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WAR CABINET

WEEKLY RÉSUMÉ
(No. 117)

of the
NAVAL, MILITARY AND AIR SITUATION
from 0700 November 20th, to
0700 November 27th,
1941

[Circulated with the approval of the Chiefs of Staff.]
NAVAL SITUATION.

General Review.
Naval forces have been co-operating with the Army off the Libyan coast and have destroyed two enemy supply ships.

An Italian cruiser has probably been sunk by one of our submarines in the Central Mediterranean.

H.M.S. Dunedin and H.M.A.S. Sydney are presumed sunk by enemy action.

A merchant raider has been destroyed in the South Atlantic.

Our shipping losses have been exceptionally light.

Home Waters.

2. On the 23rd the fifteenth Canadian troop convoy arrived in Home Waters.

During an attack by E-boats on a coastal convoy off Cromer on the night of 23rd/24th, one E-boat was sunk, one was probably sunk and another was damaged by the escorting destroyers.

Northern Waters.

3. On 12th November, the Russian submarine K.21, in the vicinity of Hammerfest (westward of North Cape), torpedoed two merchant vessels of 4,000/5,000 tons, one of which was sunk.

Early on the 22nd, in an attack on a westbound convoy off Vardo (Varanger Fjord), H.M. Submarine Seawolf sank a 3,000-ton tanker, and on the 24th, in the same vicinity, torpedoed another merchant ship.

On the 24th, H.M.S. Kenya, with two British and two Russian destroyers, bombarded the enemy fort and batteries at Vardo.

Mediterranean.

4. Light forces have operated off the Libyan coast in support of our military operations, and cruisers and destroyers have been disposed to intercept reinforcements by sea.

The S.S. Glenroy (Special Service vessel, 9,809 tons), on passage to Tobruk, was hit by a torpedo during an attack by two torpedo-bombers, and was subsequently beached at Mersa Matruh. One certainly and possibly both attacking aircraft were shot down.

H.M. Australian Sloop Paramatta was torpedoed to the north-eastward of Tobruk. Survivors have been sent to Alexandria, but no details are available.

On the 10th November, the Greek submarine Glaucos torpedoed and probably sank a merchant ship of 3,000 tons off Heraklion (Crete). On the 21st the Polish submarine Sokol, off Navarino Bay, obtained two hits on a southbound convoy of three ships escorted by a destroyer. On the same day H.M. Submarine Utmost, in the vicinity of the Strait of Messina, attacked a force of three cruisers and three destroyers. One cruiser was hit and probably sunk. In a further attack on this force by aircraft another cruiser was hit by torpedo (see Air Section). Two schooners were sunk by H.M. Submarine Q.21 off the north-western coast of Italy.

In the afternoon of the 24th, following a report by aircraft, H.M. Ships Aurora and Penelope, with two destroyers, sank two southbound merchant ships of 5,000 tons, escorted by two destroyers, to the south-west of Crete. The escorting destroyers escaped.

It is estimated that 14,000 tons of enemy shipping has been sunk or damaged in the Mediterranean by our aircraft; details are given in the Air Section.

During the week approximately 22,000 tons of French shipping westbound and 15,000 tons eastbound have passed the Straits of Gibraltar under escort.

South Atlantic.

5. On the 22nd H.M.S. Devonshire sank an enemy vessel, thought to be the German Merchant Raider Goldenfels (7,800 tons), 800 miles S.S.W. of Freetown. No survivors were picked up owing to danger from attack by U-boat.
H.M.S. *Dunedin*, on patrol in the Central Atlantic, has failed to answer signals for more than forty-eight hours and it is feared that she has been sunk by a *U*-boat.

**East Indies.**

6. H.M.S. *Cornwall*, to the south-east of Cape Guardafui, intercepted the French s.s. *Surcouf* (1,129 tons) north-bound with a cargo of foodstuffs.

**Australia.**

7. From the information at present available, it is understood that an action took place to the west of Cape Farquhar (West Australia) between H.M.A.S. *Sydney* and an enemy raider, resulting in both ships being sunk. German seamen survivors have been picked up in this vicinity by the British tanker *Trocus* (7,406 tons), but up to the present no survivors from *Sydney* have been found.

**Anti-Submarine Operations.**

8. During the week there have been six inconclusive attacks on *U*-boats, three by aircraft to the westward of Ushant, two by our surface craft in the Straits of Gibraltar and to the south-west of Freetown, and one by a Russian patrol boat in the approaches to the White Sea.

**Enemy Intelligence.**

**German.**

0. There is no change in the position of main units. The battleship *Tirpitz* shows no sign of impending activity, but the Pocket Battleship *Admiral Scheer* remains at immediate notice.

**U-boats.**

Reports received indicate no important changes in the disposition of *U*-boats in the North Atlantic. In the South Atlantic *U*-boats have been reported off Freetown, in the St. Helena area, and two or three in mid-Atlantic near the Equator.

**Enemy Attack on Seaborne Trade.**

10. No casualties from *U*-boats or mines have been reported during the week. Two ships were sunk and another damaged in a southbound convoy, which was attacked by *E*-boats off the Norfolk coast. Enemy aircraft damaged two ships off the East Coast and have also attacked shipping off the Wexford coast, inside territorial waters.

**Protection of Seaborne Trade.**

11. During the week ending the 26th November, 1,110 ships, including 244 allied and 35 neutral were convoyed. Two cruisers, four anti-aircraft ships, 108 destroyers (including 30 United States destroyers), and 107 sloops, corvettes and minesweepers were employed on escort duties.

Imports into the United Kingdom by ships in convoy during the week ending the 22nd November were 602,000 tons, of which 240,511 tons were oil of various grades. Imports during the previous week were 608,354, and the average for the past ten weeks was 896,000 tons.

**British Minelaying.**

12. During the week mines have been laid off the Belgian Coast and off French Biscay Ports.
Enemy Minelaying, British Minesweeping.

13. On the night of 23rd/24th, about 30 enemy aircraft laid mines in the upper Bristol Channel, which necessitated closing all ports above Swansea for two days. On the night of the 24th/25th, about 23 aircraft operated over the Thames Estuary. Minor raids were also made off Holyhead, Milford Haven, Falmouth and Lyme Bay. Twelve magnetic and nine acoustic mines have been destroyed during the week. The mine totals are: 1,529 magnetic, 1,170 acoustic and 1,063 moored.

Enemy Merchant Shipping.

14. The Yugoslav *Serafin Topic* (4,294 tons), which has been at Oran since January 1941, is reported to have been handed over to the Italians. The Italian *Mauro Croce* (1,049 tons) is reported to have been torpedoed on 9th November while on passage from Barcelona to Genoa. The Italian *Capo Pino* (4,785 tons) is overdue at Istanbul from Salonika and is reported to have been sunk. The Yugoslav *Tomislav* (5,387 tons), which has been taken over by Lloyd Triestino, left Shanghai on 19th November under the Italian flag.

MILITARY SITUATION.

(An outline map showing Axis operations against Russia is included in this Résumé as an inset.)

Russo-German Campaign.

Finland.

15. There has been no change.

Leningrad Sector.

16. Fierce fighting has taken place east of Leningrad in the Volkhov-Tikvin area, but there has been no appreciable change.

Central Sector.

17. The territorial situation in the immediate neighbourhood of Kalinin remains the same, but it appears that the German forces, which were held at this point, have been diverted south-eastwards against Moscow. This new drive has made substantial progress and the Germans claim to have reached Solnechnaya Gora, which is less than 40 miles from Moscow.

Due west of the capital there has been no advance by the Germans against the vigorous Russian resistance, but the pressure is being maintained. Coincidental with the new Moscow thrust the intensified offensive immediately to the south of Tula continues, and has made some further progress in the direction of Riazhsk.

South of Orel there has been a slight advance to the Orel-Kursk railway.

Ukraine.

18. Some slight advance has been made south-east of Kharkov in the direction of Kupyansk.

Although the Germans have reached Rostov, strong Russian resistance continues, and, as the town is on the right bank of the Don, its loss would have no serious immediate strategic effect, provided the bridges over the river were destroyed.

Crimea.

19. The whole of the Crimea is now in German hands except for the south-western extremity, where Sevastopol continues to resist strongly.

Up to the present the Germans have made no attempts to cross the Kerch Straits.

Conclusion.

20. The new offensive towards Moscow from the north-west, in conjunction with the maintenance of pressure due west of the city, considerably increases the
threat to the capital. The Russians, however, continue to resist vigorously and there is no indication of any collapse before this new offensive.

The eastward thrust south of Tula is also serious and, as mentioned in last week's Résumé may be aimed either at cutting the Moscow–Ryazan–Voronezh railway, or more probably, at swinging northwards against Moscow from the line Tula–Riazansk. The result of the new offensives will largely depend on whether the improved weather conditions hold. A sudden thaw, which is probable at this time of the year, might well bring operations to a standstill.

The Germans may be expected to continue their thrust in the Rostov sector, with the object of crossing the River Don as quickly as possible and then beginning their drive into Caucasus.

Operations.

Enemy Forces and Dispositions.

Libya.

21. Prior to the opening of the campaign enemy forces in Cyrenaica were believed to consist of—

(a) German Afrika Corps—
   15th Armoured Division
   21st Armoured Division
   55th Savona Infantry Division,
located roughly in the area Bardia–Sollum–Sidi Omar.

(b) Italian 21st Corps—
   17th Pavia Infantry Division,
   25th Bologna Infantry Division,
   27th Brescia Infantry Division,

with a stiffening of German infantry, investing Tobruk.

(c) Italian 10th Corps—
   132 Ariete Armoured Division,
   101 Trieste Motor Division,
   102 Trento Motor Division,
in reserve in the area El Adem–El Gobi–Bir Hachim to the south of Tobruk.

The German armoured divisions were on a colonial establishment and contained only one armoured regiment each (in addition to infantry regiments, supporting artillery, &c.). The 132 Ariete Armoured Division was thought to be about the equivalent of a British armoured brigade. In all, it was estimated that the Axis disposed of some 387 tanks, apart from obsolescent and very light tanks.

The task of containing the Tobruk garrison fell in the main to Italian forces, consisting of three infantry divisions and elements of one motorised division. They were also responsible for the defence of outposts, such as the remote Jalo oasis, 260 miles south-west of Tobruk.

Own Forces and Plan.

22. As far as is known, General Auchinleck's intentions were—

(a) to bring about a tank battle, with the particular object of destroying the German 15th and 21st Armoured Divisions;

(b) at the same time, to roll up the enemy's forces in the frontier area Sollum–Bardia–Sidi Omar from the south and south-west.

To provoke the tank battle, the plan was to advance on Tobruk with cruiser tank formations via Fort Maddalena and El Gobi with the object of forcing the enemy to leave his laager positions and fight in the open. The Tobruk garrison was to co-operate.

The attack on the enemy in the frontier area was to be carried out primarily with unarmoured formations supported by “1” tanks.

In addition, a third force was to advance from Jarabub on Jalo, in Western Cyrenaica, a distance of 180 miles.
The Opening of the Offensive.

23. Before the main offensive, certain preliminary operations were carried out in the vicinity of the coast behind the enemy’s lines. The results of these operations are not yet known.

24. The offensive which opened at dawn on the 18th November coincided with very bad weather which prevented the bombing of enemy aerodromes on the extensive scale which had been planned. Heavy rain had fallen in Cyrenaica and turned usually motorable areas into mud. The Western Desert railway to Mersa Matruh was breached in several places, although the damage was not serious.

The rainfall had, however, been much heavier on the coast than inland, and enemy communications, landing grounds and laagers were more adversely affected than the desert areas in which our troops had concentrated.

25. The armoured portion of the force refuelled some 20 miles east of the frontier at 0900 hours on the 18th November and proceeded to advance according to plan. By the late afternoon the leading brigade was 20 miles south-east of El Gobi, with the remainder of the force echeloned in rear.

By midday advanced patrols of the formations detailed for the attack on the enemy in the frontier area had made contact on the general line Halfaya-Scheferzen, and, at dusk, a detachment was located between the Halfaya ridge and the coast, the bulk of the force being in the Scheferzen area and to the south-east of it.

Meanwhile the advance from Jarabub had begun. Strict wireless silence was preserved during this stage of the operations. Hitherto serious battle had not been joined, but all available evidence pointed to the fact that the enemy had not yet appreciated either the scope or weight of the offensive.

On the morning of the 18th November an enemy force of tanks and M.T. were reported by air reconnaissance to be stuck in the mud at Bir el Gobi and were later very successfully attacked by Blenheims and Marylands.

Operations on the 19th and 20th November.

26. Reports of operations subsequent to the approach march have naturally been fragmentary, and it is not yet possible to give a connected story of the battle.

The first clashes between armoured forces appear to have occurred on the afternoon of the 19th November, when 15 Italian tanks were destroyed near Bir el Gobi, and one of our leading formations met some 60 German tanks, believed to be of the 21st Panzer Division, 20 miles to the north-west of Sidi Omar. In the latter action 26 enemy tanks were destroyed and 20 of our own were lost.

Meanwhile the formation in the centre had pushed on unopposed in the direction of Sidi Rezegh, south-east of Tobruk.

27. On the 20th November the armoured battle was joined in earnest. The formation on the right took up the pursuit of the enemy forces with which it had been engaged in the Bir el Meliha area on the previous afternoon and drove them off in a north-easterly direction, inflicting a loss of 34 tanks and 9 tank transporters. Meanwhile the centre formation had encountered 200 tanks of the 15th Panzer Division, which seem to have been trying to cut their way out to the west. In the action which developed to the south-east of Sidi Rezegh the enemy lost 70 tanks, 33 armoured cars and several hundred prisoners before withdrawing. In addition, 19 enemy aircraft, previously damaged by our fighters, were captured on Sidi Rezegh landing ground with their crews.

In the centre, between Sidi Rezegh and Bir el Meliha, another British armoured formation came into action against German tanks moving south-west from the Bardia-Gambut area. The results of this action are still not known.

28. Enemy tank casualties on the 19th and 20th November amounted in all to 150 tanks, 33 armoured cars and 9 transporters—approximately half of the German armoured strength in Cyrenaica.

29. On the evening of the 20th November, reserves of tanks were sent up to make good the losses sustained by our armoured forces during the opening engagements.
30. While these battles were in progress, increasing pressure was being exerted on the enemy in the Halfaya-Sidi Omar region: part of our forces engaging the enemy in a northerly direction and part outflanking the defences to the west, directed on Sidi Aziz, 12 miles to the south-west of Bardia.

31. Throughout these two days the R.A.F. were most active and steadily gained a degree of air superiority which by the 21st November appears to have become almost complete. A marked feature of the air operations was the excellent co-operation with the armoured formations. An example of this may be quoted when a distress call for ammunition was made at 1230 hours on the 20th November; the ammunition was picked up from Matruh and delivered to the formation concerned on the scene of battle four hours later.

Operations on the 21st November.

32. The 21st November saw a continuation of the heavy fighting. This was to be expected after the German High Command had recovered from the shock of their original surprise. By midday a strong enemy tank force was being engaged heavily by our armoured formations south of Sidi Rezegh. At the same time a defensive flank was established at El Gobi to mask the Italian Ariete Division, which had withdrawn westward after the action of the 18th November. Fighting in the Rezegh area was undoubtedly very heavy on this day and casualties to our armoured forces may have been severe. There is reason to hope, however, that the enemy force which contained the bulk of German armoured fighting vehicles remaining in Cyrenaica was very seriously depleted.

33. Meanwhile the Tobruk Garrison, which had been ordered to make a sortie at dawn, was making slow progress towards Sidi Rezegh. Their sally had been preceded by a successful feint attack by British and Polish infantry on the western sector, intended to cover the real point of exit on the eastern perimeter. The considerable opposition from German infantry and extensive minefields met on the eastern flank were undoubtedly the main factors contributing to the slowing up of this advance, in which 1,100 prisoners, half of them German, were captured.

34. Further east, part of the force in the frontier area had advanced to Sidi Aziz, 10 miles west of Capuzzo and in rear of the German battalions in the Capuzzo-Halfaya area. To the south a detachment had by-passed Sidi Omar, held by the 55th Savona Division, and was planning to attack that fort on the following morning from the north.

In the desert the force from Jarabub was also preparing to attack Jalo.

Operations on the 22nd and 23rd November.

35. Accounts of the operations up to the morning of the 23rd November are still somewhat disconnected.

It appears that on the 22nd November the majority of the enemy tanks succeeded in extricating themselves from the engagement south of Sidi Rezegh and retiring north-eastwards behind the escarpment, covered by a screen of anti-tank weapons.

Later in the day the formation holding Sidi Rezegh was attacked by a strong force of enemy tanks from the east and west and was forced to withdraw southwards. These tanks may have been partly those which had succeeded in disengaging themselves from the battle earlier in the day and partly Italian and German tanks which had been concentrated south of Tobruk.

By the following morning the bulk of our armoured force and the unarmoured troops accompanying it were engaging this new enemy force south of Sidi Rezegh. The battle continued throughout the day and casualties on both sides are believed to have been heavy.

36. Few further details have been received of the sortie south-eastward from Tobruk. On the 22nd November, however, the advance was continuing slowly and steadily, and several enemy strong points had been captured.

37. Meanwhile, Capuzzo and Sidi Azeiz had been captured during the night 21st/22nd November, and part of the force operating in the frontier area had turned westward towards the main battle area south-east of Tobruk.
Further south the force from Jarabub had captured Aujila, 8 miles north-west of Jalo on the 23rd November.

**Operations subsequent to the 23rd November.**

38. Since the evening of the 23rd November few details of the operations have been received. From the confused accounts available, the burden of the fighting south-east of Tobruk appears to have passed temporarily to the unarmoured troops, the armoured formations having been withdrawn for reorganisation. The forces advancing westward from the frontier area after capturing Gambut had, by the morning of the 25th November, effected a junction with the troops operating east of Sidi Rezegh.

39. On the 25th November an enemy force of some 30 tanks and 500 infantry was located moving eastward across the frontier south of Sidi Omar, evidently with the intention of creating a diversion.

**Conclusion.**

40. It is too early to foretell the result of the engagements now in progress south-east of Tobruk. Casualties on both sides have undoubtedly been heavy. General Auchinleck has, however, succeeded in bringing the enemy's armoured forces to battle and has already destroyed a large number of his tanks. He has gone a long way towards rolling up the enemy's frontier defences, and it is to be hoped that the next few days will see the junction of the forces about Sidi Rezegh with the Tobruk Garrison.

**Comparison with 1940 Campaign.**

41. Little detailed information is as yet available as to the part played by Italian forces. It is, however, clear that with German stiffening and under German directions they have fought much better than they did in 1940, when they had to meet a British offensive alone.

This improvement is probably partly due to the fact that in 1940 Italian forces in Cyrenaica consisted of a motley collection of recently raised Metropolitan Divisions, and Blackshirt and Libyan formations, with a high command that was more intent on blaming the deficiencies of their equipment on each other than on preparing to meet a British attack. It is also no doubt to some extent to be attributed to the replacement of the "toy" 3-ton and unwieldy 11-ton tanks by the more serviceable 13-ton tank, with which 132 (Ariete) Armoured Division is now equipped. Reports agree that this division, which is operating in the Bir el Gobi area, has put up a tenacious resistance. 55 (Savona) Division, which is operating in the Solium sector, also appears to have fought well.

**East Africa.**

42. Five separate columns are advancing on the Italians in the Gondar area. In the north, Lamant Hill (11 miles north-east of Gondar) and Venticinque Hill (3 miles further south) were captured on the 12th and 17th November respectively. Our forces are now facing the enemy's main position some 15 miles north of Gondar.

On the 21st November a force which had been side-stepped eastwards from the main Debarech-Gondar road captured Zagadi (17 miles south-east of Gondar). In this engagement the enemy sustained 2,000 casualties while his force holding the Feroaber position (12 miles further south) was cut off from communication with Gondar.

The column advancing north-westward along the Debra Tabor-Gondar road captured Kulkaber, to the north of the Feroaber position, on the 21st November, and took 1,800 prisoners.

An Ethiopian force which has advanced up the western shore of Lake Tana is investing Gorgora, which has also been heavily bombed from the air.

The Sudanese column advancing along the Gallabat-Chelga road is now in front of the Cheiga position. A raid by this column on an enemy post north-west of Cheiga on the 20th November inflicted heavy casualties and is believed to have drawn strong reinforcements from the Gondar area.

Patriot forces are co-operating in all sectors.

It is estimated that the garrison of Gondar still remaining consists of some 12,000 Italian and native troops.
Intelligence.

Spain.
43. Confirmation has been received of the report that the number of German divisions between the River Gironde and the Spanish frontier has been reduced to two. There seems, therefore, no likelihood of early German action against Spain.

Italy.
44. Reports continue to be received that the Italians are fortifying the Brenner. In view of the wide variety of sources from which these reports emanate, and the difficulty of seeing any reason why they should be deliberately spread by the Axis, it is not possible to dismiss them out of hand.

If these fortifications are in fact proceeding, it seems that it can only be due to the influence of a section of the army which is opposed to complete subservience to Germany. This faction must therefore either be sufficiently powerful to compel Mussolini to make concessions to its policy or be able to carry on the work without his knowledge.

Balkans.
45. There are indications that the strength of the German garrison in Crete may be raised from some 14,000 to approximately 30,000.

While the total number of German divisions in the Balkans is believed to remain at fourteen, it is possible that some transfer of German troops may have taken place recently from Bulgaria to the South Russian front.

Roumania.
46. A report announces the opening of a new railway in Bessarabia on the 25th October. This stretches between Anciz and Ismail Port and is 111 kilom. in length, linking up the port, which is on the north bank of the Danube near its mouth, with the main railway to Cetatea-Alba.

Bulgaria.
47. Bulgarian labour corps troops are reported to be working on the roads Skoplje-Kustendil-Plovdiv and Seres-Drama-Xanthe. Work on North-South communications appears to have been suspended.

No detailed information is available regarding the extent of co-operation by Bulgarian forces in the German effort to restore order in Yugoslavia, but it is reliably reported that some towns south of Nis have been occupied by the Bulgarians.

Turkey.
48. A series of field defences are being constructed east of the Sea of Marmara, along the line of the Sakaria River from Bilecik (or possibly further south at Bozuyuk) through Geyve to the Black Sea. 10,000 labourers are said to be engaged.

North Africa.
49. It is believed that since the 19th November all members of the German Armistice Commission in North Africa have appeared in uniform and are carrying arms. It is reported that they have been given authority to make arrests and bring culprits before the French Courts.

A report just received states that 50 uniformed and armed Germans arrived by air at Casablanca on the 23rd November.

Far East.
50. The situation in the Far East continues to be dominated by the Washington negotiations. The possibility of a satisfactory settlement is still extremely doubtful.

At the same time Japanese military preparations are continuing in the south, whilst the situation in the north remains generally static.

It is reliably reported that since the beginning of November at least one Japanese division has been withdrawn from North or Central China through Shanghai. Its destination is at present unknown.
It is also probable that the forces in the south have recently been reinforced by a division from Japan.

51. The present distribution of Japanese forces is believed to be as follows:

North—
Japan: Seven divisions.
One Tank Regiment.
Korea: One division.
Sakhalin: Two divisions.
Manchukuo: 26 Divisions.
7 Tank Regiments.

Centre—
North China: Nine Divisions.
Twelve Independent Mixed Brigades.
Two Tank Regiments.
Central China: Six divisions.
Seven Independent Mixed Brigades.
One Tank Regiment.

South—
Canton: Three divisions. One Tank Regiment.
Swatow: One Independent Mixed Brigade.
Formosa: Three divisions.
Hainan: One division.
Indo-China—
North: One division.
South: Three divisions. One Tank Regiment.

Total: 62 Divisions,
20 Independent Mixed Brigades,
13 Tank Regiments.

Invasion.

52. Few reports of invasion preparations or intentions have been received during the period under review. Sources continue to send descriptions of craft under construction, and the greatest activity in this direction appears to be in Belgium. One report states that mass production has been started of a 500-ton vessel with bows specially adapted for troop disembarkation. Date of completion is given as February 1942.

AIR SITUATION.

General Review.

53. Operations against targets in Germany and Occupied Territory were again considerably restricted by bad weather.

Air operations in support of the offensive in Libya have been on an intensive scale.

Germany and Occupied Territory.

Day.

54. Bomber Command despatched 13 sorties, and Fighter Command flew 192 sorties on offensive operations over occupied territory and against shipping. Attacks on shipping are reported under "Coastal Operations."

55. Of two Stirlings despatched to attack the Osnabrück and Bremen areas, one attacked shipping instead owing to failure of cloud cover. It was engaged by eight Me. 109's, and shot down one of them in flames. The second Stirling was also attacked by eight Me. 109's, and was forced to abandon task. In the ensuing encounter, which lasted for 25 minutes, two Me. 109's were probably destroyed and one was damaged.
56. Hurricane bombers and Spitfires attacked a variety of targets in Northern France and in Holland including aerodromes, factories and communications. Spitfires attacked six Me. 109's on the ground at Calais-Marck aerodrome, destroying one, probably destroying a second and damaging a further three. They also machine-gunned personnel on Le Touquet aerodrome. The storage tanks of an alcohol factory at Fontaine-le-Dun, near Fecamp, were attacked by Spitfires, and a factory near St. Omer was bombed by Hurricanes, which registered several hits. Other targets attacked include motor transport near Le Touquet, a goods train, a power station and barges near St. Omer, and a meteorological station and gun positions on Schouwen Island in Holland.

57. During these operations our fighters destroyed in combat six enemy aircraft, probably destroyed one and damaged seven. Our losses were nine fighters, but one pilot was rescued.

Night.

58. The activities of the three Commands were again considerably restricted by continued bad weather. All bomber operations were cancelled on four nights of the week. Two hundred and fifty-eight sorties were flown, the principal targets being the naval bases at Brest and Lorient and the docks at Emden, Ostend, Dunkirk and Cherbourg. A total of 193 tons of H.E. bombs and 13,384 incendiaries were dropped.

59. Naval targets at Brest and Lorient were attacked on two nights by a total of 25 heavy bombers which dropped 107 tons of H.E. bombs. On the first night observation was difficult owing to thick cloud, but on the second there was bright moonlight with good visibility. The docks were seen clearly, but the battle cruisers were obscured by a smoke screen. It is believed that a large proportion of the bombs dropped close to the battle cruisers. Forty-five tons of H.E. bombs were dropped on Lorient. Bursts were seen in the dock area and fires were started in the vicinity of the Southern Dry Docks.

60. A heavy attack was made on Emden on which a total of 87 tons of H.E. bombs and 11,000 incendiaries were dropped. Owing to thick cloud results could not be observed. At Cherbourg, where visibility was good, 23 tons of H.E. bombs were dropped in the dock area and bombs were seen to burst across the docks and on quays and wharves. A total of 20 tons of H.E. bombs was dropped on the docks at Dunkirk and Ostend. At the latter many bursts were seen in the dock area, where a number of fires were started.

61. Pamphlets were dropped in the Paris, Orleans, Dunkirk and Brest areas.


United Kingdom.

63. Fighter Command flew 1,737 sorties by day and 429 sorties by night.

64. Enemy operations by day were very limited. A few bombs were dropped in coastal areas.

65. At night no concentrated attack developed, although individual aircraft dropped bombs or parachute mines on several nights in the East and South-West coastal areas. Three enemy aircraft were destroyed by night during the week, and a Ju. 88 which got lost was captured intact.

Coastal Operations.

66. Unfavourable weather again hampered operations against enemy shipping. Coastal Command flew 173 patrols (291 sorties) and provided 26 convoy escorts (49 additional sorties). Shipping protection patrols by Fighter Command totalled 505 (1,314 sorties).

[28200]
67. A Stirling of Bomber Command (previously referred to in paragraph 55) made a daylight attack off Borkum on a convoy consisting of four merchant vessels, two of 10,000 tons each and two of 8,000 tons. Bursts were seen close to the two larger vessels. Another convoy consisting of two merchant vessels, each of about 8,000 tons, escorted by a large trawler, was attacked off the Lister Light by a Hudson. One of the merchant vessels was hit by a bomb and by machine-gun fire. Two coastal vessels of 700 and 900 tons respectively were attacked by Hudsons off the West Coast of France. The larger vessel was just missed by two bombs and the smaller was hit several times by cannon and machine-gun fire. Another Hudson probably hit a 2-3,000-ton merchant vessel off Borkum. A small merchant vessel off Egero on the south-west of Norway was hit by a Beaufort, and a 5,000-ton merchant vessel off Egersund was probably hit by another Beaufort.

68. Spitfires scored hits on two flak ships off Cape Gris Nez and on barges near Gravelines.

69. Ten aircraft laid mines off Lorient, Brest and the Frisian Islands.

70. There were several enemy attacks on shipping, including an attack on the 24th against a ship off Carnsore Point in Eireann territorial waters. Routine weather reconnaissances were flown over the North Sea, the English Channel and the Atlantic. Aircraft of the Condor unit were active on four days of the week in rather more than average strength west and south-west of Bordeaux.

Central Mediterranean.

71. Air operations against enemy communications in the Mediterranean have continued. On the 20th, six Blenheims were despatched to attack a convoy off S.W. Greece, consisting of two medium-sized merchant ships escorted by a destroyer and a Ju. 88. The Ju. 88 was driven off, but intense A.A. fire prevented a low-level attack being made. Near-misses were observed on the destroyer and the larger merchant ship. On the following night Wellingtons and naval aircraft attacked a convoy consisting of one cruiser, five destroyers and five merchant ships, 12 miles off Cape Spartivento (Sicily). The cruiser was hit by a torpedo and a probable hit was also made on a 7,000-ton merchant ship. No hits by bombs are claimed, but many of the ships were straddled. A very effective smoke-screen hampered our bombers and accurate A.A. fire was encountered. One Swordfish is missing.

72. On the 26th, Blenheims attacked shipping off the coast of Tripoli (L) and made two hits on a 7,000-ton liner and one on a destroyer. On the next day the liner was sighted 300 yards from shore, stationary and afloat in the water. A small naval vessel was bombed and probably sunk by Blenheims in Argostoli Harbour.

73. Naval Swordfish mined the approaches to Tripoli (L) on two nights and bombèd the town as a diversion. Nuisance raids were made against Naples, Messina and Brindisi, where a large fire was started. Five Hurricanes made a daylight attack on Comiso aerodrome, Sicily, and made hits on hangars and dispersed aircraft.

74. Reconnaissance sorties were flown over the Ionian Sea, south-west Greece and the Central Mediterranean.

75. Italian fighters which made a daylight attack on Halfar aerodrome, Malta, causing slight damage to an aircraft and A.A. post, were engaged by Hurricanes, which probably destroyed one of them and damaged two. On another occasion Italian fighters approaching Malta were intercepted by Hurricanes, which destroyed three of them, probably destroyed two and damaged four more. Bombs were dropped on the island by a few aircraft on three nights without effect.

Libya.

76. The British air forces in the Middle East, including Australian and South African Squadrons and a squadron of Free French Blenheims, were engaged in intensive operations in support of our offensive in the Western Desert.
77. In close support of ground forces our light bombers were in continuous action by day, and on one day a total of eleven squadron sorties were flown by Maryland and Blenheims. On the 20th Maryland made a successful attack on an enemy armoured force moving south from Capuzzo, and on the 22nd 12 Blenheims destroyed at least 100 M.T., including ten petrol tankers, on the El Adem–Acroma road, and exploded a munition dump. Both these forces were intercepted by German fighters, and lost four aircraft on each occasion. Subsequently, fighter escort or cover was provided for our bombers operating in the main battle area and their casualties were light. Heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy armoured force which was approaching the frontier area on the 25th. To the south, smaller forces attacked enemy transport at Bir-el-Gobi and Bir-Hakeim. Blenheims from Malta made three attacks on transport along the coast road between Tripoli and Sirte and destroyed many vehicles, including petrol tankers, which were set on fire. They also attacked an aerodrome and landing ground near Sirte.

78. Besides escorting bomber formations our fighters constantly patrolled the battle area. During a low sweep, 18 enemy M.T. were destroyed and on another occasion Hurricanes attacked about 30 enemy aircraft on Binima aerodrome, including troop transports and gliders, destroying four and damaging at least eight others. Beaufighters made low-flying attacks against enemy aerodromes at El Tmimi, Slonta (near Cyrene), Barce and Jedabya; petrol tankers were destroyed and much damage was done, notably at El Tmimi and Barce, where 14 Ju 87s, four S 79s and an Me 109 were destroyed. At Jedabya, a transport aircraft was forced to crash when landing. Transport in the Barce area was also attacked and four petrol tankers and several lorries were destroyed.

79. On the 20th, nine fighter sweeps, totalling 177 sorties, were flown over the battle area. Nine Ju 87s, escorted by 15 Me 109s, were attacked and forced to jettison their bombs. Seven Ju 87s, four Me 110s and one Me 109 were shot down during the day for the loss of seven of our fighters and three pilots. On the 25th, 20 Tomahawks intercepted a mixed force of about 60 German and Italian bombers, escorted by fighters, and destroyed ten of the enemy, probably destroyed three and damaged eight, with the loss of only two Tomahawks. Since the beginning of the battle, at least 52 enemy aircraft have been shot down by our fighters, of which we have lost 24; some of whose pilots, however, are known to be safe. Approximately 40 further enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground.

80. During the early part of the week, our night offensive was directed against targets in Eastern Cyrenaica. On the night of the 19th/20th, 43 tons of bombs were dropped at Derna and ten tons at Bardia, and on the following night 32 Wellingtons attacked the aerodrome and landing grounds at El Gazala. On the four succeeding nights Benghazi was attacked—the aerodromes of Berta and Binima by a total of 61 Wellingtons, and the harbour district by 44. Aircraft from Malta as well as from Egypt took part in these attacks. On the aerodromes, hits were made on petrol and bomb dumps and on buildings; in the harbour district, bursts were seen on a landing stage and in the area of the railway, workshops, Customs Houses and Military Headquarters. Two 4,000-lb. bombs exploded near the base of the Cathedral mole, resulting in large explosions and fires. Five Wellingtons were lost during these operations.

81. Reconnaissance aircraft from Egypt covered the area between Crete and the Libyan coast in search of shipping, and on the 24th sighted a convoy about 65 miles west of Crete. A striking force of Blenheim despatched to attack the convoy failed to locate it, but the merchant ships were subsequently sunk by a naval force from Malta, as reported under "Naval Situation." Tactical reconnaissances were flown daily over the battle area and a close watch was kept on enemy movements at Benghazi.

82. Heavy rain and floods which made aerodromes unserviceable and communications difficult, hampered the operation of the enemy air forces, which were mainly employed in the protection of their bases and support of their ground troops. Their operations against our fleet were on a light scale, and bombing of our back areas was not heavy or particularly effective. No attacks were made against Alexandria or the Canal zone.
**Air Intelligence.**

83. The main concentration of Axis aircraft is in the Benghazi area, which is probably congested.

84. The effect of the strained Axis supply situation should become apparent within the next few days, in spite of the liberal employment of Ju. 52 transport aircraft to improve matters.

85. The following reinforcements have reached Libya since our offensive started:

(a) *German.*—About 25 Ju. 88's were sent to Cyrenaica from Greece at the beginning of the offensive, but have since returned to Athens, probably owing to shortage of fuel at Benghazi. Some 25 Me. 110's were brought from Crete and Sicily to Cyrenaica, but the majority of these have been lost and not replaced. Fifteen Ju. 87's came from Crete. No reinforcements of Me. 109's have been received, but some are probably coming.

Two to three hundred Ju. 52 transport aircraft from Russia and Eastern Germany are now being employed in the Libyan campaign.

(b) *Italian.*—Replacements for the existing squadrons in Cyrenaica are not being regularly received, but reinforcements by new units comprising 70 aircraft of all types have arrived. It is believed that 25 Italian Ju. 87's have reached Tripolitania and that some of them may have moved forward to Cyrenaica.

**East Africa.**

86. Our bombers and fighters flew 95 sorties during the week in support of land operations in the Gondar area. On the 21st, during operations which culminated in the capture of Feroaber and Kulkaber, 54 sorties were flown, which included attacks on trenches and machine-gun posts.

**Aden.**

87. Patrols and reconnaissances were flown along the French Somaliland frontier and over Jibuti, on which leaflets were also dropped. On the 22nd three Vincents, escorted by two Blenheims, transported a party to carry out the demolition of two forts under the terms of an ultimatum accepted by a Beihan chieftain.

**Russia.**

*Air Operations.*

88. No reports have been received.

**HOME SECURITY SITUATION.**

**General.**

89. Although bombs were dropped on five days and six nights of the week, the total number of incidents was very small.

**Damage.**

90. Very little damage, none of which was important, has been reported.

**Casualties.**

91. Estimated civilian casualties for the week ending 0600 Wednesday, 26th November, are 7 killed and 25 seriously injured.
APPENDICES I and II will be published monthly.

APPENDIX III.

(1) Vessels on the British Register or on Time Charter to the United Kingdom.
Non-tankers and Tankers. 1,600 gross tons and over.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total.</th>
<th>Allocated to the Fighting Services.</th>
<th>Coasting Trade of the United Kingdom and Eire.</th>
<th>Trade between Countries other than the United Kingdom and Eire.</th>
<th>Repairing, Damaged or not in use.</th>
<th>Importing Services of the United Kingdom.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3,334</td>
<td>20,025,000</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>5,490,000</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>370,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>20,392,000</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>5,315,000</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>366,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>3,019</td>
<td>20,427,000</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>5,337,000</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>370,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3,175</td>
<td>20,107,000</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>5,209,000</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>360,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3,509</td>
<td>20,130,000</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>5,059,000</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>351,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>3,619</td>
<td>20,474,000</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>5,267,000</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>340,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3,913</td>
<td>20,543,000</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>5,232,000</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>346,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>3,013</td>
<td>20,009,000</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>5,318,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>371,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.—The above table is an aggregation of the material in the employment tables of non-tankers in Statistical Digests E and F respectively. In combining the figures for non-tankers (which are compiled as at the end of the month) with those for tankers (which are compiled as at the 15th of the month) certain slight differences have had to be brought into a common form.

(1) (a) These comprised 47 tankers of 385,000 gross tons.
(b) Non-tankers allocated to the fighting services which are under repair are excluded from this column. All tankers on Admiralty service are, however, included.
(c) A substantial part of the tonnage in these columns brings commercial cargoes to the United Kingdom on completion of the outward voyage, e.g., to the Middle East (see note (3)).
(d) In recent months the proportion of this tonnage which did no importing to the United Kingdom (Armed Merchant Cruisers, Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, Hospital Ships, &c.) has amounted to rather more than one-half.

(2) These columns give vessels out of employment (apart from tankers on Admiralty Service), being mainly those immobilised by damage or repair. They do not, therefore, include vessels under repair while loading or unloading cargo.
(3) These columns include vessels (apart from tankers on Admiralty Service) which are bringing imports to the United Kingdom but which were allocated on the outward voyages to the Fighting Services or which had previously been trading between countries other than United Kingdom and Eire.
APPENDIX IV.

Merchant Ships (all sizes) lost by the enemy up to 24th November, 1941.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>German.</th>
<th></th>
<th>Italian.</th>
<th></th>
<th>Finnish</th>
<th></th>
<th>Together.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captured or seized</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>312,000</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>293,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>571,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuttled or sunk</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>784,000</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>507,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>1,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified ships reported by S/M, A/C, &amp;c., as sunk or destroyed (tonnage estimated)</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,760,000</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1,106,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>644</td>
<td>2,866,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>2,806,000</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>1,936,000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>1,057</td>
<td>4,787,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, 100 ships of 203,000 gross tons under enemy control or useful to the enemy have been sunk.

Also some 85 ships, totalling 483,000 gross tons, have been placed under protective custody in United States and South American ports to prevent sabotage by their crews. Some of this tonnage has been taken over and put into service by the United States and some by South American Republics.

The losses of unidentified German ships include a number claimed by the Russians.

APPENDIX V.

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

20th November.—A/S Trawler Stoke City bombed and damaged on patrol in Skopen Fjord (Faroes). No serious casualties.

21st November.—M/S Drifter Rowan Tree grounded and capsize in entrance to Lowestoft Harbour and is a total loss.

22nd November.—A/S Trawler Apollo sunk after collision off Butt of Lewis.

24th November.—H.M. Drifter Cabot sank at Avonmouth after being rammed by a dredger. No casualties.

25th November.—H.M. Drifter Fisher Girl was sunk in Falmouth Harbour by a near miss. No casualties.

The following casualties to naval personnel have been reported:

- Officers: 6 killed; 3 missing; 3 wounded.
- Ratings: 15 killed; 4 missing; 3 wounded.
APPENDIX VI.

Operational Aircraft Battle Casualties.

0700 hours, Thursday, 20th November, 1941, to 0700 hours, Thursday, 27th November, 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></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One fighter pilot is known to be safe.

German.

| Bombers | 4 | Destroyed. | 4 |
|         |   | Probably    |   |
| Fighters| 7 | Destroyed. | 1 |
|        |   | Damaged.   | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 3 |             |   |
| Total   | 11|             | 4 |

No account is taken of aircraft destroyed on ground.

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></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighters</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

German.

| Bombers | 8 | Destroyed. | 1 |
|         |   | Probably    |   |
| Fighters| 24| Destroyed. | 5 |
|        |   | Damaged.   | 14 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 |             |   |
| Total   | 29|             | 5 |

Of the above totals, one bomber and one fighter were destroyed by A.A. fire.

Italian.

| Bombers | 2 | Destroyed. | 2 |
|         |   | Probably    |   |
| Fighters| 12| Destroyed. | 5 |
|        |   | Damaged.   | 11 |
| Miscellaneous | 8 |             |   |
| Total   | 14|             | 8 |

In addition to the above, the following unidentified German or Italian casualties in the Middle East have been reported: 12 Bombers destroyed and 7 Bombers damaged.
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.—On the night of the 12th/13th August, 1941, a heavy bomb is reported to have fallen in Zehlendorf, a suburb on the south-west of Berlin. It fell in the middle of an open space of some four to six acres, on which fruit trees and vegetables were growing. The area was surrounded with dwelling houses.

The bomb crater did not appear to be very large. The nearest house, approximately 80 yards distant, was very severely damaged, although the walls were still standing. Windows and roofs were damaged throughout a considerable area. All the glass and most of the tiles were missing from houses within a radius of 300 yards, while the effects of the bomb could be seen on buildings 400 or 500 yards from the crater.

Nürnberg.—The aluminium works received several direct hits causing a stoppage of work.

General.—The Hamburger Fremdenblatt of the 31st October publishes the names of 52 persons killed in the raid on Hamburg on the night of the 26th/27th.

Occupied France.

Donges.—In the raid of the 28th/29th September, eleven tanks of about 100 ton capacity each caught fire and a total of 600 tons of diesel oil was burnt. The damage was estimated at approximately £50,000 at pre-war rate of exchange.

Lille Area.—A further report tells of the widespread disorganisation of industry in the neighbourhood due to our attacks on the power supply. In many cases factories received power for a limited number of hours per day, and the situation was complicated by the fact that they were not informed in advance at what time the power would be available.

Rouen.—In the raid on the power station at Rouen on the 18th September one bomb hit a metal girder in the glass roof covering the centre of the engine room. It exploded instantaneously, thereby causing only slight damage to the machinery but some casualties among personnel. Other bombs fell on two works nearby, one of which was the St. Gobain chemical factory.

Italy.

Naples.—In attacks at the end of October a factory making caustic soda was hit. It is thought production would be affected for a month.
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ISSUED WITH WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY №119(26.11.41)

SOUTH WEST U.S.S.R.

SCALE 1:4,000,000 OR 1 MILE TO 1 INCH

AXIS OPERATIONS AGAINST U.S.S.R.
showing approximate advances.

LEGEND

Approximate lines reached by Axis Forces:
10th Nov.
17th Nov.
24th Nov.

Main thrusts of Axis Forces.

Note: It is emphasized that in the mobile warfare which has taken place up to date there can be no continuous front line. The lines on the map therefore indicate only the approximate limits of advance of the foremost troops.
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LEGEND
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