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It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document.

WAR CABINET

WEEKLY RÉSUMÉ

(No. 90)

of the

NAVAL, MILITARY AND AIR SITUATION

from 12 noon May 15th, to

12 noon May 22nd,

1941

[Circulated with the approval of
the Chiefs of Staff.]
The reports of operations in and around Crete are given on page 10.

NAVAL SITUATION.

General Review.

1. The Mediterranean Fleet is engaged in operations off Crete. A German battleship has arrived at Bergen. Shipping losses during the week have been heavy.

Home Waters.

2. Two heavy ships and eleven merchant ships with air and surface escorts were reported proceeding northward through the Kattegat on the 20th and on the 21st aircraft located a Bismarck-class battleship, a Hipper-class cruiser, a destroyer and 6 merchant ships at Bergen. In consequence of these movements strong naval forces have proceeded to the Iceland (C) area. The Finnish tanker Josefina Thorden (6,549 tons) was intercepted by our patrols on the 19th, and the Jussi H (2,323 tons) on the 20th, about 150 miles to the west of the Faroes. The tanker was attacked by enemy aircraft six hours after interception and set on fire, but two days later the fire was out and she was taken in tow. Enemy aircraft were shot down by H.M. Patrol Vessel Perspective off the Humber and by H.M. Minesweeper Princess Elizabeth and four trawlers off Harwich.

North Atlantic.

3. The French tanker Sheherazade (18,467 tons), which had escaped from New Orleans on the 16th, 2 hours before U.S. guards were due to go on board, was intercepted by H.M.S. Diomede 800 miles East of Bermuda on the 21st. The French schooner Izarra was intercepted on the 17th when 420 miles north of the Azores. During the period 12 French merchant ships (42,000 tons) have passed Gibraltar westbound and 7 (32,000 tons) eastbound. All were under escort.

Mediterranean.

4. The Greek destroyers are now operating as local escorts from Alexandria and the Greek submarines have been exercising with their own torpedo boats. H.M. Submarine Undaunted is overdue from patrol and must be considered lost. H.M. Submarine Triumph bombarded Apollonia and also sank a 400-ton schooner in that area. H.M. Submarine Unbeaten attacked shipping to the east of Tripoli and sank a large schooner and damaged a smaller one by gunfire. H.M. Submarine Urge sank a 7,000-ton tanker and a 9,000-ton troopship in a south-bound convoy to the south-west of Malta on the 20th and on the 21st attacked two cruisers and 3 or 4 destroyers at long range, possibly sinking a destroyer. H.M. Gunboat Gnat bombarded Gazala on the night of the 17th/18th. H.M. Destroyer Encounter received further damage in an air raid on Malta on the night of the 15th/16th, and H.M. Minesweeper Ferney is now so badly damaged that she is to be broken up. H.M. Corvette Gloxinia was damaged by a mine at Malta. During the air attacks on Crete (reported under the Cretan section) H.M. Corvette Salvia was damaged at Suda Bay on the 16th and H.M.S. York was again hit on the 18th. On the 20th H.M. Minesweeper Widnes and a small auxiliary were damaged and beached.
Other Foreign Stations.

5. H.M. New Zealand Minesweeper Puriri sank whilst sweeping in Hauraki Gulf. There were four casualties.

H.M.S. Newcastle 300 miles south of St. Helena intercepted the French Lieutenant St. Loubert Bie (6,126 tons) on passage to Madagascar from Marseilles with 1,700 Indo-Chinese troops.

In Italian Somaliland, Guardafuin Lighthouse was occupied by our forces and Tukom (10 miles South of Guardafui) surrendered on the 19th May.

Anti-Submarine Operations.

6. Nine attacks by surface craft and four by aircraft were made during the week, some of which, almost certainly, were directed against the same submarine. In two instances quantities of oil were sighted on the surface at the end of the attack or series of attacks. These were in attacks carried out by air and surface craft on the 15th, 300 miles west of Ireland, and an attack made by H.M. Destroyer St. Clair on the 20th, 400 miles west of Ireland.

Enemy Intelligence.

German.

7. The Scharnhorst and Gneisenau remain at Brest. On the 16th May a floating crane was working alongside the former. Air reconnaissance of Kiel on the 18th May showed an 8-inch cruiser in dry dock and a pocket battleship, probably the Admiral Scheer, in the port. The 8-inch cruiser Seydlitz was still at Bremen.

U-Boats.

8. Up to 16 German and 4 Italian U-boats have been operating in the North-Western Approaches throughout the week. The majority of them have been disposed to the west of Iceland (C), with two or three to the south of Iceland (C) and two north-west of the Hebrides. Up to five Germans have been working to the west and north-west of Freetown.

Raiders.

9. It is thought that the raider that sank H.M.S. Voltaire (Weekly Résumé No. 85) returned to Germany sometime in April.

There is probably one raider in the North Atlantic, one in the South Atlantic and one or perhaps two in the Indian Ocean.

Enemy Attack on Seaborne Trade.

10. Shipping losses during the period have been heavy. They have been mainly caused by U-boats, which made a heavy attack on a homeward-bound Canadian convoy about 300 miles south-east of Greenland, sank several independently-routed ships to the west of Freetown and inflicted a small number of casualties on shipping in the North-Western Approaches.

Aircraft have attacked convoys in the North-Western Approaches on two occasions and inflicted some casualties. In this area the S.S. Ungeni (3,160 tons) shot down a Focke-Wulf on the 19th and rescued five survivors.

There have been few air attacks on coastal convoys, all unsuccessful. There were several casualties from an aircraft attack in the Mediterranean and two from mines in the Thames Estuary.

Protection of Seaborne Trade.

11. During the week ended the 21st May, 904 ships, of which 154 were Allied and 21 Neutral, were convoyed. One battleship, one cruiser, twelve armed merchant cruisers and ocean-boarding vessels, four submarines, 59 destroyers, 66 sloops and corvettes and 7 ex-American coastguard-cutters have been employed on escort duties.

Imports into Great Britain by ships in convoy during the week ending the 17th May were 1,062,625 tons, compared with 861,156 tons during the previous week.
week and an average of 737,293 tons for the past ten weeks. Twenty-eight tankers brought 306,636 tons of oil compared with 245,291 tons in 26 tankers between the 4th and 10th May. Mineral imports were 326,129 tons, of which 260,316 tons were steel, pig-iron, scrap-iron and iron-ore. Timber imports were 35,359 tons, and cereals 208,841 tons. 26 ships were fully laden with grain. Other food imports amounted to 109,108 tons, of which the principal commodities, in tons, were: sugar and molasses, 43,601; refrigerated and tinned meats, bacon and hams, 23,369; dried and tinned fruit (including a cargo of 8,282 tons of currants), 9,982; cocoa, 8,298; butter, 4,184; tea, 1,887; and jam, 1,367. Three consignments of tobacco totalled 1,299 tons, and among large imports of machinery were 1,772 tons of machine tools.

British Minelaying.

12. On the 16th May, H.M. Ships *Teviot Bank* and *Plover* laid 370 mines in the East Coast area, and H.M. Ships *Aegaeon*, *Menestheus* and *Port Quebec* laid 1,490 mines in the Iceland (C)—Faroes Channel.

Minelaying by aircraft has continued, though not on any great scale, chiefly off the French Channel and Biscay Ports.

Enemy Minelaying, British Minesweeping.

Home Waters.

13. Enemy aircraft have carried out minelaying operations off our coasts every night this week, chiefly on the east coast from the Humber to the Thames Estuary and off Falmouth.

Six magnetic mines and 12 acoustic mines have been detonated during the week and one mine has been counter-mined in the Clyde. Seven contact mines have been swept in the Falmouth field and one contact mine has been swept about 31 miles east of Orfordness. The mine totals, including those dealt with in foreign waters, are now: acoustic 610, magnetic 1,151, contact 872.

Foreign Waters.

14. During the night of the 17th/18th May minelaying aircraft raided the Suez Canal, and six mines were dropped in the vicinity of Kantara, while about 20 bombs or mines exploded in the Canal or on the shore. The position of the mines were all marked. Two minelaying aircraft were shot down. Traffic is stopped in the northern section, but it is hoped to resume it shortly. Several objects suspected to be mines were dropped off the Grand Harbour entrance of Valletta, Malta, during the night of the 14th/15th May. No report of mines swept since this raid has so far been received. New searched approach channels have been established for the two Valletta harbours.

Enemy Merchant Shipping.

German.

15. Photographs taken of Bordeaux during the last week confirm the report that the *Portland*, 7,132 tons, had arrived at Bordeaux from Talcahuane.

The *Ithaaka*, 1,773 tons, and the *Cordelia*, 1,357 tons, with the Roumanian tanker *Campina*, 3,032 tons, entered the Bosphorus on the 14th bound for the Aegean and were met off the Dardanelles by two seaplanes and one aeroplane. The *Campina* is under German control and was fully loaded with 3,800 tons of petroleum. The *Ithaaka* was loaded with ammunition and the *Cordelia* with grain. The *Yalova* left Chanak for Mitylene on the 15th May, and her cargo was said to be food-stuffs. The *Arkadia*, 1,756 tons, is reported to have had a cargo of 6,100 bombs and a large number of small rubber boats when she passed Istanbul on the 8th May bound for the Aegean. The Bulgarian *Tzar Ferdinand*, 1,994 tons, passed Istanbul bound for the Black Sea on the 29th May.

Italian.

16. The *Pier Luigi*, 2,571 tons, which has been chartered by a German firm, passed Istanbul and Chanak on the 16th and 17th May respectively, bound for Greece, and is reported to have a cargo of 4,000 tons of grain. The *Caterina*
Madre, 4,020 tons, also German controlled, passed through the Bosporus on 19th May, bound for Salonika, with 5,850 tons of wheat. The tanker Giuseppina Ghirardi, 3,319 tons, with 8,000 tons of benzine, passed through the Bosporus on 19th May, bound for Greece. The agents of the Capo Arma, 3,175 tons, also under German control, have produced a bank guarantee for the debt due to the Shell Company, for which the ship had been sequestered at Istanbul; she has been released and sailed on 20th May for Braila.

The tankers Arcola, 6,349 tons, and Todaro, 5,162 tons, are reported to be loading at Teneriffe and to intend leaving on 20th May.

The Duchessa D'Aosta, 7,872 tons, which is at Fernando Po, in the Gulf of Guinea, is believed to be in wireless communication with Europe and transmitting information about the movements of allied shipping.

French Intelligence.

17. The disposition of the main units of the French Fleet is largely unchanged. The bulk of them are at Toulon, whilst there are light forces and damaged capital ships at the North African ports, Casablanca and Dakar.

It is reported that at Dakar the caissons have been removed from the battleship Richelieu, but that divers are still at work on her. At Toulon a system of "gardienage" has been instituted for all but a force consisting of the battleship Strasbourg, three 8-inch cruisers, two 6-inch cruisers, the aircraft carrier and certain small craft, which are kept at short notice. Under this system the ships are maintained ready for sea, partly fuelled and with ammunition, but provided with reduced civilian crews.

Reports of the state of opinion in the French Fleet suggest that it is now less anti-British than was formerly reported, and is certainly very anti-German, except for a number of over politically minded officers.

MILITARY SITUATION.

Operations.

NOTE.—The military operations in Crete are shown in paragraphs 71-75.

Egypt and Libya.

18. On the 15th of May, simultaneous offensive operations were carried out by our troops in the Sollum-Sofafi area and by the Tobruk garrison.

19. The former operation gained considerable initial success and our leading elements penetrated as far as Fort Capuzzo, seven miles west of Sollum. Later in the day an enemy counter-attack, supported by about 40 medium and heavy tanks, necessitated a withdrawal to positions in the Sidi Suleiman-Halfaya area with forward posts in Sollum. Heavy casualties in personnel and A.F.V.'s were inflicted on the enemy and 500 prisoners were taken.

On the 18th of May the enemy attempted an advance eastwards towards Halfaya and Sidi Suleiman with a force which included 70 tanks. The southern flank of this force was attacked by our armoured troops and the enemy withdrew later in the day.

20. The operations in the Tobruk area took the form of an advance by our fighting patrols and tanks in the Medawar salient, the western extremity of the defensive perimeter, a position which was recently occupied by the enemy. The enemy counter-attacked vigorously during the following night and recovered some of the ground which he had lost, but by the 16th of May our position in the salient had been consolidated with an average gain of about 600 yards.

Casualties have not yet been fully assessed, but it is believed that in all these operations the balance is in our favour.

Abyssinia.

21. On the 16th of May, emissaries from the Duke of Aosta, commanding the Italian forces in East Africa, arrived at the headquarters of our troops investing the Amba Alagi position to ask for terms of surrender for himself and the garrison. The formal surrender of the Amba Alagi garrison numbering about 7,000 took place on the 19th of May and the Duke of Aosta and his staff surrendered on the following day.
22. Operations against the remaining Italian forces concentrated about Gondar and Gimma and in the lake area of Southern Abyssinia are proceeding steadily, although hampered by bad weather.

**Iraq.**

23. A council of fair standing under local Sheikhs has been established at Basra for local administration. The situation there remains quiet and police posts 25 miles south of the city have been occupied without incident.

24. The progress of our advance columns from Palestine was delayed owing to soft going; the leading troops reaching El Majora, south of Lake Habbaniyah on 16th May, where they were met by armoured cars and have now arrived at Habbaniyah.

On the night of the 18th/19th May our troops entered Falluja without casualties. The bridge across the Tigris at this point was found to be undamaged.

**Far East.**


2/15 Punjab Regiment has arrived in Borneo from Singapore.

**Intelligence.**

**Germany.**

26. Several sources confirm the strengthening of German forces along the Russian frontier in North Norway, East Prussia and South Poland, and army formations which are being withdrawn from the Balkans may well be destined for Poland.

27. At the same time there are several reports which hint at a rapprochement between the two countries. Some of these suggest that German threats have been successful, and that arrangements for German control of the despatch of supplies from Russia have been accepted by the latter country.

28. German propaganda, which recently was spreading rumours of war, is now stressing closer co-operation. Two reports state that Hitler has not finally decided whether to obtain his wishes by persuasion or by force of arms, and another indicates that the latter alternative will be chosen if the former does not give results by the end of May.

**Norway.**

29. The number of German troops reported to have arrived recently in Kirkenes and North Norway amounts to the equivalent of one division. Movements of German transports from Baltic ports since the beginning of May tend to suggest that the German garrison in Norway and Finland is being further reinforced.

**Spain.**

30. Reports have been received of the presence of German troops at Pau, the reconnaissance unit of an armoured division being mentioned. One report suggests that Germany's intention in S.W. Europe is to neutralize Gibraltar by gaining command of the Straits from the Spanish and the African coasts, rather than to attempt its capture.

**Morocco.**

31. Small parties of German "tourists" are still filtering into the interior of the French and Spanish Zones of Morocco and intensifying their propaganda among the Moors. There have also been reports of similar parties at one or two points in West Africa.

**Turkey.**

32. It is reported that certain Germans in Iran with an intimate knowledge of Turkey were ordered on the 13th May to leave for Turkey within 48 hours.
33. The German occupation of several of the Greek islands in the Eastern Aegean constitutes a serious threat to Turkey, which would be intensified if the present attack on Crete proved successful.

Syria.

34. There now seems little doubt that the landing in Syria of German aircraft and the passage from Syria through Turkey of arms and ammunition for the Iraqi rebels were achieved with the full knowledge of the French High Commissioner and at the behest of Vichy. Fearing retaliation by us when the news leaked out, French troops were moved towards the Palestine and Iraq frontiers and A.A. defences around the principal towns and aerodromes were fully manned. It is now clear that General Dentz and the majority of the French in Syria will remain loyal to Vichy.

35. There are reports of an agreement between France and Germany, covering facilities at ports and air bases, whereby the French will withdraw to the Lebanon area, leaving Germany a free hand in the rest of the country. German “tourists” are daily expected in large numbers and there are rumours of the imminent arrival of a German Military Mission.

AIR SITUATION.

General Review.

36. During the week there was a decrease in the number of day and night operations carried out by Bomber Command owing to unfavourable weather conditions. The night effort of the enemy was also on a much reduced scale. Syrian aerodromes used by the German Air Force have been heavily attacked by our aircraft.

Germany and Occupied Territory.

General.

37. During the week Bomber Command flew 74 day and 448 night sorties, which is a decrease in both day and night operations compared with the previous week. Weather conditions deteriorated during the latter part of the period under review and caused projected operations to be cancelled on three nights, and curtailed on the fourth night.

Day.

38. With the exception of successful attacks on Gosnay, near Bethune, and on Heligoland, all our daylight operations were concentrated against enemy shipping and are reported under Coastal Operations. The attack on Gosnay was directed against the Power Station and Benzol Plant, direct hits being scored on both objectives causing clouds of steam and smoke at the former and volumes of smoke from the latter. Photographs confirm this. Thirteen squadrons of fighters were engaged in escorting our bombers and covering their withdrawal. Numerous combats ensued and we lost six fighters and one bomber; five enemy fighters were destroyed and eight more damaged. On the same day the naval base of Heligoland was subjected to a surprise attack carried out from heights of 40 to 50 feet, in the face of intense anti-aircraft gunfire. Explosions were seen in the centre of the town from which a mass of smoke and flame resulted. One of our bombers did not return.

Night.

39. On the first four nights of the week aircraft of Bomber Command carried out moderately heavy attacks against the Industrial centres at Cologne (on two consecutive nights), Hanover and the naval shipbuilding yards at Kiel. Attacks on a lighter scale were made on Boulogne, Dieppe, Rotterdam and a number of secondary targets. Three Manchesters and two Stirlings bombed the industrial centre of Berlin on the night of the 15th/16th. Apart from many large fires seen through gaps in the cloud, results were obscured by indifferent visibility and searchlight dazzle. Some indication of the effect of these attacks may, how-
ever, be gauged from the weight of bombs dropped in the target areas. Cologne received 178 tons of High Explosive bombs and 25,500 incendiary bombs; Hanover, 88 tons of H.E. and 10,500 incendiary bombs; Kiel, 50 tons of H.E. and 2,300 incendiary bombs, while 15 tons of H.E. were dropped on Berlin.

40. Coastal Command aircraft on two nights bombed the docks at Willemsoord and Dieppe. Other attacks were made on the E-boat base at Ijmuiden, U-boats at St. Nazaire and destroyers at La Pallice, in addition to small raids on invasion ports and on aerodromes near Brest. Bombs were seen in most instances to explode in the target areas, but accurate observation was difficult owing to weather conditions.

Fighter Command despatched offensive sorties against aerodromes in Northern France on two nights.

United Kingdom.

41. Fighter Command flew 1,171 patrols involving 3,177 sorties by day and 669 sorties were flown by night. There was a slight increase in the daylight effort of the enemy. By night, however, there was a considerable decrease, only 290 long-range bombers being employed as compared with 1,070 in the preceding week, although adverse weather conditions prevailed on three nights only.

42. By day, the usual enemy reconnaissance and patrols were flown, and again there were a few offensive daylight sweeps by small formations over Kent. Hawkinge aerodrome was machine-gunned three times on the 16th May by one of these formations. During the week our fighters destroyed at least fifteen aircraft engaged in these operations, and A.A. guns destroyed three others. We lost seven aircraft, but three pilots were saved.

43. By night, there were no sustained or concentrated bombing attacks on this country. The heaviest attack was made on the night of the 16th/17th May, when about 140 aircraft made a widespread attack on the Midlands. Three enemy night bombers were destroyed during the week. We lost two Beaufighters, but the crews are safe.

Coastal Operations.

44. Coastal Command flew 252 patrols and provided escorts for 107 convoys, involving a total of 821 sorties. Shipping protection patrols carried out by Fighter Command totalled 886 and involved 1,849 sorties.

45. Enemy coastal shipping was subjected to a number of attacks by aircraft of Bomber Command and Coastal Command, in the course of which Blenheims of the former Command sank a 2,500-ton merchant vessel off Bergen.

46. Eighteen successful minelaying sorties were flown during the week, of which twelve were carried out by aircraft of Coastal Command. An average of about 18 enemy minelaying aircraft was plotted on six nights, operating principally between the Thames Estuary and the Humber and in Liverpool Bay and off our South-Western coasts.

47. Aircraft of the Condor unit carried out two dawn attacks on shipping North-West of Ireland and other units were similarly engaged at night off the East Coasts of England and Scotland, East of Dublin and South-West of Wales. During daylight Me. 109's made two attacks on shipping off the South Coast.

48. Enemy bomber reconnaissance aircraft continued their routine patrols over our coastal areas and the North Sea.

Malta.

49. Enemy aircraft made six attacks on Malta during the week, but our fighters were unable to intercept. Luqa aerodrome was again the main target and was attacked twice on the 20th and once on the 21st May by large formations of German aircraft. Three of our aircraft on the ground were burnt out and others were damaged. Some damage was also done to the aerodrome buildings. Takali and Halfar aerodromes were also attacked, but only slight damage was caused.
50. On the night of the 15th/16th the Grand Harbour was attacked by eight German aircraft, and Valletta was bombed twice during the week, some civilian property being demolished.

51. Several reconnaissances of the Tunisian and Sicilian coasts and of the Ionian Sea were flown by our Maryland aircraft.

Crete and Eastern Mediterranean.

52. A report of the operations in Crete are described in paragraphs 71 to 75 of this Résumé.

53. Our aircraft have continued to make heavy attacks on aerodromes in Greece used by the enemy as bases for air attacks on Crete. On the night of the 16th/17th May seventeen Wellingtons from Egypt heavily attacked the aerodromes at Malaoi and at Argos. Four aircraft were destroyed at the former and large fires were started at the latter. Two nights later seven Wellingtons attacked successfully the aerodromes at Hassan and Eleusis; and on the night of the 20th/21st ten Wellingtons heavily bombed the aerodromes at Malaoi, Eleusis, Menidi and Toplia.

54. On the night of the 17th/18th May a Wellington bombed Calato aerodrome (Rhodes) and started several small fires.

55. On the 15th, eight Italian aircraft bombed Nicosia (Cyprus), but caused no service damage or casualties.

Egypt and Libya.

56. Benghazi Harbour was heavily bombed by our aircraft three times during the week and much damage was done to buildings near the Mole.

57. Attacks on enemy aerodromes were continued. Hurricanes destroyed two Me. 109’s on the ground at Gazala; at Derna, eight Wellingtons and two Blenheims dropped bombs on a large concentration of enemy aircraft and on the hangars. The Barracks and aircraft at Apollonia were also successfully machine-gunned.

58. Several successful attacks were made on enemy supply columns. On the 16th May Hurricanes and Blenheim fighters machine-gunned a convoy of one hundred large M.T. vehicles between Barce and Derna, destroying several of them, and on the 19th a Hurricane set fire to vehicles which were conveying troops between Derna and Bardia.

59. About thirty enemy aircraft attacked the harbour and the water distillery at Tobruk on the 17th without causing damage or casualties. The Suez Canal near Port Said was attacked by Ju. 88’s and He. 111’s on the night of the 17th/18th May, when about fifty mines or bombs were dropped, thirty of which failed to explode. Low machine-gun attacks were also made. No damage or casualties are reported, but three enemy aircraft were destroyed.

Palestine and Syria.

60. German aircraft proceeding to Iraq have continued to make use of Syrian aerodromes.

61. Our aircraft heavily attacked enemy aircraft on the aerodromes at Palmyra, Rayak and Damascus. A He. 111 and a large transport aircraft were set on fire at Palmyra, and the runway at Rayak was damaged.

62. Our aircraft which were engaged on these operations were fired on in the Damascus, Aleppo, Beirut and Rayak areas, and attempts were made by French fighter aircraft to intercept.
Iraq.

63. Our aircraft have continued their attacks on aerodromes and barracks. In the attack on the hangars at Rashid on the 20th May thirteen direct hits were obtained, and in the attack on Mosul aerodrome by Blenheim fighters on 16th/17th May two enemy aircraft on the ground were set on fire and others were damaged by machine-gun attack. An extensive fire was also started.

64. Standing patrols were maintained by our aircraft over Habbaniya and Fallujah. Iraqi troops at Fallujah were attacked by our bombers on the 19th and pamphlets were dropped demanding surrender. On the same day a column of British troops was landed to the east of the town by Valentias and Douglas aircraft.

65. A number of German aircraft have arrived in Iraq. Two Me. 110's were shot down over Rashid on the 17th May. On the 16th and 20th He. 111's and Me. 110's attacked Habbaniya aerodrome, where the engine repair depot was set on fire and some damage was caused to our aircraft.

66. The Iraqi Air Force have not been in action since the 7th May.

Abyssinia.

67. During the week our aircraft attacked enemy positions at Gondar and at Chilga, near Lake Tana, and aerodromes at Azazo and Gimma. Attacks were also made on motor transport and armoured fighter vehicles between Chilga and Gondar and near Dalle, several direct hits being scored.

General Air Intelligence.

Syria.

68. It is reported that the defences of Syrian Aerodromes are being improved and that troops are standing-to in anticipation of a British attempt to take over control of Syria.

69. The two train loads of arms which left Aleppo on the 11th May have arrived in Iraq, and these arms are believed to be now in the hands of the Iraqi rebels.

70. Meanwhile, the infiltration of German "tourists" into Syria continues and 200 are reported to be expected to arrive shortly at Beirut.

CRETE.

71. After a week of considerable air activity, during which our aircraft made a number of heavy attacks on aerodromes in Greece used by the Germans as bases for air attacks on Crete, a large number of enemy aircraft on the 19th May made heavy bombing and machine-gun attacks on the Maleme, Canea, Heraklion and Suda Bay areas.

72. On the 18th May, Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force, and General Freyberg had decided to withdraw the remaining aircraft, as experience in Greece had shown the impossibility of operating them without adequate A.A. protection in the face of a heavy scale of air attack. Conditions in Crete were even more unfavourable as there were no facilities for dispersal, and aerodrome defences were insufficient.

73. In the morning of the 20th May enemy air attacks were continued and at 0800 German air-borne troops had been landed south and south-west of Canea. At 1100 approximately 1,500 enemy troops wearing New Zealand battle dress landed by gliders, parachutes and troop carriers in the Canea and Maleme areas. By the afternoon most of them had been mopped up, but a fairly strong enemy party south of the Canea-Maleme road had not been accounted for. During the afternoon parachute troops wearing English battle dress landed in Heraklion town, on the aerodrome and in the Candia area.
74. On the 21st of May, the situation at Heraklion was obscure, but the town and harbour were partly occupied by the enemy, who had mounted machine guns on the mole. In the Retinio Sector an attack on the aerodrome at 0300 was successfully withstood. During the morning in the Maleme area a heavy air attack forced our troops to withdraw east of the aerodrome. According to a later report the aerodrome and the area west of it were held by the enemy, but elsewhere the coast line was in our hands. Landings of parachute troops S.W. of Canea at 1515 were heavily engaged by our artillery and machine-gun fire.

During the week the garrison of Crete had been reinforced by 2nd Leicesters, 6 "I" tanks, 16 light tanks, 18 A.A. guns, 17 field guns, and on the 18th and 19th May a further battalion with 14 days' supplies, together with 3 "I" tanks, and stores were landed at Mesara Bay.

75. Strong forces of the Mediterranean Fleet had been operating in the vicinity of the island for some days, and on the night of the 20th cruisers and destroyers patrolled the north coast but without result. They retired to the southward during daylight on the 21st, and the destroyers refuelled. H.M. destroyer Juno was sunk by bombs in this area about noon. On the afternoon of the 21st five convoys of merchant ships and fishing vessels, two of them escorted by destroyers, were reported steering towards Crete from the islands to the north. Cruisers and destroyers were ordered to intercept, and during the night sank an enemy destroyer, two merchant ships and a number of caiques. Up to 0845 hours on 22nd May no sea-borne enemy troops had been landed in the Heraklion, Retimo, Canea and Maleme areas. (Operations are continuing.)

HOME SECURITY SITUATION.

General.

By Day.

76. Minor bombing occurred in Kent and Sussex on the 15th May and at Brixham on the 19th May.

By Night.

77. Compared with previous weeks, bombing was on a minor scale and of a widespread nature. On the 16th/17th May, however, the bombing was chiefly concentrated on the Birmingham area, Nuneaton receiving the main weight of the attack. Southampton, Plymouth, Leicester and Chelmsford were among other places where bombs were dropped. Three aerodromes in Cornwall were attacked.

Damage.

Nuneaton.

78. In the attack on the 16th/17th May damage to war industry was not serious, but part of the Daimler Company's works were destroyed by fire. Production in other factories was hampered for a few days by damage to the town's utility services. Several public buildings and many houses were damaged.

Birmingham.

79. The military effect of the raid was very small. Although fires were started at five important factories, the damage was not serious. In the centre of the City a shelter was hit causing several casualties.

Elsewhere.

80. At Brixham a gasometer was badly damaged and at Tipton damage at the Mond Gas Company temporarily affected the supply of 44 industrial concerns in the Black Country. A benzol plant at Plymouth was destroyed. Some damage was caused in the Docks of Barrow-in-Furness and to the Royal Ordnance Depot, Landguard Point, Felixstowe.

Casualties.

81. Casualties for the week ending 0600 hours, 21st May, are estimated at 163 killed and 212 seriously injured. No casualties have been reported from London.
APPENDICES I, II and III
will be published monthly.

APPENDIX IV.

Enemy Merchant Ship Losses up to Wednesday, 21st May, 1941.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captured or seized</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>274,000</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuttled or sunk</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>589,000</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified ships reported by S/M, A/C, &amp;c, as sunk or destroyed (tonnage estimated)</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>930,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>351</td>
<td>1,793,000</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, 42 ships of 72,000 gross tons under enemy control or useful to the enemy have been sunk.
Also some 53 ships, totalling 320,000 gross tons, have been placed under protective custody in United States and South American ports to prevent sabotage by their crews.

APPENDIX V.

Casualties to H.M. Auxiliary Vessels and to Naval Personnel.

The following casualties have occurred to H.M. Auxiliary Patrol vessels during the period under review:

May 15.—M.T.B. 50 damaged by aircraft in the Dover Straits and towed into harbour.
May 18.—H.M. Drifter Jewel sunk by mine in Belfast Lough with the loss of all the crew, and the Balloon Barrage Vessel Hilda was damaged by mine off Liverpool.
May 19.—H.M. Trawlers Darthema and Comptator damaged by air attack in Lyme Bay.

The following casualties to naval personnel have been reported:
Officers: Killed 8, missing 1, prisoners of war 2, wounded 4.
Ratings: Killed 71, missing 13, prisoners of war 119.
Operational Aircraft Battle Casualties.

0600 hours, Thursday, 15th May, 1941, to 0600 hours, Thursday, 22nd May, 1941.

Metropolitan Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>In the Air</th>
<th>On the Ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of pilots known to be safe, 6.

German.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destroyed</th>
<th>Probably Destroyed</th>
<th>Damaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No account is taken of aircraft destroyed on the ground.

Of the above totals, 2 fighters were destroyed by A.A. fire.

Middle East.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>In the Air</th>
<th>On the Ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above totals, 1 aircraft was lost in action and 5 aircraft were destroyed on the ground in F.T.S. (Iraq).

German.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destroyed</th>
<th>Probably Destroyed</th>
<th>Damaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the above totals, 4 bombers, 2 fighters and 5 miscellaneous aircraft were destroyed, and 2 miscellaneous aircraft were probably destroyed by A.A. fire.

Italian Aircraft Losses: Nil.

APPENDIX VII.

Air Attacks on Enemy Territory in Europe.

Extracts from Recent Raid Assessment Reports.

The following reports of damage have been received during the past week from Air Reconnaissance and Intelligence sources:

Germany.

Berlin.—An informant present in the Unter den Linden on the night of the 9th/10th April reports that at the Brandenburger Tor and incendiaries fell in the roadway, but further down they fell on the roofs of houses on the north side of the street. The roofs were set on fire and in some cases premises were burnt out on the top and second floors. No serious attempts were made for about an
hour to deal with incendiaries which fell in the roadway. H.E. bombs fell on a school and a theatre near the Reichstag; another fell on a bank building in the Mittelstrasse, which was entirely destroyed, and another fell in the Hausvogtei Platz (in which the Reichsbank is situated), completely destroying a six-storey tailoring establishment. A delay-action bomb in the Mittelstrasse went off at 5 in the afternoon of the 10th, and in the Lichtenberg district 422 flats had had to be evacuated. A further report concerning the "new bomb" which was dropped on the 17th/18th April states that practically every window within half a mile was broken and within 250 yards roofs had been lifted off and all window frames and doors blown in.

An informant present on the 18th/19th April observed repair work proceeding at both the Anhalter and Stettiner Stations. One corner of the Friedrichstrasse Station has been hit and the Winter Palace Music Hall nearby has closed down, all its windows having been blown out.

**Mannheim.**—In the raid on the 5th/6th May the Rhine Bridge was hit and damaged. Traffic over it was restricted. A large mill in Ludwigshaven was still burning the next morning, and the I.G. Farben Works were ringed off by the military. Ambulances were seen leaving the works for the hospital throughout the day. In the raid on the 29th/30th April the harbour area was heavily damaged, 12 river cargo boats were destroyed and a large iron foundry and engineering works was hit causing casualties among the personnel.

**Hamburg.**—As a result of the attacks on the 8th/9th, 10th/11th and 11th/12th May nearly every part of the city has suffered, and in particular the district surrounding the station. The bombs used had great explosive effect and the city is said to present a tragic picture. Photographs taken during the attack on the night of the 11th/12th show fires increasing in intensity in the Altona district.

**Bremen.**—The raid on the 8th/9th May caused considerable damage to property and many people were killed or injured.

**Cologne.**—In a raid on the 3rd/4th May part of the Deutz Works were burnt out and a textile works was heavily damaged.

**Emden.**—The railway lines and goods sheds along the Cobfleut Canal have been damaged five times. The outer harbour railway station has received three direct hits and the railway sheds lying to the North and South thereof four direct hits. A power station to the North-West has been hit on two occasions, causing a complete stoppage for two days each time.

**General.**—Reliable informants state that the German people are impressed with the recent scale and weight of R.A.F. attacks, which are stated to be highly successful. In Kiel, Mannheim and Hamburg the authorities have no longer been able to prevent the inhabitants knowing the extent of the damage. Many rumours are current in Germany about the terrific effect of the latest British bombs.

**France.**

**Brest.**—In the raid on the 4th/5th May the Gneisenau received further serious damage from a direct hit. It is said that both battle cruisers have received damage that will necessitate at least two months' repair work.

**Norway.**

In the attack on the aerodrome at Sola on the night of the 5th/6th May two barracks were destroyed and two damaged by incendiary bombs. One of the hangars was severely damaged by a bomb which hit the ground 10 metres away, demolishing one of the walls. Eight aircraft in the hangar were damaged.

The following information of damage has been received from Prisoner of War Sources and should be treated with reserve:

**Berlin.**—A P/W who visited Berlin in March stated that, in his opinion, raid damage was much more serious than had been admitted in official communiqués. A German officer, who was in Berlin about the same time, declared
that the R.A.F. could be expected to arrive punctually about 2300 hours. Shortly before this, all cafés and places of amusement were closed and trams and buses were crammed with people hurrying home.

**Bremen.**—Heavy damage is reported to have been caused to the Focke-Wulf aircraft factory and 300 Kondor wings are said to have been destroyed. A large part of Germany’s remaining stocks of coffee was stored in warehouses at Bremen which were hit and set on fire last January. The population of Bremen and Hamburg are becoming increasingly nervous and dissatisfied, and are unable to work properly owing to lack of sleep. Although much overtime is worked, and wages are higher than ever before, this confers little advantage owing to lack of goods available for purchase.

**Wilhelmshaven.**—It is reported that entire roads have been destroyed, the Jackmann bridge and the street leading to it have disappeared, and the Königstrasse, the Roonstrasse, and a swing bridge have been damaged. It is impossible to get ships out of the harbour because of damage to the locks.

**Kiel.**—Much damage is reported, and it is said that in an attack towards the end of February 600-700 people were killed.