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UNITED STATES NAVY

WAR DIARY  
OF  
ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

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16 MAY, 1942-31 MAY, 1942

PG NUMBER 31511

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UNITED STATES NAVY

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*Department of the Navy  
Naval History and Heritage Command*

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WAR DIARY

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

1955



Editorial Note:

The translation of this German War Diary was made in London, England, under the guidance of Commander S. R. Sanders, USNR. When his London Office was closed and the translation project was discontinued, much unfinished material was sent to Naval History Division, (OP-29).

Because the dissemination of the data contained in these documents is important, the translations and stencils have not been checked for accuracy of interpretation, phraseology, and spelling of officers' names or geographical names. Distribution under these conditions seems justified because of the excellent reputation of the London personnel and because translators are not available in Naval History Division. Research to correct possible inconsistencies did not warrant the time involved.

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





16 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

- ESE winds, force 1, overcast, visibility 7 miles, sea 1, temperature 13° C.

Enemy Situation:

After Kerch was taken, traffic of enemy merchant ships and boats naturally decreased in the Kerch area.

Nevertheless, a fair number of small steamers was still proceeding close to the east coast of the strait. Numerous small vessels were sighted in the eastern ports on the Sea of Azov.

Throughout the day a destroyer patrolled the area off Sevastopol; she was once sighted by air reconnaissance and several times located accurately. Submarine activity in the Crimean area as far as the west coast of the Black Sea increased considerably: 12 submarines were detected and some bearings taken.

More submarines were intercepted in the northeastern Black Sea, where Commander, Light Forces was at sea with 7 minesweepers and 8 M.T.B.s.

Due to inadequate air reconnaissance, no reports were submitted concerning any other forces.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

I visited the Operations Staff in Eforia with Chief of Staff.

- 0400 The minelaying formation put in to Constantza after carrying out minelaying operation L (see War Diary 15 May).
- 0420 Supply ship "Uta" put out from Bugaz for the south with naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143. At 1145 they put in to Sulina. They continued passage to Galatz at 1350.
- 0625 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 continued passage to Kherson from Sulina and anchored in Ochakov roads at 1830.

South Russian Area:

- 0600 Group 1, Danube Flotilla put out from Ochakov for Bugaz to disembark warrant officers and non-commissioned officers. At 1215 the group put in to Bugaz.

CONFIDENTIAL

16 May, 1942

0900- Group 2, Danube Flotilla put out from Ochakov to  
1315 search for mines on route Green as far as the  
Ilichevka minefield gap and back to 46° N. No  
mines were swept.

At 0600 during the night of 15/16 May, Mariupol  
was heavily bombed. Naval installations were  
badly damaged, but no further damage or casual-  
ties were reported.

Crimea:

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that Naval  
Port Commander, Kerch had arrived in the town at  
1600 on 15 May. Kerch has been completely in  
German hands since 2000. Up to now, no vessels  
have been found. As far as can be seen, berthing  
facilities in the harbor have not been destroyed.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported Radar Post  
Crimea I (Cape Ili) ready for operations.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Reina Maria" non-operational for 4  
days for rudder repairs. Radio set also broken  
down: cause and duration of repairs will be re-  
ported later.

Land Situation:

No incidents were reported from the coastal area of  
1st Army H.Q. (Tanks).

According to the report for the day from 11th Army  
H.Q., the remnants of the enemy forces which were  
confined to the northeastern tip of Kerch Penin-  
sula made desperate counter-attacks against our en-  
circling troops. All these attacks were repulsed  
at the cost of high enemy casualties. Weak forces  
attempted a landing near Cape Chroni, but they were  
sealed off. On the other hand, the village of  
Mayak (eastern tip of the peninsula) had again to  
be abandoned to the enemy.

Situation:

In teletype Gkdos. 29/12 I A/WVO/1900, 15 May,  
Army Group South reported that it was not intended  
to employ Coastal Defense Flotilla, Sea of Azov  
until later. They requested that the necessary  
preparations be made for this operation.

Radiogram 1515 was sent subordinating Coastal De-  
fense Flotilla again to Naval Shore Commander,  
Ukraine, who is to form them up and fit them out  
with all speed. Lieutenant Commander Kuster who  
was dispatched from here will remain with Naval  
Shore Commander, Crimea for the further preparations  
for the assignment with 11th Army H.Q.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

No wind, fair, visibility 25 km., sea 0, temperature 12° C.

Enemy Situation:

Numerous small enemy vessels are proceeding in the eastern bays of Kerch Strait and close to the eastern part of the north coast in the direction of Terriuk.

Minor activity of naval forces. According to reports of the Air Force, 1 heavy cruiser, 1 destroyer and 9 M.T.B.s put in to Novorossisk about 1000. Photographic evaluation at 1630 revealed that only 1 light cruiser ("Krasny Krim") was lying in the harbor with 1 large destroyer ("Tashkent"), 2 more destroyers, 6 submarines, 2 minesweepers and small vessels. Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza reported continuous lively submarine activity in the area south of the Crimea and in the western Black Sea. Thirteen submarines were detected.

In the area off Sevastopol 1 flotilla leader and another destroyer whose position was assumed to be some 30 miles west of Balaklava were detected. Also some small unidentified vessels.

As on the last few days, several destroyers and a number of minesweepers and M.T.B.s were detected in the northeastern area.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

1000 The Italian Rear Admiral Bartoldi (representative of the Italian Naval Command with Naval High Command, Naval Staff) arrived at Palas airfield accompanied by Chief of Staff, Naval Group South.

In the forenoon they visited Commanding Admiral, Black Sea and Captain Klatjan, Commander, Rumanian Naval Division. Rear Admiral Giurgescu, C-in-C Rumanian Navy, was also present.

In the afternoon Rear Admiral Bartoldi inspected the Italian naval forces. Commanding Admiral and Chief of Staff, Admiral, Black Sea, Chief of Staff, Naval Group South, Commander, Naval Special Duties Detachment, C-in-C Rumanian Navy, Commander Rumanian Naval Division and C-in-C Rumanian Naval Forces also took part.



CONFIDENTIAL

17 May, 1942

- 1900 Tugs "Oltul", "Elona" and "Arion" put out from Sulina to the north with 3 barges and 1 tug, bound for Nikolaiev. They were escorted by gunboat "Sberul" and 3 naval ferry barges.
- 0600 Commander, Danube Flotilla put out from Bugaz for Ochakov with tug "Remulus" and Group 1. At 1300 the vessels put in to port.

South Russian Area:

- 0400 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 (with life-belts and rescue equipment for Naval Shore Commander, Crimea) put out from Ochakov for Kherson where they arrived at 1200.

Crimea:

Naval Port Commander, Kerch reported that during the forenoon the town was shelled several times by enemy gunboats from a range of 9 - 13.5 km. When our anti-aircraft guns began firing, the boats made off developing smoke. No reports were received of any incidents in the rest of the area of Naval Shore Commander, Crimea.

Readiness:

Guardboat "Trenje" non-operational until 29 May because her air pump broke down.

Land Situation:

Despite strong resistance, the attack on the enemy confined north and northwest of Yonikale (the last enemy port of embarkation) made substantial progress.

According to a report from Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q., the enemy is bringing up reserves via Kerch Strait.

No incidents were reported from the coastal area of 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks).

18 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

No wind, almost entirely overcast, visibility 10 miles, sea 0, temperature 14° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of small enemy vessels observed yesterday continued today in the eastern bays of Kerch Strait. Three small merchant ships and 3 boats were even observed off the northwestern tip of Kerch Peninsula where the enemy is still holding out. Normal enemy shipping was observed in the ports on the Sea of Azov.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 May, 1942

Enemy naval forces were still concentrated near Sevastopol where about 3 or 4 destroyers, at times escorting single steamers and a tanker, were detected by air reconnaissance or Radio Intercept Service. Six submarines were also intercepted in the western Black Sea.

No further information was received on enemy shipping in the port of Sevastopol.

According to a later report, cruiser F has been in the northeastern sea area with 3 submarines since yesterday evening.

There were 2 more submarines off Batum.

Own Situation:

Convoy and Escort Assignments:

1. Owing to fog, the northbound Rumanian (word illegible) convoy was only taken over by Group 2, Danube Flotilla at Bugaz at 1200. The escort vessels "Sborul" and 3 naval ferry barges put in to Bugaz at 1300. At 1805 Group 2, Danube Flotilla put in to Odessa with the convoy.
2. At 0800 steamers "Carpeti" and "Oituz" and tanker "Prodomes" put out from Constantza for the north escorted by destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Maresti". Naval ferry barge No. 136, carrying minesweeping gear for Naval Shore Commander, Crimea, is to join the convoy in Sulina. At daybreak on 19 May, the convoy is to be taken over by Group 1, Danube Flotilla.
3. At 1100 the southbound convoy comprising motor vessels "Kassa" and "Kolosvar", steamer "Danubius" and tanker "Le Progres" put out from Ochakov for Sulina escorted by Group 1, Danube Flotilla. The convoy ran as scheduled. At 1900 Group 1, Danube Flotilla delivered the convoy to gunboat "Sborul" and 3 naval ferry barges which had put out from Bugaz. They will continue to the south and are expected to arrive at Sulina about 0200 on 19 May. At 2000 Group 1, Danube Flotilla put in to Bugaz.
4. Owing to fog, the transport group of 1st Special Duties Flotilla - 4 naval ferry barges - could not put out from Kherson for Ochakov until 0800 and therefore failed to meet the southbound convoy (see para. 3). The transport group continued passage without anti-mine escort and put in to Odessa at 1600.

Bulgarian Area:

0300 Special Duties Formation put out from Varna to search for mines on the Varna-Burgas route. No report of results has yet been received.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 May, 1942

It is intended that the Special Duties Formation should put out from Burgas on 19 May to check the area off Sozopol and the route to Sozopol and back and then on 20 May operate from Sozopol again, checking the route as far as Varna.

Rumanian Area:

- 0400 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121, 144 and 145 put out from Constantza via Sulina to Skadevsk with reserve torpedoes, emergency repair wagons, equipment etc. for the Italian vessels. Naval ferry barge No. 136 joined them as far as Sulina from where they continued to Ochakov with the northbound convoy (see "Convoy and Escort Assignments," para. 2.).
- 1030 In Eferia a discussion was held at the Operations Division, Admiral, Black Sea with Commander Mirbelli, Commander, Italian Naval Command, and Commander, Special Duties Detachment concerning the employment of the Italian vessels. (For report, see Appendix.)
- 1515 U-boat "Delfinul" put out from Constantza on operations. According to the operational order issued by Rumanian Naval Command, she is to operate in the area south of 43° N between 33° 30' E and 35° E as I proposed. The operation should last 10 days.

South Russian Area:

No incidents.

Crimea:

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that Naval Port Commander, Kerch was fully employed in preparing defenses against possible enemy attacks and that he had therefore temporarily abandoned naval tasks. By order of 11th Army H.Q., most of the Reinforced Coastguard Control Service was withdrawn from the West and south coasts of the Crimea and transferred to Kerch Peninsula.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported that fierce fighting was still going on for the Veikov foundry (east of Kerch) and for the last enemy positions near Kapkan and Yonikale. Every inch of terrain has to be wrested from the enemy forces which are putting up a stubborn defense regardless of their many casualties.

The situation on the Sevastopol front is unchanged. Lively inward and outward bound shipping traffic was observed.

No incidents were reported from the coastal area of 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks).

CONFIDENTIAL



19 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

N winds, force 3, overcast, visibility 20 km., sea 2, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon, the Air Force reported numerous small vessels in Kerch Strait which were obviously being used to take off Russians from the northeast corner of Kerch Peninsula which was still in Russian hands.

Inward and outward bound destroyers were sighted in the Sevastopol area. Several submarines were detected south of the Crimea and in the western Black Sea. Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza has heard cruiser F off the central part of the east coast, presumably proceeding north, since 0400.

Own Situation:

Convoy and Escort Assignments:

1. At 0400 Group 2, Danube Flotilla and the Rumanian towed convoy which had moored in Odessa during the night continued passage to Nikolaiev, while Group 2, Danube Flotilla returned to Bugaz at 1400.
2. At 0500 steamers "Carpati" and "Oituz" and tanker "Le Progres" (with naval ferry barge No. 136 from Sulina) were picked up by Group 1, Danube Flotilla at the rendezvous south of Bugaz. Destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Maresti" which escorted the convoy up to this point returned to Constantza where they arrived at 1000. The northbound convoy ran as scheduled. When they had completed their escort duty, Group 1, Danube Flotilla put in to Ochakov at 1445, while the 3 supply ships continued passage to Nikolaiev and naval ferry barge No. 136 to Kherson.
3. The southbound convoy which put out from Ochakov also ran as scheduled. At 0400 motor vessels "Kassa" and "Kolosvar" and steamer "Danubius" put in to Sulina with gunboat "Sberul" and 3 naval ferry barges. The supply ships then continued passage upstream. Tanker "Le Progres" which belonged to this convoy is waiting in Sulina roads for further escort to Constantza.

Bulgarian Area:

Supplementary report for 18 May:

The check sweep which was carried out by the Special Duties Formation on the Varna-Burgas route brought no results.

19 May, 1942

The report on the result of the check sweep made during return passage from Burgas to Varna has not yet been submitted.

Special Command, Bulgaria reported that from 1920 to 2040 yesterday the small Turkish steamer "Duadep" (250 tons) which was proceeding with a mixed cargo from Burgas to Istanbul was shelled with 70 rounds of 3.7 cm. tracer ammunition by a submarine off Tescevo within territorial waters near the Turkish/Bulgarian border. The steamer was hit 10 times and is now beached, listing heavily, about 180 meters offshore near the Turkish/Bulgarian border. Some of the shells hit the mainland and Turkish guards replied with machine-guns. The crew of 8 men reached Turkish or Bulgarian territory. Anti-submarine operations are intended today by Bulgarian E-boats.

Rumanian Area:

Dockyard questions:

1. Dockyard Control Staff of Rear Admiral Claussen reported that workers who had been arrested by the prefect of Ochakov-North had been freed again upon intervention of Admiral Pais, Under Secretary of the Navy. Salvage work was resumed at the floating dock on the River Bug.

It has transpired that the workers were arrested by the prefect "as a reprisal", presumably with approval of the governor, because the Germans (dockyard) were believed to have towed off a barge laden with scrap-iron from the right bank of the Bug. Thorough investigations are still going on as the affair is to be reported to Marshal Antonescu.

I ordered Dockyard Control Staff to take the following attitude:

- a. Reprisals among Axis forces cannot be countenanced.
  - b. The German opinion is that, as a waterway for large ships, the River Bug is entirely in German hands. The boundary is the right river bank of the Bug.
2. The contract with Galatz dockyard (Santieroly Navla Galati) was presented to President Antonescu for approval 8 days ago. So far no action has been taken. Rear Admiral Claussen is attempting to obtain the signature through the secretary's office.
  3. When Rear Admiral Claussen visited Busila, Minister of Transportation, he urged the speedy completion of repair shops in Constantza.



19 May, 1942

South Russian Area:

0900 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121, 144 and 145 which put out from Constantza yesterday at 0900 with cargo for the Italian forces put in to Skadovsk. No incidents reported during the crossing.

Naval Port Commander, Skadovsk reported that during the night of 18/19 May 3 partisans were captured on Kimburn Peninsula. They stated that they had been landed by a submarine a few days before with orders to occupy Tendra lighthouse and to pick up a radio set to be dropped by a plane. Further investigations will be carried out by 444th Coastal Defense Division which is in command of this area.

Between 2015 on 18 May and 0600 on 19 May, Mariupol had repeated heavy raids. Slight damage to naval property.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that 1,915 tons of cargo and 588 soldiers were transported between 19 April and 18 May by the transport group of Coastal Defense Flotilla.

Crimea:

Since 1700 on 15 May, Naval Radio Station, Kerch has been in operation carrying on routine traffic with Simferopol on the Crimea frequency. One of our construction squads managed to contact the Navy in Kerch.

Naval Shore Commander reported from Simferopol that the anti-aircraft protection requested for the defense of the Italian vessels in Yalta in agreement with 4th Air Force and 11th Army H.Q. had been provided: 1 battery of 8.8 cm. guns and 1 battery of 2 cm. guns had been installed. 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns were also brought for Foros, Theodosia and Ak Mechet.

Readiness:

Guardboat "Bechelaren" arrived from Linz and is lying in readiness in Orsova. "Alzei" is in Moldova. No incidents in the Iron Gates area.

Guardboats "Tronje" and "Gernot" are undergoing repairs and routine boiler cleaning in Orsova.

Land Situation:

Heavy fighting was still going on against the enemy in the northoast corner of Kerch Peninsula. The enemy put up a stubborn defense despite heavy casualties, but was pushed back. No important fighting on the Sevastopol front. Shipping traffic in the harbor still lively.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

N winds, force 4, almost entirely overcast, visibility 20 km., sea 3, temperature 19° C.

Enemy Situation:

There were only slight shipping movements in the eastern part of Kerch Strait and the Air Force observed no important activity in the Sea of Azov.

In the course of the day, activity of enemy naval forces increased considerably. At about 1700 Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza reported the following distribution of forces:

Cruiser F, 1 flotilla leader, 2 destroyers and presumably also C-in-C Fleet aboard an unidentified vessel in the Sevastopol and Crimean area. According to a D/F bearing, cruiser F was in 43° 39' N, 33° 27' E (55 miles south of Cape Kherscnes) at 2058.

Submarines detected: 4 in the same area and in the western Black Sea. Several M.T.B.s, minesweepers and patrol boats were intercepted in the vicinity of Sevastopol.

Commander, Light Forces, 3 submarines and 6 minesweepers were heard in the northwestern area.

Finally, cruiser A and the flotilla leader which yesterday was reported as being on passage to the southeast were detected in the southeastern Black Sea from noon onwards.

Enemy intentions cannot be deduced: they may be preparing for energetic reinforcement of Sevastopol or they may be making an indirect attempt to tie down German troops on the Crimea.

Own Situation:

Convoy and Escort Assignments:

- 1100 1. Motor vessel "Sulina" put out from Ochakov to the south escorted by Group 1, Danube Flotilla. Tug "Remulus" and motor minesweeper FR 8 - as far as Bugaz only - and the 3 Rumanian tugs "Oltul", "Elena" and "Arten" also joined the convoy.
- 1800 FR 8 and "Remulus" put in to Bugaz.
- 1900 The convoy was given over to destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Maresti". Group 1, Danube Flotilla put in to Bugaz. Owing to the weather, Commander, Destroyers ordered the 3 Rumanian tugs back to Bugaz where they put in at 2030.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 May, 1942

1940 2. Tanker "Le Progres" put out from Sulina for Constantza with gunboat "Chiculescu".

Bulgarian Area:

Yesterday's check sweep from Varna to Burgas brought no results.

Rumanian Area:

1015 Gunboat "Dumitrescu" put out from Constantza for Sulina to relieve gunboat "Chiculescu".

1940 "Dumitrescu" put in to Sulina.

While turning, motor vessel "Tisza" was blown on to a sandbank. The rudder, propeller and propeller shaft were damaged. A thorough examination of the ship will be necessary before she can carry out further escort duty.

The 4 Italian E-boats are lying in Constantza harbor ready for transfer to Yalta. According to the weather forecast of Meteorological Station, Constantza, the weather should improve in the afternoon with abating winds for the next 24 hours. The final decision as to whether the boats should be dispatched at 1700 on 20 May will depend on the 1400 weather chart which should be submitted for discussion at 1500.

1500 A conference was held concerning the transfer of the Italian E-boats to Yalta and their employment against Russian supply traffic. Commander Minbelli could not be present as he was in Sevastopol.

Meteorological Station, Constantza predicted favorable weather conditions for the next 24 hours for transfer of the boats to Yalta. The wind abated to N, force 3. The new weather front is not expected to pass until about 0800 on 21 May. The boats were therefore ordered to put out at 1700.

The following route was laid down for their passage to Yalta: From Constantza to Cape George and from there direct to Yalta. The route along the coast with the intermediate ports of Ochakov or Skadovsk was not chosen because this meant a detour of some 200 miles and moreover no suitable aviation gasoline was available in these ports and the boats would have been compelled to replenish their supplies. Short detour via Cape George was recommended for the following reasons:

1. To camouflage the intended passage to Yalta from enemy evening reconnaissance frequently observed off the Rumanian coast.
2. To shorten the route across the open sea.



20 May, 1942

3. To give the boats the opportunity to call at Sulina if the weather is bad. Preparations have been made there for refueling.

All commands involved were informed by radiogram of the sailing of the boats:

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea  
4th Air Force for Naval Liaison Officer  
Air Commander, South  
11th Army H.Q. for Naval Liaison Officer.

Copy to:

Group South  
Naval Special Duties Detachment

The following directive on the employment of the E-boats against Russian convoy traffic to Sevastopol was transmitted by radiogram:

"Emergency to Italian E-Boat Flotilla  
Naval Shore Commander, Crimea

Copy to:

Naval Group South

Supply traffic to Sevastopol should be disrupted by the Italian E-boats.

Reports on the enemy: According to air reconnaissance, Russian convoys approach Cape Sarich on northerly course, then proceed to Sevastopol close to the coast. They are escorted by destroyers and the area is patrolled by guard-boats.

No German forces were at sea.

Enemy mines can be expected south and west of Cape Sarich. The boats should not put out from Yalta before nightfall. Operational area should be east of the longitude of Cape Sarich. Torpedoes should be fired at all valuable targets.

Report intentions daily.

Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Op. 105 A Op."

This order was issued for the following reasons:

According to air reconnaissance reports, the Russian convoys approach Cape Sarich from the south and then proceed along the coast to Sevastopol. At a range of 5 to 15 miles from the coast there are Russian mine fields west of Cape Sarich as far as Sevastopol. Therefore, as the area west of Cape Sarich must be avoided by the Italian E-boats, operations southwest of Cape Sarich on the convoy approach route seem most likely to bring success.

20 May, 1942

- 1710 The Italian E-boats put out from Constantza as scheduled under the command of Commander Mimbelli.
- 1711 4th Air Force and Air Commander, South were requested to provide fighter escort for the 4 Italian E-boats between Cape Sarich and Yalta from daybreak on 21 May.
- 1930 A telephone report was received from Naval Communications Officer, Sulina:
- Sulina: N - W winds, force 6 - 7.
- Italian Radio Station, Constantza transmitted this report to the E-boats at once.
- 2240 Rumanian Naval Detachment reported loud engine noises 9 miles south of Sulina.

It may be assumed that these noises came from the E-boats which were delayed by a sudden deterioration in the weather about 1800 (W winds, in squalls up to force 7). The lights at Sulina will be lit and the batteries will be informed of the passage of our vessels. The pilot boat is waiting off Danube estuary.

South Russian Area:

- 1345 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 passed Ochakov from Kherson on passage to Bugaz. At 1940 they put in to Bugaz. A check sweep by mine-exploding vessel No. 191 to widen the shipping channel (southern side) brought no results.
- During the night of 19/20 May, 25 bombs were dropped on Berdyansk. No damage to naval property.
- 0530 On 20 May Mariupol was heavily attacked by 9 bombers with fighter escort. Two electric power lines to the dockyard were destroyed, while some of the lathes and the entire welding shop were put out of action. Other important buildings were also damaged. Incendiary bombs and bombs of heavy caliber were used for the first time.

These ever-increasing air attacks necessitate reinforcement of the anti-aircraft protection of Mariupol, as the coastal defense flotilla is formed up there and it also has the only efficient dockyard. 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks) was requested to transfer 1 heavy anti-aircraft battery to this place.

Crirea:

On 19 May, Eupatoria was raided from 1:24 to 2:25 and Theodosia from 2:15 to 2:10. No damage to naval property.

On 19 May, Simferopol reported that special boats transported by railroad from Italy had arrived. Transportation to Yalta was intended for 20 May.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 May, 1942

Nothing to report from the Iron Gates.

Readiness:

Motor minesweeper FR 8 again operational.

Land Situation:

No incidents in the coastal area of 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks).

Destruction continued of the last enemy forces which were still defending stubbornly in the northeast corner of Kerch Peninsula. In addition to 10,000 prisoners, the enemy lost almost 5,000 dead. No important actions on the Sevastopol front except artillery activity.

21 May, 1942

Weather forecast  
(Constantza):

NW winds, force 3, fair, visibility 20 km., sea 2, temperature 16° C.

Enemy Situation:

The Air Force again confirmed the great number of small vessels (sometimes 30 - 50 and more) in the ports on the Sea of Azov, Yeisk, Akhtari and Terriuk.

Radio Intercept Service also reported the same distribution of naval forces as yesterday.

Own Situation:

Convoy and Escort Assignments:

The southbound convoy with motor vessel "Sulina" ran as scheduled.

0450 "Sulina" put in to Constantza with destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Maresti".

1930 Motor vessel "Tisza" and tug "Engerau" put out from Sulina to the north escorted by gunboats "Stihi" and "Dumitrescu" and torpedo boat "Sberul".

Bulgarian Area:

0900 Three Bulgarian E-boats put out from Varna to the south for anti-submarine operations in the area off the Bulgarian south coast as far as the Turkish frontier where the Turkish steamer "Duadep" was attacked by an enemy submarine on 18 May. In teletype Gkdocs. 2837 dated 19 May, Naval Group South reported that the steamer was again manned by the crew after the submarine made off. The engine is in order. Measures were taken for unloading the cargo.

CONFIDENTIAL



21 May, 1942

Check sweep by the Rumanian minesweeping formation in the area between Sozopol and Zarebo (south of Burgas). No mines were swept.

Rumanian Area:

1254 Naval Communications Officer, Sulina reported: 3 Italian E-boats anchored off the coast. The pilot boat could not go out because of the rough sea.

The fourth boat which was sighted at 2300 on 20 May for the last time seems to be missing. Three ferry barges put out from Sulina to search for her.

0215 Air Commander, South reported that no fighter forces would be available.

0618 A teletype was received from Naval Signal Station, Sulina: "Italian E-boats MAS 571, 572 and 573 put in at 0515."

0730 A Most Immediate radiogram was transmitted to

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea  
4th Air Force for Naval Liaison Officer  
11th Army H.Q. for Naval Liaison Officer  
Air Commander, South  
Special Duties Detachment  
Group South.

"Secret - "Panthersprung" abandoned owing to the weather. Now start from Sulina will be reported."

0933 Naval Signal Station, Sulina reported: "The fourth E-boat has been sighted in the south."

0957 The boat entered Sulina.

1030 The 3 naval ferry barges which were detailed to assist her put in to Sulina.

The unexpected bad weather demonstrates the difficulties and unreliability of weather forecasts in the Black Sea area. This is now even worse without the Turkish weather forecasts which we have not had for some time. Experience has shown that direct passage of the E-boats from Sulina across the Black Sea to Yalta could only be justified in very good weather. Since on the one hand weather conditions during the next few days cannot be expected to be good but on the other hand transfer of the boats to Yalta is urgently required, the boats must sail close to the coast so that at any time they can call at an emergency port in case of a sudden change in the weather (see War Diary 20 May, 1500). Measures were therefore adopted to provide fuel in Skadevsk and Ak Mechet. Arrival of aviation gasoline in these places can be expected in about 4 or 5 days.

21 May, 1942

Inspection of the Italian E-boats in Sulina and a discussion with Commander Mimbelli revealed that, after minor overhauls, 2 boats would be ready to leave on the evening of 22 May. The other 2 boats will require about 5 days for repairs. One damaged the hull above the waterline on ramming a seamark and the other has a damaged propeller with a loose shaft.

The following was laid down at a conference with Commander Mimbelli:

The decision as to whether the 2 boats which will be ready for operations on the evening of 22 May should proceed alone and, if so, on which route from Sulina to Yalta will depend on the weather on 22 May and the weather forecast. Commander Mimbelli awaits further orders.

0545 Rumanian tugs "Oltul", "Elena" and "Arlon" put out from Bugaz for the south. At 1215 they put in to Sulina.

1155 Supply Ship "Uta" put out from Sulina for Bugaz.

At 1315 "Uta" observed an explosion about 1,000 meters on the starboard quarter about 12 miles north-west of Sulina. Cause unknown.

1600 About 8 miles southwest of Cape Burnas, "Uta" was attacked by 3 bombers which also machine-gunned her at low level. Fifteen bombs were dropped in 3 approaches. Splinters and machine-gunfire killed 3 men and wounded 4 seriously and 4 slightly. The steering gear was damaged and splinters damaged the hull at the waterline.

Upon "Uta"'s first report of the air raid, 3 naval ferry barges were dispatched to the north, while Commander, Danube Flotilla also put out from Bugaz with motor minesweepers FR1, 4 and 7.

Two flying boats sent from Constantza picked up the 4 seriously wounded men and brought them to Mamaia.

2015 "Uta" put in to Bugaz escorted by 3 motor minesweepers (FR). When it was learned that Danube Flotilla had gone to meet "Uta", the 3 naval ferry barges which put out from Sulina were ordered to return.

10.0 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 put out from Bugaz to the south. At 1700 they put in to Sulina.

Transfer of tug "Rorulus" from Bugaz to Sulina was reported without time of origin.

No mines were swept by mine-exploding vessel No. 191 off Ochakov.

0830 Skadovsk was bombed by a single plane. Six light bombs were dropped. No damage, 2 duds.



21 May 1942

1154 There was a second attack by 3 twin-engine planes from an altitude of 3 - 4,000 meters. 18- 20 bombs were dropped. They landed in the vicinity of the harbor entrance and as far as 500 meters to the east. Only splinters landed in the harbor area. No damage or casualties.

From 0925 to 0945, 2 twin-engine bombers with German markings and yellow wing-tips attacked the battery positions near Byelossarika (some 15 miles southeast of Mariupol) and a nearby fish-salting factory. Light bombs were dropped and planes also used machine-guns. No military damage.

Criminals:

From 0547 to 1030 Apatoria was raided. No damage was reported.

Simferopol reported on the passage of the Italian special boats to Malta.

No incidents at the Iron gates.

Readiness:

Supply ship "Eta" non-operational.

Italian S-boats 571 and 573 non-operational until 22 May,  
572 and 574 non-operational until 26 May.

"Delfin 5" - German Special Abilities Detachment - was commissioned on 16 May.

Land Situation:

In the northeastern corner of North Caucasus only small enemy groups are still holding out and their destruction is imminent. No important fighting on the Sevastopol front.

Traffic continued in the harbor, but accurate observations were difficult because of artificial smoke.

22 May 1942

Weather forecast (Constantia):

SS winds, force 2, almost entirely overcast, visibility 20 km., sea 1, temperature 17° C.

Army Situation:

The number of small enemy vessels (and some even smaller than previously reported) in the ports of the Sea of Azov has increased.

Slightly less activity of the Russian fleet.

Cruiser P was reported as proceeding to the east. According to visual observation, 1 heavy cruiser (presumably P) was said to have put in to Sevastopol with a destroyer. Confirmation not yet received.

22 Aug 1942

According to a report from a reliable agent, no surfs have been taken in overpassing to embark forces for Sevastopol. Recent lively activities of naval forces suggests that such reinforcements have already been landed under cover of darkness.

Sea Situation:

Supply Traffic:

1. The northbound convoy comprising motor vessel "Lissa" and tug "Angerul" ran as scheduled. The convoy was rallied by Group 2, 3rd Flotilla to the rendezvous south of Sevastopol. The 3 Russian escort vessels returned to Odessa where they put in at 1200.

Cehikov reported that "Lissa" and "Angerul" passed by at 1240 on passage to Sevastopol. Group 2, 3rd Flotilla which was to escort steamers "Arctik" and "Lisur", the latter "Prodrumus" and naval ferry boat 136 from Cehikov to Odessa had to postpone this assignment to 23 Aug because of the weather. The boats put in to Cehikov.

2. At 0945 the transport group of 1st Special Mobile Flotilla (4 naval ferry boats) put out from Odessa for Sevastopol where they put in at 2000.

Submarine Area:

No incidents.

American Area:

At 1225 1 enemy bomber attacked the town district of Lulima. Four boats were dropped. No military damage.

1200 Aug "Lorulus" put in to Kletz from Lulima via Odessa.

South Russian Area:

Cehikov reported that mine-sweeping vessel No. 191 had checked the area off Sevastopol. No mines were swept.

From about 3 to afternoon strong forces of enemy planes approached Sevastopol 3 times but were repulsed by anti-aircraft guns which were replaced there recently.

Grinea:

Water station VI (3 to 4 miles, 5 miles south-southwest of Iltar) was reported ready to operate.

No incidents in the area of Naval Base Commander, Grinea.

Land Situation:

11th Army reported no important fighting on the Sevastopol front.

22 Apr 1942

On Verch Zimnitskaya the enemy is still resisting, although encircled in the rocky terrain of Chirchik where there are many caves. According to statements of deserters, there are several thousand men there. Their resistance should be broken by blasting the entrances to the caves.

Nothing to report from the coastal area of 1st Army . . . (Tanks).

23 Apr 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Winds, force 3, no cloud, visibility 25 km., sea 3, temperature 19° C.

Enemy Situation:

Much less activity of enemy shipping and naval forces compared with the last few days. Air reconnaissance sighted a convoy consisting of 1 medium merchant ship, 1 destroyer, and 1 patrol vessel, heading for Constanța, 40 km. south of Ulita. About 2000 cruiser was detected at sea in an unidentified position. Radio intercept service also detected several destroyers and submarines. U-in-1 Fleet was said to be in or en passage to Sevroskisk.

Our Situation:

Supply Traffic:

- 0700 1. Group 2, under flotilla put out from Chakov for Consta with steamers "Miradia" and "Buzurg", tugger "Krasnokonos" and naval ferry bar 136. At 1200 they put in to Consta.

Due to the weather, the enemy with steamer "Bar Ferdinand" which was meant to return to Chakov had to be postponed for 24 hours.

- 0730 2. Tugger "Krasnokonos", which put out from Constantza at 1900 on 22 Apr to the north, put in to Consta escorted by tugboat "Nicolae". At 1305 the tugboat returned to Constantza.

Since sea transportation was resumed - 20 April to 30 Apr - 57,000 tons have been transported from Constantza, the Danube ports and Consta to Moldavia and Rumania. On return passage, 3,000 tons of service supplies have been transported from the south Russian area.

All the convoys ran without loss. This was especially pleasing in view of the heavy enemy countermeasures by submarines and planes.

Dalvarion Area:

Due to bad weather, special duties at Consta hindered the check sweep of Consta.

23 May 1942

0900 On pass to the north of the "Turkish steamer" (500 tons) was sunk by a surfaced enemy submarine which fired 3 torpedoes. The third hit the steamer while she was within 1000 yds of the shore. The crew was rescued. The 3 mines off the shore in the area east of Sardinia, 3 Italian submarines sighted the surfaced submarine for a short time and closed her without result.

Italian Area:

The contact between the Hermann Goering Works and the Italian "U-boat" (U-boat) was signed in Sicily: see for details.

Until further notice, 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla, U-boat is assigned to defend the island of Sicily. The flotilla is to put out for the island of Sicily 5 naval ferries (Nos. 130 and 143 and 5 motor launches). The order to leave is 0400 on 24 May via U-boat and U-boat.

1215 While on pass to the north of Sicily to bring provisions to the crew of the U-boat, the "U-boat" was attacked from the air about 10 miles west of Sicily. The plane approached at an altitude of approximately 2,500 feet and dropped 2 bombs close to the U-boat.

After midnight, Nos. 1, 3 and 9 put out from Sicily to mark the U-boat's position. The assignment could not be carried out because of the bad weather.

Local Italian Area:

Belokov reported that a mine-laying vessel, U-boat, checked the mine field off Sicily. Mines swept.

After the U-boat decided that the U-boat of the 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla (U-boat) was to be transferred immediately to the island of Sicily to protect the U-boat's mine field. At 1930 a U-boat ferry (No. 139) with U-boat commander, U-boat and the battery commander boarded and put out from Sicily to the U-boat's position for the U-boat. They returned at 2000.

Unloading of U-boat ferry (Nos. 131, 141 and 145) was completed. They had equipment for the U-boat's U-boat (U-boat) such as reserve torpedoes, U-boat repair tools, etc. which was transported from Sicily to the U-boat. This was loaded on the U-boat. U-boat will leave for U-boat at 0500 on 24 May.

U-boat U-boat commander, U-boat reported U-boat U-boat ferry (U-boat) was sunk by the U-boat's U-boat (U-boat) U-boat ferry (U-boat), U-boat and the U-boat were damaged by U-boat's U-boat (U-boat) in U-boat on 23 May.



23 May 1942

Land Situation:

Within 50 miles from the coastal area of 1st Army (1000).

11th Army P.C. reported on movements with the 1st Army groups in the terrain covered with caves near Ichim Ustun.

Radio:

Motor messengers per 7.3 operational.

24 May 1942

Weather forecast (Constantinople):

Partly cloudy, visibility 30 km., sea 0, temperature 15° C.

Enemy Situation:

Lively activity of enemy aerial forces generally. According to radio intercept reports, submarines were distributed over the entire Black Sea area. One was detected in the vicinity of Sudaia about 2200.

Cruisers 1 and 9 were observed in the eastern part of the Black Sea.

Air reconnaissance reports slight and no reports on enemy traffic were submitted.

Weekly traffic evaluation of the ports in the Caucasus area revealed normal shipping of about 40,000 tons in Novorossiisk harbor. The bulk of shipments in 1941. Otherwise no important changes in the ports.

Own Situation:Supply Traffic:

- 0400 1. Steamer "Bar Ferdinand" and naval ferry bar 10. 136 put out from Odessa to the east coast by group 2, Danube Flotilla. At 0900 the cargo passed Odessa and group 2, Danube Flotilla put in. "Bar Ferdinand" continued to Nikolaiev and naval ferry bar 10. 136 to Kherson.
- 2120 2. Motor vessels "Kassa" and "Klesvar", tanker "Le Progres" and steamer "Danubius" put out from Odessa to the north escorted by minesweeper "Stali", torpedo boat "Sferul" and naval ferry bar 10. 126, 137 and 138. The ships should be picked up by the escort at the rendezvous south of Bugaz at 0500 on 25 May.

Bulgarian Area:

No accidents.

Rumanian Area:

- 0355 Torpedo boat "Chiculescu" put in to Constantza from Sulina.

24 May 1942

- 0700 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143 and 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla put out from Koltz for Bulina. They intended to continue to Oktyevsk via Ochkov on 25 May and to once to Oktyevsk. Five motor launches bound for Oktyevsk will join the convoy as far as Ochkov.
- 1100 One plane attacked the Bulina estuary, dropping 3 bombs about 300 meters from the dredger working there. No damage.
- 1700 After a telephonic discussion with Commander Fabbelli, the Italian Light Flotilla was directed to put out for Koltz with the 2 operational boats in view of the favorable weather forecast.
- 0700 The Italian Boats under the command of Commander Fabbelli put out for Koltz via Ochkov. The engine of the last boat on failed and Commander Fabbelli was compelled to return to Bulina where the boats put in again at 1900.

In view of the changeable weather, it is a great pity that the transfer of the boats was again unsuccessful. Every effort is being made to have at least 2 or 3 boats ready to put out by tomorrow evening, but before 1. The 1st Division, 3rd Assault has already predicted increasing rain for tomorrow.

#### South Russian Area:

- 0700 The amphibious vessel No. 191 put out from Odessa to check the route to Ploesti. She put in to Olessa at 1000.
- No news report.
- 1430 Commander, 1st Special Duties Flotilla and naval ferry barges Nos. 121, 144 and 145 put out from Oktyevsk for Bulina.

The 3 naval ferry barges are proceeding along the north coast of Kerkennik Bay as far as off Kerkennik and then approaching the Bessarabian coast south of Izlaz. The boats should arrive at Bulina about 1000 on 25 May.

Naval Base Commander, Odessa reported:

Air raid on Leningrad during the night of 23/24 May. No damage to naval installations.

#### Ukraine:

Naval Base Commander, Ukrainian report of several air raids on Leningrad, Leningrad and Oktyevsk. No damage was reported.

Iron Guard: "Guard boats" "Kolokol" and "Lilzei" patrolled the river. No incidents.

#### Land Situation:

Reports were reported from the east side of 1st Army H.Q. (Leningrad) no incidents in the Leningrad front. The remaining enemy forces which have withdrawn to the east in the north eastern corner of Kerkennik Peninsula are still fighting. Prisoners and deserters already amount to more than 3,000 men.

24 May 1942

100-100000

Weather:

The third Italian fleet will be non-operational for 1 or 2 days.

25 May 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Variable, fair, visibility 15 mi., sea 0, temperature 13° C.

Enemy Situation:

Only a few reconnaissance reports were received today stating that enemy convoy traffic was low.

At 1140 the air forces reported a convoy consisting of 1 patrol vessel, 1 tanker of 4,000 tons and 4 small ships proceeding close to the southeast Bucegius coast.

In contrast to inbound and outbound traffic of small ships seemed slight according to pilot traffic evaluation.

Moderate activity of small forces. No large vessels above Flotilla leader type were observed. Obviously, Commander, Light Forces who has been at sea since 21 May is on his way back off the southeast Bucegius coast.

At 2130 1 submarine was reported 20 miles south of Malta. Five more submarines were reported in the western Black Sea and 2 in the north eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:Supply Traffic:

1. The northbound convoy comprising motor vessels "Kassa" and "Kolosvar", steamer "Danubius" and tanker "Le Progres" ran as scheduled.

At 1430 the convoy was met at the rendezvous south of Luga by Group 1, Danube Flotilla. The Rumanian naval forces and 3 naval ferry barges which escorted the convoy as far as this point returned to Sulina and put in there at 1115.

1300 Group 1, Danube Flotilla put in to Sulina, while the 4 supply ships continued past the Laislaviev and Kerson.

2. The second transport group (4 naval ferry barges) put out from Kerson for Alessa and put in there at 1300.
3. Tugs "Danubius" and "Stilii" and naval ferry barges nos. 122, 135 and 137 which escorted the Rumanian tugs "Elena", "Albul" and "Arden" (with the Danube travel convoy for Laislaviev) put out from Sulina to the north.

Rumanian Area:

During the last few days Russian submarines systematically attacked supply traffic between the Bosphorus and Rumanian ports. The Turkish steamer "Etil" was sunk by a Russian submarine off

25 May 1942

Constantinople on 23 May. These reported attacks on this important traffic off the Turkish and Bulgarian coasts require of course countermeasures. The following proposal was submitted to the 1st Group South in Ankara, 1st Air Corps, 24 May:

Subject: Protection of supply traffic between the Caspian and the Black Sea. Reported Russian submarine attacks on shipping close to the Bulgarian and Turkish coasts - recently Turkish sea liner "Yedigöller", 500 tons, on 23 May off Akkoçlu - necessitate increased countermeasures. I therefore make the following proposal:

1. a. Reinforced and where possible permanent anti-submarine operations by Bulgarian aircraft and torpedo boats between the Black Sea and the Turkish frontier.  
b. Employment of Bulgarian planes in anti-submarine operations in the east off the Bulgarian coast.  
As paras. 1.a. and 1.b: Special Staff, Ankara should examine the possibility of execution of these measures and report results.
2. Daily anti-submarine operations in inland waters - up to approximately 20 miles off the coast - between Cape Sabir and the Caspian by 4th Air Force and close to the Turkish coast outside territorial waters by Special Command. 4th Air Force is requested to state their views.
3. Patrol of the area off the Turkish coast by Turkish naval forces. Group South is requested to examine this matter and to take the necessary steps to ensure its execution.

In File No. 2911 op, 1st Group South expressed the following opinion:

"In connection with the measures proposed above, it is to be assumed that the minefields off the Bulgarian coast will have to be reinforced by deep anti-submarine mines if they have been discovered. The arrangement with Turkey will be attempted, but chances of success are low."

The report of the 1st Group South to Ankara also called for further minefields off the Bulgarian coast to protect supply traffic through the following cable message by teletype:

"In regard to File No. 2911 of 24 May:

Russian submarines mainly make their attacks in the vicinity of the Turkish coast and south of it.

If they discover Turkish territorial waters as was done recently, many submarines can attack everywhere in the route between the Caspian and the Black Sea.



25 Apr 1942

This long route cannot be protected by minefields. Another smaller minefields do not promise success and it would therefore be more suitable to keep the available mines for the important tasks in the northern Black Sea, since no mines can reach that area in the near future.

Admiral Black Sea Chels. Op. 254 Top."

Bulgarian Area:

- 0400 Naval ferry barges nos. 132 and 143 put out from Bulgaria for Buzan with 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla.
- 1055 Naval ferry barges nos. 131, 144 and 145 put in to Bulgaria from Sredzha.
- 1350 The harbor and town of Dulina were bombed by 3 SB 2 planes. They approached from the north and sailed off to the east. Altitude 1,000 meters, 4 bombs, no damage.
- 1500 Naval ferry barges nos. 132 and 145 put in to Buzan with 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla. Further passage to Bulgaria is intended for 0400 on 26 Apr.

Ruthenian Area:

The harbor area of Oranopol was bombed during the night of 24/25 Apr. Considerable damage to buildings from incendiary bombs. The army repair shop and 13 cars were destroyed by fire. No casualties.

Julian:

Naval Store Commander reported that battery at Cape Ivan Sabo (south of Novosia) consisting of three 13 cm. captured guns was ready to fire. With the exception of 1 ammunition bunker and 1 bunker for the crew, all required buildings were completed. Still no projectile.

Naval Store Commander, Oranopol reported that preparations had been made to lay the minefields in Kerch Strait with combined operations equipment. The following proposal for minelaying in Kerch Strait was then submitted to Naval Group South in Odessa. Op. 201 Top:

Subject: Minefields in Kerch Strait.

Reference: Admiral, Black Sea Chels. 68 Chels. of 27 April 1942.

The following are the proposals for minelaying in Kerch Strait:

I. Minefields to be laid immediately:

- a. Minefield off Cape Yerkovskii. 7 SB minefields in 3 rows with a gap for passage of small vessels at the eastern flank nearest the shore.

25 May 1942

b. Anti-landing minefields.

1. Off Lantisk Burun.
2. Off the southern part of the town of Nerch - petroleum harbor.

II. Mines should be prepared for minelaying off Nerch Harbor at short notice. The minefield should be laid by special order when an enemy landing plan is discovered.

III. Preparations should be made to block the southern entrance to Nerch Strait, building on the Russian minefield already there. Attention will only be possible after the arrival of naval ferry barges, that is to say, after the capitulation of Sevastopol, as the vessels cannot be transferred earlier.

IV. At present the minefield off the northern entrance to Nerch Strait can be omitted as the limited enemy forces could hardly carry out offensive measures from the Sea of Azov.

Approval request 1."

In teletype 2943 Sklos. of 24 May, Naval Group South gave their consent to this proposal.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was then instructed as follows:

"1. The following minefields quoted in sequence of their priority are to be laid:

1. Minefield in 3 rows off Cape Pavlovski beginning in  $45^{\circ} 16.2' N$ ,  $36^{\circ} 29.1' E$ , course  $122^{\circ}$ .  
Lines to be used: 48 M. Average distance between mines 15 meters.  
Depth setting 2.5 meters. Distance between rows 40 meters. To mark the end of the field, a buoy should be laid 100 meters after the last mine on the prescribed course.
2. Minefield in 2 rows off Lantisk Burun beginning in  $45^{\circ} 16.5' N$ ,  $36^{\circ} 26.0' E$ , course  $325^{\circ}$ . Lines to be used: 60 M. Average distance between mines 15 meters. Depth setting 2 meter. Distance between rows 30 meters.
3. Minefield in 2 rows off the southern part of the town of Nerch - petroleum harbor - beginning in  $45^{\circ} 20.0' N$ ,  $36^{\circ} 28.7' E$ , course  $360^{\circ}$ . Lines to be used: 60 M. Average distance between mines 15 meters. Depth setting 1 meter.
4. Minefield in the northern part of the dredged channel to Akreetsaroda iron works in approximately  $45^{\circ} 20.6' N$ ,  $36^{\circ} 32.15' E$ . Lines to be used: 20 M. Depth setting 1 meter.

25 May 1942

5. Preparations should be made to block Merch Harbor at short notice by a minefield in 2 rows with 60 mines in  $45^{\circ} 21.0'$  N,  $36^{\circ} 29.3'$  E, course  $014^{\circ}$ . Average distance between lines 15 meters. Depth setting 1 meter."

2a. para. 5: In view of our need to use Merch Harbor, immediate blocking of the harbor is considered ill-advised. We intend to lay the minefield suddenly when enemy landing intentions are confirmed.

No incidents at the Iron Gates.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Mirasti" operational.

The third Italian L-boat will be non-operational until the evening of 26 May.

Land Situation:

No reports were received from 11th Army L. C. or Naval Liaison Officer to 1st Army L. C. (Units).

26 May 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Winds, force 3, visibility 10 miles, sea 1, temperature  $16^{\circ}$  C.

Army Situation:

Only a few observations were submitted. 40 to 60 small vessels including vessels of about 100 tons were lying in the ports on the Sea of Azov. It is most likely that the enemy escape from Merch was the main cause of this concentration. Air reconnaissance reports revealed no particular clues that the enemy was preparing to land on the north coast and no airtel reports confirmed any such intentions.

Submarine activity increased slightly compared with the last few days. Radio Intercept Service presumed 2 submarines to be in the southern Black Sea in unidentified positions (one returning to Sevastopol on 23 May; relieved). Twelve submarines were distributed over the entire Black Sea area.

No large vessels exceeding destroyers were detected at sea. Heavy shipping in the port of Korostenisk had reached some 60,000 tons. According to photographic evaluation, naval forces were distributed in the main ports on the Caucasus coast and the battleship was lying in Loti. No cruisers were observed in Sevastopol harbor.

Army Situation:

Supply Traffic:

0920 1. Two L ferry barges Nos. 122, 135, and 137 put in to Glesso with ammunition barge "Llen", "Obul" and "Arion" and the

26 May 1942

Unknown based on report. The 3 barges and their barges put out for Odessa escorted by Group 1, Danube Flotilla. At 1720 Group 1, Danube Flotilla put in to Odessa. The barges continued passage to Odessa.

- 0400 2. Group 2, Danube Flotilla put out from Odessa for Odessa with steamer "Odessa". The latter put in to Odessa at 1025. Group 2, Danube Flotilla continued passage to the south, putting in to Odessa at 1330.
- 0600 3. Naval ferry barges No. 136 put out from Odessa for Odessa and put in there at 1335.

Balkan Area:

- 0930 Steamers "Lepina" and "Krasovskii" put out from Constantza to the south to escort the Italian tankers "Libero" and "Gloria" from the Caspian to Constantza.
- 0145 3 26 and 3 25, the first boats of 1st 1-Port Flotilla to be transferred via the route to the Black Sea area, put out from Sulina for Constantza where they put in at 1430.
- 1300 Naval ferry barges No. 129 and 13th Harbor Danube Flotilla put out from Sulina for Odessa where they arrived at 1715. They will continue to Odessa via Odessa depending on the weather.

In view of the favorable weather forecasts for the next 24 hours, the Italian 1-Port Flotilla was directed to transfer No 571 and 573 to Italy. At 1930 the boats put out from Sulina.

- 1930 Naval ferry barges No. 121 and 145 put out from Sulina for Constantza. These 2 naval ferry barges were to transport up and fuel supplies for 1st 1-Port Flotilla from Constantza to Black Sea.

South Russian Area:

- 0430 Mine-sweeping vessel No. 191 put out from Odessa for a check sweep off Perry Head. 3 times swept.
- 1300 Mine-sweeping vessel No. 191 put in to Odessa.

Naval ferry barges No. 127 and 139 transferred the first gun of 3rd Battery, Army Coastal Artillery attachment 145 to the island of Chirchik.

At 2130 according to report of 1st 1-Port Flotilla, Chirchik, a vessel, probably a submarine, was observed off the north coast of Chirchik. A boat was lowered from the vessel. On the vessel there were shells of 1st and 2nd Batteries, Army Coastal Artillery attachment 145 which were displayed there, it sailed off to the south. Further details were reported.

During the night of 25/26 May, a patrol bomber was again observed from the air. This bomber has 2 or 3 anti-aircraft guns of 30-20 mm, 1st 1-Port Flotilla are believed to have shot down the bomber.



26 Aug 1942

Summary:

Naval Mine Commander, Crimea reported repeated air raids on Yuzepole, Odessa, and Kerch Peninsula. No damage was reported. In these raids the enemy used a new kind of phosphorus incendiary bomb which at first caused a gas alarm to be given.

Iron Gates: The guardboat "Lizoi" made a check sweep from Kullowa to Kisilievo and back. No incidents.

Readiness:

The Bulgarian torpedo boat "Bneul" is non-operational for some weeks for repairs and bottom cleaning.

The Bulgarian motor minesweepers non-operational for some days for bottom cleaning.

Naval supply boat No. 144 provisionally non-operational for 2 days.

After routine electrical repairs, "Legale Ferdinand" made trial runs. Final repairs will be completed in 3 - 4 days.

Mail Situation:

No incidents in the Sevastopol front.

Destruction of the enemy continued on Kerch Peninsula where forces were still resisting stubbornly and fanatically in various places.

27 Aug 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Overcast, cloudy, light fog, visibility 12 miles; temperature 13° C.

Enemy situation:

Yesterday's picture of a certain lull in the activity of enemy naval forces changed rapidly. Obviously, the large vessels above flotilla leader type only put in to their bases for a limited time to replenish, make preparations for new assignments and to resume their escort and defense tasks especially off Sevastopol.

Submarines were less active.

From 0243 Commander, Light Forces and cruisers D and F appeared in radio traffic; presumably they were coming from the Kati-Ostun area. According to radio intercept reports, the Bulgarian command simultaneously received radio reports from Sevastopol, from 1700.

27 May 1942

Apart from small convoys off the Caucasus coast, there were 2 convoys in the south Crimean area proceeding from the coast of Sevastopol. Air reconnaissance reported the battleship and 2 destroyers 30 miles south of Odessa, course 320°, full speed, at 1835. At 1900 a second report came in of 1 heavy cruiser and 2 destroyers approximately in the same area. Both reports concerned the same formation, and, since according to radio intercept reports only cruisers F and D were at sea, the type of vessel must have been confused. It is most unlikely that the battleship did not appear in radio traffic. On the other hand, the smaller escort vessel might have sent out radio signals as a descriptive maneuver.

A number of very small vessels were also at sea.

Air reconnaissance reports were submitted from the coast of Azov.

Constitution:

Supply Traffic:

- 0610 1. The transport group (4 heavy ferry barges) put out from Odessa for Ceheliv with equipment for the Dnieper Flotilla and put in there at 1100.
- 2. The convoy of the 2 Italian tankers "Albergo" and "Glen" ran as scheduled. The tankers which were met by their escort at nightfall off the Sperus put in to Constantza at 1600 with destroyers "Morgina Maria" and "Marasesti".
- 1100 3. Gunboat, Dnieper Flotilla and heavy ferry put out from Ceheliv to the south as escorts for tanker "Le Progress" and tug "Argenta".  
Four lesser tankers "Pravda" and heavy ferry barges Nos. 122, 135, 136 and 137 also left the convoy.
- 1915 When their convoy had been transferred to gunboats "Stini" and "Mintrescu" and the motorboat "Gorbul", heavy ferry barges put in to Odessa with 4 heavy ferry barges.  
The British heavy ferry escorted the 4 ships as they continued to the south. "Gorbul" and "Mintrescu" intended to put in to Odessa, "Pravda" and the gunboats should put in to Constantza.

Algerian Area:

No incidents.

Iranian Area:

- 0600 Heavy ferry barges Nos. 121 and 145 put in to Constantza from Odessa.

27 May 1942

In a Naval Staff Station, Constantza sent a report that a Russian submarine in an unidentified position had sighted 2 Romanian destroyers, course 115°, speed 19 knots, at 2031 on 26 May. These could only be the Romanian destroyers "Mareștii" and "Mărăsești" (see "Supply Traffic", para. 2.) which were proceeding from Constantza to the Bosphorus to meet tankers "Albatros" and "Colona".

This report showed the danger for supply traffic close to the Turkish/Romanian coast and stressed the need for the defenses for this supply traffic already requested - see War Diary 25 May.

#### South Russian Area:

- Supplementary to the report concerning a planned landing operation near Klarivka (see War Diary 26 May, 2130), Naval Port Commander, Odessa reported that in the morning of 27 May 1 probable mine was sighted in 46° 1.5' N, 32° 33.5' E. It can be assumed that the enemy laid mines last night on the supply route from Ochakov to Odessa from submarines or surface vessels. 15th Harbor Defense Flotilla which had already been sent out to check this channel was then instructed as follows:

"Mines suspected in 46° 1.5' N, 32° 33.5' E. 15th Harbor Defense Flotilla must examine this area within a radius of 0.5 miles while carrying out the normal night patrol in the Black Sea Bases. 1531.

Report execution.

#### Marina, Black Sea Bases. G 344 Nov."

During the night of 26/27 May, the harbor district of Mariupol was attacked by planes and at the same time shelled from the sea by a probably gunboat which fired 2 rounds, presumably 10 cm. shells. No hit damage to naval installations.

Supplementary report for 26 May: Three Russian planes attacked several motor fishing vessels which were on passage from Benichesk to Byklosaranka. One Croatian Petty Officer and 1 Russian were killed in action and 1 Croatian was wounded. The boat was slightly damaged.

#### Crișea:

- 0545 Italian boats nos 571 and 573 put in to Malta from Sulina. No incidents were reported during passage.

The minefield which was planned near Tavlyvski has been laid as scheduled.

In radiogram 1206/27/25 May 1 Shore Commander, Crișea reported:

"Under the very same conditions accurate figures of the motor fishing vessels and small ferry barges which could be made available for 'Luppenja'". Considering the poor endurance of the fishing vessels described by Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine in Radiogram 333 Chiefs. of 12 May and the latest experiences with them, only 25 at the most could be promised. This number would

27 May 1942

not be sufficient for this operation. Please the every effort be favored accurate data immediately so that the Army can complete the ferry program. Please expedite all shorecraft, all craft available, such as Army Flotilla, Motor Launches, etc. and even railroad transport train.

Naval Group Commander, Soviet Flotilla, 491.

Reinforcement of coastal defense flotillas in the Black Sea with vessels from the Black Sea area will only be possible on a limited scale. Transfer of flotilla is required to protect the convoys from air attacks and mines. However, transfer of these vessels will not be possible with the amount of our transport. Transfer of naval ferry boats from the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov is out of the question so long as the coast is still in Russian hands and the enemy has control of Kerch Strait with batteries on both sides and sea mines. The only boats to be considered are those of the Army Defense Flotillas, Gdessa and Malchikov in the Black Sea, i.e. about 12 boats. Considering the importance of operation "Izmenjaj", it seems advisable to release these 12 flotillas temporarily from their present assignments and to transfer them to the Sea of Azov.

Commander Naval Group Commander, Soviet Flotilla, in the following radio message (0103), in which the Defense Flotillas, Gdessa and Malchikov were directed to transfer to the Sea of Azov immediately:

First Radio Message in radio message to Naval Group Commander, Soviet Flotilla, 491:

1. Parts of Army Defense Flotillas, Gdessa and Malchikov (about 12 boats) will be released from the Black Sea area for operation "Izmenjaj". Transfer to Sea of Azov has been arranged.
2. Transfer of naval ferry boats will only be possible if they could pass through Kerch Strait.
3. All other Army Defense Flotilla was needed as a direct transport train was not possible and the boats have other urgent assignments.
4. Naval Group Commander, Ukraine should report immediately how many parts of coastal defense flotillas and transport flotillas will be available for "Izmenjaj".
5. Naval Group Commander, Ukraine should report probable date of operation "Izmenjaj".

Naval Group Commander, Soviet Flotilla, 491 336.

als.:

First Radio Message in radio message 0103, 20 was sent to  
Naval Group Commander, Gdessa.  
Naval Group Commander, Ukraine.  
Naval Group Commander, Ukraine.  
With teletype copy to  
Naval Group South.

SECRET



27 May 1942

1. Naval Port Commander, Odessa should immediately dispatch all operational boats of the harbor defense flotilla to Mikolajev. Report time of sailing and number of boats.
2. Naval Shore Commander, Marine should transfer such boats from Mikolajev and boats of Harbor Defense flotilla, Mikolajev to Genichesk with all speed to place them at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Crimee for "Chapponjak". Report arrival at Genichesk as soon as possible.

Almiral, Black Sea No. 335-401."

Iron Notes: "Aimboat "Barnet" patrolled the river from Orsova to Irenova. No incidents.

Readiness:

Quartermaster "Barnet" again operational.

Land Situation:

No incidents in the coastal area of 1st Army L.S. (Danks). No important fighting on the air-strept front with the exception of some lively artillery fire from time to time, mopping-up of the quarry area in the northern corner of Kerch Peninsula continued against gradually decreasing enemy resistance.

28 May 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

SW winds, force 3, sea 1, slightly overcast, visibility 10 miles, temperature 15° C.

Enemy Situation:

Under the route of cruiser D which was escorted by 2 destroyers could be traced quite accurately by means of air reconnaissance and radio intercept reports.

Most likely the cruiser landed troops in Sevastopol during the night of 26/29 May and on return passage was sighted by the Air Force in large grid square 34 and in the following subsidiary squares:

- at 0452 grid square 3436
- at 0710 grid square 5457
- at 1525 grid square 3432 (3 miles southwest of Murso).

Cruising speed must therefore have been 21.7 knots, i.e. 228 miles in 10½ hours.

Further transport assignments of this sort can be expected.

At 1450 Radio Intercept Service reported cruiser F off the central part of the east coast, but already some distance from it.

20 May 1942

It is therefore obvious that it will be necessary to establish a D/F station in the Arctic in order to get important positions promptly. An application was therefore sent to Naval Group with request for permission to transfer D/F station, Glessa to this place.

Naval surveillance and control activities.

Arctic Area:

Supply Traffic:

- 1355 1. Steamer "Arctic" and "The Progress" put out from Glessa escorted by gunboats "Sivik" and "Arctic". This south-bound convoy (see for May 27 May) thus runs as scheduled.
- 1315 2. Steamer "Arctic" put out from Glessa with an important cargo of supplies and a mission for "Arctic" and passed Svalbard at 1700.  
  
Owing to urgent requests from the Air Force, steamer "Arctic" had to put out with all speed before completion of loading, and without one of the crews of "Arctic" for anti-aircraft escort. The Russian Air Force provided fighter escort. This was the first time that a supply ship had proceeded to Glessa without escort.
- 3. Steamers "Arctic" and "Arctic" put out for the north escorted by destroyers "Arctic", "Arctic" and "Arctic". At 0500 on 20 May, the ships should be picked up off Svalbard and should then proceed to Svalbard.

Tularemia Area:

No incidents.

Arctic Area:

- 0745 3 destroyers, 1st special Arctic Flotilla and 1st Arctic Flotilla (s.s. 102, 135, 136 and 137) put out from Glessa for Svalbard where they arrived at 1300.
- 0900 2 destroyers, 1st special Arctic Flotilla put out from Glessa to the north to check the route as far as the Arctic Flotilla can reach. At 1300 the ships put out from Glessa.
- 2230 3 destroyers, 1st special Arctic Flotilla and 1st Arctic Flotilla (s.s. 102, 126, 135, 136, 137 and 138) put out from Glessa for anti-aircraft escort to the Arctic Flotilla and to check the route as far as Svalbard.

South Arctic Area:

191 special Arctic Flotilla for Svalbard.

29 July 1942

The remaining 2 units of 1st Battery, Army Coastal Artillery Detachment 145 were transported to Beharful by naval ferry barge No. 139.

During the night of 27/28 July, the harbor district of Sevastopol was again raided. Three naval ferry barges were damaged by splinters. No casualties.

Boats on passage from Kerch to Lavivaya Kosa were machine-gunned. One Russian was killed by splinters, 4 men were seriously and 3 slightly wounded. No important damage.

During the night of 27/28 July, the town district of Berghansk was bombed twice. No damage.

#### Air:

Sevastopol was repeatedly attacked from the air. No losses reported. No damage to naval installations.

#### Land situation:

No incidents reported from coastal area of 1st Army. (Falks).

No important fighting in the Sevastopol front. Continuous shipping traffic to and from Sevastopol might have been transporting material and troops. Because of an artificial smoke screen and fighter defenses, exact data could not be observed.

On North Peninsula loading-up operations were continued as scheduled in the quarry area of Chernaya Isina.

29 July 1942

#### Weather forecast (Constantza):

Fair, no cloud, slight fog over the sea, visibility on land 6 km., temperature 17° C.

#### Naval situation:

The Air Force reported only a few reconnaissance results, presumably owing to the small number of planes employed.

In the other land, radio traffic revealed considerable activity of enemy naval forces. Sixty cruisers D and F and 7 destroyers were detected, while cruiser G was also assumed to be at sea.

C-in-C fleet is believed to be putting out from Odessa, but is not yet certain if other ships aboard the battleship.

Airborne activity was remarkably lively: 18 were reported. Their positions which were not immediately ascertainable, extended from the Caucasus coast as far as the western Black Sea.

Patrol forces were busy in the Sevastopol area and in the Caucasus coast. Most notably the lively activity of enemy naval forces was connected with the transport of relief convoys to Sevastopol.

29 May 1942

Com Situation:

Submarine Area:

No incidents.

Russian Area:

- 0400 Commander, Danube Flotilla and Group 1 put out from Iuzh for Cehakov to pick up the southern convoy which was planned for tonight. At 1000 they put in to Cehakov.
- 0500 The escort of the northern convoy consisting of the steamers "Galina" and "Arloel" was taken over as scheduled by Group 2, Danube Flotilla at the rendezvous off Iuzh.
- 0925 The commander of Group 2 reported:  
 "Submarine attack in 46° 31.5' N, 30° 52' E."
- 0957 A radio message was received from War 1 Communications Officer, Clesca:  
 "At 0955 steamer "Galina" was sunk off Clesca by a sub. Commander has been informed. Rescue work under way."
- 1003 The group commander sent the following radio message:  
 "Steamer "Galina" torpedoed by a submarine. Hit midships and sinking slowly."  
 In view of these reports the southern convoy was stopped by the following radio message:
- 1100 "Submarine danger. Southern convoy must return to Cehakov-Booth."
- 1106 A radio message was received from War 1 Communications Office, Clesca:  
 "Order to transfer of non-contact lines, Clesca area is closed to shipping. The southern convoy has returned to Clesca. We await further orders."
- 1121 Commander, Group 2, Danube Flotilla reported:  
 "At 0925 "Galina" was attacked by a submarine from the starboard quarter. Very close track and precise course sighted by Corporal Klerf, Unit 7 21020. Range some 300 meters. Crew rescued. 4 dead, several wounded. "Arloel" proceeded at maximum speed to Cehakov-Booth under command of minefield pilot Lieutenant Commander "Spencer."
- 1302 "Arloel" put in to Cehakov without incident.  
 The cause of sinking of steamer "Galina" is not yet clear. The cause may have been  
 a. sunk by a torpedo from a submarine  
 b. or have struck a magnetic mine.



29 May 1942

In favor of the sinking by a submarine was the statement of the Air Force man (see 1121).

The following facts are in favor of sinking by striking mine (this could only have been a mine without a notice firing device as the steamers were proceeding with anti-mine escort):

1. No column of water was reported such as is usual in a torpedo hit.
2. The periscope and torpedo track were only sighted by 1 Air Force man whose judgment cannot be accepted as reliable.
3. In a smooth sea, the place of sinking (close to the coast in water 18 meters deep) would have made it very difficult for a submarine to attack.

At present no accurate statements can be made in the cause of the loss of "Gulina": both possibilities have to be considered. The following instructions were therefore sent via Naval Special Duties Detachment:

1. Anti-submarine operations to be carried out in Class: Bay.
2. Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 to sweep the route.

In order to carry out these assignments, Group Northbay, 1st Special Duties Flotilla (different units employed in transportation) and mine-exploding vessel No. 191 have been subordinated for operational matters to Special Duties Detachment and Danube Flotilla respectively.

The following orders were also given: transports on passage from Buzak to Cehakiv must in future have an anti-submarine escort as well as an anti-mine escort. For this purpose 1st Special Duties Flotilla will be employed in 2 groups, 1 stationed in Cehakiv and the other in Buzak.

1345 See Transportation Office, Classa reported:  
"to "Gulina":

Casualties: 3 dead, 3 men of on-line crew seriously wounded, 7 engineers in Air Force hospital, Classa, 1 civil engineer appointed to "Nikolia" slightly wounded, will remain with Naval Port Commander, Classa at present. The crew of 41 men will be transferred to Constantza by Romanian Naval Detachment. 14 Air Force soldiers, 4 sailors, 2 soldiers of the anti-tank guns and 10 sergeants will be sent to Constantza by Sea Transportation Office, Classa. 35 of the crews of Bisol ferries will be sent to Nikolaiiv by Sea Transportation Office, Classa. Inform Construction Battalion 86, Constantza."

1215 Naval ferry barges Nos. 122, 126, 135, 136 and 137 put into Gulina. Anti-submarine operations off Cape Burnas and check sweep as far as Buzak as scheduled. No incidents.

29 May 1942

At 1400 and 1700 respectively, destroyers "Morgina Maria" and "Marasesti" with "Maresti" put in to Constantza after escorting motor vessel "Dulna" and steamer "Mircea" as far as Lugaz.

1900 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 145 put out from Constantza with fuel for 1st Fleet Flotilla in Ak Lechet. Completion of this assignment will only be possible when 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla (now lying in Cehakov) has examined the route off Markinitzki Bay and from there to Ak Lechet. 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla was instructed to carry out this task as soon as possible.

2200 Naval ferry barges Nos. 136, 138 and 144 put out from Sulina for Olessa.

South Russian Area:

0425 The transport group (4 May 1 ferry barges) put out from Cehakov for Olessa after unloading the equipment for the 1st Fleet Flotilla. They put in there at 0900.

Naval Port Commander, Odolovsk reported that the 3 guns of 1st Battery, 1st Coastal Artillery Detachment 145 on the island of Dzheriulghach were ready for heavy firing practice.

During the night of 28/29 May, the harbor district of Mariupol was raided again. The transshipment pier in the main harbor was badly damaged.

0030 Berdyansk was shelled by 2 Russian motor gunboats which put up an artificial smoke screen and made off when our batteries replied. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that on 28 May all the vessels at sea were repeatedly bombed and each hit by enemy fighters. Apart from slight damage to the vessels, there were no casualties.

Crimea:

During the night of 28/29 May, Lugat ria, Siferopol, Kholosia, Sari Ulsk and Filta were bombed repeatedly. One of the 2 Italian E-boats lying in Filta was slightly damaged by splinters. Otherwise no damage or casualties reported.

Recklessness:

Naval ferry barge No. 174 operational.

Motor minesweepers No. 4, 8 and 10 non-operational. Cause not yet reported but presumably on the trouble. Duration of repairs will be reported later.

One of the slight cylinder fittings on one of the Italian E-boats will be non-operational for 2 days.

Local Situation:

No important fighting was reported by 11th Army T.O. on the Soviet side front.

The remnants of the enemy forces are still re-forming themselves in the quarry area of Bohin Ushka.

30 May 1942

Text of forecast (Constantza):

Weather, no clouds, visibility 10 miles, slight haze, temperature 15° C.

Enemy Situation:

Attention in the lively activity of naval forces reported yesterday suddenly decreased. In the evening only several submarines and probably cruiser D with C-in-C Fleet command were detected in radio traffic in the southeastern Black Sea area.

The Air Force submitted no reconnaissance reports.

Own Situation:

Naval Traffic:

When the 4 naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla hitherto employed in transportation between Glesse and Khuson were all called to Group 1, the 10 naval ferry barges were detailed as follows as anti-submarine escorts:

To Cchakv: Naval ferry barges Nos. 125, 128, 136 and 138.  
To Tuluz: Naval ferry barges Nos. 133, 134 and 144.  
To Sulina: Naval ferry barges Nos. 126, 135 and 137.

Convoy traffic will be suspended until the area between Cchakv and Glesse is searched for magnetic mines by mine-sweeping vessel No. 191 which will be escorted by naval ferry barges due to submarine danger.

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

- 0545 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 125 (transporting fuel for 1st Flotilla, see War Diary 29 May) put in to Sulina. At 1000 they continued to Glesse. As the center engine of naval ferry barge No. 121 broke down, naval ferry barge No. 122 was detailed for escort.
- 0715 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 took a communications squad of the Air Force to the island of Tiknisi and then put in to Sulina again at 0630.
- 1300 Commander, 1st Flotilla and Group 1 put in to Tuluz from Cchakv ready for the next convoy.

South Russian Area:

Mine-sweeping vessel No. 191 put in to Cchakv from Nikolaiev. During the check sweep off Berzovcisk carried out en passage, no mines were swept.





31 May 1942

Own Situation:Bulgarian/Rumanian Area:

No incidents.

South Russian Area:

- 0845 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121, 122 and 145 (fuel transportation for 1st B-3 at Flotilla) put in to Odessa from Sulina. As the center engine of naval ferry barge No. 121 had broken down, her cargo was transferred to naval ferry barge No. 133 which with naval ferry barge No. 145 proceeded to Odessa at 1600. They put in at 1945.
- 1315 3rd Battery, Army Coastal Artillery Detachment 145 (Kharovks, north coast of Markinitski Bay) reported 1 half-submerged submarine at a range of 7,500 meters. Naval Port Commander, Odessvsk requested air reconnaissance from Air Commander, South. Results not yet reported.

Although it was most unlikely that a half-submerged submarine could be observed accurately from the shore at that range, it may have been a submarine because the enemy has already appeared in this area several times and tried to land groups of partisans and agents (see for Army 26 May).

- 1015 Mariupol was attacked from the air. Slight damage to buildings and minor casualties among the civilian population.

Transportation to and from Mariupol was suspended until further notice when Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported continuous fighter attacks during the last few days.

Crimera:

- 1000 One Italian B-24 shot out from Eilat on a sea rescue mission reported by Air Commander, South. One Russian rubber dingy with documents was salvaged. Without further details, Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported air raids on Safferyal, Kerch, Eupatoria, Malt and Theodosia.

Land Situation:

No important fighting in the Sevastopol front. There was lively shipping traffic from and to Sevastopol, nicely screened by artificial smoke.

No incidents in the coastal area of 1st Army R.O. (links).

Readiness:

Not r manesweters #4 and 8 remain operational.

(Signed)

Pici

(Unwritten signature possibly  
P. P. P. P.)

APPENDIX I

Annex to War Diary 18 May

Discussion between Admiral, Black Sea, Comcrimins  
30 April and Commander in Chief in 18 May, 1942

... Personal report of Chief of Staff in the situation in the Black  
Sea area:

Up to now almost all our transports have run without delays. With the exception of one small one, March Peninsula has been captured. Army operations have developed as scheduled, but still have not influenced the situation at sea.

Enemy area: The Russian base in Sevastopol (threat from the flanks).

Tasks of the Navy in connection with Army operations:

Fitting out of the fishing vessels in the Bay of Navy for transport assignments to the north coast. Opening of Kerch Strait for our landing operations. Naval ferry barges are best suited for this crossing. Sevastopol is the obstacle. During the last few days, several enemy vessels, submarines and destroyers have been observed in the area west of Sevastopol, presumably protecting Russian base operations. It is urgent that we attack Sevastopol. For this purpose, a mine-free route must be cleared from Ochakov-Karkiniyaki Bay-Okalovsk-Bekhet. Preparations are under way. Time required: 10 to 14 days.

Further preparations for employment of line forces against Crimea:

- I. Reconstruction of Ochakov base is under way and will probably be completed at the end of May.
  - II. Aviation fuel has been stockpiled in Hult and Medisic (20 tons in each place).
  - III. Equipment for the Italian boats was loaded into 3 naval ferry barges at Constantza which put out at 0300 on 18 May via Danube for Okalovsk. Lieutenant Ciclo was in charge.
- D. Survey of the new situation by Commander, Naval Special  
Duties Detachment:

In the main, the enemy has appeared with submarines and planes in the western Black Sea. Presumably, the planes are used for aerial reconnaissance.

The enemy submarines operated in fixed positions, observed off Euzak, Constantza (within the closed area), and on the Bosphorus and in the Aegean.

According to reports from the Naval D/P Section, the submarines were seen in their reconnaissance reports from Sevastopol. On 7 and 8 May, our convoys were attacked from the air.

During the last few days, the weather was favorable for our operations because it was unfavorable for Russian air reconnaissance.

Military operations in the Crimea have an influence upon Russian air operations.

Civilian, the Russian surface forces have not yet been employed against us. According to radio traffic, however, cruisers have been detected several times (cruisers A, D and F).

Our Operations:

Supplies depend on the number of steamers available. Weather conditions are very important as the small war minesweepers of Danube Flotilla can only operate in sea up to force 3. This period is very favorable for carrying out transportation.

Regular checks of routes taken are impossible.

During outward and return passage, escort vessels are always used to check the routes and they proceed with our out.

The routes and danger areas will be made known to the Italians. Charts will always be available.

Close cooperation and coordination of tasks have been arranged between 1st Special Duties Detachment and the Italians.

Harbor plans and special plans (minefields) will be given to the Italians and they will be informed of future German operations.

The following operations are in progress:

- a. Yesterday evening, a towed convoy put out from Sulina to Nikolayev (Romanian destination - intentions for construction of bridges).
- b. This afternoon, a northward convoy put out from Constantza. It will be picked up by Danube Flotilla at Oluz tomorrow morning - 19 May, 1942.
- c. One small land convoy to Odessa.
- d. In preparation: Convoy of 2 tankers from the Desperus to Constantza planned for 23 May. These 2 tankers are to make several runs to the Piraeus. During passage to Istanbul, radio operators and communications personnel wear civilian clothes. War attaché, Istanbul will receive directions for this operation via signal group south.

3. Contents of Commanding Officer's:

Summary of these 2 surveys:

transportation is the main problem. The Russian base at Sevastopol is just too far as far our operations. It would be desirable to make at least diversionary attacks on Sevastopol. Later on, offensive operations against Sevastopol should be carried out in cooperation with the Army and Air Force, and when all naval forces available. Russian naval forces and Russian supply and patrol vessels should be attacked.

Preparations for later offensive operations against Sevastopol should therefore be our first consideration.

Commander Mihailov was requested to give information on the intentions of the Italian E-boats, U-boats and special boats.

1. How are the vessels to be transferred to the Crimea?
2. What support can be given by the Germans for this assignment (air reconnaissance, escort vessels, interceptors and navigational assistance)?

7. Commander Mihailov's answer:

Commander Mihailov has selected suitable bases in the south east of Crimea. The best places are in the Crimea and Sicily.

The E-boats will first be sent to the Crimea. Reasons: They are the first boats which will be ready for operations and are able to proceed to the Crimea direct (range 250 miles from Constantinople).

Radius of action 400 miles, best cruising speed 30 knots. The E-boats will be most successful at night, will take the enemy by surprise. This is planned for 1940 in 1941.

Proposals for operations:

Instead of Constantinople, which should be the point of departure, using a shorter route. The E-boats should first make a deceptive course. The weather is very favorable at present, therefore put out as soon as possible.

Commander Mihailov agrees with the proposal to steer a deceptive northern course.

Details of execution should be best discussed direct cooperation between Naval Special Action Detachment and Commander Mihailov (instructions to lead the way, escort forces, navigational signals - 30. degree, air reconnaissance). The Italian boats should maintain contact with the E-boats. Use radio broadcast procedure. Contact will be settled with the communications officer. Contact authorities in the Crimea should be informed of the transfer of the E-boats. Determine color light German reconnaissance signals.

Question by Commander Mihailov:

Instructions and operations of the E-boats discussed directly with Naval Special Commander, Crimea?



DISPATCH:

Yes, close cooperation with Royal Marine Commanders, Gambia and reports to Admiral, deck to.

For this purpose, use radio station in Malta. Dispatch Lieutenant Kraker to Malta as communications officer to be arranged by Senior Communications Officer).

Italian Fleet Submarines:

The Italian submarines will be ready to submerge within 10 days. Then at first they will have to exercise off Constantinople and Sicily within and outside the minefield zone.

Transfer to Malta: At first, let it be 3 only for experience. Examine whether Malta is a suitable base. Check sweep of the transfer route will be necessary. Route from Luqa to Kleravka (Kirkkinitzki Bay) easy to check. As far as Skudovsk naval ferry lanes will escort the vessels. In the afternoon they shall proceed from Malta to Malta if the weather is suitable. If Malta is satisfactory, transfer the other submarines to this place, otherwise relieve the 3 submarines. The latter route means a great risk.

Special Tasks:

Between 20 and 25 Aug, transfer to Suda Bay or Malindi. They are to be employed mainly against Sevastopol as it is expected that the battle for Bosphorus Strait will be finished by then. Operations to be made from Malta.

Objection of Commander Admiral:

Special tasks may also have to be employed in defense of Bosphorus Strait against Russian penetration. For this purpose, British Turan would be a very suitable base.

As to later tasks cooperation with 11th Aug... will be necessary with the development of offensive operations.

Commander Di Felici will proceed to the Crimea with the Italian Fleet.

Written report on plans to be submitted by Commander Di Felici.

SECRET

Annex to the Order No. 181

Translation

Memorandum

In accordance with the instructions of Admiral, [redacted] and on the basis of my experiences during my official visits to the Crimea and the Ukraine the vessels of 15th Flotilla will be employed as follows:

1. Boats:

If the weather permits, the 4 boats will be transferred direct from Constantinople to Varna tomorrow. The boats will arrange their courses and speed so that they will be east of the meridian of Cape Svirich at dawn and will arrive in Varna about 0500.

In Varna the boats will refuel and lie in readiness for a night operation off Varna or, depending on the situation, for an operation in the area between Varna and Dobrussisk. In the latter case, the boats will first proceed to Mesdosia for fuel.

Provided that weather conditions permit, I shall support army operations by employing the 4 boats as much as possible to take advantage of the fact that the enemy is not expecting the boats in the Danube area and in the favorable moon phase.

2. To learn about submarines:

Before their employment, the submarines will require some exercises which should last about 10 days.

After completion of their exercises and when [redacted] Bay and the approaches to the harbors in the north coast of Crimea have been examined for mines, the first 3 submarines will put out for the mine. As the direct route is too long the boats will first be transferred to [redacted] coast. They will proceed along the coast to the north and have a day's rest in one of the ports (if possible).

From [redacted] coast where they will refuel, they will be transferred to [redacted] and on passage will operate in the Sevastopol area against enemy naval forces for 10 days.

After their transfer, when the crews have had their necessary rest, they will be employed according to the situation.

After the end of their experience during the operation, I shall either send the 3 submarines back to Constantinople after some operations (10 to 14 days) and replace by the other 3 submarines or station all 6 permanently in the ports on the [redacted] or the [redacted] line.

3. Special Boats:

Assuming that the offensive operations of the Army on Kerch Peninsula will be over before the arrival of the special boats on the Crimea, I plan to employ these boats from a harbor on the south coast of the Crimea (Feros) as close as possible to Sevastopol.

As the special boats are loaded in tracks and can be moved quickly, they can be employed according to the situation even in the Kerch Strait area.

I shall issue further details when Lieutenant Commander Modero has arrived in the Crimea and as soon as I know when the special boats will be ready for operation.

16 Nov 1942.

Flotilla Commander  
(Signed) Lindelle  
Commander

Naval Group South  
Serial No. Ghdos. 3529 Op.

9 July, 1942

To:

Naval Air Command, Naval Staff (twice).

Copy to:

Admiral, Black Sea.

Subject: War diary of Admiral, Black Sea. 16 - 31 July, 1942.

Reference: Admiral, Black Sea Serial No. Ghdos. Op. 314 . I of 11 July, 1942.

Comments on War Diary of Admiral, Black Sea  
16 - 31 July, 1942

"Balkan Area", 16 July, 1942:

In the operational area provided for the submersible "Solfimul", there is only slight enemy traffic, but presumably enemy defenses are also weak there. This plan is only advisable because the submersible is not trained for operations in strong defended areas and in any case she is probably not technically suitable.

"Balkan Area", 20 July, 1942:

By order of Admiral, Black Sea, the western operational borderline for the Italian submersibles laid down as the meridian of Cape Soric. However, in the end it was decided that operations southeast of Soric would or might be successful. In my opinion the latter area would promise more success at present.

"Balkan Area", 25 July, 1942:

Concentration of anti-submarine defense in the offshore waters by Admiral, Black Sea is urgently necessary. I apprised Naval Attache, Istanbul with the request to stress to Turkish authorities the need for Turkish participation in anti-submarine operations for the protection of Turkish shipping within Turkish territorial waters. I am quite aware that, with Turkey's present political attitude, efficient measures cannot be expected from the Turks.

"South Russian Area", 25 July, 1942:

All efforts by Group to reinforce anti-aircraft protection for these important industrial and designed installations in Leningrad have failed.

"Crimea", 25 July, 1942:

In my opinion they are ILC wires and not on ASD radar field.

"Crimea", 27 July, 1942:

Since on 27 July the request of Lithuanian G. is only a general preparation, I have stopped the transfer of Harbor Defense Flotillas, Tides and believed to the best of my knowledge replacement of the pier fishing vessels by a number of motor boats from Germany will be arranged.



"Heavy Situation", 28 Apr, 1942:

I refused to transfer the 4/F at this time from Adm. to H. H. H. just now because at present the western Black Sea is still the enemy's focal point. I have however requested a fourth /F installation for H. H. H.

"Supply Traffic", 28 Apr, 1942:

In order to bring the transfer of "Lend Lease" without anti-air escort at the urgent request of At. H. H. H., I maintain that the responsibility remains with the naval command which issued the sailing order.

(Signed) Beluster.  
Chief of Staff.





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