form a small combat group at the disposal of Commander, Naval Artillery Battalion "532" Ustluga. Admiral, Baltic States is under the impression that the 3rd SS Armored Corps and Combat Group, Coast are in an acute and unwarranted state

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of nerves. The 54th Army Corps, to which the SS formations have been subordinated since 27 Jan., assesses the situation more favorably. Naval Shore Commander has pointed out to the 54th Army Corps that following the withdrawal of the coastal batteries there will be no effective coastal defense after 28 Jan. When the Coastal Control Office, Lovkolovo and the Special Operations Unit, Baltic States become part of the Combat Group, Coast and the battery crews are withdrawn, the left flank will be completely exposed. Naval Shore Commander has been instructed to secure as much equipment as possible and thus avoid unnecessary losses. At 2115 Chief, Operations Branch, Naval Command, Baltic reported by telephone:

"Commanding Admiral, Naval Command, Baltic has been informed by telephone that the order to withdraw the coastal batteries, issued this morning at the suggestion of the Army Command, was canceled in the afternoon. As the batteries were already in process of withdrawal they have now been instructed to return and take up their positions again."

On being contacted by Operations Division the Naval Liaison Officer at High Command, Army, Army General Staff reported that the Army Operations Division had been doubtful about the wisdom of canceling the order and would see to it that there are no similar incidents in future.

Admiral, Baltic States submitted a detailed report on the start of withdrawal from the Luga Bay area as from 26 Jan.

The preparations for this measure were initiated by Army Group North. At about 1230 on 27 Jan. Naval Shore Commander "R" was ordered by the Commander of Combat Group, Coast to issue the keyword for the start of the withdrawal. In the afternoon the 54th Army Corps knew nothing about the withdrawal instructions, but although they assessed the situation much more calmly than the 3rd SS Armored Corps, they refrained from interfering with the execution of the order. However, at 2015 the 3rd SS Armored Corps gave orders that the naval formations in Luga Bay must remain in their old positions or return to them if they had already withdrawn. At 2140 Commander of Combat Group, Coast gave orders that all withdrawal movements were to cease immediately, but everything already on the road should proceed.

This report reveals the regrettable confusion prevailing on 27 Jan. It remains to be seen to what extent the withdrawal

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of naval batteries - which cannot be made good - will affect the operations.

Naval Staff issued the following directive to Naval Command, Baltic:

In case it becomes necessary to withdraw the Army front to the Hungerburg-Narva line, examine the possibility of support for this movement by gunfire from ships (minesweepers) and report your plans. Preparations must be made in conjunction with the local Army commander.

V. Submarine Warfare

Submarine U "257" has been on the rendezvous for the RIO GRANDE since 25 Jan., but has failed to meet her.

The almost simultaneous interception of two convoys in AM at midnight, as reported on 27 Jan., has had extremely regrettable consequences for the dispatch of submarines against the expected enemy heading southwest. Air Commander, Atlantic Coast did not receive the report on the two convoys until two hours after the sighting. When passing on this report to Commanding Admiral, Submarines at 0220 he inquired from which convoy the homing signals should be sent out, although this matter was made absolutely clear in the operational order. At 0230 the plane was ordered to transmit homing signals in the direction of the convoy first reported, but failed to carry out these instructions. Nor were any shadowing reports received from the submarines during the night of 28 Jan. The convoy has not been spotted so far. Thus in spite of the promising sortie by the submarines the operation was a failure, because the air shadower was not adequately trained to carry out his duty successfully. The sortie of the submarines of Groups "Hinein" and "Stuermer", occasioned by the erroneous report on the enemy in the Bay of Biscay, has already been mentioned.

Otherwise nothing special to report.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

Brisk enemy air activity over the west area by day. Besides isolated flights six formations totaling 280 planes

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were reported flying over the Dunkirk-Ypres area and attacking the area southwest of Abbeville. Simultaneously 150 enemy planes passed over the Hague-Groningen area. One Arado 96 on a training flight and two Me 109 were shot down by enemy fighters.

During the night of 29 Jan. airfields in Holland were attacked but with little effect. In the late evening sixteen Me 410 and ten FW 190 planes carried out a nuisance raid on London; one of them was lost.

Reich Territory:

In the evening between six and eight planes entered the Duisburg area. Thirty planes flew over the Belts and Kiel Bay, probably dropping mines. Small formations entered the Potsdam - Rathenow - Rheine - Muenster area and from there went on to Greifswald. Some of them also touched the Rheims - Trier and Saarbruecken areas.

There was a heavy terror raid on the southern and southeastern parts of Berlin during the early morning of 29 Jan. See Daily Situation for details. The report on the defense has not yet been received.

Mediterranean Theater:

Planes of the 2nd Air Force carried out reconnaissance.

By day 57 fighter-bombers were operating against the beachhead. Two large landing craft, 3 freighters, 1 large transport and 1 medium landing craft were damaged. Five of our planes were lost, three of the pilots are safe.

The enemy sent up 440 planes on operations over the front area, concentrating on the area southeast of Rome and the beachhead. There were strong attacks on the Ariano airfield, the railroad station and communications at Verona, the town and airfield at Ferrara, also the railroad station at Terni, railroad installations near Alerona and the "Freya" detecting set near Talamone. Further attacks were directed against railroad installations in Orte and on German ships in Mariana Grosseto. See Daily Situation for damage caused.

From the area of Air Force Command, Southeast 21 reconnaissance planes were reported over the Aegean Sea, 6 over Corfu and 2

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in the Strait of Otranto.

Eastern Front:

On 27 Jan. our planes carried out 837 missions over the eastern front, we lost seven planes. About 360 enemy planes were observed on flights, eleven of them were shot down.

The mission carried out by planes of the 5th Air Force over Northern Waters has already been reported.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

No special incidents.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence there was a British convoy coming from the east in the waters immediately off Bone on the evening of 28 Jan. German Naval Command, Italy did not send any reconnaissance reports from the beachhead. Between 0915 and 0930 the 2nd Air Force reported 7 destroyers, 1 patrol vessel, 14 landing craft in the area from the island of Ponza to west of Ischia; between 1100 and 1200, 6 to 12 landing craft unloading and 10 to 15 freighters stationary, probably damaged, in Nettuno Bay. At 1500 14 vessels of various sizes, landing craft or transports were sighted on course north and at 2045 6 vessels, probably landing craft, stationary northwest of Ponza. At 2355 13 vessels, probably landing craft, were on southerly course 60 miles southwest of Ponza and at 2400 9 landing craft east of Ponza on course northnorthwest.

Reconnaissance over the Tyrrhenian Sea did not sight the enemy, nor was anything sighted in the coastal waters off Ancona-Ortona from 1628 to 1740.

On 27 Jan. our battery on Elba sighted several destroyers and PT boats between Corsica and Capraja. Capraja is probably occupied by the enemy.

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Own Situation:

During the night of 28 Jan. torpedo boat TA V23" and fast escort vessel SG "15" sailed from Spezia and carried out mining operation "Eidechse" south of Civitavecchia according to plan.

Six motor minesweepers carried out mining operation "Kanin" in the same area according to plan. On their return passage they were attacked by enemy planes. Detailed reports have not yet been received.

Judging from enemy radio traffic, several ships must have struck mines and been lost during the landing operations, as there were several warnings against areas fouled by mines.

On 25 Jan. submarine U "223" probably sank one corvette in CJ 816 with "Zaunkoenig" torpedo.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

The mining operation in the Mezzo Channel by torpedo boat TA "22" and two patrol vessels has been postponed until the night of 28 Jan.

Increasing labor difficulties and a threatening wage strike are reported from the shipyards on the Northern Adriatic.

To increase the transit efficiency in Adriatic and Aegean ports Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is making 4,000 men of the Italian armed forces, at present interned on the Greek islands, available to Group South as labor force. A condition is that Naval Group South must provide the transport from the islands and organize them in labor battalions. Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast is to furnish the guards required for the internees put to work in the harbors of his command area. (See teletype 1905.)

b. Aegean Sea:

There was little activity because of the stormy weather. Apart from enemy air activity no special incidents were reported. Group South informed Army Groups E and F that they propose to use the hospital ship GRADISCA to transport the Italians from Rhodes. (See teletype 2205.)

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c. Black Sea:

The torpedo operation south of Tuapse by four boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla during the night of 28 Jan. was without result. Four motor minesweepers in the patrol line south of the Kerch Strait and south of Kerch did not sight the enemy. Three naval landing craft are to take up patrol position in the Kerch Strait during the night of 28 Jan. Four motor minesweepers are at immediate readiness in Feodosiya.

The 4th Battery of the 613th Naval Artillery Battalion near Kamysh Burun is again ready for action with six guns.

Otherwise no special incidents.

VIII. Situation East Asia

No special reports.

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Items of Political Importance

No special reports.

Conference on the Situation with Chief, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General:

The emergency formations Class A have now been combed out as directed by Chief, Naval Staff and the number of men in this class reduced from about 40,000 to 19,000. If kept at this strength, a call-up of this class will not affect naval warfare until some far distant date.

II. In reply to a question from Chief, Naval Staff, Chief, Artillery Branch, Naval Ordnance Division reported that despite the initial difficulties 3.7 cm. anti-aircraft guns can be generally regarded as suitable for submarines. If they are not still required as reserves for submarines, Quartermaster Division can find some other use for the four-barreled 2 cm. guns released by the installation of the 3.7 cm. anti-aircraft guns.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

III. Chief, Operations Branch reported on the work done in the area of Commanding Admiral, Naval Group West with regard to plans and preparations against enemy landings as laid down in Fuehrer directive 51. An outline of these measures is contained in proposal submitted by Naval Group West as per 1/Skl 93/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in File 1/Skl I op. VI, 6.

Chief, Naval Staff was most satisfied with the plans and preparations which have been very carefully thought out.

IV. Report by Chief, Auxiliary Cruiser Section on the action of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla and the 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla on 28 Dec. 1943 in the Bay of Biscay.

Chief, Naval Staff again stated that the course of the action was highly unsatisfactory. The report does not give any comments on the tactical course of the operation. Chief, Naval Staff gave orders for a supplementary report to be

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submitted by the Fleet Command.

V. Army Situation:

The heavy enemy attack in the great bend of the Dnieper continues. The troops who have been engaged in a major battle since 8 Jan. are showing signs of fatigue. However, on the whole the situation is being kept in hand.

The situation with Army Group North is extremely unsatisfactory. Our formations have been pushed back 30 km. east of Narva and the enemy, after his break-through in the south, is turning towards Luga. The formations of the 26th Army Corps have been practically wiped out.

In Italy our attack against the northern beachhead to be carried out by the formations brought down from northern Italy is to start on 29 Jan.

Special Items:

I. The Commander of the 1st PT Boat Division reported that seven boats of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla will be ready for action within one or two weeks, provided that personnel and outstanding equipment can be assigned immediately. The disadvantages of this type are: limited seaworthiness, exceptionally loud engine noises, poor rudder effect in wind and when proceeding at low speed, practically helpless at night because of the continuous vibration even at minimum seaway and the inadequacy of their armament. The boats have therefore little chance of success in an offensive operation against the established beachhead near Rome, and what chance they have will be further diminished by enemy fighter planes and the small enemy craft coming out from Corsican and Sardinian harbors to act as flank protection.

The Commander of the 1st PT Boat Division considers that German crews are too valuable for these outmoded and inefficient craft. He does not think that the withdrawal of front-line German crews from other tasks is justified.

II. At the suggestion of the Inspectorate for Anti-Gas and Air Raid Precautions, on 28 Jan. Operations Division attended a lecture on the present state of preparations for gas warfare. Facts established were as follows:

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1. So far, with the exception of the M-hulls, the Navy has not developed any weapons for offensive or defensive gas warfare.

2. Anti-gas protection on board is in order, but the same is only reservedly true of naval units ashore, particularly staffs.

It seems that on board ship the Navy is prepared for gas warfare, but for coastal defense forces we have to rely solely on equipment developed by the Army. This is available in a great variety.

Operations Division considers it essential to equip naval forces engaged in coastal defense with the same weapons for gas warfare as the Army formations. So far as is known here, there has been no general training of Army troops for gas warfare and the preparation has been confined to specialists.

Hence we must:

- a. examine whether the Navy requires and can set up special gas formations;
- b. come to an agreement with the Army about the part to be played by their specialists within the scope of the coastal defense done by the Navy;
- c. study whether and when it will be necessary to train all naval personnel in gas warfare.

Quartermaster Division is to see to a. and b.

With regard to c., so far as is known here, public opinion in foreign countries is not at all inclined to take up gas warfare. However, from time to time the more violent organs of the press demand it and the enemy is known to be making extensive preparations for it. Hence we can expect gas warfare sooner or later and it may come with the start of a large-scale invasion. We must therefore initiate the necessary measures without delay.

Operations Division thinks that within Naval High Command the Inspectorate for Gas and Air Raid Precautions is the

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competent office which should handle all training questions.

Naval Staff requested Quartermaster Division to take charge of the matter. Copy of order 1/Skl Ia 312/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

III. Quartermaster Division sent a request to Chief, Naval (Ship) Construction Division with copy to the Shipbuilding Commission asking for a check-up on the following questions:

1. What are the possibilities for making the bow of the destroyer type "42 A" sufficiently buoyant?

What would be the effect on fuel reserves and range of action?

2. Assuming that four extra torpedoes were stored on deck, how would weight be balanced and stability maintained and what would be the effect on the range of action?

Situation 29 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio monitoring, at 2035 Annapolis broadcast that on 28 Jan. an abandoned steamer was reported on fire in 44° 05' N, 52° 35' W.

Possibly she was the RIO GRANDE.

2. Own Situation:

No special incidents.

Naval Staff transmitted weather report and forecast to the RIO GRANDE.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Fifty-five enemy planes were spotted on missions

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over the Bay of Biscay.

Locations of enemy vessels in the rendezvous area and the Channel did not furnish any important clues.

At 0220 a plane belonging to Air Commander, Atlantic Coast reported 200 to 300 landing craft in BF 6778 (110 miles west of the Gironde). In the forenoon this report was proved to be a mistake. The vessels were a group of tuna fishing boats spread out over such a long distance, that one of our submarines took them for an eastbound convoy with air escort and reported them as such.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Three vessels belonging to the 8th Destroyer Flotilla were sent out on offensive reconnaissance against the reported formation and left Le Verdon at 0415. In view of the alarm report from Air Commander, Atlantic Coast, normal patrols were reinforced by ten extra positions and immediate readiness was ordered for the 3rd and 4th Coast Patrol Forces. After the 8th Destroyer Flotilla and the submarines had recognized the reported enemy force as a group of Spanish fishing vessels, there came a telephone request from General Jodl for the destroyers to search the Spanish fishing vessels for arms, radar equipment or evidence of British connections. They were also to discover whether they were fishing with or without German permission.

A reply was sent via Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy), stating that several hundred Spanish fishing vessels have been searched without result in recent months, and that the fishers are to be found regularly in that area where they have German permission to fish.

On grounds of the alarm report, Commanding Admiral, Submarines issued orders for all boats of Groups "Stuermer" and "Hinein" to proceed immediately in the direction of the probable landing area and boats leaving the Bay of Biscay to return. These measures were canceled when the facts were cleared up. The 8th Destroyer Flotilla went on to carry out training exercises.

Mine exploding vessels swept two mines.

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Channel Coast:

During the night of 29 Jan. five boats of the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla laid barrage "N 2" as planned. Mining operation "L 7" is scheduled for the night of 29 Jan.

The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla broke off the torpedo operation against the westbound convoy because of the heavy swell. All the boats returned to Cherbourg at 2315 on 28 Jan.

Our convoy of mine exploding vessels was shelled from 2156 to 2250 between Gris Nez and Calais by long-range batteries firing about one hundred rounds. No damage was caused. The fire was returned from 2157 to 2251 by Batteries "Todt" and "Lindemann" and Special Artillery Battalion 702. The British long-range battery near St. Margaret at Cliff was shelled with nine rounds 40.2 cm., sixteen rounds 30.8 cm. and eight rounds 28 cm. Poor visibility prevented observation of results.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

Minesweeping and escort work was carried out according to plan. One patrol position was taken up. The Weser Channel is closed because of suspected mines. Two mines have been swept so far.

Convoy 1213 from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe resumed its passage from Den Helder at 1700.

Six convoys totaling about 103,000 G.R.T. were taken through the IJsselmeer and the waters round Zeeland.

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Two Ju 88 were sent out on reconnaissance of Scapa Flow. A report on the results is not yet to hand.

At 0934 the northernmost submarine of Group "Werewolf" spotted the PQ convoy in AB 5627 on northeasterly course close to the ice boundary. Our air reconnaissance picked up the convoy at 1409 in AB 5397.

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According to the Air Force, the convoy consists of 16 merchantmen escorted by 5 destroyers and 1 anti-aircraft cruiser.

2. Own Situation:

Submarine Group "Werewolf" consisting of nine boats is operating against the reported convoy. Four more submarines put out from Hammerfest for the operational area in the forenoon. A fourteenth boat is proceeding at maximum speed from Bergen to the Bear Island Passage. Submarines and planes maintained contact with the convoy all day. During the action against the convoy escort, when there were altogether five attacks, three destroyers were sunk with "Zaunkoenig" torpedoes. A detonation was also heard after a double torpedo salvo on an overlapping steamer.

No reports came in from the area of Admiral, Arctic Coast owing to line trouble. In the other areas 27 ships were escorted north and 13 south. Twenty-five were left lying in harbor in Kristiansand-South and 17 in Stavanger.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

On the evening of 28 Jan. enemy planes appeared to be dropping mines in Kiel and Howacht Bays and the waters round Fehmarn. In the early hours of the morning between 300 and 400 planes flew over South Jutland and the Danish islands in a southeasterly direction. A few nuisance planes were over the Kiel area. Naval anti-aircraft guns brought down one plane north of Howacht Bay.

According to a report from Naval Liaison Staff, Finland, at 1525 on 28 Jan. an unknown submarine was sighted by a Finnish pilot boat near Jussaroe. The Finns subjected the pilot to detailed interrogation and insist that this report is correct.

2. Own Situation:

No special incidents in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

Following the Finnish report of the sighting of a submarine

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Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic sent two patrol vessels out on submarine chase. Escort was ordered for troop transports, hospital ships, tankers and other important vessels. Shipping proceeding to Finland and Reval and in the opposite direction will go via Finnish leads, Aaland Sea and Swedish leads.

Admiral, Baltic States reported that the withdrawal from the Luga Bay area is going according to plan. The first evacuation transports have arrived at Reval. Combat Group, Coast ordered all naval units to withdraw from Luga Bay during the night of 29 Jan.

V. Submarine Warfare

Groups "Hinein" and "Stuermer" are cruising at the most economical speed in the new operational area in the large grid squares AL, BE and AM. No other important reports.

VI. Aerial Warfare

West Area:

By day about 200 enemy planes flew into the Calais - Amiens area. There were also reports of planes crossing into Reich territory and fighter escorts coming in to pick up the returning formations. Ninety planes penetrated as far as Paris. Brest-North airfield was attacked with machine-gunfire. Explosive bombs were dropped on the airfield at Morlaix and the flying field at Le Mant. One FW 200 and one Ju 88 were shot down. During the night of 29 Jan. 285 of our bombers were sent against London, 229 of them reached their target. Thirteen planes are missing, six more crashed in German-occupied territory. The report on results has not yet been received.

Reich Territory:

Prior to the raid on Berlin on the morning of 29 Jan. there were raids on four night fighter airfields in Holland and a weather reconnaissance plane was sent as far as Berlin. The bombers did not take off for Berlin until three hours after the attack on the fighter airfields; at least 600 to 700 took part. 205 of our night fighters went up and shot down 43 enemy planes, most of them by "zahme Sau". (Tr.N.: radar-directed night firing.) Four of our planes were lost,

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seven are missing.

In the forenoon at least 500 enemy planes carried out a heavy raid against Frankfurt/Main and Offenbach. See Daily Situation for report on damage. Bombs were also dropped on Wiesbaden. The formation was escorted to the Reich frontier by Spitfires and Thunderbolts; from there Lightnings escorted them to Frankfurt. We sent up 504 fighters. Forty-seven enemy planes were brought down for certain and ten probably. One of our planes was lost. In the evening ten to twelve planes entered the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area. Bombs were dropped on Duisburg.

Mediterranean Theater:

We carried out photographic reconnaissance of Alexandria and Haifa. See supplement to Daily Situation for evaluation. The number and type of vessels in Alexandria gave no hint of any special operations. Our own missions: 30 fighter-bombers attacked ships off Anzio. One landing craft was heavily damaged. 47 bombers repeated the attack on ships off Anzio during the night. One destroyer and two large transports were sunk, four transports heavily damaged. Two of our planes are overdue.

The enemy sent up 440 planes over the front. His fighter-bomber attacks were concentrated on roads and villages in the area southwest of Rome, he kept a fighter screen over the beachhead. Communications and airfields at Ancona, Rimini and Bologna were attacked. In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast between twelve and sixteen enemy planes seemed to be dropping mines in the waters between Syros and Milos. Sixteen enemy reconnaissance planes were reported over the Aegean Sea and four near Corfu, during the night several planes were observed supplying partisans.

Eastern Front:

On 28 Jan. our planes flew 938 missions over the eastern front as against the enemy's 350 missions. Twenty-two enemy planes were brought down, seven of our planes were lost.

In the 4th Air Force area planes carried out photographic reconnaissance of Batum. We did not learn anything of importance.

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The missions flown by the 5th Air Force in Northern Waters have already been reported.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0830 4 Italian submarines and 1 U.S. corvette left Gibraltar for the Atlantic. At 1100 Tangier sighted a convoy of 6 U.S. tankers heading for the Mediterranean under escort by 4 U.S. destroyers and corvettes.

Own Situation:

Three convoys totaling 15,200 G.R.T. were taken along the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance, there was brisk shipping traffic in the beachhead area during the night of 28 Jan. On 29 Jan. further landings were observed. In the forenoon 11 transports were off Anzio, 10 transports and 30-40 landing craft off Nettuno. One U.S. vessel was located at 1835 70 miles south to west of Civitavecchia and one at 1904 120 miles southsouthwest of Nettuno.

Own Situation:

No real damage was done in the air raids on Viareggio and San Stefano at midday on 28 Jan. One auxiliary minesweeper was slightly damaged. The harbor and town of San Benedetto were heavily bombed at midday on 29 Jan. The mole and the ship berths were hit.

Torpedo boat TA "23" and fast escort vessel SG "15" carried out minelaying operation "Eidechse" as planned. On their return they were unsuccessfully attacked by enemy planes north of Leghorn. Torpedo boat TA "29" put out for minelaying operation "Angora".

A situation report from Commanding General, Armed Forces,

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Southwest states that the motor minesweepers were repeatedly attacked by enemy planes while minelaying on the night of 27 Jan. and R "201" was sunk. Two others were damaged.

The report by German Naval Command, Italy has not yet been received.

Reinforced patrols are being carried out in the Spezia-San Stefano area.

Submarine U "455" reported a successful breakthrough to the Atlantic, she gave her position as CH 6845.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Wage strikes have broken out in the shipyards at Trieste and in an engine factory. Seven enemy boats destined for the island of Uljan have been sunk by Army gunfire and Air Force action. Well-equipped partisans, some of them in British uniforms and with heavy arms, have been seen in the Zara - Biograd - Pivovao area. At 0200 on 28 Jan. an enemy group landed near Milna southsoutheast of the town of Hvar.

The steamer SIPAN was returned to the Croatian Navy on 24 Jan.

b. Aegean Sea:

Convoys in the Aegean Sea were canceled because of the bad weather. The motorship SEEROSE was sunk in an enemy air raid on Panormos. Two infantry landing-craft which were out of control were beached. Motor minesweeper R "211" was also beached after grounding in Ornos Bay.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence four submarines were at sea.

Own Situation:

Naval landing craft in the patrol line in the Kerch Strait were unsuccessfully shelled from an enemy battery of six 17 cm. guns about midnight on 28 Jan. Patrol in the

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Kerch Strait on the night of 29 Jan. will be as follows:
4 motor minesweepers at the southern exit as far as Eltigen,
3 naval landing craft in immediate readiness in Kamysh Burun.

The motor minesweepers did not put out because of the weather.

At 1300 submarine U "18" put out from Constanta on an operation against the enemy.

Some of the convoys to the Crimea were hindered by the weather.

With regard to the land fighting, Admiral, Black Sea reported a minor enemy breakthrough by means of forceful thrusts. Mopping-up is in progress.

Admiral, Black Sea reported to Naval Liaison Staff, Rumania, with copy to Group South, that according to a report from German Naval Command the Rumanian ships TRANSYLVANIA and BESSARABIA have been sold to Turkey. Admiral, Black Sea pointed out that this entails a weakening in the tonnage of the nations allied with Germany and asked whether we knew anything about the negotiations or took any steps to intervene in the matter.

VIII. Situation East Asia

No special reports.

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Items of Political Importance

It is worth noting that Finnish representatives have been invited to the Philadelphia Conference of the International Workers Commission and the Finnish Socialist Party has accepted the invitation as a matter of course.

According to Reuter, the U.S. State Department has made it known that the loading of Spanish tankers with oil products for Spain has been stopped. This measure has been taken while trade and general relations between Spain and the U.S.A. are being re-examined against the background of the trend of Spanish policy. It is reported that the Spanish Government has shown a certain reluctance to grant the U.S. demands. The action of the U.S. Government has been undertaken in full agreement with the British Government.

This oil embargo indicates that the screw is being turned on Spain.

Chief, Naval Staff is going to France.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Quartermaster General:

The 100 ton crane urgently required for work on the TIRPITZ is out of action and with only a 20 ton crane available the repairs cannot be completed by the dead-line previously set, 15 March. If the anti-aircraft fire control station "C" and the optical range finder in the fore-top were to be omitted, the repairs might be managed by the end of March. Otherwise we cannot count on the ship being ready before the middle of May. Zeiss are now checking up on whether the optical range finder can be repaired aboard ship and what degree of readiness this will give.

Chief of Staff decided that the Fleet Command should be asked for their opinion. If it can be repaired so as to give 12 to 24 hours readiness, then we should aim to have the repairs completed by the end of March and omit the anti-aircraft fire control station "C".

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In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. Army Situation:

The enemy attack on Kerch was repulsed. Reinforcements are being brought up by air. The enemy again broke through in several places in the area south of Kiev in the southern part of the eastern front. The situation with Army Group North is obscure. Our troops are in danger of being encircled in the area north of Novgorod.

Special Items:

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division and branches of Naval Intelligence Division, Quartermaster Division and Chief of Staff, Commander in Chief, Navy have been transferred from command post "Bismarck" to command post "Koralle" according to plan.

II. Group South forwarded to Operations Division copy of directive sent to Admiral, Adriatic, Admiral, Aegean and Admiral, Black Sea. This points out all possible developments in the situation in these areas and refers to the Fuehrer order that all preparations are to be completed by 15 Feb. Copies of directive as per 1/Skl 299, 300 and 301/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV and Part C, Vol. XIVa.

Situation 30 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

No special incidents.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence extraordinarily heavy shipping traffic was observed in the waters off Northern Ireland. Locations in the rendezvous area did not yield any important clues.

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2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 0026 destroyers Z "32" and Z "37" had a heavy collision in BF 9573. The aft torpedo tubes on Z "37" exploded and she is out of control. Both vessels are heavily damaged. Two minesweepers and two patrol vessels put out from Bayonne to render assistance. Two tugs and four more minesweepers ordered out from Royan were hindered by fog. Destroyer Z "23" has taken Z "37" in tow. The tow can be picked up at the earliest at 0100 on 31 Jan. at point "Garten".

Six submarines were escorted out and one in.

At 0015 a submarine chaser searching for one of our submarines close to point "Eis" was subjected to an unsuccessful dive-bombing attack.

Channel Coast:

While proceeding from Dunkirk to Dieppe on the night of 29 Jan. mine exploding vessel "32" with her escort was attacked by two fighter-bombers at 2030; from 2045 to 2112 PT boats attacked them off Calais. Minesweeper M "370" was heavily damaged. At 2125 there was a fresh attack from PT boats and from 2154 to 2240 the mine exploding vessel came under well-placed fire from enemy long-range guns. Pieces of explosive hit the vessel. From 0005 to 0054 a new attack by fighter-bombers took place. Our losses were slight. One PT boat was set on fire. For brief action report and preliminary account see teletypes 1130 and 1924.

On the same night another mine exploding vessel under escort, also six minesweepers proceeding from Rotterdam to Boulogne were not spotted by the enemy at all or only to a small extent. Group West intends to be guided by this experience on future occasions when several convoys are scheduled to go through the narrow part of the Channel on one night.

The 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla is to lay mine barrage "N I" and torpedo boats T "22" and T "23" are then to proceed to Hook of Holland on the night of 30 Jan. The 5th PT Boat Flotilla is scheduled to carry out a torpedo operation off Beachy Head. Mine exploding vessel "32" is to transfer from Le Havre and the convoy OSTERODE is to proceed from Le Havre to Dieppe.

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III. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

1. North Sea:

Five mines were swept off the estuaries in the Heligoland Bight. Three convoys totaling 45,627 G.R.T. were escorted through the waters round Zeeland. Minesweeping was for the most part canceled because of the stormy weather.

Convoy 1213 completed the passage from the Hook of Holland to the Elbe. Convoy 478 from the Elbe to Hook of Holland started out with five steamers. They are scheduled to put in to Den Helder.

Naval Command, North forwarded a request from Admiral, Netherlands for 700 LMA and/or LMD mines for mining sea channels and harbors during withdrawal movements. Naval Command, North requested information about the numbers of mines to be allocated.

Operations Division replied that the Navy plans to allocate LMB mines for mining sea ports and outer sea channels. For mining inner sea channels, inland harbors and canals, extensive use should be made of aerial mines from Air Force stocks, and a promise given by Commander in Chief, Air Force on 9 Aug. 1943 states that these will be made available in case of withdrawal movements. The allocation of LMB mines from naval stores will be 500 at most.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Submarine Division submitted preliminary excerpts from interrogation of prisoners from PQ 25. These reveal that the convoy consisted of 15 Liberty and Empire freighters loaded with tanks, planes, wheat, fats, medical supplies and machinery; they were escorted by 10 destroyers and 16 escort vessels. The sailors had been told that the Germans were in possession of torpedoes which could steer a figure of eight, also remote-controlled aerial torpedoes. They had been warned to expect mines to be laid in the path of the convoys. Tankers are fitted with torpedo nets, steamers do not carry any location gear.

Convoy PQ 26 was shadowed by our submarines throughout the day.

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Our air reconnaissance reported that the convoy consists of 16 merchantmen proceeding in line abreast with 12 destroyers encircling them and cruisers following astern.

Own Situation:

On 29 Jan. a few isolated planes were reported over the Kirkenes and Vardoe area, eleven over the Egersund area and two north of Bergen. Five bombs were dropped on Kirkenes.

Four Russian mines type M 31 were swept in the East Varanger Fjord.

Twenty-four ships were escorted north and 32 south. Twenty-two were left behind in Kristiansand South and 15 in Stavanger.

The submarines were hindered in their attempts to get close to the convoy by additional escorts apparently brought up from Murmansk and numerous searching groups of two to three destroyers ahead and on the flanks of the convoy. Most of their successes were achieved against destroyers and escort vessels. In addition to the three destroyers reported on 29 Jan., five more were sunk today and four torpedoed, so that our total success against convoy PQ 26 to date amounts to 8 destroyers sunk, 4 destroyers and 1 steamer torpedoed.

The last shadowing report was sent out at 2358 from AC 4636.

In the forenoon Admiral, Northern Waters ordered two hours' readiness for the 4th Destroyer Flotilla.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

According to a report from the Naval Attaché in Stockholm, the British transport PT boat GAY CORSAIR put in again at Lysekil on 28 Jan. after a deceptive departure with another PT boat. The GAY CORSAIR lay in the meantime beside the DICTO and the LIONEL in Brofjord. Both boats have engine trouble. Presumably they will put out during the night of 30 Jan.

The enemy has crossed the Luga line and taken Jamburg.

The Finnish Naval Staff forwarded a Swedish report stating

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that an unidentified submarine was sighted on 29 Jan. in A0 5312 (southeast of Stockholm).

2. Own Situation:

One EIM mine was swept in Kiel Bay. The steamer HANAU (5,600 G.R.T.) struck a mine and capsized in the same area.

In the area of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic minesweeper M "451" ran aground north of Falada.

Naval Shore Commander "R" reported: At 0015 the order was given to Combat Group, Coast for all naval formations to withdraw. Except for two companies of the 531st Naval Artillery Battalion all formations east of Narva succeeded in moving behind the Narva line. The Ustluga radio station has been dismantled. The Luga bridge near Ustluga and all living quarters have been blasted.

Naval Shore Commander "R" will transfer to Haljala if the situation demands this.

The guard commander of Intelligence Station, Vinistu was shot while checking up on a man suspected of fleeing from Finland. Vinistu was burned down as it was discovered that on several occasions fugitives received assistance there.

Special Operations Unit "Ostland" consisting of three companies and 200 men from the Coastal Control Office at Lovkolovo will remain at the disposal of the Army for the defense of the Narva line. On 31 Jan. one hundred men of the battery crews will start from Reval to reinforce the Coastal Control Office, Lovkolovo at Group "Hohnschild". The battery crews which have arrived at Reval are being assembled into a combat group.

Naval Command, Baltic inquired how many cutting floats will be allocated to Commander, Minesweepers Baltic on 1 March. Plans have been made to store them at Reval. Furthermore Naval Command, Baltic requested the allocation of 100 EMR/K mines not previously included in the schedule.

Naval Staff allocated 3,000 cutting floats. It is not possible to allocate EMR/K mines as the extremely small number available is earmarked for use in the Channel area.

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With this total allocation the distance between the mines in the "Seeigel" and "Krebs" barrages, which extend for about 55 miles, should be between 30 and 35 meters.

V. Submarine Warfare

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, Colombo reported a submarine sighted by a plane in MQ 13 at 0804. At 1130 Basra passed Bombay a report about sighting a submarine in MF 85.

2. Own Situation:

Submarine U "178" reported that U "178" and U "510" have been supplied by the SCHLIEMANN. U "178" took over 19 tons of rubber. U "510" misfired a triple torpedo spread on a freighter on westerly course in KP 6227.

No special reports were received from the Atlantic.

VI. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

There was moderate enemy air activity by day over the occupied west area; a few bombs were dropped.

2. Reich Territory:

At midday several hundred bombers escorted by fighters flew into Central Germany. There was a minor raid on Hanover and a heavier one on Braunschweig. See Daily Situation for details.

In the evening several hundred bombers made a very heavy raid on Berlin. The damage done by explosive bombs is heavier than in earlier raids. Considerable loss of life must be expected. Transport facilities have suffered a good deal, many public buildings and industrial plants are damaged. See Daily Situation for details.

At the same time 30 to 40 enemy planes were reported over the Rhine-Westphalian area. Thirty-three explosive bombs were dropped on Wuppertal and six on Dueren. We sent up 455 fighters; a report on their success has not yet been received.

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3. Mediterranean Theater:

No reports on our missions are to hand.

The enemy attacked airfields in the Udine area. Many of our planes were damaged. Eighteen enemy planes were brought down by anti-aircraft fire and fighters. In the front area the weather impeded operations by our close combat formations. There was only slight reconnaissance activity.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast sixteen planes were observed on reconnaissance over the Aegean. Milos and one of our convoys west of it were attacked.

4. Eastern Front:

Nothing to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 1800 on 29 Jan. Tangier sighted a cruiser of the BROOKLYN class making for the Mediterranean. At 1700 on 29 Jan. Cape Spartel reported a large U.S. warship and two destroyers also making for the Mediterranean.

At 1030 on 30 Jan. Ceuta reported eleven loaded freighters putting in to Gibraltar from the Atlantic.

Own Situation:

Two convoys totaling 3,225 G.R.T. were escorted off the French south coast.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

According to air reconnaissance on 29 Jan., there were 5 vessels thought to be destroyers off Nettuno, 20 vessels thought to be merchantmen 15 miles south of Anzio, 20 more vessels thought to be merchantmen and 5 escort

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vessels 37 miles south of Anzio on northerly course, and 50 vessels thought to be merchantmen 30 miles west of Naples.

According to photographic reconnaissance 6 PT boats, 7 small warships, 1 submarine, 3 naval landing craft and 50 fishing vessels were lying in Maddalena.

At 0818 on 30 Jan. there were 1 passenger ship, 1 merchantman and 4 destroyers on easterly course 90 miles northwest of Benghazi, and at 2025 three destroyers 15 miles northeast of Ancona on westerly course.

Own Situation:

In the enemy air raid on San Stefano on 28 Jan. war transport KT "20" was slightly damaged and one freight barge heavily damaged. On 29 Jan. Naval Battery Leghorn shot down a Spitfire. Railroad installations were destroyed in the attack on Ancona.

From the operational area at the beachhead submarine U "223" reported sinking an LCF with a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo, achieving three hits on two LST's belonging to a formation, also torpedoing a destroyer with a "Zaunkoenig" torpedo.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

The shipping lane Zara-Sibenik via the Pasman channel is again open, Biograd is in German hands.

Group South asked German Naval Command, Italy for information about which of the scheduled minelaying operations "Tanne", "Ulme", "Fichte", "Dickicht", "Visier", "Harnisch", "Klinge", "Degenknauf" and "Teppich" have been or will be carried out.

We have to await the reply from German Naval Command, Italy. According to records available at Operations Division only the operations "Klinge" and "Degenknauf" have so far been carried out.

b. Aegean Sea:

The weather again held up convoy traffic.

In the enemy air raid on Panormos on 29 Jan. the motorship

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SEEROSE became a total loss. Two infantry landing craft out of control have been beached. On the same day an auxiliary sailing vessel was sunk in an air raid on Corfu. A coastal patrol vessel swept two mines in Salamis Bay.

Two armed fishing vessels camouflaged as pilot cutters arrived at Mudros from the Dardanelles on 29 Jan. The vessels were detained by the Turkish authorities on 25 and 26 Jan.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

At 1331 a plane bombed an enemy submarine 90 miles southwest of Tuapse and saw heavy explosions, also oil on the water.

There were no operations by our motor minesweepers because of the weather. Four motor minesweepers are at immediate readiness in Feodosiya, three naval landing craft in Kamysh Burun.

Otherwise nothing to report.

VIII. Situation East Asia

No special reports.

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Items of Political Importance

United Press, reporting from well-informed Washington circles, states that the severing of all economic relations with Spain can be expected. A British newspaper writes that if Great Britain wishes to take similar action against Spain the only thing to do is to suspend deliveries of wheat and coal to Spain.

Obviously this is the preliminary propaganda for another turn of the screw on Spain. The systematic anti-Spanish campaign clearly indicates that the enemy powers intend to include Spain in their calculations in the near future. We shall have to consider what possibilities are left to us to achieve any counter-effect.

Conference on the Situation with Chief of Staff, Naval Staff

I. Report by Chief, Operations Branch:

a. German Naval Command, Italy, after studying the action reports from the Assault Craft Group of the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla based on Terracina, reported that they were very dashing in their execution of their four operations and the shore organization made every effort to ready the boats for the next sortie. On their return from the operational area the last three craft sighted an enemy vessel, but in the encounter the torpedo went beneath the target.

Subsequently one boat dropped two depth charges close to the stem of this vessel without noticeable effect. All forces taking part did their best and although they did not achieve any visible success these operations by the 10th Italian PT Boat Flotilla have brought a definite improvement in morale.

b. The question of attacking Turkish sailing vessels outside their territorial waters has been decided to the effect that such vessels cannot be attacked if they are known to be of Turkish origin. For details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII.

c. The enemy air raid on Berlin on the evening of 30 Jan. was very severe. The Central Telegraph Office was

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hit. Many of the teletype lines are out of order and radio monitoring has been considerably affected. The billets in Woyrsch Strasse and in the Billingszeile also suffered.

In a Highly Restricted Circle:

II. Army Situation:

The heavy enemy attacks on the northern flank of the Dnieper bend near Recizca still continue.

The situation in the area of Army Group North remains serious. On the Narva front the enemy captured Jamburg. Our northern front seems to be interrupted in several places.

Italy:

Three of our divisions are assembled in readiness for an attack on the landing area and a fourth is being brought up. The attack has not yet begun.

Special Items:

Concerning Situation on the Gulf of Finland:

Following a directive from Naval Staff of 28 Jan., Naval Command, Baltic reported that the only naval forces for the support of the withdrawal movements to the line Hungerburg - Narva are six minesweepers type "40" of the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla which carry one 10.5 cm. gun. They are available until 3 Feb., after that there will be only two as the other four are due for overhaul. The 17th Patrol Flotilla, which is to be brought up, cannot be used for the intended operation as their draught is too large and their armament too weak. The 25th Minesweeper Flotilla could operate south of "Seeigel" in Narva Bay, keeping close to the coast up to about the eight meter line. Maximum range 15,400 meters, for effective shelling of ground targets 13,000 to 14,000 meters. Necessary condition is adequate fighter protection. Accurate fire control and correct observation of the target is difficult as the minesweepers are not familiar with the enemy procedure of firing by grid squares and have no experience of combined firing - the one method which promises results. Furthermore, the guns are not technically suitable for indirect firing on land targets.

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The mine situation off Narva - Hungerburg is not clear. Dropping of mines was observed in the autumn of 1943 and a preliminary check-up of the operational area is necessary. Only minesweeping planes are available for this purpose and they require heavy fighter protection. It is doubtful whether we can give the Army any effective support, as the main road to both peninsulas is outside the range of our guns and the ground lying between it and the coast is very swampy. An enemy advance there is highly unlikely. The main thrust will probably be directed along the Jamburg - Narva road which is beyond the range of the minesweepers' guns. The coast of Narva Bay is protected against enemy landings by Batteries Hungerburg, Merikuela, Valaste and Silame. Finally Naval Command, Baltic points out that the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla is indispensable for tasks in the Gulf of Finland in the spring and that its commitment for operations in Narva Bay will considerably weaken the "Nashorn" barrage patrol.

Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) sent the following message in the evening of 30 Jan.:

"Commanding General, Army Group North today reported to the Fuehrer. In view of the far-reaching effects of further withdrawals, particularly for the naval situation in the Baltic Sea, submarine warfare, shipping lanes to Finland and the Estonian oil area, the Fuehrer ordered that every effort must be made to avoid a withdrawal to the "Panther" position. All available forces must be used to defend the Luga position at all costs. Luga position to be linked to the north to General Sponheimer's Group and farther north to naval defenses in the Three Lakes narrows south of Kaporja Bay (Lake Kopenskoe, Lake Glubokoe) so that Luga Bay and our minefield system are within our own front line.

The Fuehrer asked for a message to be sent to the Grand Admiral asking that the Navy should give every possible support to the Army forces in that sector, which are at present weak. The Fuehrer requested maximum reinforcement of naval defenses by the bringing up of more forces and as soon as the situation is again stable, the setting up of mobile coastal batteries. He also asked whether it would be possible as a temporary measure to put emergency formations of the Navy in the Baltic area (drawn from training establishments, non-operational personnel) into action in the threatened area. Every possible step must

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be taken to avoid further withdrawal of the front and stem the present retreat."

Naval Command, Baltic reported:

"The enemy has crossed the Luga line. Jamburg has been taken. The Army is endeavoring to defend the Narva line known as the "Panther" position. We must now reckon on enemy naval forces appearing in Narva Bay. This will endanger our line of communication with Tyters Island. For the present two armed fishing vessels are protecting the supply traffic and we are having to accept the consequent reduction of the active patrol of the "Nashorn" barrage from six vessels to five. It has further been proposed to send the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla to take up a patrol line Tyters-Aseri-Kunda Bay and omit the concentration at "Nashorn". We request that at least 4-6 naval landing craft (artillery) should be brought up as quickly as possible. An early decision is requested as four out of the six vessels of the 25th Minesweeper Flotilla now in the Gulf of Finland must begin overhaul at the beginning of February. The first three vessels of the 17th Patrol Flotilla are not expected to arrive before 5 February. They are only suitable for the "Nashorn" barrage."

The two teletypes were immediately passed to Chief, Naval Staff via Group West.

Naval Command, Baltic reported as follows on the conference held on 30 Jan. between Admiral, Baltic States and Chief, Operations Branch, Army Group North:

"The Army is abandoning the idea of using minesweepers in the inner Narva Bay to attack the land front. They do not expect enemy movements on the Kurgalov Peninsula, and apart from that the dense woods prevent observation from the sea and shelling would be ineffective. Shelling the enemy's advance on the Narva bridgehead does not promise good results and in any case the guns have not sufficient range. There is no fighter protection available and past experience seems to indicate that the enemy will do most damage from the air."

Naval Command, Baltic in a further report on the situation states that the enemy has attacked with 57 divisions, 9 brigades and 33 armored formations. Following dispatch of

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eleven divisions to the southern and central fronts, Army Group North was not able to withstand this pressure. They suffered considerable loss of weapons and equipment and numerous casualties. The troops have fought to the limit of their strength but are having to yield to enemy pressure which however comes from personnel with little or no training. The main danger comes from his thrust against Lake Ilmen, which threatens all formations of the 18th Army Command on the Leningrad front with encirclement. Another imminent danger is the thrust west of Nevel in the direction of Duenaburg - Riga to cut off Estonian territory. Further there is the major threat to our rear from partisans who control large areas of territory. The Narva-Lake Peipus line and the region to the south of it must therefore be held under all circumstances.

The Army attaches exceptional importance to the reinforcement of coastal defenses and the land front and welcomes even the smallest help. They need tanks, anti-tank guns and planes. Plans have been made to form Estonian - Latvian divisions (about 50,000 men) as quickly as possible (there are no arms for them as yet), also to call in all rear troops and reserves.

It is essential for the Navy to drop all other tasks and projects and give support. Admiral, Baltic States has promised to bring up the reformed Battery Ruchi-Lipovo as soon as possible. It will be set up in Reval (Tallinn) today. For the meantime it is being got ready in Hungerburg. Personnel are being withdrawn from the eastern area.

Operation "Vorwaerts" cannot be considered at present. Any cuts must be canceled at once as Estonia is directly threatened.

Group North/Fleet will be consulted and a joint proposal submitted about precautionary readiness of light forces and submarines, questions of fitting out, fuel supply, etc. and transfer to Libau or farther east.

The 25th Minesweeper Flotilla still has only five vessels as minesweeper M "451" sank after running aground.

Group North/Fleet passed the following comment on this report by Naval Command, Baltic:

"Group North does not consider that the present situation described by Naval Command, Baltic affords any opportunity

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for effective participation by naval forces, especially as fuel stocks in the eastern Baltic are inadequate. However, the Group thinks it a good plan to hold naval forces in readiness and proposes the following measures for the Fleet:

1. The 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla consisting of six boats at present in training will be equipped for operations and remain on six hours' readiness. Training to be continued with full equipment until operations are ordered.
2. Transfer of a PT Boat Flotilla belonging to Commander, PT Boats from the west area into the Baltic Sea and from there transfer to the east taking along a PT boat tender. If the transfer of the flotilla from the west area appears inexpedient for other reasons, it is proposed to equip eight boats of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla (Wilke), now doing elementary tactical training, for action and then place them on six hours' readiness, exercises with full equipment being continued.
3. If necessary similar steps can be taken with destroyers Z "35" (doing initial training) and Z "25" (ready again about 3 Feb.).
4. The transfer of destroyers and torpedo boats to the east necessitates the immediate allocation of fuel to Baltic operational ports; a supply ship belonging to Naval Command, Baltic may have to be used.

The Group further proposes that a flotilla of about eight submarines belonging to Commanding Admiral, Submarines, should be put on six hours' readiness so that while continuing their training they can be sent on operations at six hours' notice."

Naval Staff thereupon issued the following directive to Group North/Fleet with copies to Naval Command, Baltic and Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic:

- "1. Assignment of another minesweeping flotilla to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic is under consideration.
2. Reval (Tallinn) is to be prepared as a base in case a PT boat flotilla is transferred from Naval Command, Baltic. Decision on this point not yet taken.
3. The following vessels should be considered as reserves:

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The PRINZ EUGEN, four destroyers from the Skagerrak and Z "35", Z "25" as soon as they are ready for action. The suggestion with regard to the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla is not approved."

Naval Staff further directed that Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North should immediately send three naval landing craft (artillery) from the 2nd and three from the 1st Gun Carrier Flotilla for operations in the eastern Baltic. They are to be put under Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, who is to inform Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North direct about the destination to be given to the craft.

The information on the measures planned and partially carried out by the Navy is being sent to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) with copy to Naval Command, Baltic as follows:

"I. Coastal Front:

1. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North are each to turn over three naval landing craft (artillery) to Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic as soon as possible.

2. The 25th Minesweeper Flotilla (five boats) will remain on operations. Overhaul postponed.

II. Land Front:

1. Naval detachments in action with the Army:

- a. 200 men of Naval Artillery Battalion 531,
- b. 300 men of 31st Manning Division,
- c. 250 men drawn from various units.

2. Other detachments scheduled to go into action:

- a. 60 men with four 7.6 cm. guns on their way to Hungerburg.
- b. 100 men without guns from coastal defense Reval (to be evacuated from islands as soon as weather permits).

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c. 200 men (mixed).

1. and 2. total roughly 1,100 men."

Chief, Naval Staff is to be informed accordingly via 1st Submarine Flotilla. Naval Staff suggested that he should approve the proposal made by Group North/Fleet for the assignment of six submarines belonging to Commanding Admiral, Submarines and requested his decision.

Admiral, Baltic States forwarded a request from Army Group North asking that if at all possible the Navy should immediately turn over 20,000 rifles with belts, cartridge pouches and bayonets for the Estonian formations now being assembled. Naval Command, Baltic reported that of the 40,000 rifles in the Baltic area, 29,000 have been allocated and distributed to emergency formations Group A and 11,000 to Group B so that it is impossible to turn over arms with equipment from this command area to Admiral, Baltic States. Quartermaster Division is to pursue the matter.

II. Enemy Preparations for landings in Portugal and on the Biscay Coast

In a directive to Commanding General, Armed Forces, West, Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff and Naval Staff dated 12 Jan., Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff pointed to increasing indications that enemy landing preparations in the west might perhaps be directed against Portugal and the Biscay coast near and south of Bordeaux. The purpose of the landings could either be (1) to make us withdraw our reserves from the Channel coast or (2) to place the focal point of the attack on the continent in southern France, in which case the landings would be extended to the French Mediterranean coast and the enemy's first aim would be to unite the two landing groups in the Garonne area and thus cut off communication with the Iberian Peninsula.

Present preparations for possible large-scale enemy landings take no account of such a situation. The Fuehrer has therefore ordered the preparation of further countermeasures:

In the event of (1) the Spanish border must be effectively blocked. The blocking must be backed up by prompt destruction of important objectives on railroads and roads leading up from the south; the coastal defense in the southern sector of the 1st Army Command must be reinforced by at least one division.

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A withdrawal of forces from the command area of the 15th Army Command should only be considered as a last resort.

In the event of (2) the concentration with the 15th Army Command must be broken up and a force consisting at the outset of at least six divisions, including three or four fast formations must be assembled in southern France. The southern sector, 1st Army Command and the French Mediterranean coast must also be reinforced. This operational force will have to oppose the enemy on the Iberian Peninsula and prevent him from gaining a foothold on the Spanish north coast. Alternatively they may have to break up the formation of a second front north of the Pyrenees. Once it is clearly recognized that the enemy is concentrating on southwestern Europe all forces that can be spared from the defense against minor invasion operations on the Channel coast, together with major reinforcements from other command areas must be brought up to the new front.

The Air Force has been ordered to make all preparations for opposing an enemy landing expected in Portugal with the main body of forces concentrating on the port of Lisbon. The Air Force is also to make preparations for the support of the operations of Commanding General, Armed Forces, West.

As far as the Navy is concerned Naval Staff is studying the possible measures to be taken in the event of enemy operations against Portugal and the Biscay coast. Commanding General, Armed Forces, West, Commander in Chief, Air Force and Naval Staff are to report their plans.

On 13 Jan. Chief of Staff commented as follows on this directive: Possibly the Allied large-scale plan of strategy - recapture of the Mediterranean as basis for operations against Europe - is now beginning to take on a more definite shape. Therefore the attack from the south is not impossible since its successful execution will bring military and economic advantages (serious threat to the submarine bases on the Bay of Biscay, establishment of a front in southern France, Sicily, Italy, political and economic isolation of the Iberian Peninsula). Accordingly invasion preparations against Northern France, Holland - with the exception of possible commando raids - must be taken as a ruse to tie down our forces, and the trend of events in the Eastern Mediterranean is also worth noting!

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On 16 Jan. Naval Staff passed the directive from Armed Forces High Command to Group West with copy to German Naval Command, Italy and requested them to forward suggestions on the Navy's role together with their plans at an early date.

Quartermaster Division was also informed of the directive and requested to submit proposals to Operations Division if they see any further possibilities for strengthening the coastal defense in the possible invasion areas.

The proposals received from Group West have been examined at Naval Staff and a report made to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff under date of 31 Jan. Copy in 1/Skl I op 200/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Provisional file "Large Scale Enemy Landings".

A directive has been issued to Group West to make preparations for PT boat operations.

III. A conference on the subject of employing mines with new firing devices has taken place between Chief, Operations Division and the Inspector of Aerial Mine Warfare. It was agreed that the Inspector should send a teletype worded as follows to Commander in Chief, Air Force, Operations Staff:

"1. Protection of our coast by mines will be carried out exclusively by the Navy. Of the new firing devices the AA 1 is already in use.

2. If following an enemy landing it becomes clear that our forces will not be able to proceed through certain waters for some time to come, then Naval Staff will promptly request the Air Force to mine those areas, which will be regarded as enemy territory.

3. In the event of 2. materializing, DM 1, AD 104 and AA 1 firing devices may have to be used and as a precaution we must keep well-protected stocks of these devices in the west area.

4. For the time being the Air Force will not lay mines outside the limits fixed at present. In the event of 2. Naval Staff will decide where the limits are to be extended. The pressure box firing device might also be used.

5. Re the mining of the Bristol ports, Mersey estuary

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and Humber with pressure box firing devices, it must be left to the Supreme Command to decide whether on receipt of early warning of the sailing of a landing fleet we are justified in compromising these devices by using them even in a short operation.

6. Conclusions:

a. The Air Force must start now to make arrangements for safe storage of AD 104, DM 1, AA 1 firing devices for all events mentioned in paragraphs 2. to 5.

b. The Air Force must be prepared to meet a request for aerial mining operations as described under paragraphs 2. to 5. at short notice.

c. As yet no definite date can be given when instructions should be issued or preparations begun. However, it must be borne in mind that after receipt of the relevant orders the testing personnel of the aerial mine working parties must be notified (time required: 24 hours) and the firing devices transported from the storage caves to the take-off bases (requiring another 24 hours); also that a working party needs 24 hours to prepare ten LMB mines with firing device DM 1 or forty BM 1000 with AD 104, i.e. seven working parties need about four days to fit 280 LMB mines with DM 1 firing devices, one day to fit 280 LMB 1000 with AD 104, that is if the operation is to start from the airfields where they are stationed. Combining all these stages in preparation, the minimum period required for DM 1 firing devices is therefore six days and for AD 104 three days.

7. Naval Staff is of the opinion that apart from the instances cited in paragraphs 2. to 5. it is essential for strong forces to carry out aerial minelaying against the given targets (about 2,000 mines monthly) over a long period (at least two months). Since the 3rd Air Force think that they can be ready to begin such an operation about the middle of March (presumably this means technical readiness) Naval Staff considers that it might well be started on 15 March 1944."

IV. The Main Committee for Ship Construction submitted construction schedule for submarines type XXIII as at 1 Jan. 1944 to Quartermaster Division. The schedule gives the submarines of this type to be completed in the yards at

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Hamburg, Toulon, Genoa, Monfalcone and Odessa as follows: 2 in February, 6 in March, 12 in April, 21 in each of the months May, June and July, 22 in August, 20 in September and 15 in October.

V. We must bear in mind that the new firing devices with pressure box combination will be employed as a defense measure against landing operations even at the risk of their becoming compromised. Naval Staff reminded Quartermaster Division and Underwater Obstacles Branch that a sweeping gear against the pressure box firing device must be found as quickly as possible, also a "special mine exploding vessel" must be designed and placed in production.

VI. Group South plans to establish the 10th Coast Patrol Force in the command area of Admiral, Black Sea about 1 Feb. Group South further requested basic approval of changes in organization proposed by Admiral, Black Sea. These should result in an improvement in the command as regards both operations and personnel and give a clear-cut organizational set-up. (See War Diary 19 Jan.) The Group plans to carry out the change about 1 Feb. and has appointed Captain Weyher to be Chief of Staff at the Rumanian Naval Staff until further notice. The Group has approved the plan to transfer Admiral, Black Sea to Constanta; the staff is to be limited to 85 men.

VII. German Naval Command, Italy reported that the organization of sector commandants and the appointment of a second Naval Shore Commander, West Coast, as approved by Quartermaster Division, is impracticable because of the extent of the defense area on the west and east coasts. Besides the sector commandants have not nearly sufficient personnel to provide a staff for a second Naval Shore Commander on the west coast. Cooperation between the Army and the Naval Shore Commander and sector commandants is developing satisfactorily. With reference to Fuehrer Directive 40, German Naval Command, Italy considers it essential to keep the sector commandants and thus provide for the subdivision of the combat sectors. Arrangements for coastal defense are at present being drawn up in conjunction with Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest and the 14th Army Command. German Naval Command requested that the present organization be retained under all circumstances, as it is running smoothly and is necessary because of the length of the coasts.

Quartermaster Division approved this request.

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Situation 31 Jan.

I. War in Foreign Waters

1. Enemy Situation:

According to Reuter, it has been officially announced in Rio that on 3 Jan. the Brazilian ship CAMOCIN rescued 28 German and 8 Italian survivors from an enemy ship sunk in the Atlantic and landed them in a Brazilian port.

The presence of Italians among the survivors indicates that if they do belong to a German blockade-runner at all, they must be from the BURGENLAND or the WESERLAND. Since the entire crew of the BURGENLAND has already been reported saved, the chances are that the Brazilian ship picked up some of the crew of the WESERLAND.

2. Own Situation:

Naval Staff sent a radio message to the CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN confirming receipt of report from a submarine (Commander: Spahr) that she had been supplied by the SCHLIEMANN, who now carries 1,477 cbm. Diesel oil, 455 cbm. Tarakan oil for Merkator submarines (former Italian transport submarines, Tr.N.), 101 cbm. lubricating oil and sufficient provisions and equipment for six submarines.

II. Situation West Area

1. Enemy Situation:

Thirty-nine planes belonging to No. 19 Group were spotted on missions. Their target area was not recognized.

One British vessel was located at 0925 in BE 2310, one at 1108 in AL 9950 and one at 2116 in BD 6960.

During the night of 30 Jan. radio intelligence intercepted reports that our PT boats had been located by the enemy.

An intelligence report from Portugal states that a landing operation against the French south coast is to be expected at the beginning of March and that troop movements in the Adriatic area are only meant to mislead us. There will probably be simultaneous landings in Brittany and south of the Loire.

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2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

At 1630 destroyer Z "32" anchored off Royan. The convoy with destroyers Z "23" and Z "37" is on passage to Pauillac. Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla reporting on a reconnaissance sweep into the Bay of Biscay, stated that he had made a random selection of seven Spanish and French trawlers carrying radio transmitters but in no case did the search yield any result. The Flotilla carried out practice cruises in the afternoon and at night. The collision between Z "32" and Z "37" took place in a subsequent night cruise. On Z "37" two warheads of the aft torpedo tube group exploded and probably the chamber containing the reserve torpedoes blew up too. The two engine rooms and the intervening compartment 5 took in about 800 tons of water. On Z "32" both forward compartments are heavily damaged. The return passage was without incident. For copy of brief report from Commander, 8th Destroyer Flotilla see teletype 1700.

In accordance with the Fuehrer's suggestion following the recent erroneous report of a convoy, Naval Staff has directed Group West to keep a check on Spanish fishers and their activities in the Bay of Biscay.

We have in mind:

1. to ship agents on the Spanish fishing vessels,
2. to intersperse them with fishing vessels and steamers carrying Spanish or French camouflage but with German crew who must be able to send radio messages.

Group West is to check the matter with their Intelligence Station and submit proposals.

Naval Staff further directed Group West to expedite the planning for emergency barrages along the Atlantic coast in the sector south of the Gironde and to check if it is possible to divert suitable mines from ready-use stocks of KA 104 to the Atlantic coast.

Three submarines were escorted in.

Channel Coast:

Five boats from the 5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla put out from Le Havre and carried out a minelaying operation on the night of 30 Jan. Torpedo boats T "22" and T "23" then continued their passage east. The other boats returned to Le Havre.

During the night of 30 Jan. six boats from the 5th PT Boat Flotilla were operating off Beachy Head in three groups. The westernmost group sank an auxiliary minesweeper and two steamers. The middle group met destroyers and sighted motor gunboats without engaging in combat; they turned back because of decreasing visibility.

The destroyers and gunboats forced the eastern group to withdraw. For preliminary report from Commander, PT Boats see teletype 0930.

The convoy OSTERODE proceeded from Le Havre to Boulogne during the night of 30 Jan. Mine exploding vessel "168" and the 6th Minesweeper Flotilla reached Le Havre. Mine exploding vessel "32" arrived at Cherbourg.

One ELM mine was cleared off Ostend.

III. North Sea, Norway, Northern WatersNorth Sea:

Five ground mines were swept off the estuaries.

Escort work was carried out according to plan. Patrol and defense positions were taken up.

Torpedo boats T "22" and T "23" will transfer from Dunkirk to Hook of Holland.

Norway, Northern Waters:1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence, Polyarnoe sent a very urgent radiogram to all submarines in the operational area at 2330 on 30 Jan. Convoy PQ 26 was spotted by our air reconnaissance at 1120 and shadowed until 1820. The last report gave the enemy's position in AC 8349. Our submarines did not regain contact with the enemy.

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2. Own Situation:

In the evening of 30 Jan. there was an exchange of fire in the Petsamo area while the Petsamo convoy was being escorted through. On 29 and 30 Jan. 25 enemy planes entered the Kirkenes area. Bombs caused some damage. Twelve planes were reported in the Petsamo area on these two days and two in the Vardoe area. At noon on 30 Jan. a Mosquito plane was reported north of Stavanger and another west of Bergen. The latter made an unsuccessful attack on a patrol vessel in Kors Fjord. Other isolated enemy planes were reported south of Stavanger and in the Bergen area.

Twenty-nine ships were escorted north and 32 south. Twenty-eight were left behind in Kristiansand South and 16 in Stavanger. 16 more were left behind in the Arctic coast area.

According to a report from Naval Command, Norway dated 29 Jan. the backlog in Kristiansand South came about because:

1. the weather held up the departure of northbound convoys for several days,
2. escort vessels on the northern part of the west coast have been held back by the weather and have only just started on their passage south.

On the evening of 28 Jan. eight steamers proceeded north from Kristiansand South.

There were to be further convoys on 29 and 30 Jan. to make up the backlog. Naval Staff advised the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping that we cannot accept his opinion that the backlog was caused by the withdrawal of some of the escort vessels for other purposes and suggested that he should check the reliability of the sources of this information.

IV. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

1. Enemy Situation:

Two Russian battalions broke through near Keikino in the direction of Reigi on the Narva. Brisk air activity is reported from the Great Tyters area.

2. Own Situation:

The steamer RUHRORT sank in Kiel Bay probably after striking a mine. The area has been closed because of suspected danger of mines. Otherwise nothing to report in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

In the area of Admiral, Baltic States, Hungerburg and Narva have been alerted to alarm readiness. A counter thrust against the enemy breakthrough has been started. Groups "Schneider" and "Hohnschild" with fourteen 2 cm. guns of Battery Hungerburg have been withdrawn from the present firing position near Hungerburg and are being transferred to a new position two kilometers farther south with the main direction of fire against Reigi and the northern bank of the Narva River.

In the area of Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic, the 3rd Patrol Flotilla broke off their anti-submarine patrol off Utoe. Nothing was sighted.

Minesweeper M "451" which ran aground north of Porkalla has been sunk. The crew were rescued.

V. Submarine Warfare

The Naval Attaché, Madrid transmitted a report from Las Palmas stating that a convoy will leave Dakar for England via the Azores on 1 Feb. The report comes from an allegedly reliable source in the U.S. Consulate.

The meeting between submarine U "518" and the Japanese submarine KIEFER has been ordered for two hours before sunset on 13 Feb. in DF 8555. U "518" will turn over one officer and two radio operators, code material and "Naxos", "Borkum" and "Wanze" gear.

No special reports from Groups "Stuermer" and "Hinein".

VI. Aerial WarfareWest Area:

At noon and in the afternoon large enemy bomber formations flew over Holland, Belgium and Northern France and attacked airfields and communications. Isolated planes were reported

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from Western France but there were no attacks. No enemy air activity during the night of 31 Jan.

Reich Territory:

In the forenoon 90 planes flew in from the south and attacked Klagenfurt. Part of the airfield was destroyed and part heavily damaged. The airfield will be out of use for a period of from ten days to two weeks. Isolated planes are reported from the Innsbruck-Villach area. From 1420 to 1427 a machine thought to be an enemy plane was shelled in the Munich area, it flew in and out unobserved.

Mediterranean Theater:

Our planes carried out reconnaissance on the west coast from west of Algiers to Bone. At 1800 a convoy consisting of 35 merchantmen with 10 escorts, mostly destroyers, was sighted 30 miles northnortheast of Cape de Fer on southeasterly course. Our operations were canceled because of the weather. During the day the enemy carried out several unsuccessful raids on Trieste, attacked Italian airfields and ineffectively bombed and machine-gunned our minesweeper flotilla at Santa Margharita. In the raids on Italian airfields four enemy planes were brought down by our anti-aircraft guns. In the front area south of Rome two enemy planes were brought down by anti-aircraft guns and one by fighters.

In the area of Air Force Command, Southeast the enemy flew his usual reconnaissance over the Aegean Sea, Otranto Strait and Adriatic Sea. During the night planes supplying partisans were spotted in the Balkan area.

Eastern Front:

The operations by the 5th Air Force against convoy PQ 26 have already been reported. Nothing further to report.

VII. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

1. Area Naval Group West:

Enemy Situation:

At 0800 a convoy consisting of 72 ships including 4 destroyers and 5 corvettes passed Punta de Europa on their way east. At 1045 8 U.S. corvettes and 1 U.S. destroyer

were sighted off Punta Carnero heading west towards the Atlantic.

Own Situation:

Three convoys totaling 3,270 G.R.T. were escorted off the French south coast. At 1130 an enemy submarine sank two sailing barges from a convoy southeast of Cape Drammont.

Railway battery "Gneisenau" is again ready for action and will be moved to Sète on 1 Feb.

2. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Visibility throughout the area was impaired by the weather on the afternoon of 30 Jan. According to location reports two vessels thought to be PT boats were lying west of Leghorn at 2033 on 30 Jan. and at 2025 three destroyers were off Pesaro. Gaeta Bay was again shelled from the sea.

At 0750 on 31 Jan. our air reconnaissance sighted 35 transports and LCT's unloading at the Nettuno beachhead 3 miles south of Anzio, 4 transports and 4 destroyers making off on westerly course 5 miles southwest of Anzio. Two destroyers, obviously escorts, were sighted northwest of Anzio.

Own Situation:

During the night of 29 Jan. our guns forced six small vessels approaching the coast south of Pescara to withdraw.

Torpedo boats TA "23" and TA "27" carried out mining operation "Angora" south of Civitavecchia according to plan.

A late report on the sinking of motor minesweeper R "201" states that the six motor minesweepers after carrying out the mining operation "Kanin" (south of Civitavecchia) were repeatedly attacked by enemy planes off San Stefano. R "201" was sunk, fire broke out in the engine room of R "161", which had to be towed into Piombino, R "199" was damaged.

Commanding Admiral, German Naval Command, Italy informed Naval Staff on 28 Jan. about his request to Commander, Submarines, Mediterranean as to whether more submarines -

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the only effective weapon against the landing fleet - can be sent to the landing area.

Commander, Submarines replied that three submarines are operating near the beachhead and that another submarine also destined for the beachhead would leave on 30 Jan. Apart from these, there are no other submarines at present ready in the Western Mediterranean.

3. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Torpedo boat TA "22" and escort vessel G "104" escorted the combined operations craft from Fiume to Zara. Recognition signals were given, but in spite of this the convoy was shelled from land north of Zara and was also fired at by machine-guns and 2 cm. guns from the southern point of the island of Isto.

During the night of 31 Jan. TA "22", G "104" and two patrol vessels will check the Mezzo Channel for mines.

In the enemy air raid on Trogir the dockyard tanker BERBANO was set alight by machine-gunfire and became a total loss. An auxiliary sailing vessel was also sunk.

According to a report from Armed Forces High Command, Supply and Transportation Office, Armed Forces Overseas, the Commanding Admiral of the operational zone in the Adriatic coastal region plans to blow up those of the harbor installations in Trieste that are not at present in use. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff sent Naval Staff and Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest a reminder (copy to Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast) that blowing up of harbor installations is to be carried out only after consultation with the Navy offices responsible for transport. Naval Staff sent Naval Group South a request (copies to Admiral, Adriatic Sea and German Naval Command, Italy) for their opinion on how far the present preparations for blowing-up still allow for the turn round of supplies even after enemy air raids.

Group South in response to a request from Admiral, Adriatic Sea, not notified to Naval Staff, must have fixed the priority for the various mine barrages as demanded by the present situation. Relevant teletype 1/Skl 332/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

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b. Aegean Sea:

Enemy Situation:

There was brisk enemy air activity in the southern Aegean region.

Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southwest in his detailed evaluation of the air photograph of Alexandria of 28 Jan. states that no LST's, LCT's and LCI's were spotted. Since 36 LST's and 45 LCT's were spotted on 27 Jan. at the beachhead alone, Commanding General, Southwest thinks that about 60 to 70% of the LST's and a considerable number of the LCT's and LCI's believed to be in the Mediterranean have been committed. He is doubtful whether the enemy can still have sufficient landing craft for another landing operation.

Own Situation:

At 1640 on 30 Jan. the convoy ORIA en route from Milos to Stampalia was unsuccessfully attacked with torpedoes and bombs from 14 planes west of Milos. One plane was shot down. At 0730 on 31 Jan. the same convoy was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine west of Stampalia. At noon on 30 Jan. the harbor of Pigadia was attacked by enemy planes. In the afternoon a tug struck a mine about one mile offshore and sank off Navarino.

Motor minesweeper R "211" refloated and was towed into Syra by R "194".

PT boat S "54" has not yet moved from Piraeus to Salonika because of the weather.

Commander, 9th Torpedo Boat Flotilla with torpedo boats TA "14", "15", "16" and their convoy left Piraeus for Leros at 0730.

c. Black Sea:

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intelligence submarine "B" was about 70 miles west of Eupatoria at 0305. From her behavior the submarine seems to be laying mines.

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Own Situation:

At noon on 30 Jan. a strong enemy air formation attacked the harbor and roads of Eupatoria with bombs, aerial torpedoes and gunfire. Two planes were shot down. Only slight damage was suffered on our side.

Three naval landing craft were patrolling the Kerch Strait in the night of 30 Jan. No special incidents were reported. Three naval landing craft and four motor minesweepers are lying at immediate readiness in Kamysh Burun and Feodosiya. For the night of 31 Jan. PT boats and minesweeper formations are not operating because of increasing west and northwest winds. Convoys have been postponed for the same reason.

VIII. Situation East Asia

The Armed Forces Attaché Tokyo transmitted the following assessment of the situation in the southwest Pacific as at the end of January:

"1. New Guinea:

The Japanese division cut off from Madang as a result of the American landing near Gumbi is in a very precarious situation. Their supplies and withdrawal by sea are greatly endangered, as enemy air superiority has definitely been established and the islands of Umboi and Long immediately adjacent to Madang are in enemy hands. Attempts at relief from the west have failed and the battle-weary troops, who are facing an enemy with first class equipment and a steady flow of supplies, have little chance of being able to break through to Madang.

2. New Britain:

In the Cape Gloucester and Cape Merkus areas roughly one enemy division is opposed to weaker Japanese forces. Here also the enemy is superior in the air and is in possession of at least one airfield, has some heavy arms and tanks and is receiving continuous supplies by sea. The Japanese receive most of their supplies by air and now and again on dark nights when the weather is bad from small vessels plying along the coast.

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3. Bougainville:

The enemy has not made any more attempts to push ahead beyond Torodina where he now has three airfields at his disposal. Owing to insufficient supplies Japanese troops are at present unable to undertake any large-scale countermeasures.

4. Rabaul:

The efficiency of Rabaul as a supply base is naturally considerably impaired by almost continuous air raids. The Japanese Navy hopes to hold this island till June, by which time the effects of large-scale mass production of planes should make themselves felt. However, they will be seriously threatened if MacArthur's forces on New Guinea and New Britain should occupy the Admiralty Islands and land in the western part of New Ireland and cut out the important port of Kavieng. Preparations for this operation can already be recognized.

5. Marshall Islands:

The atolls of Wotje and Mille in particular are subjected to almost daily enemy air raids from the Gilbert Islands. However no serious damage has been caused so far. An early attempt at a landing is expected.

6. So far the enemy has not shown any interest in Wake as a favorable base for air attacks on Tokyo. There have not been any air raids recently. Evidently the occupation of the Marshall Islands is the next operation.

7. Surprise attacks on Truk, aimed at paralyzing this main base, are expected.

8. There are indications of a large-scale enemy offensive against Burma, but there is no doubt that the enemy lacks the ships. Nevertheless a concentration of landing craft near Calcutta has been observed."

It was also reported that the Japanese base of Rabaul has been subjected to continuous heavy enemy air raids.

GLOSSARY

AA 1

Subsonic mine unit. Acoustic mine with subsonic firing mechanism.

ASV

British radar gear carried by aircraft to detect enemy ships and surfaced submarines.

ATE

Moored mine.

Bachstelze

A device similar to a helicopter which carries an observer and is towed like a kite by the submarine or ship to widen field of vision.

Bismarck

Cover-name for OKM Headquarters (non-operational sections) located at Fuerstenwalde, near Berlin.

Blume 1

Cover-name for countermeasures against enemy landings on the Channel coast.

Blume 2

Cover-name for countermeasures against enemy landings on the Mediterranean coast.

Borkum

Radar gear used for direction of anti-aircraft batteries.

DM mines

Pressure mines with magnetic firing device.

EFA

British mine type A.

ELM/A

British aerial mine with acoustic firing mechanism.

ELM/J

British aerial mine with induction firing mechanism.

EMC
Standard mine type C - a contact mine against enemy vessels.

EMF
A German moored influence mine.

EMR
Anti-sweeping device.

Emergency Formations

Fuehrer Directive No. 51 called for the mobilization of non-combat naval personnel for front-line duty in anticipation of the threatened Allied invasion of Western Europe. Shore installations, training schools, headquarters and other such establishments had to organize part of their personnel into emergency formations. Men so designated would continue with their normal duties until their group was called up, which was not to be the case until an invasion was considered imminent. They were to be trained and equipped for land warfare in the meantime. Personnel were divided into three categories - A, B and C. Those of comparatively minor importance to the war effort, who would be called up first were Group A, the next Group B and those of vital importance to be called up as a last resort, Group C.

Falke
Cover-name for countermeasures against enemy landings in North and Central Norway.

FAT Torpedo (Federapparat torpedo)
Designation of the course-setting mechanism in the German figure or pattern running T1 and T3. The device enabled the torpedo to run in circles or loops.

Flensburg
Cover-name for radar search set.

Freya gear
Anti-aircraft radar equipment.

Fuehrer Directive 40
This directive, dated 23 March 1943, laid down principles

of Armed Forces Organization in coastal areas, so as to ensure maximum effectiveness against a possible enemy invasion. In each particular area there was to be only one commander responsible for all anti-invasion preparations and the conduct of operations in the event of an invasion.

Gertrud

Cover-name for measures to be taken in event of Allied attack on Bulgaria with violation of Turkish neutrality.

Hanna

Cover-name for countermeasures against enemy landings in Denmark.

Hohentwiel

Simple radar set carried by aircraft for location of ships.

KA mine

Beach mine.

Kehlgeraet

Set for remote control of rocket-propelled glider bomb.

Koralle

Name of a Navy camp located at Bernau, a short distance northeast of Berlin. In 1944 the Commander in Chief, Navy, much of the Naval Staff and other sections of the Naval High Command had their headquarters there.

Lichtenstein

Radar set used by night fighters.

IMA

German aerial mine type A, weight 540 kg.

LMB

German aerial mine type B, weight 975 kg.

MTA

Mine-torpedo type A.

Nashorn

Code-name for a series of German minefields designed to keep Russian submarines from breaking out of the Gulf of Finland into the Baltic Sea. They extended from Nargoen on the Estonian side to Porkalla on the Finnish side.

Naxos

Radar search equipment used on German submarines to get warning of radar location by Allied units.

PQ

Designation of convoys proceeding from the U.K. to Northern Russia.

QP

Designation of convoys proceeding from Russia to the U.K.

Point Registertonne

German reference point 43° N 35° W.

RMK

Normal coastal mine.

Rotterdam

German code-name for the Allied radar gear utilized for high-altitude flying and as a navigational aid.

Siebel ferry

A double-hull ferry boat developed by Special Command Siebel. It consisted of two steel hulls connected by means of wooden platforms; there was a turret in the center. The Siebel ferry could be used as a gun-platform, troop-carrier or supply carrier.

SSS

Distress signal sent by ship when sighting or under attack by a submarine, could also indicate being damaged by a mine.

Todt Organization

A construction organization (named for the founder) which built the German superhighways, the West Wall and the Atlantic fortifications. It employed domestic and foreign labor on military projects both in Germany and the occupied countries.

UMA

Anti-submarine mine type A.

UMB

Anti-submarine mine type B.

Vorwaerts

Cover-name for measure to effect economies in personnel.

Wallenstein

Cover-name for countermeasures against enemy landings in Southern Norway, Skagerrak and Jutland.

Wanze

Radar search equipment used by submarines.

Zaunkoenig

Anti-destroyer, acoustic homing torpedo.

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