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WAR CABINET

WEEKLY RÉSUMÉ
(No. 188)

of the
NAVAL, MILITARY AND AIR SITUATION
from 0700 April 1st, to
0700 April 8th,
1943

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

General Review.

1. Enemy shipping in the Central Mediterranean has been successfully attacked by our submarines and light craft.
   U.S. bombers have inflicted serious casualties on a Japanese naval force in the Solomons.
   One German U-boat has been sunk and three others probably sunk.
   A concentrated U-boat attack on a homeward-bound convoy has been repelled by reinforced escorts with comparatively small losses.
   Elsewhere shipping losses have been light.

Home Waters.

2. On the night of the 4th/5th a large heavily escorted ship left Boulogne on an easterly course. Dover batteries opened fire and the ship subsequently proceeded into Calais at slow speed. On the same night M.G.Bs. sank one of four trawlers off Dunkirk. Thirteen prisoners were captured.

3. H.M.S. Mallard (corvette) probably destroyed an aircraft off Orfordness on the 4th, and on that night the Sunk Head Fort shot down two aircraft which were probably minelaying in the Thames Estuary.

Northern Waters.

4. Russian warships have sunk two enemy transports totalling 15,000 tons in the Barents Sea.

Mediterranean.

5. On the night of the 27th March a feint landing, including a bombardment by H.M.S. Laforey (destroyer) and the Polish destroyer Blyskawica, was carried out near Cape Serrat (35 miles west of Bizerta), which was evacuated by the enemy on the 2nd and occupied by a Naval and small Commando force on the 3rd.
   On the night of the 31st/1st, M.T.Bs. 266 and 315, in a sweep from Bone, sank one and probably another ship in an escorted convoy off Tunis.

6. The following attacks have been reported by H.M. Submarines: —
   Splendid on patrol off the north coast of Sicily probably sank a 10,000-ton southbound tanker on the 17th and a 3,000-ton eastbound tanker in tow on the 21st. Unison probably sank a 2,000-ton ship off the south coast of Italy on the 23rd. On the following day Unseen torpedoed a 3,500-ton ship in northbound convoy, west of Sicily. Unbroken attacked a Regolo class cruiser south of Messina on the 3rd. One explosion was heard. On the following day she torpedoed a large southbound escorted tanker off the south coast of Italy. Unrivalled torpedoed three ships of 6,000, 3,000 and 300 tons off Palermo and Tribune sank two ships off Naples.
   U.S. aircraft have successfully attacked shipping in the Sicilian Channel.

7. The Suez Canal was blocked from the 4th to the 6th through the sinking of a pontoon six miles north of Suez.
   On the 6th a convoy of 12 ships in ballast arrived at Alexandria from Malta. Four hundred and fifty tons of supplies have been discharged at Gabs.

Pacific.

8. U.S. submarines have recently sunk one destroyer, one large transport and two freighters; another freighter was probably sunk, and a destroyer and a cargo vessel were damaged.

9. In air attacks by U.S. aircraft on Kavieng (New Ireland) one heavy and one light enemy cruiser were sunk, one destroyer seriously damaged and one large destroyer or light cruiser damaged. Details are given in the Air Situation.

10. On the 20th March a 5,000-ton Japanese ship loaded with ammunition was sunk by a U.S. cruiser off Attu Island (Aleutians).
Anti-Submarine Operations.

11. Thirty-seven attacks have been made on U-boats during the week: 26 by aircraft and 11 by surface craft. One German U-boat was sunk, three probably sunk and one possibly damaged.

Two promising attacks by aircraft were made on a U-boat off the Canaries on the 5th, and on the following day it was reported that 53 members of the crew of a U-boat, some of them wounded, had landed from a raft on the south coast of Gran Canary Island. They stated that their U-boat had been seriously damaged by air attack and they had sunk her. The crew are now on board the German s.s. Corrientes (4,565 tons), which has been at Las Palmas since the beginning of the war.

Three U-boats were probably sunk: by aircraft off Cartagena, by the escorts of a southbound convoy west of Oporto, and by a Sunderland aircraft off the Canaries.

H.M.S. Tay (frigate), escorting a homeward-bound convoy, possibly damaged a U-boat in the N.W. Approaches.

Enemy Intelligence.

German.

12. There has been no direct evidence of the positions of the German heavy ships in Northern Waters.  

Hipper has been seen in the floating dock at Wilhelmshaven.

Italian.

13. During the week about 11,000 tons of shipping arrived in Tunisia from Italy. During March about 40 per cent. of shipping to Tunisia was sunk.

Japanese.

14. The estimated strength of the Japanese forces in the South Pacific is: three 16" battleships, two 14" battleships, one aircraft carrier, seven heavy cruisers, eight light cruisers, 15 seaplane carriers and four converted carriers. The concentration of shipping at Rabaul is maintained, and Kavieng (New Ireland) is being used as a base for stores and reinforcements for New Guinea.

U-boats.

15. About 100 U-boats continue to operate in the Atlantic, the majority of which are concentrated in the N.W. Approaches.

There has been some activity in the Caribbean and off the West African coast.

Protection of Seaborne Trade.

16. During the week ending midnight the 4th, 865 ships were convoyed. Of these 219 were in ocean convoys and 646 in British coastal convoys. Seventy-three destroyers (including 10 U.S. destroyers), 129 sloops, cutters, corvettes and frigates (including one U.S. sloop and two U.S. corvettes), one ocean boarding vessel and one escort-carrier, were employed on escort duties. During the week 135 ships in five ocean convoys arrived in Home Waters. Four ships were sunk.

17. During the week ending the 3rd, imports into the United Kingdom by ships in convoy totalled 845,000 tons compared with 883,392 tons during the previous seven days and an average of 566,000 tons during the past ten weeks. Of the week's imports 145,000 tons were mineral oil of various grades.

Enemy Attack on Shipping.

18. During the week U-boats are reported to have attacked 11 ships, of which eight are known to have sunk.

A homeward-bound convoy from the U.S. was successfully brought through a large concentration of U-boats by the efficient counter-measures of the escorts assisted by aircraft from Iceland (C). This convoy, consisting of 61 ships escorted by one destroyer, one frigate and four corvettes, with an escort group of four destroyers in support, was intercepted on the 4th to the south-east of Greenland and was shadowed until the 7th by a pack of about 20 U-boats. Four
ships were sunk and a straggler also attacked. On one night 16 attacks were made on the convoy, all of which were driven off by the escorts.

Two ships in convoy to Freetown were sunk off the Portuguese coast. In the Caribbean two ships were sunk in Florida Strait and one torpedoed east of the Bahamas.

One ship was torpedoed and subsequently beached with a broken back north-west of Cape Town.

One ship in coastal convoy was mined in the Thames Estuary.

19. The provisional figure of tonnage lost by enemy action during March is about 654,000 tons, which included six tankers totalling 48,000 tons. The bulk of the losses occurred in the Atlantic, 72,000 tons in the Mediterranean, and 27,000 tons in the Indian Ocean and Pacific.

British Minelaying.

20. During the week surface craft laid mines in the Channel; aircraft laid mines off the Biscay ports.

Mines have also been laid in the Central Mediterranean.

Enemy Minelaying, British Minesweeping.

21. On two nights of the week enemy aircraft were suspected of having laid mines off Harwich and in the Thames Estuary. E-boats were operating between the Eddystone and Falmouth and in Lyme Bay on two nights.

U.S. minesweepers have destroyed four ground mines off Casablanca.

The mine totals are 4,236 ground and 2,408 moored.

Enemy Merchant Shipping.

22. The Italian s.s. *Pietro Orsolo* (6,344 tons) has arrived at Bordeaux from the Far East.

Three German ships have left Bordeaux: the s.s. *Osorno* (6,951 tons) and *Portland* (7,132 tons), probably bound for Japan, and a ship of the *Alsterfuer* class (2,720 tons) which may be acting as a supply ship for U-boats. The Italian s.s. *Himalaya* (6,240 tons), which was sighted outward bound on the 26th, returned to La Pallice three days later. The German s.s. *Dogger Bank* (ex-British *Speybank*, 5,154 tons) is reported to have been torpedoed, probably by a U-boat, on the 3rd March, about 600 miles south-west of the Azores. She was homeward bound as a blockade runner from the Far East. One survivor was picked up.

The Italian s.s. *Derna* (1,769 tons) was sunk off the French coast early in March when returning to Spain from Italy.

**MILITARY SITUATION.**

(An outline map is included as an inset.)

**Tunisia,**

*First Army.*

23. In northern Tunisia activity has again been confined principally to the coastal sector. After the completed occupation of Sedjenane on the 31st March, British forces advanced further east and on the 3rd Cape Serrat, which had been evacuated by the enemy, was occupied by a naval party together with detachments of French native troops. Patrol contact has been maintained with retreating enemy forces in the region of Jefna. The effect of these operations in the northern sector has been to straighten our line so that it now runs from just west of Jefna north to the coast. Elsewhere in this British sector there has been considerable patrol activity and in the Medjez El Bab area the enemy has been shelling our positions. During the 7th we launched an attack at divisional strength with the object of pinching out the pocket of enemy-held ground north-east of Beja. First reports of this offensive indicate that it is progressing satisfactorily.

In the French sector further south a number of patrols have been carried out and French forces have linked up with the U.S. at El Ala, between Picchu and Fondouk. The greatest activity has been in the Picchu area, where the enemy holds the positions west and north of the town in considerable strength. Two enemy attacks, supported each time by tanks, which were put in on the 3rd were repulsed by our artillery. On the 5th a large number of enemy transport were seen moving north-east towards Karachoum.
U.S. Forces.

24. In this sector progress has again been slow and neither in the Maknassy nor El Guettar areas have the U.S. forces succeeded in breaking through enemy resistance. Several enemy counter-attacks, supported by tanks, have been put in against the U.S. formations on the high ground south-east of El Guettar. These attacks have mostly been held, but they prevented the U.S. forces from making the hoped-for junction with the Eighth Army further south. In the fighting on the 3rd in this region many of the enemy were killed or taken prisoner and over 20 enemy mortars were captured, but in a counter-attack on the night 3rd/4th U.S. units, holding the eastern end of the high ground south of the Gafsa–Gebes road were driven back. On the 6th, U.S. forces south of the road put in an attack to regain the lost high ground, but the attack failed owing to enemy machine-gun fire. An armoured force just north of this, which also attacked at the same time, was held up by tanks of the enemy rearguard. On the night 6th/7th however, this rearguard finally disengaged itself, and on the following day U.S. forces were able to advance and make contact with patrols of the Eighth Army, 40 miles east of El Guettar.

Eighth Army.

25. By the 31st March our forward patrols were probing the strength of the enemy position along the line of the Wadi Akarit, which is about 18 miles north-west of Gabes. The enemy line now ran along this wadi and his right flank rested on the hills that form the western end of this gap between the sea and the Salt Lakes. Armoured reconnaissances, meanwhile, were carried out along the inland flank of this position and these showed that the enemy's hold on this high ground was strong and defended by extensive mine-fields. A lull now followed during which General Montgomery regrouped his forces in readiness for the next move. As the country to the west of the enemy line is difficult and unfavourable for any large-scale outflanking movement, an infantry assault on the centre of the enemy position was decided upon and concentration of our infantry north of the Oudref area ensued. On the night 5th/6th, the Eighth Army resumed the offensive. After a bombardment by 450 guns an infantry attack was launched on the centre of the enemy position. This attack was made in complete darkness, with no moon, and was completely successful, apparently taking the enemy by surprise; so that by early light on the 6th the resistance of his organised positions seemed to have collapsed. Later the same morning some of our mobile and armoured formations began passing through the gap punched by our infantry. On the afternoon of the 6th the enemy had somewhat recovered himself and fierce counter-attacks ensued. All of these were withstood. During the afternoon British infantry completed five crossings over the Wadi Akarit, through which more armour was passed, and by the evening over 6,000 prisoners had been captured. During the night of the 6th/7th the enemy withdrew his remaining forces from the Akarit position and the withdrawal was followed up in full force by the Eighth Army, some of whose formations advanced the coastal road and some further inland.

It is clear that the enemy has suffered a heavy defeat. The fighting has been very fierce indeed, but all our objectives have been carried and our position is completely satisfactory.

The Russo-German Campaign.

Northern Sector.

26. The Russians continued their attacks south of Lake Ladoga, but there appears to be little change in the situation and the attacks are reported to have weakened in the past few days.

Central Sector.

27. The Russians have made no further advance west and south-west of Vyasma, and it seems probable that the Germans, whose resistance had increased in the previous week, have now been able to stabilise their line.

Donetz Sector.

28. Local German attacks against the line of the Upper Donetz have been held.

In the Izum area the Russians still hold a bridgehead south of the Donetz, against which the Germans have been exerting strong pressure.

It is now reported that the ice on the Donetz is breaking up.

[25281]
Taman Bridgehead.

29. In the area of the Taman bridgehead, where the thaw began early, the ground is drying and there has been a revival of activity.

The Germans have withdrawn the northern flank of their bridgehead somewhat, towards the River Kuban.

In the Krimskaya area and immediately south of it the Russians attacked in considerable strength on the 3rd and 4th. They appear to have made only slight progress, and on the 6th the Germans claimed that the attacks had been discontinued because of the heavy Russian losses.

Summary.

30. Owing to ground conditions there have been only local operations along the greater part of the front. Only in the Taman area has the fighting been heavy. Although German evacuation from the Taman Peninsula is believed to be continuing, the Germans are strongly resisting Russian efforts to drive them out of the bridgehead.

Burma.

Arakan.

31. Part of the Japanese force which had crossed the Mayu River from the east had, by the 4th, infiltrated through the Mayu Hills and established a road-block on our lines of communication north of Indin on the coast.

Our forces withdrawing from positions north of Donbaik successfully attacked this road-block on the 5th. Japanese infiltration to the south-west of Indin had also to be dealt with, but by the 6th the situation had been cleared up and our main forces reached Kyaupandu, four miles north of Indin, without further molestation. All our wounded were evacuated safely. Casualties inflicted on the Japanese in this action were considerable.

East of the Mayu Hills our troops moving southwards have reached the area of Okthema (9 miles north-east of Indin).

Our forward positions on the Mayu Peninsula are now about 16 miles in rear of the positions which we had held from the middle of January up to last week.

Upper Burma.

32. In the Hukawng Valley, north-west of Myitkyina, enemy forces have again advanced. There have been two engagements, with our levies and a Chinese force respectively, to the north of Shingbwiyang. No details have yet been received.

AIR SITUATION.

General Review.


Over 100 U.S. bombers attacked Naples.

Successful and heavy attacks were made on enemy shipping in the Mediterranean.

In Tunisia operations were again on a heavy scale.

U.S. heavy bombers effectively attacked shipping off New Ireland.

United Kingdom.

34. Thirty-five enemy aircraft flew overland in daylight; the principal attacks were made by 12 and eight fighter-bombers on Eastbourne and Newport, Isle of Wight, respectively. Four enemy aircraft were destroyed. At night, enemy activity was on a very small scale; two enemy bombers were shot down by Naval A.A. fire and one by fighters.

Germany and Occupied Territory.

Day.

35. U.S. heavy bombers operated on two occasions. The first attack, made by 87 Fortresses (H.17), was on the Renault Works at Billancourt, near Paris, where 222 tons of H.E. were dropped in good weather conditions. Bombing is
reported to have been good and an interpretation of photographs taken on the following day is referred to in Appendix VI. Many enemy fighters were encountered and 47 of these were destroyed by the Fortresses (B.17) and a further 19 were probably destroyed or damaged. Four Fortresses were lost. In conjunction with this operation, 25 Liberators (B.24) carried out two uneventful sweeps. The second attack was made by 83 Fortresses (B.17) and Liberators (B.24) on the Erla aircraft and aero-engine repair works at Antwerp. Weather was excellent and 245 tons of H.E. were dropped, but no results were observed from the bombing, which was described as “fair.” (For results as assessed from photographs, see Appendix VI.) In combat, provisional claims are 11 fighters destroyed, six probably destroyed and four damaged, for the loss of four Fortresses (B.17).

Mosquitoes operated effectively in low-level attacks against railway centres and repair shops which were attacked and hit at Trier, Ehrang (near Trier), Malines, Tergnier and Namur. Escorted Venturas and Whirlwind bombers attacked similar targets at St. Brienc and Abbeville respectively.

A total of 48 escorted Venturas, of which five are missing, made two raids on shipping and the port area at Brest, and also attacked the Wilton shipbuilding yards at Rotterdam. Bombing from about 12,000 feet, bursts were seen very close to a tanker in dry dock at Brest and the arsenal and naval barracks were hit; at Rotterdam, a Sperrbrecher may have been damaged. Dieppe harbour was attacked by six Typhoon bombers.

The Mondeville power station and steel works near Caen was bombed by seven Typhoons, hits being made on the coke ovens and blast furnaces.

Escorted Typhoon bombers attacked the airfields at Drucat (Abbeville) and Fort Bouge (St. Omer), and 24 escorted Venturas bombed the assembly plant and hangars at Carpiquet airfield near Caen (see Appendix VI).

Escort, cover and diversionary sweeps in connection with the above operations were flown by 56 squadrons of fighters which, in combat, destroyed 21 enemy fighters, probably destroyed four and damaged 25 for the loss of 15 Spitfires.

In addition, four of our aircraft were lost on harassing operations against enemy communications. These were on a small scale and resulted in the destruction of two locomotives and damage to seven more.

Night.

36. Bomber Command aircraft operated against land targets on three nights against four objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dispatched</th>
<th>Primary. of bombs.</th>
<th>Tonnage</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Crashed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Nazaire</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorient</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essen</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiel</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Essen, excellent weather was marred only by the usual industrial haze, and marker bombs accurately placed resulted in a well concentrated attack. Numerous fires were started in the Krupps works and, in addition to two particularly large explosions reported, a sudden increase in the glow of fires was seen by crews when crossing the Dutch coast. (An immediate interpretation of photographs taken on the following day is in Appendix VI.) Enemy fighters were active over the target and searchlights had been greatly augmented.

Weather conditions over Kiel were bad, thick cloud completely obscuring the target. The majority of crews bombed on the initial marker bombs which are believed to have been well placed but, in the absence of photographs, it is not at present possible to indicate the degree of success achieved. Two enemy aircraft were destroyed on this operation.

St. Nazaire and Lorient were both bombed on the same night. At the former visibility was excellent and the attack was well concentrated, one major explosion being seen. At Lorient, ground haze hampered accurate pin-pointing and little could be observed apart from one large fire seen in the north-east of the town.

Leaflets were dropped over French towns by 28 aircraft. Intruder patrols were uneventful.

Coastal Operations.

37. Torpedo-carrying Hampdens and Beaufighters attacked enemy shipping off the Norwegian coast; two ships, of 3,000 and 1,500 tons respectively, were sunk and a 5,000-ton ship was hit and last seen moving shorewards listing heavily.
and down by the bows. The results of other attacks could not be observed. One Hampden failed to return.

Fighter-bombers set on fire a trawler off the Dutch coast and seriously damaged two R-boats off Le Treport. At night, two more R-boats were damaged by Typhoons, and a naval Albacore seriously damaged a medium-sized ship off Dunkirk.

Bomber Command aircraft, of which 100 were despatched, laid 273 sea-mines in enemy waters. Four bombers are missing.

**Mediterranean.**

**Tunisia.**

38. The Allied Air Forces have rendered the maximum close support for the Army, heavily attacked enemy airfields, and bombed communications. An average of approximately 1,000 sorties a day was flown.

Intensive attacks on enemy concentrations in the Wadi Akarit area began on the 2nd, when 70 U.S. Baltimores (A. 30) and Bostons (A. 20) made five attacks on enemy positions and M.T. On the same day a further three attacks were made by 48 fighter-bombers. Later in the week similar targets were bombed north of the wadi by 141 aircraft. Other attacks on a heavy scale were continued further north in the Cekhira area, where, on the 6th, a total of 60 U.S. fighters machine-gunned from a low level M.T. withdrawing along the coast road. Guns were heavily bombed on the slopes of Djebel Chemsi, and in this area 36 M.T. were destroyed or damaged. Numerous other attacks on similar targets were carried out in the areas north of El Hamma, Faid, Sidi Nsir, Fondouk and Pichon.

On the 7th, following the successful break through at Akarit, all available light and fighter-bombers of the Western Desert and Central Tunisian Air Forces attacked on the heaviest scale that has ever been made against Rommel's retreating forces; much damage and confusion was caused among columns moving northwards, the main effort being directed against targets on the Cekhira-Sfax roads. Targets improved during the day and excellent results were seen.

Many offensive sweeps were carried out by fighters and defensive sorties flown; numerous enemy aircraft were encountered. In the El Guettar area 12 U.S. Spitfires destroyed 14 Ju. 87s for the loss of one Spitfire. Spitfires intercepted and broke up a large formation of Ju. 87s with a heavy fighter escort, totalling about 60 aircraft, over our forward positions; seven enemy aircraft were destroyed. In the Central Sector 18 Ju. 87s, escorted by fighters, were intercepted by U.S. Warhawks (P. 40 F); and 10 enemy aircraft were destroyed. U.S. Spitfires shot down three Ju. 88s over the El Guettar area and three more near Gabes.

More than 20 fighter-bombers attacked our landing grounds at Souk El Khemis, but practically no damage was done; two F.W. 190s were shot down by Spitfires and one Me. 109 by A.A. fire. Five Hurricanes intercepted four S.M. 79s west of Bougie and shot down all of them.

Very heavy attacks were made on enemy airfields, nearly 600 bomber sorties being directed against these targets; further attacks were made by fighter-bombers. A total of 1,007 fighters provided escort for these operations; eight bombers and four fighters were lost. Numerous combats took place, resulting in 12 enemy aircraft being destroyed with 10 probables and 29 damaged. The heaviest attacks were made against the airfields at Sfax-El Maou, La Feneconnerie, El Djem and Ste Marie du Zit; lighter scale raids were made on El Aouina, Sidi Ahmed and Enfidaville. A night attack was made by 45 Wellingtons, Naval Albacores dropping flares, on El Maou, and on the following day a further raid was made by 70 U.S. light and medium bombers. During one day La Faneconnerie was attacked by 54 Bostons (A. 20), 48 Warhawks (P. 40 F) and 44 Spitfires. Many enemy aircraft on the ground were either destroyed or damaged as a result of this intensive bombing.

Night attacks were made on Bizerta, Sfax and Tunis. At Bizerta, Wellingtons dropped 24 tons of bombs in the dock area. Wellingtons and Halifaxes, with Naval Albacores co-operating, dropped 78 tons of bombs on Sfax, bursts being seen in the vicinity of the station, barracks and factory buildings. Sixteen Wellingtons bombed the docks and shipping at Tunis.

**Italy, Sicily and Sardinia.**

39. Ninety-one U.S. Fortresses (B. 17) attacked the airfield, harbour and railway centre at Naples. Thirty-four tons of fragmentation bombs were dropped on
the airfield, where about 25 aircraft were hit and a large fire started in the refuelling area. Over 100 tons of bombs were dropped on the harbour, where a tanker, a large ship and the power and gas plants were hit. Fifty-five tons of bombs were dropped on the railway centre. A further attack, on the same day, was made on the harbour by nine Liberators (B. 24).

In Sicily the train ferries were bombed at Messina and San Giovanni by U.S. Liberators (B. 24). Malta-based Spitfires carrying bombs made hits on seaplanes and railway buildings at Syracuse, and successfully bombed the railway station and a factory at Ragusa. About 57 tons of bombs were dropped by Liberators (B. 24) on the harbour and quays at Palermo. Two attacks were made on the docks and shipping at Trapani by Fortresses (B. 17) and Wellingtons; several ships were hit and fires started in the dock area. The airfields at Milo (20 miles north of Catania) and Palermo were bombed by a total of 50 Fortresses (B. 17). 30 aircraft were destroyed on the ground and bursts were seen among 50 or 60 others. The airfield at Borizzo was attacked by 36 Mitchells (B. 25).

In Sardinia the airfield at Decimomannu was attacked by 16 Wellingtons and shipping at Carlo Forte was bombed by 18 U.S. Mitchells (B. 25).

**Sicilian Channel.**

40. Five convoys were attacked by a total of 76 U.S. Mitchells (B. 25) escorted by U.S. Lightnings (P. 38). As a result of these attacks a destroyer was seen to blow up, one large ship sunk, seven ships were set on fire, and four other ships and two barges were hit. Four bombers and two fighters are missing from these operations; eight enemy aircraft were destroyed.

Two other convoys were attacked by a total of 41 U.S. Fortresses (B. 17). A 6,000-ton ship was seen to blow up and another left burning, and an escort vessel was sunk. Ten U.S. bombers were damaged and 18 enemy fighters were destroyed.

Twenty-three U.S. Lightnings (P. 38), during an offensive sweep, encountered a large number of enemy aircraft, of which 16, including 11 Ju. 52s, were destroyed. Two U.S. fighters were lost.

**Operational Battle Casualties.**

41. In the Mediterranean area the following casualties are reported during the week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destroyed or Damaged</th>
<th>Crashed or Forced Landed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allied</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enemy</strong></td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No account is taken of aircraft destroyed on the ground.

**Russia.**

42. Except on the Southern Front, particularly in the Kuban area, Soviet air activity is reported to have been on a light scale. This is probably due to weather conditions which have been very bad for flying. Considerable air activity has been maintained in the Kuban, and the Russians have made several air attacks on German convoys in the Black Sea.

The G.A.F. have provided support for their ground troops in the Kuban area and Soviet harbours and naval bases in the Western Caucasus have been raided. Over 40 German aircraft are reported to have been destroyed over Leningrad.

**Burma and India.**

43. A total of 89 U.S. Mitchells (B. 25) and 15 U.S. Liberators (B. 24) made 13 attacks on railway targets. In the Mandalay area, four of these attacks were directed against the marshalling yards at Maymyo where damage was done to sheds, sidings and rolling stock. At Mandalay itself and further south at Thazi and Pyinmana, the railway tracks and warehouses were hit. The station at Rangoon was hit at night by Liberators, and at Pyawbwe (near Rangoon) 30 hits were made on the track.

Oil installations at Yenangyun; Thilawa (near Rangoon) and Bhamo (170 miles N.N.E. of Mandalay), were bombed and at the first two places, several fires were started. Small scale attacks were made on enemy airfields at Meiktila and Pakokku.
In support of our land forces, Blenheims and Hurricanes attacked enemy positions on the Mayu peninsula.

In North Burma, U.S. Kittyhawks (P. 40), operating from China, attacked an enemy headquarters at Maingkwan and, over Lungling, intercepted nine enemy fighters, seven of which were destroyed for the loss of one Kittyhawk (P. 40).

In Central Burma, to the north-west of Mandalay, a total of 28 Blenheims bombed Kanbahn, Pinlebu and Bonchaung.

In Southern Burma, U.S. Liberators (B. 24) attacked docks and shipping at Tevoy (230 miles S.E. of Rangoon).

In Eastern Bengal, escorted enemy bombers attacked our airfields at Feni, Dohazari and Agartala and, further south, made two attacks on the airfield at Maungdaw; no serious damage resulted. A.A. fire and interceptions by Hurricanes, two of which were lost, resulted in five enemy aircraft being destroyed, 11 probably destroyed and at least 16 damaged.

Pacific Zone.

New Guinea.

44. Enemy positions in the Mubo and Salamoa areas were attacked by a total of 69 Allied aircraft.

Single U.S. heavy bombers attacked the airfields at Lae, Madang and Finschhafen and, in the north-west of the island, a total of 17 Allied bombers raided the airfields at Timika, Babo and Kaukenau.

New Britain.

45. Six attacks, mostly by single U.S. heavy bombers, were made on the airfields at Gasmata and Cape Gloucester.

New Ireland.

46. A total of 23 U.S. Fortresses (B. 17) and Liberators (B. 24) made four successful attacks on enemy shipping in the Kavieng area, other Fortresses at the same time attacking the airfield. In these operations, one heavy and one light cruiser were sunk, a destroyer was severely damaged and a large destroyer (or light cruiser) and a merchantman were damaged. In addition, four merchantmen and two destroyers may have been damaged by near misses.

Tanimbar Islands.

47. Four small-scale attacks were made by Allied bombers on the seaplane base at Saumlaki.

Solomon Islands.

48. A formation of 41 Allied fighters intercepted about 35 enemy fighters over Russell Island; 16 enemy aircraft were destroyed for the loss of six Allied fighters.

Four Catalinas (P.B.Y.) bombed and started large fires at Buka airfield on Bougainville Island.

HOME SECURITY SITUATION.

General.

49. There has been very little bombing in daylight during the week and no bombs have been dropped during darkness. On the 1st, bombs and machine-gun fire caused some damage and a few casualties at Ventnor. On the 3rd, bombs were dropped at Eastbourne demolishing 31 houses and a surface shelter. Civilian casualties were 16 killed and 32 seriously injured. Early in the morning of the 7th, bombs were dropped at Broadstairs, where damage was slight, and at Newport, Isle of Wight, where considerable damage was done in the centre of the town and there were 15 fatal casualties.

The coast of Kent was shelled during the night of the 4th/5th and during daylight on the 5th. Some houses were damaged at Deal, Dover and Folkestone, and there were some casualties.

Casualties.

50. The estimated civilian casualties for the week ending 0600 hours on the 7th were 22 killed and 41 seriously injured.
Appendices I, II, III and IV will be published periodically.

APPENDIX V.

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

April 2.—M.T.B. 267 broke her back and was sunk on passage from Benghazi to Malta.

April 5.—M.G.Bs. 110 and 113 damaged in action off Dunkirk.

April 6.—Steam Drifter Golden Gift sunk in collision in Oban Bay.

April 6.—M.T.B. 63 abandoned after collision on passage from Benghazi to Malta. M.T.B. 64 seriously damaged.

The following casualties to naval personnel have been reported:

Officers: 31 killed; 8 missing; 6 prisoners of war, previously reported missing.

Ratings: 25 killed; 14 wounded; 86 missing.

APPENDIX VI.

Air Attacks on Enemy Territory in Europe.

Extracts from Recent Raid Assessment Reports.

The following reports have been received during the week:

Germany.

Berlin.—A final interpretation of photographs, taken subsequent to the attack on the 1st/2nd March, show good reason why this attack has always been reported as outstanding and one, which, if its success were repeated on two or three more occasions, would nearly paralyse the life of the city. Reports of the fact that the fire situation was out of control have been numerous and are confirmed by the photographs which show considerable fire damage in the city. As one report stated, the Berlin fire services had been organised in the true Prussian manner on the assumption that there would never be more than a certain number of fires at the same time and each official had received orders as to what he was to do according to the number of fires. In this attack the number of fires exceeded that permitted by the Prussian drill orders, and organisation and discipline completely collapsed. Assistance was received from the fire brigades of Leipzig and other centres. Berlin, to a far greater extent than London, relies upon trams for municipal transport, and the dislocation caused to the tramway system accentuated the effect of the attack.

The photographs show some 30 factories to have been damaged. The principal feature is probably the destruction of the railway repair shops adjoining the Tempelhof marshalling yards where workshops have been destroyed over an area of 22 acres. Two large manufacturers of wireless sets, Telefunken and Blaupunktwerke, have been severely damaged, also two branches of Askania Werke, makers of optical and precision instruments. Among other works, whose premises have suffered severe damage, are makers of telephone equipment, roller bearings and fire control apparatus. Warehouses in the inland docks or military barracks were burnt out or destroyed by H.E. and at a conservative estimate at least 4,800 flats or houses and 600 detached or semi-detached houses were destroyed or very severely damaged.
It is of interest that the damage known to have occurred to the German Air Ministry is not seen on the photographs. The damage was caused by a bomb which fell in one of the inner courtyards, and between 200 and 300 rooms were destroyed or severely damaged coupled with the loss of important records.

Two factors seem to have caused the greatest effect:

(i) The phosphorus incendiary bomb, which, apart from its destructive effect, caused numerous casualties through burns to persons who attempted to deal with it, and

(ii) The effect of the heavy bombs, which, apart from completely destroying all buildings in the immediate neighbourhood of impact, would blow out all windows within 500 yards.

Vegesack.—A detailed study by a specialist in photographs of naval shipping and shipbuilding throws considerable light on the effects of the daylight attack by the U.S.A.A.F. on the 18th March on the U-boat construction at the Bremer Vulkan Schiffbau und Maschinenfabrik A.G. Of 15 U-boat hulls on the slips at the time, seven have almost certainly been damaged fairly severely, while six others appear to have sustained some slight damage. The 15 U-boats were in different stages of construction, and while some were due to launch almost immediately, others were still in the form of pressure hulls and unlikely to be launched before the autumn. Of the seven considered to have been severely damaged, one (which as already reported capsized on the slipway) was ready for immediate launching, two should have been ready mid-May, two mid-June, and one early July; the remaining one was still a pressure hull only and would have been due for launching in mid-August.

Apart from damage to the U-boats or the slips, the damage to buildings is probably sufficient to reduce efficiency to a minimum, if it does not cause complete dislocation. As a result this yard may well be of little importance for at least 12 months.

Essen.—A visitor to the town at the beginning of the third week of March reports that no work was in progress at Krupps. It was still necessary to obtain a special pass to enter and he was told that 15,000 workers of Krupps and 90,000 people in all were homeless. The whole area had suffered very heavy damage and he was informed that the damage to Krupps was the heaviest so far inflicted by the R.A.F. on works vital to the war effort.

It is learnt that gas supplies were still interrupted on the 23rd March.

An immediate interpretation of photographs taken on the 5th shows further damage to Krupps as a result of the raid of the 3rd/4th. Three of the largest buildings including the shell forgings workshop, have been damaged and seven other shops have been partly destroyed by H.E. or gutted by fire. There are also many incidents of fresh damage in the districts immediately west and south-west of Krupps works.

Cologne.—Several reports have been received that in the attack on the 26th/27th February one of the bridges over the Rhine was damaged and open only to pedestrians. It is now known that the bridge in question was the Hangebruche which was damaged at its western end. In the last week of March this bridge was still only open to pedestrians.

General.—An informant who has recently been visiting Germany states that the recent attacks have made marked impression upon the whole of the German people. He had met soldiers home on leave who were shocked at the condition of their towns and had openly criticised the Party. Many of the civilian population were disinclined to go to cellars because so many occupants had been drowned by bursting pipes and they complained bitterly of the lack of safe shelters.

France.

Paris.—Photographs taken on the 5th which cover the whole of the Renault Works show that, as a result of the U.S.A.A.F. daylight attack on the 4th, damage is widespread throughout the works. Several buildings of the Salmson Works have also been severely damaged.

St. Nazaire.—Photographs show, that as a result of the attacks on the 28th/29th March and 2nd/3rd April, fresh damage has been caused in the port area, and in the town, which is now virtually devastated. In the Bassin de St. Nazaire there are four hits on the submarine pens, a hydraulic machine shop has been damaged by fire and an iron works partly destroyed. The dam at the
north-western end of the entrance lock to the Bassin de Penhouet has been hit, and in the Chantiers et Ateliers de Penhouet two submarine stores have been destroyed and a small floating dock partly submerged. In addition, buildings in the aircraft factory and in the metal works in the Chantiers et Ateliers de la Loire have been destroyed or damaged.

Nantes.—An immediate interpretation of photographs taken on the 4th April shows that as a result of the attack on the 23rd March very severe damage has been caused throughout the St. Joseph Locomotive Works. Of the 12 main buildings, more than half have been seriously damaged and the remainder have all received damage by blast.

Amongst buildings damaged are the locomotive repair shop, a machine shop (where 10,000 square ft. of roof has been destroyed), a forge, and at least eight other multi-bay buildings and workshops.

In addition, several direct hits on railway tracks have destroyed rolling-stock and huts, and many conveyors and gantries have been damaged by blast.

Rouen.—An immediate interpretation of photographs taken on the 4th April, after the daylight attack by U.S.A.A.F. aircraft on the 28th March, shows damage in the Rouen/Sotteville marshalling yard. The main building of the Quatre Mares Loco Repair Works has been seriously damaged by a number of direct hits, and the shop to the north of it almost destroyed; buildings to the south have also been damaged and several hits were obtained on the up-forwarding sidings and the down reception sidings. In addition, the road bridge over the centre of the marshalling yard has been damaged.

Ougree.—In the attack on the 12th March on the Cockerill Works, the Centrale Electrique and other buildings were hit. As a result all work stopped and no date for its resumption has yet been fixed.

Caen.—Photographs taken on the 4th during the attack on Caen/Carpiquet airfield show several bursts on the runway and a large number (at least 41) concentrated across the administrative buildings and workshops.

Holland.

Eindhoven.—An immediate interpretation of photographs taken on the 5th April shows that, as a result of the R.A.F. daylight attack on the 30th March, the main building of the Manufacture of Lamps and the main building of the Manufacture of Valves (Philips Works) were both hit. The medical section and the transport section were also damaged.

Maasluis.—Photographs taken on the 29th March, after the R.A.F. daylight attack on the 18th March, show that a building of the Maasluis Oil Refinery was damaged. In addition, a considerable area of a multi-bay building belonging to the Vereenigde Touwfabriek N.V. (rope factory) has been destroyed.

Belgium.

Antwerp.—Photographs taken on the 5th, following the U.S.A.A.F. attack on the same day, show that the aircraft assembly shop of the Erla aircraft and aero-engine repair works has been partially destroyed, and that the aircraft dismantling and wing repairs shop has been severely damaged by several direct hits. In addition, three buildings (of a total area of over 5,400 square yards) belonging to the S.A. Photo Produits Gevaert have been seriously damaged.