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UNITED STATES NAVY

WAR DIARY OF ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA



1 JUNE, 1942-30 JUNE, 1942
PG NUMBERS 31512-31513

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WAR DIARY

OF

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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.

1958

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1 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, almost entirely overcast, visibility 6 km., sea 1, temperature 16° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity by enemy naval forces increased in the course of the day. Cruisers A and F and Commander, Light Forces were detected off the central part of the east coast. At the same time Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza reported continuous submarine activity in the whole of the Black Sea.

Air reconnaissance sighted 1 freighter 6,000-8,000 tons off the Turkish coast near Cape Sinope Burun, course southeast. She had Turkish markings.

At about 1800 the Air Force reported what purported to be a heavy cruiser with a destroyer 60-70 miles south of Kerch Peninsula; at the same time Radio Intercept Service detected a flotilla leader in the same area, course west, proceeding at high speed. Probably this latter report is the correct one.

No reconnaissance reports for the Sea of Azov.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Check sweep of the northern and southern entrances to Varna Bay. No mines swept.

Rumanian Area:

1910 Ceremonial farewell to the former Commanding Admiral, Black Sea, Vice-Admiral Fleischer at the railroad station at Constantza.

Apart from myself and all the German officers of the station, the following were present: Commander, Rumanian Naval Division and Commander, Rumanian Naval Forces with their staffs and Commander, 9th Rumanian Division.

1st Battery, Naval gunnery Detachment 621 ("Tirpitz") provided a guard of honor, while the Rumanian Naval Division provided the band.

South Russian Area:

0600 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 122 left Odessa for Varna. On both of them the connecting rod on the center engine has been wrenched out and the engine casing broken in pieces so that they require dockyard repair in Varna. With the small number of naval ferry barges available, the temporary loss of these two is regrettable, particularly in view of the need for reinforced anti-submarine escort between Ochakov and Bugaz. However, now that the barges are being used almost continuously, sometimes in unfavorable weather, such incidents must be expected.

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0400 Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 accompanied by 3 naval ferry barges as anti-submarine escort left Ochakov to check the route to Odessa and the inner Odessa Bay. They arrived at Odessa at 1300.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 reported that she swept a mine in $46^{\circ} 35' N$, $31^{\circ} 31.5' E$. Probably a German aerial mine. The route to Odessa was checked 3 times as far as buoy 19 - $46^{\circ} 33.5' N$, $31^{\circ} 00.5' E$. No mines swept. Enemy minelaying therefore seems unlikely.

Following the first interrogation - not yet completed - of the men rescued from motor vessel "Bulina", it seems highly probable that she was the victim of a submarine attack.

Originally it was thought that the depth of the water marked at this point on the maps - 13-20 meters - ruled out such a possibility, but there is evidence for thinking that the water may actually be deeper and further investigations are being made on this matter.

If we are correct in assuming that "Bulina" was sunk by a submarine, then we can expect that following this success the enemy will send more submarines to the supply route between Odessa and Ochakov. After considering various ways of meeting this danger, I sent the following instructions by teletype to Naval Special Duties Detachment with copy to Group South:

"It is possible that "Bulina" was sunk by a submarine. A successful attack will lead the enemy to increase submarine operations in the Odessa Bay area. Supply route between Ilichevka and Ochakov must therefore be protected against submarines. Anti-submarine escort and occasional submarine chase are not sufficient owing to the inadequate equipment of the available vessels - no location gear and no chutes for depth charges.

You are to consider the possibility of protecting the supply route by laying a minefield - in separate sections - from about $46^{\circ} 29' N$, $31^{\circ} 1' E$. This minefield, added to the Russian one, would in effect protect the whole route north of the Ilichevka route to Odessa, as the eastern part is protected against submarine attack by the jutting out of Oleskaya Bank. Naval Special Duties Detachment will submit their general comments on this project. Details can be discussed at a later date.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Skids. 454 A Op."

As far as we can discover here the Russians have not yet reported the sinking, so that at present we have no confirmation of our conjecture.

Sovievka - north coast of Karkinitzki Bay:

Two partisans were captured by 3rd Battery, Army Coastal Artillery Detachment 145 near the beacon. Coastguards and a detachment of assault troops from Naval Port Commander, Skadovsk were immediately called on and a thorough search made, resulting in a fight with a band of partisans about 6 km. east of the village of Sovievka. Two partisans killed, 13 taken prisoner. Our casualties were 2 slightly wounded.

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According to statements from the prisoners, the band set out 2 days ago after a previous attempt on 23 May had failed - see War Diary 26 May.

Air attack on Mariupol during the night of 31 May/1 June. Bombs dropped on the town area. No damage to Naval installations.

Crimina:

No incidents.

Readiness:

Naval ferry barges No. 121 and 122 non-operational, proceeding from Odessa to Varna for necessary deckyard repair.

Boat "Delfin 6" - Naval Special Duties Detachment, Varna - was commissioned and is operational.

Land Situation:

Neither 11th Army H.Q. nor 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks) had any special incidents to report.

Plans:

As soon as the route between Ochakov and the inner bay at Odessa has been reported clear, the 7 supply ships lying ready in Ochakov with the 3 Rumanian tugs, will be escorted to Bugaz by Danube Flotilla and the available naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla. At Bugaz the convoy will be handed over to the Rumanian naval forces and proceed to Sulina/Constantza in 2 groups at speeds of 10 and 8.5 knots respectively. 1st group: "Lirkalic", "Kassa", "Kolosvar". 2nd group: "Carpati", "Tisza" and "Domubius", with "Zar Ferdinand" as far as Odessa.

2 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 1, almost entirely overcast, sea 2, visibility 20 km., temperature 16° C.

Effective today I have taken over the duties of Admiral, Black Sea.

Enemy Situation:

Naval forces are again increasing their activity. Radio traffic revealed 16 submarines at sea, also 2 destroyers and a number of small vessels such as minesweepers, patrol vessels and M.T.B.s. Of the large ships, Radio Intercept Service reported cruiser D off Tuzpse about noon and in the central Black Sea cruiser B in radio communication with a destroyer and Sevastopol.

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2 June 1942

In the Lutun area cruiser A was detected by Radio Intercept Service and the Air Force. A convoy consisting of a tanker of 3,000 tons, 1 or 2 destroyers and 3 other vessels was sighted by the Air Force at 1145 on 1 June, course northwest, about 55 miles west of Poti. Today at 1745 the Air Force sighted a similar convoy about 42 miles south of Sudak and later reported the destruction of the tanker by an aerial torpedo. Probably it was the same convoy.

No reports on the Sea of Azov.

Bulgarian Area:

2130 Steamer "Romania" sailed from Varna under escort for Constantza. She is intended as a depot ship for 1st E-Boat Flotilla and, after a period in dock at Constantza for completion of conversion work, she will return to Varna.

Rumanian Area:

0415 Gunboats "Danitrescu" and "Chiculescu" which sailed from Constantza at 1930 on 1 June put in to Sulina ready for escort duty.

1000 Commander, Danube Flotilla with Group 1 and motor minesweepers FR 4 and FR 8 sailed from Fuzuz for a check sweep to Ochakov.

Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. reported that the artillery attack on Sevastopol began in the early hours of 2 June. Immediate operations by all available offensive forces are therefore urgently required in order to interfere with incoming and outgoing naval traffic at the start of the battle for Sevastopol. At the moment the following are available:

1. Two boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla in Constantza. The boats are not yet fully operational, but Flotilla Commander reports that in view of the urgency of the situation they might be used.
2. Two Italian E-boats in Yalta.
3. Three Italian midget submarines in Constantza.

If at all possible these boats must be put on operations in the Sevastopol sea area during the night of 2/3 June.

Orders issued as follows:

1st Immediate radiogram 1138/2 - also teletype:

"Two boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla will stand west and southwest of Sevastopol during the night of 2/3 June. Put in to Ak Mechet or Yalta early on 3 June. Inform coastal authorities. Operation to be repeated on night of 4/5 June.

Admiral, Black Sea Cb. Flot. 499 A Cb."

2nd Immediate radiogram 1136/2 - also teletype:

"Evening air reconnaissance on 2 June in air grid squares 35, 34, and 44 requested for E-boat operation in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Flot. 499.

Admiral, Black Sea Cb. Flot. 500 A Cb."

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2 June 1942

Most Immediate radiogram 1158/2/24/99 - also teletype:

"Three Italian midget submarines will sail from Constantza at 0000 on 3 June and from the afternoon of 5 June until the morning of 6 June will be in a reconnaissance line from $43^{\circ} 36' N, 33^{\circ} 25' E$ to $43^{\circ} 36' N, 34^{\circ} 20' E$.

They will then put in to Malta.

Attenda for Italian Detachment only: Expect to meet Italian and German E-boats in the area south and southeast of Cape Sarich.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 501 A Op."

Notes on these orders:

1. E-Boats:

The original plan to transfer the E-boats via Ochakov to Ak Mechet and send them against the Sevastopol supply traffic from there was dropped in order to avoid loss of time. The boats will proceed from Constantza direct to the operational area west and southwest of Sevastopol and will then put in to Malta or Ak Mechet as the situation requires. Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol and 2 naval ferry barges are at once to check the E-boats' route from the south round Cape Tarkhankutzki to Ak Mechet for moored mines. Following orders issued:

Most Immediate radiogram to
Harbor Defense Flotilla, Odessa,
Naval ferry barge Co. 143

Copy to: Naval Shore Commander, Crimea,
1st E-Boat Flotilla,
Group South.

"Break off operation ordered in Gkdos. 455 A Op. Proceed immediately to $45^{\circ} 38' N, 32^{\circ} 43.3' E$ and from there search the route to Ak Mechet.

Then, proceeding in open formation, search the route from Ak Mechet via

$45^{\circ} 33' N, 32^{\circ} 40' E$ via
 $45^{\circ} 27' N, 32^{\circ} 26' E$ to
 $45^{\circ} 15' N, 32^{\circ} 26' E$
and back to Ak Mechet.

Report completion of operation by radiogram. Our E-boats and naval ferry barges are at sea in the area around Cape Tarkhankutzki.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 497 A Op."

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Most Immediate radiogram to
Naval Port Commander, Skodovsk for Group Len.

Copy to: Naval Shore Commander, Crimea,
Group South,
1st E-Boat Flotilla.

Naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 will proceed immediately
from Skodovsk via $45^{\circ} 59.6' N$, $32^{\circ} 55' E$ to $45^{\circ} 30' N$, $32^{\circ} 43.3' E$
searching the route from there to Ak Kochet with crepea gear
and then immediately searching the route from Ak Kochet via $45^{\circ} 27' N$,
 $32^{\circ} 26' E$ to $45^{\circ} 15' N$, $32^{\circ} 26' E$ and back again to
Ak Kochet.

The operation is urgent and should be completed by the morning
of 3 April.

For information:

Expect to meet our E-boats between Cape Parikmatzki and Ak
Kochet.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Hqs. 498 A Op."

2. Italian E-Boats:

As statements from captives taken prisoner and observations by
the Air Force confirm that supply ships proceeding to Sevastopol
from the south make for Cape Sarich, the 2 Italian E-boats have
been ordered to an operational area south of Sarich:

Most Immediate radiogram 1521/2/32.

"Operations by Italian E-boats from Malta urgently required
south of Cape Sarich tonight. Weather conditions favorable.
Report intentions.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Hqs. A Op."

This will avoid a clash between our own and the Italian E-boats
tonight.

Italian Midget Submarines:

The midget submarines with their very limited operational capacity
have been ordered to stand on and off in their reconnaissance line
to report enemy naval forces and steamers approaching Cape Sarich
or Cape Mersonese from the south and, if circumstances permit, to
attack them.

To ensure smooth co-ordination between the E-boats, Italian E-boats
and submarines and prompt receipt of Air Force reconnaissance reports
by the naval forces, there must be close communication between Com-
mander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla and the Commander, Italian Forces and
close cooperation in the spot with Air Commander, South. Lieutenant
Birnbacher, Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla has therefore been ordered
by radiogram 1528/2/23 to assume the additional responsibility of
ensuring that the necessary measures are taken in the Crimea:

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"On arrival in Orincea, Lieutenant Birnbacher, Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla will have the additional duty of communicating with Italian E-boats and Air Commander, South for the purpose of co-ordinating E-boat operations. If possible common operational H. S. at Sadki.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 509 A Op."

1330 E-boats B 26 and 28 sailed from Constantza.

1428 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported:

"Turned back because of engine trouble."

On putting in, he reported engine troubles caused by faulty packing allowing water to leak into the fuel. The damage can be repaired within 24 hours. Orders were therefore given that the E-boats are again to sail from Constantza for this operation at 1300 on 3 June. Postponement was notified to all stations concerned by following radiogram:

"Operation by 1st E-Boat Flotilla in accordance with Gkdos. 499 postponed for 24 hours.

Additional note for Group South only:

Boats returned because of engine trouble.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 517 A Op."

South Russian Area:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191, with 3 naval ferry barges as anti-submarine escort, checked the supply route from Odessa to Ochakov. No mines swept.

After she had swept this route - where "Lulina" went down - with magnet gear without result, she was ordered to check the route from Ochakov to Skadovsk to a point south of Tendra. This route must be searched for magnetic mines as a statement from a captured Russian officer mentions that a magnetic mine was laid north of Tendra Peninsula in October 1941.

Emergency radiogram to
Mine-exploding vessel No. 191,
Commander, Danube Flotilla.

Teletype to Naval Special Duties Detachment.

"Gkdos. - On 4 June, mine-exploding vessel No. 191 using magnet gear will search the route from buoy 25 via

46° 32.4' N, 31° 14' E
46° 21.6' N, 31° 27.9' E
46° 15.5' N, 31° 31' E
to 46° 12' N, 31° 37' E and back.

Then at the disposal of Commander, Danube Flotilla.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 521 A Op."

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Similarly 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla searched the race from Cchakov - buoy 25 - $46^{\circ} 23' N$, $31^{\circ} 26' E$ - bearing 286.5° to 4.3 miles from Tendra - beacon - and back again. No mines swept.

- 1330 Commander, Dniebe Flotilla with Group 1 and motor minesweepers TR 4 and TR 3 put in from Bugaz. No mines swept, but a gangway floating on the surface and fastened below to the ship denoted the exact position of the wreck of motor vessel "Julina", 500 meters south-east of the point originally reported on 29 May. Position marked with an improvised marking. Exact soundings were taken revealing a depth of 22 meters, 9.5 meters above the wreck.

A permanent marking is to be laid.

Fresh air attack in the harbor area at Simriopol during the night of 1/2 June. A power line in the dock area was cut and the welding furnace in the lockyard and the water-works are temporarily out of action.

- 0605 Air attack on Simriopol. Four bombs landed in the crane site. No damage reported.
- 1000 Russian Torpedo: Supplementary report for 1 June: Torpedo bombarded by enemy artillery - 8 shells. No damage to naval installations.

A naval ferry barge proceeding from Shukovka to Kerch was also shelled by enemy artillery on Chushka Peninsula. 45 shells, no hits.

Crimea:

In their operation by the 2 Italian Fleets in the Cape Sarych area. No particular incidents.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported air attacks during the night of 1/2 June in Genichesk, Yalta, Sadki, Eupatoria and Simferopol. No times given. No damage reported.

Iron Gates area: "Bochelaren" operational in Orsova, "Tranje" in Trencseva.

"Gernot" carried out a check sweep from Baldoja to Trencseva. No incidents.

Readiness:

Le-boats S 26 and S 23 operational except for the 4 echo-sounding gear and the 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns to be installed in the fore-deck.

"Gelele Ferdinand" operational.

Italian Le-boat 573 again non-operational in Yalta. Length of non-operational period depends upon arrival of spare parts now being forwarded from Italy by air.

Land Situation:

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

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11th Army A.C. reported that since 0600 our artillery have been cooperating with 8th Air Corps in a mass bombardment of the fortress of Sevastopol.

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Weather forecast (Constantza):

W winds, force 2, bright, visibility 20 'm., temperature 10° C.

Enemy situation:

Enemy naval activity soon died down again. At about 1700 H. in Naval D/F Station, Constantza obtained a bearing of 102° on the cruiser I. The bearing was passed to the 2 D-boats at sea at about 1735. Towards evening however, the cruiser seemed to have turned out of the central area between the Crimea and the Turkish coast and to be proceeding towards Novorossisk. She changed to a southeasterly course again before reaching this harbor and did not reappear in the radio picture.

Presumably the cruisers are in the harbors of Datur and Poti and the battleship also at Poti. No movements of convoys or ships observed off Sevastopol.

According to radio traffic there were 10 submarines at sea, 7 of them in the Crimean area and western Black Sea.

Air reconnaissance observed the usual small craft in the Sea of Azov harbors.

Own Situation:

1000 Convoy and Escort Assignments:

Commander, Danube Flotilla sailed from Ochakov with 6 motor minesweepers (MR), with Commander, Special Duties Flotilla and 6 naval ferry barges as anti-submarine protection, to take the following supply ships to the south:

Steamer "Zar Ferdinand" to Odessa,
steamers "Danubius" and "Arkadia" and motor vessels "Kassa",
"Kolosvar" and "Tisza" to Sulina,
steamer "Carpati" and Rumanian tug "Elena" to Constantza as far as Bugaz and "Oltul" to Sulina.

The convoy was duly taken over by Rumanian naval forces at Bugaz:

"Regina Maria" and "Ibrasessti" for steamer "Carpati" to Constantza and gunboats "Dimitrescu" and "Chiculescu" and torpedo-boat "Sberul" for ships proceeding to Sulina.

2000 Commander, 1st Special Duties Flotilla put in to Bugaz with 6 naval ferry barges and tug "Elena".

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Bulgarian Area:

Special Duties Detachment checked the route from Varna to Balzic. No mines swept.

Rumanian Area:

- 0000 Three Italian midget submarines put out from Constantza in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Ckdos. Op. 501 A Op. - see War Diary 2 June.
- 1000 Steamer "Romania" put in to Constantza from Varna.
- 1300 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla sailed from Constantza with S 26 and S 28 for the operation off Sevastopol (see Admiral, Black Sea Ckdos. Op. 517 A Op. War Diary 2 June, 1428).

South Russian Area:

- 0330 Naval ferry barges Nos. 145 and 133 sailed from Ochakov for Ak Mechet with fuel and equipment for 1st E-Boat Flotilla.
- 0630 Naval ferry barge No. 145 sank after striking a mine about 7 miles south of Karabach. She is returning to Ochakov. Casualties: 1 dead, 8-10 missing, 5 severely and 3 slightly wounded.

Evidence to date shows that naval ferry barge No. 145 struck the mine about 600 meters outside the strip which 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla searched yesterday. 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla who were ordered to make an immediate search of the place of sinking reported on putting in that they had not discovered any mines. On 4 June, they will again search and buoy the route from buoy 25 to abreast of Tendra beacon - see War Diary 2 June.

Line-exploding vessel No. 191 carried out a check sweep off Per-vomcisk. No mines swept.

Yesterday Harbor Defense Flotilla, Odessa with naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 133 searched for moored mines on the route from Ochakov along Tendra Peninsula to Skadovsk to a breadth of 500 meters and marked out the course alteration points with buoys. On 4 June, they will carry out an operation in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Ckdos. Op. 497 A Op. - see War Diary 2 June - and use oropesa gear to sweep the approach route to Ak Mechet and the departure route from Ak Mechet round Cape Parkhankutzki to the south.

Group Lex - naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 - swept the approach and departure routes at Ak Mechet to a width of 100 meters and reported no mines swept.

Group Lex has been ordered to repeat the operation on 5 June and buoy the swept channel. Distance between the buoys 2 miles. When this has been done, which means that the route will have been searched 3 times and buoyed, it should be possible for 1st E-Boat Flotilla to return from their operational area west of Sevastopol without danger from mines.

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The loss of naval ferry barge no. 145 which was to have brought Diesel oil for 1st E-Boat Flotilla to Ak Kechet means that the 2 E-boats which sailed today from Constantza cannot return to Ak Kechet. Orders were given for them to return from the operational area early on 4 June and put in to Constantza. The stations concerned were informed of this by the following radiogram which also requested evening reconnaissance in the sea area west and south of Cape Khersonese and Jarich:

"Two boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla sailed in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Ckdos. 499 and 517. They should put in to Constantza from the operational area early on 4 June. Evening air reconnaissance requested in air grid squares 35, 34 and 44.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Ckdos. 542 A Op."

Air attack on the harbor area at Mariupol during the night of 2/3 June. Slight damage to the north mole.

0145 Vessels on the north coast was shelled from the sea by what were thought to be 3 motor boats. Rumanian troops in the Anzroy Bay answered with machine-gunfire. At the same time noises were heard, apparently of fairly large vessels. No attempt at landing.

Grinea:

1235 The following report was received in Malta from Italian E-Boat flotilla: At 0020 12 miles from Cape Jarich and bearing 200°, "Italian E-boat URS 571 fired 2 torpedoes at a passenger ship of approximately 8,000 tons escorted by 2 destroyers and 2 patrol vessels. Range 2-2.5 km., no success. Speed of convoy 10 knots, approximate course-012°. On return passage, the E-boat sighted a surfaced submarine, course 240°, speed 10 knots, at 0230 5 miles southwest of Cape Mitodor.

Italian E-Boat Flotilla, Ckdos. 115"

Commander Limbelli submitted the following suggestion for operations by Italian and German naval forces off Sevastopol:

"In reply to your 482 A Op., operations by my forces will be as follows: The midget submarines are to operate approximately 15 - 25 miles southwest of Cape Khersonese. The motor boats will be operational this week and are to operate close to the enemy coast as far as Sevastopol harbor entrance. The E-boats, which are to operate closely with the motor boats; cannot go further than the latitude of South Cape Khersonese on account of their small tonnage. I think that possible incidents between our units can best be avoided if orders are issued prohibiting attacks on both large and small E-boats and submarines. We shall take care of any small actions, if we get the opportunity to send our boats against the enemy with good chances of success.

Italian E-Boat Flotilla Ckdos. 111."

Following a discussion in which Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla took part it was decided:

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1. Permission cannot be given for the Italian midget submarines and E-boats to operate at night in the same limited area as the German E-boats - the danger to both parties is too great.
2. Operations by Italian submarines directly off Cape Kiersenese are impracticable on account of the constant strong Russian patrol by guardboats and planes which would always be forcing the boats to submerge during the period from 0400 to about 2100.

Furthermore the midget submarines would be in danger from the Russian minefields reported in the Cape Kiersenese area.

3. The attack on the 8,000-ton Russian steamer 12 miles south of Cape Sarich has proved that there are prospects of success in the operational area previously assigned to the Italian E-boats and midget submarines.

The following order was therefore sent to Commander Minelli:

"In reply to your Ekdos. 111:

Operations by German E-boats and Italian E-boats and midget submarines in the same area are to be avoided because of the danger to all concerned. For this reason:

1. German E-boats are to operate west and southwest of Cape Kiersenese.
2. Italian E-boats and midget submarines are to operate south of Cape Sarich. The submarines will be on a patrol line south of Sarich on about 43° 50' N during the night, at dawn they will proceed north and in the afternoon return south to their patrol line, so as to make way for the Italian E-boats on night operations close to the coast.

As far as possible submarine operations are to be arranged so that there are always 3 midget submarines in position.

Admiral, Black Sea Co. Ekdos. 559 A Op."

0300 From Malta Naval Shore Commander, Cremona reported:

"At 1630 on 3 June, 1 Italian E-boat carrying an inspection party from C-in-C 11th Army H.Q. was attacked and machine-gunned close to the coast by 2 fighters with German markings. Both fighter squadrons here report that none of their planes was in this area at the time of the attack. Investigations proceeding: 2 fatal casualties, one of them Commander von Wedel, 4 severely wounded, several slightly wounded. Boat non-operational. Addenda: Replacement for Naval Port Commander, Malta urgently requested, cannot be supplied here.

Naval Shore Commander, Cremona PG C 7172."

The damage and loss of life would have been avoided if my instructions had been adhered to and the boat had not put out from Malta before dusk. Recent events have shown that air attacks must always be expected during the day in the sea area off Malta which is controlled by the Russian Air Force. The purpose of a tour of inspect-

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ion by C-in-C 11th Army H.Q. is not clear to me here. To clarify the situation, the following radiogram was sent to Naval Shore Commander, Crimea:

"Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 105 A Op. gave orders that Italian E-boats are not to sail from Yalta before dusk. Report immediately who ordered yesterday's inspection.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 580 A Op."

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea again reported air attacks on Simferopol, Eupatoria, Yalta and Kerch. No damage reported.

Readiness:

Motor minesweeper FR 8 operational on 2 June.

Italian E-boat ILS 571 non-operational.

Bulgarian torpedoboat "Smoul" operational on 2 June.

Two Bulgarian motor minesweepers operational on 3 June.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported that the bombardment of Sevastopol is continuing according to plan.

4 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 5, cloudy, visibility 25 km., sea 3, temperature 20° C.

Enemy Situation:

Cruisers A, D and F are at sea, but we have so far been unable to recognize their assignment (remote cover for convoys, training etc.) nor have we been able to distinguish them entering and leaving Sevastopol.

Radio Intercept Service reported 8 M.T.B.s in the southeastern part of the Sea of Azov - the first time M.T.B.s have been observed there.

One or 2 destroyers, a few small craft and Commander, Light Forces were observed in radio traffic off the central part of the east coast.

No reports on merchant shipping movements - not even in Sevastopol area.

Own Situation:

Supply Traffic:

1. The southbound convoy which sailed yesterday proceeded according to plan as far as Sulina.

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Gunboat "Dimitroscu" put in to port with motor vessels "Kassa", "Kolosvar" and "Tisza", steamer "Danubius" and tug "Clitul".

Steamer "Arkadia" got stuck on the bar as she was putting in. In the early morning an attempt was made to drag her off, but without result. Two naval ferry barges are acting as anti-submarine protection. Additional tugs were requested immediately from Galatz and Constantza and as soon as these arrive another attempt will be made to get her off.

Reports received so far do not make clear who is responsible for the accident. As far as we can see the blame must be shared by both parties. On the one hand the pilots were not in position at the proper time, on the other hand while she was waiting the steamer did not continually check her position by soundings and did not pay sufficient attention to a warning from another vessel. In the present weather - winds up to 1500, force 6, squally - the ship is in a dangerous position and must be dragged off as soon as possible if she is to avoid becoming a total wreck and impeding or even preventing the passage of other ships in and out of the harbor.

2. The northbound convoys which should have sailed today from Constantza and Sulina for Ochakov were postponed for 24 hours because of the weather.

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

- 1000 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Constantza with S 26 and S 28.

Commander Birnbacher, the Flotilla Commander reported that he had been lying in a waiting position in grid square 5512 (lower right corner) until 0115, but had not observed any shipping traffic. Sevastopol light and radio beacons were working. The operation was broken off at the stated time because of the weather and bright moonlight. During return passage, the weather suddenly deteriorated - NE winds, force 6-7. Boats reached Constantza without incident.

- 1735 E-boats S 72 and S 102 - brought by the Danube route - put in to Constantza from Sulina. They should be operational on 9 June.

The Italian Naval Detachment reported from Eforia that the 2 Italian E-boats in Sulina are operational. Provided the weather improves these 2 boats will proceed via Ak Mechet to Malta on 5 June. Following orders were issued:

"Weather permitting, the 2 Italian E-boats will proceed from Sulina via Ak Mechet to Malta on 5 June.

Course directions:

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From Sulina via route Green to Green 24, then
via 46° 7.5' N, 32° 0' E
via 46° 1.5' N, 32° 33' E
via 45° 59.6' N, 32° 55' E
via 45° 38' N, 32° 43.3' E
to Ak Mechet.

Refuel in Ak Mechet.

Then via 45° 33' N, 32° 40' E
via 45° 27' N, 32° 26' E
via 45° 15' N, 32° 26' E
via 44° 10' N, 32° 26' E
via 44° 10' N, 34° 10' E
to Yalta.

Sail from Sulina at 0400, from Ak Mechet at 1900. Naval Communications Officer, Sulina will immediately report time of sailing to Admiral, Black Sea and Naval Special Duties Detachment. Naval Port Commander, Ak Mechet will have aviation fuel and billets in readiness.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 583 A.Op."

So far there have been no reports from the midget submarines which sailed for their operational area on 3 June. They have only a very limited action radius, so that in my opinion one cannot expect too much from them.

South Russian Area:

0400- Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 carried out a check sweep from Ostrov 1330 to Beresan. One mine was swept in 46° 34.4' N, 31° 25' E. Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 received the following orders to check the route from Ochakov to Tendra-point where naval ferry barge No. 145 sank. Check to be made immediately after 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla has searched and marked the routes.

"16th Harbor Defense Flotilla will search the route with dropsea gear and lay marking buoys
from 46° 35' N, 31° 15.5' E
via 46° 32.4' N, 31° 14' E
to 46° 21.6' N, 31° 27.9' E.

On completion of the operation by 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla, mine-exploding vessel No. 191 will immediately check the marked route with magnet gear at least twice in each direction. Report execution.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 581 A.Op."

1430 Naval ferry barges Nos. 125 and 136 sailed from Bugaz. At 1748 they put in to Odessa to take in supplies.

0400 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla sailed from Ochakov for the operation ordered yesterday, but had to break off the operation because of the weather and put in again.

Sea of Azov:

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Supplementary report for 3 June: Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported renewed attacks on motor fishing vessels at sea. Further at 0230 2 boats of a motor boat flotilla belonging to 1st Army H.Q. (Tanks) were shelled by the light guns of 2 enemy motor boats. Simultaneous air attack. No damage.

Enemy vessels - probably fishing craft - were sighted several times at sea near to Berdyansk. However they remained outside the range of our guns.

1020 Supplementary report for 3 June: Renewed air attack on Mariupol. Only slight damage to buildings.

Crimea:

In reply to an inquiry, Italian E-Boat Flotilla, U.I.ta reported that according to their plans 2 motor boats are to operate against Cape Khersonese and 1 Italian E-boat south of Cape Sarich during the night of 4/5 June.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported continued bombardment of Sevastopol according to plan.

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Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 3, visibility 25 km., sea 3, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

Lively activity of enemy naval forces also observed today.

Radio Intercept Service detected cruiser D in the northern sea area up to about south of Kerch, cruiser F in the southeastern part, and cruiser A on the line Mamaia-Adler-Caucasus at 1900. Commander, Light Forces is also at sea - probably in the cruiser F.

Four destroyers were detected in the northeastern sea area and 2 to 3 more - including the flotilla leader which has been a long time at sea - in the area south of the Crimea. The flotilla leader also detected by the Air Force.

Two submarines were located at 1930 about 60 - 70 miles south of Theodosia. One of them was also reported by the Air Force in the course of the afternoon at a position further east, course west. Six submarines are presumed to be in the western Black Sea and 3 more in the eastern Black Sea.

C-in-C Fleet is near Tuapse.

Today it is again impossible to get a clear picture of the object and purpose of the naval activity.

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Own Situation:

Supply Traffic:

1. Tugs made a fresh attempt to get off the steamer "Arkadia" stranded on the Sulina bar and this time succeeded. Inspection has not revealed any damage to the ship as yet.
- 1330 2. Northbound convoy: Steamer "Suceava" sailed from Constantza with destroyer "Regele Ferdinand".
- 1900 Tugs "Engerau", "Hainburg", "Moliere" and "Oltul" - with tanker/lighter "Elbe" in tow, carrying fuel for 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ochakov - sailed for the north escorted by the gunboats "Dumitrescu" and "Chiculescu" and torpedo boat "Sborul". Groups 1 and 2, Danube Flotilla and 6 naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla will take over the convoy at the rendezvous point off Bugaz at 0500 on 6 June. At Bugaz tug "Elena" with 2 Siebel ferries will join the convoy, at Odessa steamers "Salzburg", "Zar Ferdinand" and "Oltuz".

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla with S 26 and S 28 has been ordered to operate in the area west and southwest of Sevastopol during the night of 5/6 June. The boats have orders to return to Constantza at dawn on 6 June. Air Commander, South and 4th Air Force have been requested to assist the E-boat operation by flying evening reconnaissance today in air grid squares 35, 34 and 44.

- 1300 E-boats S 26 and 28 sailed from Constantza in accordance with orders. The reports from the Radio Intercept Service and the reconnaissance reports from Air Commander, South about enemy naval forces - cruisers and destroyers - in the sea area south and south-east of the Crimea, mostly course west, are being constantly passed on to 1st E-Boat Flotilla.

The 2 Italian E-boats IIS 570 and 572 lying at Sulina, which were to have proceeded to Malta early today (see War Diary 4 June) postponed their sailing for 24 hours because of the weather. The stations concerned have been informed.

Group 1 Danube Flotilla put out from Bugaz and checked the gap in the Ilichevka minefield. No mines swept.

- 1700 After taking in supplies and equipment at Odessa, naval ferry barges Nos. 125 and 136 put in to Bugaz.

South Russian Area:

So far no reports of special incidents from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine.

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16th Harbor Defense Flotilla swept the route from Ochakov to Tendra - the point where naval ferry barge No. 145 went down - to a width of 350 meters. No mines swept. This lends evidence to the possibility that naval ferry barge No. 145 ran on to a magnetic mine laid by a German plane.

0400 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143 sailed for Ak Mechet with 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla to check the inward and outward routes - see War Diary 3 June.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 reported 2 mines swept at 1219 in 46° 34.8' N, 31° 31' E. Two seconds interval between the explosions. The mines were lying in the marked channel, which has been constantly used by fairly large steamers during recent months.

As we have no evidence so far that Russian planes have been laying ground mines and on the other hand it seems impossible for surface vessels to have laid mines there recently, they were probably German magnetic mines, many of which were laid in this area. For the moment it is impossible to see why the mines were not cleared by the mine-exploding vessel, which has repeatedly checked the route or by other vessels. The question is being investigated.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 has been ordered to re-check the route on 6 June and carry out the operation ordered in Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 581 A.Op. - see War Diary 4 June. - on 7 June.

When Sevastopol has fallen, we shall use Balaklava as an operational base for our naval forces as much as possible. It will be necessary to lay anti-torpedo nets as protection for this harbor and the following teletype has been sent to Net Barrage Formation with copy to Group South:

"Balaklava, as a future important operational base, requires a protective net barrage. Plans have been made for 4 rows of anti-torpedo nets at the narrowest part, approximately in 44° 29.8' N. Length of net required-300 meters. We suggest a retractable net, the top rope to be kept taut by hand-trinch or capstan. Request your comments and preparation of net material.

If possible send formation with nets to Yalta as ordered in Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. 206 A.Op. of 26 April.

Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. 562 A.Op."

According to reports from Captain v. Brumbach, Ivan Doba is particularly suitable as an operational base for 1st E-Boat Flotilla, and if required, for the Italian naval forces. 1st E-Boat Flotilla has been requested to send an officer to make the necessary detailed investigations on the spot.

Crimea:

No reports on special incidents received from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea.

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1045 Of the 3 midget submarines which sailed from Constantza on 3 June, CB 1 and CB 2 put in to Yalta. At 0310 on 5 June CB 1 sighted a destroyer, course southeast, 30 miles south of Cape Khersonese. Otherwise nothing to report. CB 3 has not yet put in to Yalta. She lost contact with the other boats about 2359 on 4 June. She is expected to put in early on 6 June. Italian E-Boat Flotilla - Commander Mimbelli - reported that the operation by Italian E-boat MAS 573 and 1 special vessel during the night of 4/5 June south of Cape Sarich - see War Diary 4 June - was without result. Mimbelli intends to send out 2 special boats from Yalta to operate off Cape Sarich during the night of 5/6 June.

The following radiogram was received from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea:

"At Yalta, Commander Mimbelli protested to me on the grounds that the operational area assigned to him offered no prospects of success for the Italian E-boats and submarines, as it is off the main shipping routes. He considers that his boats should be operating off Sevastopol, where the German E-boats are. Special arrangements could be made to divide the operational area so as to avoid endangering either the German or Italian boats. Relevant suggestions have already been made. The number of non-operational boats - 2 - and losses to date in Yalta harbor - threatened by air attack - can only be tolerated if the boats are sent on unrestricted operations off Sevastopol with some chances of success.

Present arrangement regarded as disadvantageous for the Italian forces because of the scant prospects of success. I think it advisable to send Staff Officer to Yalta immediately to take over direction of naval operations."

There is no justification for Mimbelli's view that the Italian E-boats have been placed at a disadvantage because they have been assigned to an operational area south of Cape Sarich while the German E-boats have been assigned to an area west of Cape Khersonese. According to the reports from the Air Force and statements from Russian captains, ships and convoys bound for Sevastopol approach Cape Sarich from the south and therefore must pass through the Italian operational area. Another proof of the prospects of success in this area is found in the fact that, during the night of 2/3 June 12 miles southwest of Cape Sarich, Italian E-boat MAS 571 fired torpedoes on an 8,000-ton steamer escorted by 2 destroyers and 2 patrol vessels - see War Diary 3 June.

I am persisting in my refusal to sanction operations by Italian and German boats in the same restricted area. However I shall suggest to Commander Mimbelli that his E-boats and special boats should operate west of Sevastopol on the nights when German E-boats are not in this area.

I therefore replied to Naval Shore Commander, Crimea as follows:

"Italian mistrust unfounded.

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In contrast to the German E-boats, the Italian E-boats have had opportunities for firing torpedoes. If weather and readiness permit, Italian E-boats to operate west of Sevastopol on the night of 6/7 June. Commander, 1st E-Ecat Flotilla will probably arrive in the Crimea on 6 June and from then on will be in constant touch with the Italians.

Commanding Admiral, Black Sea, Ckdos. Op. 617."

Readiness:

Italian E-boat 143 573 again operational on the evening of 4 June. Bulgarian torpedoboat "Dersky" non-operational until about 14 June.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. again reported that the bombardment of Sevastopol is continuing with good effect.

Brisk shipping traffic was observed from the northeast corner of the peninsula in Taman Bay during the day. Enemy fired about 30 shells on our shipping in Kerch harbor from the direction of Taman.

No damage reported.

6 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Winds, force 3, bright, visibility 25 km., sea 1, temperature 19° C.

Enemy Situation:

At 1715 60 miles south of Malta the Air Force detected a convoy consisting of 1 destroyer, 4 guardboats and 1 5,000-ton steamer, course 340°, speed 10 knots. At 1718 68 miles south of Malta there was 1 small ship of 1,000 tons, course east. At 1815 according to the Air Force report the convoy was reported 50 miles south of Malta, still with fighter escort.

No changes were reported in shipping in harbor at Sevastopol.

Radio Intercept Service detected cruisers D and F in the eastern Black Sea, no exact locations. Several destroyers were also heard in traffic from the Novorossisk and Sevastopol areas.

Usual submarine activity.

At 2055 a Soviet coastal radio station on the Sea of Azov sent a radio message stating "Cease ferry operations immediately".

At 2107 Naval W/S Station 2 (near Alpha) reported a bearing of 231° (70 km. 900 meters) and at 2124 a bearing of 236° (70 km. 100 meters). Probably they concerned planes belonging to the convoy fighter escort reported above.

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6 June 1942

Own Situation:

Supply Traffic:

The northbound convoy which sailed yesterday reached harbor without incident.

- 0530 Group 1, Danube Flotilla with 9 motor minesweepers (MR) took over the convoy off Bugaz. Six naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla accompanied them as anti-submarine escort.
- 1045 At Odessa the steamers "Cituz", "Salzburg" and "Lor Ferdinand" joined the convoy which reached Ochakov at 1550. Group 1, Danube Flotilla and naval ferry barges Nos. 125, 134 and 136, also tug "Elena" with tanker lighter "Elbe 5" put in to harbor. Naval ferry barges Nos. 128, 138 and 144 returned to Odessa where they put in at 1610. The supply ships continued their passage to Nikolaiev.

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

- 0900 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Constantza with S 28 and S 26. The boats lay in waiting position in grid square 5513 until 0130 without meeting any shipping traffic. Two patrol vessels were seen in grid square 5433: the boats avoided them.

1st E-Boat Flotilla will operate with 4 boats south of Cape Sarich during the night of 7/8 June.

The 3 Italian midget submarines, CB 4, 5 and 6, lying at Constantza are reported operational. They will not go out today because of the weather. Plans have been made to transfer them from Constantza to Yalta at 2359 on 7 June, so that they can form a reconnaissance line south of Cape Sarich during the night of 9/10 June. Commander Kimbelli was informed of this plan and his comments requested.

Italian E-boats IES 570 and 572 sailed for Ak Mechet this morning in accordance with orders.

As the weather forecast gives warning of a deterioration in the weather during the night of 6/7 June, I decided to postpone their passage from Ak Mechet to Yalta. The boats were given the following orders:

"Weather will deteriorate towards evening. Italian E-boats to remain at Ak Mechet for the present. Further orders to follow.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Ckdos. 660 A.Op."

South Russian Area:

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported more raids by enemy bombers on the afternoon of 5 June. No damage to naval installations.

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Group Lex (naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139) again searched the route from Ak Lochet round Cape Tarkhankutzki as far as 45° 15' N, 32° 26' E to a width of 200 meters and marked it with a central line of buoys. In order to give vessels putting in and out more protection if buoys drift or the current changes, Group Lex has been ordered to send naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 to check the route to a width of 250 meters on both sides of the line of buoys.

16th Harbor Defense Flotilla has been given orders that after sweeping the Ochakov-Tendra route, they are to proceed to Odessa on 7 June to be at the disposal of Naval Special Duties Detachment. Naval Special Duties Detachment has been instructed to send the flotilla to check for moored mines in the area off Odessa where we intend to lay a flanking minefield.

Crinca:

The 2 Italian motor boats which were standing between Cape Khersonese and Cape Sarich during the night of 5/6 June returned to Malta without incident.

As the E-boats will not be at sea tonight, I sent the following radiogram to Commander Minbelli informing him that he was free to send his E-boats and motor boats on such operations off Cape Sarich or Cape Khersonese as he might think fit.

"At your discretion operations by E-boats and motor boats off Cape Kherson or Cape Sarich during the night of 6/7 June. German E-boats not at sea. Report plans.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 650 A.Op."

Commander Minbelli reported his plans as follows:

"Am sailing at 2000 with E-boat MAS 573. Reconnaissance patrol off Cape Feolent. Motor boats will cruise near to Cape Aya in order to take over protection of assault boats carrying troops.

Italian E-Boat Flotilla 126 Schein."

0535 The third Italian midget submarine CB 3 put in without reporting any incidents.

German E-boats, Italian E-boats, motor boats and midget submarine CB 3 thus met no shipping whatever last night in the areas off Sevastopol, Cape Khersonese and Cape Sarich. This pointer indicating very slight enemy supply traffic to Sevastopol is backed by a report from Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. who in reply to an inquiry stated:

"In reply to your Gkdos. Op. 614:

No outgoing or incoming traffic observed recently during daylight, only movements to different berths in harbor presumably because of air attacks. No observation possible at night, slight traffic then.

Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q."

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No other reports on important incidents in area of Naval Shore Commander, Crimea.

Land Situation:

Heavy bombardment of Sevastopol continues according to plan. Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. reported that the attack on the fortress has been advanced to 7 June.

7 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

W winds, force 5 - 6, fair to cloudy, visibility 10 miles.

Enemy Situation:

The convoy reported yesterday at 1715 left Sevastopol in the early hours of the morning. She was sighted with 2 escorting destroyers 20 miles south of Malta, course southeast, at 0400. Otherwise there was only slight activity of naval forces, similar to yesterday. No exact locations.

Own Situation:

Rumanian Area:

0615 Naval ferry barges Nos. 126, 135 and 137 sailed from Sulina for point Green 23, where a buoy of unknown origin had been reported. A search within a 3-mile radius of the spot proved fruitless. The naval ferry barge group then searched route Green as far as Sulina. No mines swept.

The sailing of the Italian midget submarines CB 4, 5 and 6 from Constantza for Malta (see War Diary 6 June) was postponed because of the weather.

1920 Motor minesweepers FR 1 and FR 11, which were detached from Ochakov, took over the escort of the auxiliary ship "Uta" off Bugaz and proceeded with her to Sulina where they put in at 1830.

"Uta" will proceed to Galatz for dockyard repair on 8 June.

Reconnaissance Group 125 reported that a rubber dinghy belonging to the BV 138 flying boat, which is 2 days overdue at Varna from a reconnaissance flight, has been sighted in air grid square 2328 (bearing 330° and 53 miles from Cape Kerempch Burnu). Under present weather conditions planes cannot go down onto the water, so boats must be sent in to help.

At the request of the Air Force, I am sending out 2 E-boats (S 72 and S 102) which will sail from Constantza at 2050 and should be in the above-mentioned air grid square at 2050. Two Bulgarian E-boats are also being sent from Varna, but according to a report from the Bulgarian Command they cannot sail until midnight at the earliest.

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The dispatch of the 2 German E-boats for this task means that the operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, scheduled for 8 June for the first time with 4 boats, is unfortunately now impossible. I do not think I can refuse this urgent rescue assignment. As the E-boats have such a low eye level, I have requested that planes should cooperate in the search and the request has been granted. It is out of the question for Rumanian destroyers or torpedoboats to assist, as the grid square is more than 200 miles from the base at Constanta and the Rumanians have so little battle training that we cannot take the risk of a possible engagement with Russian forces.

South Russian Area:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 put out from Ochakov and again checked the route off Pervomaisk. No mines swept.

The transfer of 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla from Ochakov to Odessa (see War Diary 6 June) had again to be postponed until 0400 on 8 June on account of the weather.

Air attack on the harbor area at Mariupol. No damage.

0425 Low-level attack by several enemy Bata fighters on naval ferry barges lying at anchor off Byelosaraika. Two of them were slightly damaged. Machine-gunfire from the naval ferry barges prevented the fighters from more vigorous execution of their attack.

Crimea:

After a conference between Naval Group Command, South and Army Group South, orders were issued in Admiral, Black Sea Okdos. Chiefs. 88 Op. of 30 May that after the fall of Sevastopol a naval detachment should be sent to occupy Balaklava which will be our naval base. The naval detachment will be under Naval Port Commander 19 who has been temporarily detached from his normal area for this task; he will be subordinated to Naval Shore Commander "W", Captain Rosemann. Naval Port Commander 19 was immediately brought from Odessa to the Crimea by 1st Naval Operational Transportation Detachment. According to a report from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea he was yesterday waiting ready near Balaklava.

For the duration of the operation, Naval Shore Commander "W" and Naval Port Commander 19 will be under Naval Shore Commander, Crimea; afterwards they will return to their own area.

Italian E-boat ILS 573 and the assault boats which left Malta yesterday evening (see War Diary 6 June) put in again early this morning without incident. No shipping traffic was observed.

The operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla off Sevastopol, scheduled for today, has been canceled because winds, force 6 are forecast in the northwestern Black Sea and off the west coast of the Crimea. Commander Lombelli was informed and a suggestion was made that at his discretion, if local weather conditions improved, he should send out the Italian forces from Malta for operations off Cape Khersonese or Cape Sarich on the night of 7/8 June.

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1920 Italian midget submarines CB 1, CB 2 and CB 3 sailed from Malta with orders to form a reconnaissance line south of Cape Serich and return to Malta early on 9 June.

The 2 Italian E-boats MS 570 and 572 postponed their sailing from Ak Mchet to Malta for 24 hours on account of the weather.

Naval Shore Command r, Crimea reported that Special Command Schmidt (Training Command for minesweeping) was heavily shelled by enemy artillery while on a practice sweep to Kerch with combined operation boats carrying motor pinnace gear. The gear was cut. It will be salvaged at dusk.

The incident proves that in normal visibility we cannot pass through Kerch Strait in daylight so long as the Russians are in possession of the east bank and can use their artillery to shell the Strait.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Regina Liria" non-operational for boiler cleaning.

Auxiliary ship "Uta" non-operational, dockyard repair in Galatz.

Naval ferry barges nos. 121 and 122 again operational on morning of 8 June.

E-boats S 72 and S 102 operational on 7 June (2 cm. gun still to be installed on the foredeck).

Land situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported that the attack on the fortress of Sevastopol had begun according to plan. The enemy's defensive strength has not been entirely exhausted by the 5 days' preliminary bombardment, but in spite of this, after heavy fighting, we have succeeded in making the first penetrations in the enemy's defense lines. According to a report from 11th Army H.Q., the enemy has 77 Army batteries, while 10 coastal batteries are also taking part, sometimes with great quantities of ammunition.

8 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, no cloud, sea 1, visibility 15 km., temperature 12° C.

Enemy situation:

The main boats of the enemy naval forces is lying in the base, but there is fairly brisk activity of smaller vessels below the size of destroyer.

A convoy consisting of 1 merchant ship, 1 destroyer and 4 patrol vessels was 53 miles southeast of Malta at 0440, course southeast. At 0744 a second convoy, consisting of 1 fairly large merchant ship (described by the air reconnaissance as an "auxiliary cruiser") escorted by 3 destroyers, was 77 miles south of Malta, course 150°, slight speed.

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Cruiser F at sea, probably in the eastern part of the Black Sea.

Submarine activity can be regarded as normal.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

0145 Two Bulgarian E-boats sailed from Varna for air grid square 2328 to search for the rubber dinghy reported there (see War Diary 7 June).

The Bulgarian boats returned to Varna in the late evening without sighting anything.

0550 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 122 sailed from Varna for Constantza.

Rumanian Area:

0700 Motor minesweepers FR 1 and FR 11 sailed with "Romulus" from Sulina for Bugaz where they put in at 1420.

1400 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 122 put in to Constantza from Varna.

1520 E-boats S 72 and 102 returned to Constantza from their search in air grid square 2328. They also sighted nothing.

1535 Ten Siebel ferries and 1 combined operations ferry sailed from Constantza for Bugaz escorted by the gunboat "Stihi. A group of boats from Danube Flotilla will take over the escort at 1700 on 9 June at the rendezvous point south of Bugaz.

1900 Commander, Danube Flotilla put in to Constantza from Sulina with 4 motor minesweepers (RA). These were brought to Sulina from Germany by the Danube route. I welcomed the motor minesweepers (RA) on their arrival and inspected the leading boat. Unfortunately the length and shape of the bow is not entirely suitable for the rapidly rising short seas we have here. On passage from Sulina to Constantza with sea 4 their starboard bows the group showed a loss of speed of $1\frac{1}{2}$ knots. However on the whole the group will be a valuable addition to our minesweeper strength urgently needed for work in Crimean waters.

1950 Gunboat "Dumitrescu" and tug "Bersarabia" sailed from Sulina for Constantza.

When the weather improved, the 3 Italian midget submarines, CB 4, 5 and 6, which were lying in readiness at Constantza, received the following sailing and operational orders:

At 2359 on 8 June, 3 Italian midget submarines will sail from Constantza, and from 1600 on 10 June will be in a reconnaissance line from $43^{\circ} 36' N$, $33^{\circ} 25' E$ to $43^{\circ} 36' N$, $34^{\circ} 20' E$. Put in to Yalta about 0400 on 12 June.

Addenda for Italian Detachment only:

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Expect to meet German and Italian E-boats in the area round Cape Sarich.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 721 A Op."

South Russian Area:

0405 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla sailed from Ochakov for Odessa where they put in at 1000. They will be at the disposal of Naval Special Duties Detachment for urgent checking of the Odessa sea area for moored mines.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 put out from Ochakov on-check sweep to Nikolaiev, to take in water there and have her magnet gear repaired. Repairs to be completed about 9 June.

No reports from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine on special incidents in his area.

Crimea:

0100- Several air attacks on Eupatoria and Ak Mechet. No damage reported.
0415

As 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla is at the disposal of Naval Special Duties Detachment for a special assignment, I have decided to place mine-exploding vessel No. 191 at the disposal of 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla now in Ak Mechet.

The following orders were issued to 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla:

"On 9 June naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 and 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla, using oropesa gear, will search the route from Ak Mechet via 45° 59.6' N, 32° 55' E and further to Ochakov as laid down in Gkdos. 1551 A Op. Report sailing and execution of operation.

Naval Shore Commanders will inform coastal stations and the Air Force.

17th Harbor Defense Flotilla will receive further orders in Ochakov. Naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 will return to Ak Mechet as quickly as possible by the same route and rejoin Group Lex.

Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Op. 722 A Op."

The following radiogram further ordered naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 to use their return passage to Ak Mechet as an opportunity to lay heavy Russian buoys on the swept coastal route from Ochakov to Skadovsk at present marked with fairway buoys.

"Further to Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 722 A Op.

On return passage from Ochakov to Ak Mechet, naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 will mark the route with heavy Russian buoys as laid down in Gkdos. 1551 A Op. para. C.2. All course alteration points to be marked. Acting Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine will ensure that buoys are got ready as quickly as possible so that the naval ferry barges can sail on 12 June.

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Group Lex will report execution and exact position of buoys.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. G. 696 A Op."

As E-boats S 72 and S 102 are required for the sea rescue operation in air grid square 2328, the operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla south of Cape Sarich will have to be postponed until 9 June. Commander Minbelli has been informed and a suggestion made that at his discretion he should use his E-boats and motor boats in the sea area off Cape Sarich or Sevastopol.

The 2 Italian E-boats M/S 570 and 572 which were lying in Ak Mechet were instructed to sail this evening at 1900 and proceed by the prescribed route to Yalta. The Air Force has been notified.

Naval Port Commander, Ak Mechet reported that they sailed at 1930.

Of the 3 Italian midget submarines which sailed to the patrol line south of Cape Sarich at 1920 on 7 June, CB 1 and CB 3 returned to Yalta at 0600 because of heavy seas. Nothing sighted.

The following teletype Gkdos. 3270 of 7 June was received from Group South:

"Gkdos. Group considers it important to have massed operations by light forces in the area where prospects of success are most favorable. In order to achieve this concentration, the German E-boats and Italian E-boats and midget submarines should set out from the same operational base and operate under the joint command of Minbelli, Birnbacher and Air Commander who must be in close cooperation".

This teletype is entirely in accordance with my views on the commitment of the operational forces and with the previous procedure. I have already given orders in Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Op. 509 A Op. of 2 June (see War Diary 2 June) that on arrival of Lieutenant Birnbacher in the Crimea there is to be a common operation headquarters at H.Q. of Air Commander, South. Operations by all available forces (4 German E-boats, 4 Italian E-boats, 6 midget submarines and 10 motor boats) from Yalta would make close cooperation between Commander Minbelli and Lieutenant Birnbacher vital and this would doubtless have its advantages. However, I think that the massing of all forces in the small harbor at Yalta constitutes an unwarrantable risk, as such a concentration of boats would not escape the enemy's notice and would lead to heavy air attacks. I therefore decided to keep the forces divided as at present.

Yalta will remain the operational base for the Italian forces while the E-boats will be based on Ak Mechet. The demand for close cooperation between Lieutenant Birnbacher and Commander Minbelli is satisfied by the arrangement for a common operational H.Q. at Sadki.

The following report was sent to Group South:

"In reply to your teletype 3270 Gkdos:

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Orders have already been given for concentrated operations by all available forces in the area off Sevastopol with Cape Sarich as steering point to continue until Sevastopol falls. Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla and Commander Minbelli have been ordered to establish a common operational H.Q. at Sadki along with Air Commander, South. Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla is expected to arrive in the Crimea. Italian naval forces are to use Yalta as their operational base, the German E-boats Ak Mechet. Yalta is not large enough to take all the naval forces and in addition massing of all boats in Yalta is too great a danger from the point of view of air attack.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 735 A Op."

Land Situation:

Naval Shore Commander "W", who is waiting in readiness near Balaklava, reported that our attack is making no progress in the face of very stubborn enemy resistance and that our attacking forces have had to be withdrawn to their original positions. The Wesemann Detachment came under enemy fire while transporting wounded: casualties were 2 killed and 3 wounded. 11th Army H.Q. reports that after heavy fighting on the northern Sevastopol front the enemy resistance became weaker during the afternoon on the whole front. Several enemy counter-attacks with tanks were thrown back and our attack was able to gain ground all along the northern front.

9 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, fair, visibility 15 miles, sea 0, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of enemy naval forces increased during the evening. Cruiser F was detected at sea, position unknown; about 2200 she was suspected to be in the Novorossisk/Kerch area.

About 2225 cruiser B and 4 destroyers appeared in radio traffic, but her position was not detected. A few small vessels were at sea, including 6 M.T.B.s, 1 gunboat and 1 submarine in the Sevastopol area.

About 1400 air reconnaissance reported that from an altitude of 3,000 meters with visibility 40-50 km. nothing was to be seen of the enemy in air grid squares 25 and 35.

At 2015 Radar Station 2 (Cape Aitedor - 5 miles south-southwest of Yalta) detected 2 planes bearing 219°, altitude 300-500 meters, range 66-68 km. At 0501 a bomber formation in grid square 3355 sighted a Turkish submarine 23 miles north of Kerempch Burnu.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

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Special Command, Bulgaria reported from Varna that, while on a check sweep between Earebo and Ahtopol, Special Duties Detachment heard underwater radio traffic from 2 enemy submarines.

Between 2330 and 2400 several torpedo tracks were observed about 2.5 miles from Ahtopol.

This means that Russian submarines are still operating off the Bulgarian-Turkish coast. Measures against enemy submarines are essential for the protection of the supply route from the Bosphorus to Varna.

In the course of a lecture on the tasks and achievements of Main Naval B/F Station, Constantza, the Director, Commander Diesterweg, mentioned that the list of radio callsigns of Russian Black Sea submarines contained more than 200 names, of which 75 had appeared in radio traffic. In view of the numerous surprises in the eastern campaign, I think it advisable to take due note of this figure and take early steps to examine all the possible countermeasures which our personnel and equipment permit. We must be prepared for a long war in the Black Sea, for we cannot yet tell whether the two harbors of Poti and Batun, now the main Russian naval bases, will be in our hands within the next year. On the other hand, from our experiences in the Baltic it seems doubtful whether all the Russian submarines are operational by our standards.

To my knowledge, plans to date provide for anti-submarine operations by an old Danube minesweeper "Kanten" and a 300-ton steamer, now in process of conversion in Turnu Severin as a decoy. She has only one gun and very little depth charge equipment. These plans are certainly not in accord with present conditions.

In view of the increasing number of sea transportation assignments and the long sea routes for which it is difficult to provide flank-ing minefield protection - partly because of shortage of mines and partly because of the depth of water - I consider it essential to prepare at least 3 submarine chaser flotillas, each comprising 6-8 vessels - 1 flotilla each for the western Black Sea, the Crimean and eastern Black Sea areas.

Equipment: one 7.5 or 8.8 cm. gun, light anti-aircraft guns 1 anti-tank gun, location gear and depth charge throwers.

In making this demand, I am well aware that the personnel and equipment can only be assembled by degrees. Until the boats are available - new constructions or purchases - new naval ferry barges may have to be used on anti-submarine operations. Plans for getting their personnel together are already well in hand. It would be advisable to have the barges work in groups and also to send in an advance request for one officer for each group.

On the question of the use of decoys, assuming that Sevastopol has meanwhile fallen, I have the following comments to make:

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1. Operations by Q-ships in the eastern Black Sea - i.e. east of 35° E - are out of the question because of the presence of Russian surface forces.
2. On the other hand operations in the western and central Black Sea appear promising, particularly in the coastal area. There have been repeated enemy submarine attacks in the Turkish-Bulgarian coastal strip, so that a decoy making a surprise appearance here could, given skillful handling, have good chances of success.

The same holds good off the Crimean coast, where the routes will later be heavily patrolled by submarines.

The most suitable decoys would be the ships of 1,500-2,000 tons usual in this area, which lend themselves to two or three different forms of camouflage. Equipment: two 8.8 cm. or 10.5 cm. guns, light anti-aircraft guns, 2 anti-tank guns, search gear, revolving directional hydrophones and depth charge throwers.

I consider that it would be advisable to make enquiries via Naval Attaché, Istanbul as to whether such ships could be purchased from Turkey. He could emphasize our Black Sea losses, reports of which have also reached Turkey, and buy the ships under the pretext of supplementing our cargo space. Until such time as armament and crews are ready, they could be used in the convoys and then be converted at short notice in Nikolaiev. It would be a good plan to appoint Lieutenant Commander Kircheiss as adviser on the training of the crews.

Following the instructions about cutting down correspondence, I shall not send in a special request on this matter but ask that it may be taken up at a higher level.

Reconnaissance Gruppe 125 reported that the planes sent to air grid square 2328 found the rubber dinghy and rescued 2 survivors out of crew of five.

Rumanian Area:

The Italian mid-net submarines CB 4, 5 and 6 sailed from Constantza in accordance with orders from Admiral, Black Sea Op. Ckdos. 721 A Op. (see War Diary 8 June).

The following orders were issued to 1st E-Boat Flotilla for operations south of Cape Sarich on the night of 9/10 June:

"Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla will sail today from Constantza with S 26, 28 72, 102 to reach the operational area south of Cape Sarich at 2130. Return to Ak Mechet early on 10 June. Inform coastal authorities.

Addenda for Mirbelli:

Today's operational area for Italian E-boats and motor boats will be Sevastopol. Boats must have passed the Sarich meridian by 2100. Attention is drawn to recognition signals.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Ckdos. 763 A. Op."

9 June 1942

Evening air reconnaissance in air grid squares 3435, 3445 and 3444 was requested from Air Commander, South for this operation.

All important reports on the enemy were passed on to the E-boats who at 1330 were engaged on a sortie against Sevastopol.

- 1630 The 9 Siebel ferries and 1 combined operations ferry which sailed from Constantza put in to Bugaz. The tenth Siebel ferry had to put in to Sulina because of engine trouble. Gunboat "Stihi" which went as convoy escort as far as Bugaz put in to Sulina at 2350.
- 1730 Motor minesweepers FR 3 and FR 9 put in to Bugaz from Odessa. The 2 motor minesweepers (FR) which were held up because of fog were thus unable to take over the escort of the convoy of Siebel ferries from Constantza; they were piloted to Bugaz by a motor pinnace.

Naval ferry barges Nos. 126, 135 and 137 put out from Sulina and again searched the area near point Green 23 for the buoy of unknown origin reported there. They searched within a 6-mile radius but found nothing.

- 1625 Motor minesweepers FR 1 and 11 put in to Sulina from Bugaz.

South Russian Area:

1st Special Duties Flotilla carried out a practice search with the 7 naval ferry barges which were forced to put in to Odessa on account of fog. Naval ferry barge No. 125 got stuck on the harbor mole for a short time. Center and port screws were damaged and the boat will have to go to Varna for repairs.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 checked the route to Ochakov on her return passage from Nikolaiev. No mines swept.

- 2145- Several air attacks on Nikolaiev. No damage to naval installations.
2330

Crenea:

- 0010 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla sailed from Ak Mechet for Ochakov to carry out the operation in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdes. 722 A Op. (see Air Diary 8 June).

- 0645 The boats arrived at Ochakov.

Group Lex reported that naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 have buoyed the approach route to Ak Mechet in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdes. 676 A Op. para. 1 and searched to a width of 250 meters on both sides of the line of buoys with 15-meter pendant. No mines swept.

The E-boats (S 26, 20 72, 102) have orders to put in to Ak Mechet early on 10 June. Lieutenant Birnbacher has been given verbal instructions and relevant directives that on arrival he is to proceed to Sadki to confer with Air Commander, South and Commander Minbelli and set up a common operational H.Q. there for the period of operations in the sea area off Sevastopol.

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The following radiogram was sent to Commander Mirbelli and Air Commander, South:

"Ref. Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 509 A Op.

Lieutenant Birnbacher arrives at Sadki on the evening of 10 June. Request Commander Mirbelli to be at Sadki for a conference.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 767 A Op."

0430 Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 572 put in to Yalta. They were observed by Russian guardboats in about 44° 42' N, 32° 26' E. Russian chase was unsuccessful.

Italian midget submarine CB 2, which remained at sea during the night of 8/9 June despite the weather, put in to Yalta early on 9 June and reported: "Yesterday morning CB 2 heard 2 turbine ships in hydrophone gear about 20 miles south of Cape Sarich. They were probably chasing us and dropped depth charges from time to time."

They were probably 2 torpedoboats or destroyers which detected the midget submarine in their location gear and chased her. Thus the enemy must be aware of the presence of our submarines in this area. Italian E-Boat Flotilla will therefore be instructed to send the midget submarines to another area for their next operation.

The following radiogram was received from Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q.:

"C-in-C urgently requests that all possible naval forces be sent to carry out operations in the Sevastopol area to prevent the bringing up of further reinforcements. Please report action taken."

Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q., who must know about such matters from the daily situation report and the plans for constant operations by German and Italian forces, received the following reply:

"Since 1 June, German and Italian naval forces have constantly been engaged on operations in the Sevastopol area.

Rumanian U-boat "Delfinul" temporarily non-operational.

Pass this information to C-in-C, also that we have further plans for forced operations.

So far no successes, since apart from an 8,000-ton steamer at which an Italian E-boat misfired a torpedo, the boats have not met any supply traffic.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 759."

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that the floating crane, salvaged in Tobechiksko-Salzsee, was sunk during the attempt to tow it in to Kerch. Enemy guns scored a direct hit and it sank in 2.5 meters of water (probably enemy guns on Messa Tuzla).

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Otherwise no reports of special incidents in the area of Naval Shore Commander, Crimea.

Readiness:

Naval ferry barge No. 125 non-operational.

One boat from Naval Special Duties Detachment and 1 Bulgarian E-boat non-operational for about 7 days for overhaul and repairs.

Land Situation:

The attack on the northern Sevastopol front continues to meet with stiff enemy resistance; after repulsing desperate counter-attacks we are slowly gaining ground.

The Weserham Detachment is lying in readiness east of Balaklava.

11th Army H.Q. reported that the enemy gunfire from the eastern shore of Kerch Strait onto the western shore had increased (see previous report). There have been no observations of enemy landing attempts, but it is obvious that the enemy is constantly strengthening their positions.

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Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, fair, visibility 25 miles, sea 0, temperature 20° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of naval forces was only moderate during the day. The battleship and cruiser F no longer appear in the radio traffic. At about 0300 cruiser E was in the sea area south of Kerch Strait, probably course west. She was operating further east in the late evening. Activity of light forces from destroyer downwards has also decreased.

Very lively convoy activity. At about 1300 a bomber formation sighted 16 ships about 50 miles southeast of Theodosia, course west. No further details were given; probably the smaller escort vessels were included in the 16 ships. At 1445 another bomber formation reported a convoy comprising 1 merchant ship of up to 5,000 tons, 1 of up to 1,000 tons, 3 A.T.B.s and 1 minesweeper, course 270°, south of Sudak. At 1735 and again 1814 the convoy was reported further west. Obviously on each occasion it is the same convoy, probably the "16" in the first report should have been "6". Generally speaking, reports on positions and types of vessels passed in by the Air Force require careful scrutiny. This is not meant as a reproach; the crews lack practice and are unfamiliar with the sea.

Thus there is as yet no confirmation of the report that at 0655 a heavy cruiser was sighted putting in to Sevastopol and it is hardly likely that she could put in without any radio traffic at all from Sevastopol. This would be most unusual and contrary to the usual practice of the naval forces - the only explanation

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would be that Sevastopol radio station had been destroyed. The station however was heard about 2300.

Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza believes that the "heavy cruiser" was cruiser E; she could only have been a short time in Sevastopol, as she was in the northeastern sea area again in the evening.

Own Situation:

Rumanian Area:

- 0430 Motor minesweepers FR 1 and FR 11 continued passage from Sulina to Constantza where they put in at 1300.
- 1345 Siebel ferry No. 124, which had to interrupt her passage at Sulina yesterday on account of engine trouble, arrived at Bugaz.

The 4 motor minesweepers (R1) which are to join Danube Flotilla - R1 51, 52, 54 and 56 - are operational this evening.

I plan to transfer these boats to Ak Mechet, so that they will be available there for minesweeping and escort work on the approach routes into the harbors which the E-boats use as operational bases. For the present they themselves will use Ak Mechet as their operational base. During passage to the Crinca, they will sweep the new route from Ochakov to Skadovsk and from Skadovsk to Ak Mechet. The following order was issued to Commander, Danube Flotilla:

- "1. Commander, Danube Flotilla will put out from Constantza via Bugaz for Ochakov with motor minesweepers R1 51, 52, 54 and 56 early on 11 June.
2. The motor minesweepers (R1) will then sweep the following routes with oropesa gear:
 - a. The Ochakov-Skadovsk route in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Op. (Gdos. 1551 A Op. para. 2. At the same time naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 will mark the route in accordance with G. 696 A Op.
 - b. The Skadovsk-Ak Mechet route in accordance with Gdos. 15151 para. 3 and the outward route from Ak Mechet round Tarkhankutzki on both sides of the line of buoys.
3. Report position, work done and plans daily.
4. On completion of the task, motor minesweepers (R1) will for the present use Ak Mechet as their operational base. Further orders there.

Appendix for Commander, Danube Flotilla only:

Copy of previous orders referred to is appended.

Admiral, Black Sea G. 812 A Op."

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South Russian Area:

- 0400 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla sailed from Odessa with 7 boats to carry out a check sweep in the Odessa sea area. They returned at 1530 without incident. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla swept the route from Ak Mechet to Ochakov with oropesa gear without result - see War Diary 9 June.
- 0400- Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 carried out a check sweep off Per-1200 voneisk. No mines swept.

Crimea:

- 0730 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ak Mechet on completion of the operation in accordance with Admiral, Black Sea Orders. 763 A Op. Two patrol vessels and 1 Italian E-boat were sighted in reconnaissance area grid square 5558, upper quadrant. Otherwise no incidents.
- 1413 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported:

"E-boat S 26 non-operational because of fire in auxiliary engine-room. Further report will follow."

No reports were received from the Italian midget submarines CB 4, 5 and 6 which should have been in a reconnaissance line south of Cape Sarich last night.

Malta reported that of the Italian forces 2 E-boats - AS 572 and 573 - and 3 motor boats were in the area off Sevastopol during the night of 9/10 June. At 2315 a motor boat sighted a destroyer of the "Fransé" class standing on and off near Cape Khersonese and shortly afterwards a ship of about 500 tons escorted by a flotilla leader and 3 M.T.B.s with course for Sevastopol. The motor boat fired 1 torpedo at the flotilla leader without success. At 2359 the motor boats again sighted the flotilla leader proceeding at high speed on reverse course. Coastal batteries and patrol vessels fired on the motor boats without result. The Italian E-boats which were operating in poor visibility 10 miles off Cape Khersonese did not see anything of the enemy.

The Italian forces returned to Malta early on 10 June.

Italian E-Boat Flotilla reported the following plans for the night of 10/11 June:

"Tonight 2 Italian E-boats and 2 motor boats will be in a reconnaissance line between Cape Sarich and Cape Khersonese."

- 1945 Italian E-boats AS 570 and 573 sailed from Malta for this operation. Last night the following report was broadcast from Rome in the news:

"Tuesday's "Giornale d'Italia" reported that Italian naval forces are now in Russian seas and inland waters and will take part in the struggle against the Soviet Union. The Italian naval forces, which will be increased in numbers and strength, are getting ready for fresh operations."

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I have been trying to keep the enemy in the dark as much as possible about the operation of Italian and German naval forces in order to make the most of the surprise factor. Now the enemy has been warned through this press report. Even if Germany could not have prevented the Italian report, it would have been advisable not to repeat it in the German news.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported renewed air attacks on Simferopol, Eupatoria and Malta. No damage to naval installations.

This confirms my view that operational forces should not be massed in Malta because of the threat of air attack (see War Diary 8 June).

The following radiogram was received from Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force:

"As it is impossible always to be informed if and when submarines and light forces of the German and Italian navies are in Crimean waters, Commanding General, 6th Air Corps has given orders prohibiting his planes from making any attacks whatsoever on any submarines or light forces - including Russian vessels in the entire Black Sea."

There is no valid reason why these air attacks on submarines and light forces should be prohibited in the whole Black Sea area, as at present the German and Italian E-boats and submarines are only operating in the Crimean area.

Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force has therefore been requested to arrange that the prohibition should only apply to this limited area. Further, Gruppe 125 - operational bases Constantza and Varna - should also be allowed to continue their anti-submarine operations in the prohibited area, as they work in close cooperation with Naval Special Duties Detachment and are constantly given detailed information about all naval movements. The following radiogram was therefore issued to Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force:

"In reply to your radiogram 1614/9/60:

At present German and Italian E-boats and submarines are operating exclusively in the sea area off the south and west coasts of the Crimea, approaching from Constantza, Ochakov, Ak Kochet and Malta. Hence there is no necessity for prohibition over the entire Black Sea. Please arrange that prohibition applies only to area north of 43° 30' N and west of 35° 40' E. Naval Special Duties Detachment to make special arrangement with Gruppe 125; who receive current information on movements of naval forces. Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force please confirm.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. & Op."

Readiness:

E-boat S 26 non-operational.

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Land Situation:

Meserann Detachment lying in readiness off Balaklava reported no special incidents on 9 June or during night of 9/10 June. According to the daily report from 11th Army H.Q., the enemy is making an all-out effort to stop the threatened penetration on the Sevastopol northern front. These desperate counter-attacks, which were supported by strong artillery fire with great quantities of ammunition, were all repulsed.

11th Army H.Q. reported further brisk artillery fire from the eastern bank of Kerch Strait to the northeastern corner of Kerch Peninsula.

11 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

W winds, force 1, no cloud, visibility 10 miles, temperature 22° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of enemy naval forces still very slight. Cruiser E is still at sea.

Own Situation:

Convoy and Escort Assignments:

1000 Steamers "Ardeal"; "Zar-Ferdinand" and "Oituz" escorted by motor minesweepers FR 2, 4, 7, 8 and 10 and naval ferry barges Nos. 133 and 134 sailed from Ochakov for the south.

The following radiogram was received during the afternoon:

1414 Radiogram from Naval Communications Station, Odessa:

"Heavy explosion aboard second steamer of the southbound convoy, very thick smoke."

1423 Radiogram from the commander of the minesweeping group:

"Have struck a mine in 46° 32.5' N, 30° 56.5' E."

1432 Second radiogram from the commander:

"1410 steamer "Ardeal" torpedoed, now beached."

The remaining vessels in the convoy continued passage and put in to Odessa at 1530.

The 3 Rumanian tugs "Arlon", "Elena" and "Cltul" sailed from Ochakov with the interrupted southbound convoy. "Arlon" proceeded to Odessa and the other two tugs to Bugaz with Group 2, Danube Flotilla and naval ferry barges Nos. 125, 128, 138 and 144. They put in to Bugaz at 2015.

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1721 Acting Commander, Danube Flotilla reported:

"1710 submarine attack in 46° 18' N, 30° 45' E. Torpedo fired at tug "Romulus" of Danube Flotilla. Torpedo exploded ashore."

Commander, 1st Special Duties Flotilla reported that the naval ferry barges of the convoy attacked the submarine with 15 depth charges. Large patch of oil following depth charge attack. Naval ferry barges Nos. 133 and 134 remained at the scene of the attack until dark and then put in to Odessa. Attack on the submarine will be resumed at dawn on 12 June.

Naval Construction Inspectorate, Odessa immediately examined steamer "Ardeal" and discovered a large leak 4 x 8 meters at the waterline close to hatch 2 on the port side. Bulkhead is holding. Divers will examine the ship on 12 June. The Salvage Group at Odessa has been instructed to make preparations for salvaging the steamer.

Observations clearly prove that steamer "Ardeal" was torpedoed by a submarine, which also fired 2 more torpedoes without success.

Unfortunately our fear that the enemy's success against the steamer "Sulina" (see War Diary 30 April) would encourage them to more attacks has proved correct. Anti-submarine measures at this particularly dangerous spot in Odessa Bay must therefore be taken immediately. As we have no suitable vessels for anti-submarine action, the only solution is the laying of the flanking minefields as laid down in Admiral, Black Sea Op. Ckdos. 454 A Op. (see War Diary 3 May). Naval Special Duties Detachment has already received the orders and has actually begun the preliminary work before laying the minefield, in particular the task of checking these waters which according to prisoners' statements have been mined by the Russians. On 11 June, 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla carried out the first check sweep without result. To expedite this sweeping, the group of motor minesweepers (RM) of Danube Flotilla has been made available to Naval Special Duties Detachment, which now has the following vessels at its disposal:

1. The group of motor minesweepers (FR) from Danube Flotilla
2. The group of motor minesweepers (RM) from Danube Flotilla
3. 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla
4. 1st Special Duties Flotilla.

There can be no more supply convoys until the minefield has been laid. I have therefore given orders that convoys are to be stopped for the time being. The following directive was issued to Naval Special Duties Detachment (copy to Naval Group South):

"Following; the torpedoing of "Ardeal":

1. Supply convoys are to stop for the present.

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2. Flanking minefield as described in Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 454 A Op. is to be laid as soon as possible.
3. In addition to 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla, the group of motor minesweepers (Ri) of Danube Flotilla is now available to you for checking the sea area and protecting the minelaying formation. The group is at present in Bugaz.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 855 A Op."

Naval Special Duties Detachment reported:

"Rumanian Naval Command informs us that at about 2330 on the night of 9/10 June 1942 several detonations were heard at sea in the Sangica-Caroline area. At the same time a green light was observed at sea and aircraft engine noises heard. Rumanian Naval Command presumes that a plane was laying mines.

Naval Special Duties Detachment G. 1941 A I".

Although this does not give any positive evidence for minelaying by planes, the route must be checked immediately. Mine-exploding vessel, at present engaged on searching the area where naval ferry barge No. 145 went down with a view to salvage work, will on completion of this task be made available to Naval Special Duties Detachment.

Rumanian Area:

- 0430 Commander, Danube Flotilla sailed north from Constantza with motor minesweeper FR 11 and 4 motor minesweepers (Ri). FR 11 put in to Sulina at 1340 from where she intends to proceed to Galatz on 12 June. The 4 motor minesweepers (Ri) will put in to Bugaz at 2000.
- 1325 Tug "Romulus", motor minesweepers FR 3 and 9 and 10 Siebel ferries continued passage to Odessa where they put in at 1835.
- 1400 Tanker lighter "Prinzipessa Maria" towed by tug "Vartosu" sailed from Constantza for Sulina escorted by naval ferry barges Nos. 121 and 122.

The tanker lighter is intended for Bugaz where she will act as a fuel depot for the vessels of Danube Flotilla.

South Russian Area:

- 0430 Naval ferry barge No. 136 and 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla sailed from Odessa to search the bay. They put in at 0730 on account of fog.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported more air attacks on Mariupol during the night of 10/11 June. No damage to naval installations.

Crimea:

In radiogram 1001/65 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla sent the following report on the fire in E-boat S 26, reported in War Diary 10 June, 0730:

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"10 June: The war head charge of a reserve torpedo aboard S 26 caught fire in Ak Mechet. Some of the light metal construction work in the engine rooms, the deck over the engine-room and central tank area were destroyed. Pipes and electric wires in the side engine-room and the air compressor were damaged, while the starboard engine were damaged by the flow of liquid metal. Request repairs in Linz to be carried out with assistance of Lursen dockyard. Possibly the result of sabotage."

Contents of this message were passed on to Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Group South and Commander, E-Boats in Gkdos. 838 A Op. The following orders were issued to 1st E-Boat Flotilla in Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 839 A Op.:

"S 26 to be sent to Sulina as soon as possible. Tug there in readiness to take her to Linz. Dockyards have been informed. Energetic measures to be taken to discover the cause. Should a Counter-Intelligence Officer or Torpedo Specialist be sent to Linz?"

2018 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ak Mechet reported their plans for 11 June:

"Lurking position in grid square 5558. E-boats S 102, 72 and 28 sailed at 1645."

0335 Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 573 and 2 motor boats which were on operations in the sea area off Cape Sarich and Cape Khersonese during the night of 10/11 June put in to Yalta. The boats sent several radiograms during their operation and those were put together in the following radiogram to Group South:

"Further to Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 837 A Op.:

1. Italian E-boat MAS 573 fired 2 torpedoes at a motor vessel which avoided the first torpedo. The second probably hit the bows. Italian E-boat was then chased by 3 torpedoboats and could not observe the sinking.
2. Italian E-boat MAS 570 attacked a convoy soon afterwards. Fired a torpedo at a small motor vessel which took avoiding action. The boat followed the convoy to Cape Khersonese, where she again attacked the motor vessel which turned off. Then fired a torpedo at a torpedoboat which took avoiding action. Short exchange of machine-gunfire between the Italian E-boat and the torpedoboat.
3. A motor boat fired a torpedo at a torpedoboat which was stopped. Depth setting 3 meters, no result. Probably fired beneath the boat.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 845 A Op."

Hence the attacking boats were unable to observe for certain whether the motor vessel sank. However, a report from Naval Liaison Officer to Air Commander, South (radiogram 2023/11/7) mentions an empty rescue dinghy about 5 km. south of Cape Khersonese and an oil patch about 500 meters in diameter in grid square 3564, while another report from Italian Naval Command mentions that the torpedoed steamer was not seen by their last reconnaissance vessels, so the motor vessel may have gone down.

11 June 1942

- 1340 Italian E-Boat Flotilla reported from Malta that the Italian E-boats will not be able to go out on operations tonight because of the bad weather.
- 1020 Italian midget submarines CB 4, 5 and 6 returned to Malta without incident.

Air attacks on Simferopol, Theodosia, Eupatoria and Malta during the night of 10/11 June. No damage to naval installations.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported renewed shelling of Merch and Ak Burnu by enemy artillery on the east side of Merch Strait. No damage to naval installations.

Land Situation:

Bitter resistance continues on the northern front at Sevastopol and our attack is gaining ground very slowly. Similar report received from Mesernn Detachment about the attack on Balaklava.

12 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, fair, visibility 25 km., sea 0, temperature 23° C.

Enemy Situation:

Cruiser E has been proceeding west in the sea area south of the Crimea since the early morning; at about 0800 her approximate position was 52 miles southeast of Malta; at about 2000 according to an inexact location she was 80 - 90 miles south to southwest of Sevastopol.

One destroyer, 4 submarines and several small craft were detected in the same sea area.

Cruiser F probably left Poti in the early hours of the morning and is proceeding on a westerly course.

Finally a few more submarines were discovered in the southeastern Black Sea; at 0830 one of them was about 30 miles north of Cape Sinope. At 0405 air reconnaissance sighted a convoy 26 miles south of Cape Sarich consisting of one 3,000-ton steamer and 5 patrol vessels, course 160°.

At 1500 air reconnaissance reported the sea area round Sevastopol as clear of enemy ships. No large vessels in Sevastopol harbor. At about 1700 a convoy consisting of 1 merchant ship of about 10,000 tons, 2 destroyers and 5 patrol vessels, course 335°, was reported by air reconnaissance 57 miles south of Cape Sarich. It was again sighted at 1900 about 30 miles further north.

At 1730 a bomber formation sighted a light cruiser and a destroyer, course 340°, proceeding at very high speed 47 miles south of Cape Khersonese. It was probably cruiser D, which may have proceeded to Sevastopol, as all locations given were reported as definitely uncertain.

12 June 1942

Own Situation:

Rumanian Area:

- 0340 Air raid warning in Constantza. A large 4-engined plane attacked from an altitude of about 4,000 meters, flying in to attack on a westerly course. It dropped 3 bombs in the water about 1,500 meters west of the harbor entrance and then flew off to the east.
- C440 Air raid warning in Sulina. Three enemy planes flew in from west to east. No bombs dropped.

According to Rumanian reports which cannot be investigated here, both raids were by enemy planes which had been attempting an attack on Chernavoda, the Danube bridge and the Floesti oil region.

- 1530 The third group of 1st E-Boat Flotilla - S 27 and 40 - put in to Sulina on their way down the Danube. They will probably go on to Constantza at 0800 on 13 June and should be operational on 16 June.
- 1900 Naval ferry barges Nos. 122 and 135 left Sulina for Constantza.

South Russian Area:

- 1500 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla put in to Odessa.
- 1800 Rumanian tugs "Elena" and "Oltul" put in to Odessa from Bugaz. They are to be used in attempts at salvaging steamer "Ardeal".

The measures which I ordered following the torpedoing of steamer "Ardeal" are now in force. Naval ferry barges Nos. 133 and 134 are guarding the steamer against submarine attack. The group of motor minesweepers (RA) and 2 motor minesweepers (FR) have begun searching Odessa Bay in preparation for the minelaying. The search will be continued on 13 June with all vessels available - motor minesweepers (FR) and (RA), 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla and naval ferry barges.

The plans for the minefield were reported by the following teletype to Naval Group South and their approval was requested:

"Further to Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. 855 A Op. of 11 June, we plan to lay a flanking minefield:

1. From 46° 27.8' N, 31° 3.1' E to 46° 23' N, 30° 53.5' E.
2. From 46° 22.2' N, 30° 56.4' E to 46° 16.9' N, 30° 49.8' E.

Depth setting: 3 meters.

Average distance between mines: 50 meters.

Required: 560 UEB mines with contact firing.

Mines are available. Preparations in progress.

Request your approval.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 879 A Op."

12 June 1942

Commander, 1st Special Duties Flotilla reported by radiogram 2343/12/2:

"Submarine alarm again given by reconnaissance planes at the point where the submarine was attacked yesterday. 19 depth charges were dropped in the area without success. At 1535 surfaced submarine in air grid square 0763 - about 6 miles east of Odessa - was bombed by fighters without result."

Crimea:

Group Lex with naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 swept the approaches to Ak Mechet with oropesa gear to a width of 250 - 300 meters on both sides of the line of buoys.

0730 E-boats S 28, 72 and 102 put in to Ak Mechet and reported on their previous night's operations:

"3 submarines in waiting position in grid square 5558, upper right, later grid square 5559, center. Southbound convoy of 1 steamer 1,500 tons, 1 torpedoboat and 3 M.T.B.s. S 72 and S 28 each fired 1 torpedo at the S-class torpedoboat and missed. The bubble track was easily recognizable in the phosphorescence on the sea and the torpedoboat took avoiding action."

E-boats S 28, 72 and 102 will be on operations in the same area during the night of 12/13 June.

1420 The Italian midget submarines CB 1, 2 and 3 put out from Yalta for a reconnaissance line 30 miles south of Cape Sarich. They have orders to return to Yalta early on 14 June.

Up to now their reconnaissance line has always been in an east-west direction about 30 miles south of Cape Sarich. It is possible, if not very probable that the enemy has noticed this measure and in any case we must avoid clinging to a fixed schedule. This is all the more important as according to radio intercept and air reconnaissance reports - see also Naval High Command report No. 2142 - the convoys to Sevastopol follow an east-west course about 20-50 miles south of Cape Sarich till they are west of the longitude of Cape Khersonese, when they alter to a northerly course for Sevastopol. We are therefore changing the midget submarine-reconnaissance line from $34^{\circ} 0' E, 44^{\circ} 10' N$ to $34^{\circ} 0' E, 43^{\circ} N$, i.e. perpendicular to the enemy's course. Commander Lambelli has received appropriate instructions.

1940 Italian E-boats IAS 570 and 573 put out from Yalta to Cape Khersonese to form a patrol line south of the cape.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported renewed air attacks on Simferopol, Yalta, Genichesk and Eupatoria. In Yalta Italian E-boat IAS 572 was damaged by splinters and will be non-operational until further notice.

The following radiogram was received from Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force in reply to yesterday's request regarding restricted anti-submarine measures - see War Diary 10 June:

CONFIDENTIAL

12 June 1942

"Re Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. 810 A Op.:

As only planes belonging to Air Commander, South are concerned in air reconnaissance and operations in the areas outside the desired restricted zone, I have discussed the matter with Air Commander, South who has agreed to your wishes."

This means that the matter is settled as requested.

Readiness:

Naval ferry barge No. 143 non-operational - starboard engine damaged. Length of non-operational period to be reported later.

Italian E-boat IAS 572 non-operational. Length of non-operational period to be reported later.

Land Situation:

On the northern sector of the Sevastopol front the enemy is throwing in strong forces in an effort to drive back our wedge. The enemy attacks are being repulsed. We are attacking only on narrow sectors and have gained a small amount of territory. Similar reports from the eastern and southern fronts. No special reports from the Mesemann Detachment.

13 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, fair, visibility 10 miles, sea 1, temperature 25° C.

Enemy Situation:

The Radio Intercept Service noted a general decrease in enemy Fleet movements. Of the large vessels only cruiser E was detected in the northeastern Black Sea, otherwise there were only a few destroyers and submarines at sea. At about 0420 the Air Force reported a cruiser and a destroyer 47 miles south of Cape Serich, course 150°, high speed. Possibly it is the same cruiser which was sighted yesterday at the same place making for Sevastopol. On both occasions she was accompanied by a destroyer and proceeding at high speed. She put in during daylight and must have put out soon after our E-boats had left their positions.

Obviously the enemy knows how to make good use of the undisturbed opportunities for entering and leaving Sevastopol - a fact which has been noted on previous occasions.

According to air reconnaissance, almost the whole of the enemy Fleet is in the main harbors with steam up (presumably only one engine in operation). The Air Force also reported movement of small craft off Taman Peninsula under cover of heavy smoke screens.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

CONFIDENTIAL

13 June 1942

2200 Two Bulgarian E-boats left Varna for the south on night anti-submarine operations in the coastal area as far as Varna.

Rumanian Area:

0400 E-boats S 27 and S 40 left Sulina for Constantza where they put in at 0800.

1950 Italian tankers "Celeno" and "Albaro" left Constantza on passage to the Bosporus with destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Regele Ferdinand".

South Russian Area:

0600 The groups of motor minesweepers (2A) and (FR) and 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla left to continue sweeping in Odessa Bay.

At about 0945 motor minesweeper Ri 56 sighted an enemy submarine in 46° 18.6' N, 30° 46.9' E. 25 depth charges were dropped on the submerged boat and machine-gunfire from a C 30 gun directed at her periscope. No visible success. The hydrophone pursuit was without result.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191, escorted by 3 naval ferry barges, swept the route off Odessa without result. Naval ferry barges Nos. 133 and 134 are standing by steamer "Ardeal" as anti-submarine protection.

Naval Group South ordered an inquiry as to whether the gap in shipping traffic caused by the anti-submarine measures in Odessa Bay could be bridged by naval ferry barges. The result of the inquiry was reported to Group South in the following radiogram:

"Ref your Op. 3415 Geheim:

The naval ferry barges are urgently required for such tasks as anti-submarine protection for "Ardeal", anti-submarine measures in Odessa Bay, supplies for 1st E-Boat Flotilla and Italian E-Boat Flotilla, searching of routes etc. According to information from Chief Quartermaster, Black Sea there are no urgent supply tasks at the moment.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 925 A Op."

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported shelling of Irganog from the sea on the afternoon of 11 June. Three vessels were observed at the mouth of the Don; they turned off on being fired at by our guns.

Air attack on Berdyansk. Three bombs on the northeastern part of the town. No damage reported.

Several air attacks on Mariupol on 12 and 13 June. No damage to naval installations.

Crimea:

13 June 1942

0730 E-boats S 28, S 72 and S 102 put in to Ak Mechet from their operation in the Cape Sarich area (see War Diary 12 June 0730). Apart from patrol vessels, no enemy naval forces or supply ships were encountered.

1st E-Boat Flotilla reported their plans as follows:

"3 boats will be on operations south of Cape Sarich during the night of 13/14 June."

At about 0500 Italian E-boats MS 570 and 573 and 4 motor boats returned to Yalta from their operational area off Cape Khersonese and reported as follows:

"At about 0100 some 2 miles west of Cape Khersonese a motor boat fired from 400 meters at a large vessel with 2 funnels, which was proceeding towards Sevastopol with strong escort. The motor boat could not wait to see the result because escorting Russian M.T.B.s took up the pursuit immediately. Two explosions: presumably there must have been hits. The Italian E-boats and 3 other motor boats had no contact with the enemy."

The Air Force did not discover any wreckage when they searched the place where the vessel was allegedly torpedoed and the sea area round Cape Khersonese.

Following air reconnaissance, Naval Liaison Officer to Air Commander, South reported that at about 0350 a large freighter was towed into the south bay at Sevastopol. At 0355 a Ju 88 dropped 2 bombs (type SC 500) on the freighter. The ship exploded and disappeared after a few moments. Presumably this damaged ship, finally sunk by the Air Force, was the same one which was torpedoed by the Italian motor boat.

Of the 3 Italian midget submarines in the reconnaissance line off Cape Sarich, CB 3 reported an unsuccessful attack with 2 torpedoes on a heavy cruiser. At 1350 the submarine put in to Yalta to take in more torpedoes.

In view of the constant air raids on Yalta, which have repeatedly caused damage to the Italian naval forces lying there, it seems advisable to distribute these forces among various harbors. Theodosia might possibly be considered as a further operational base on the south coast of the Crimea. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was informed in the following radiogram:

"Owing to repeated air raids on Yalta, I am planning to disperse the Italian forces.

Report by return if and when Theodosia can be ready as a base for Italian E-boats or midget submarines. Presume that the wrecks in the harbor have been marked and the approach route searched for moored mines.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 921 A Op."

13 June 1942

At 0300, according to a report from Naval Port Commander, Yalta, an enemy M.T.B. fired torpedoes through the harbor barrage from a range of 1,000 meters. Italian midget submarine CB 5 was sunk. No loss of life. On being fired on the M.T.B. hid herself in a smoke screen and made off. Battery Stenzel reported hits on the M.T.B. and at 0518 the battery sighted a periscope. When they opened fire, the submarine lowered her periscope and made off in a southeasterly direction.

1000 Italian midget submarine CB 6 put out to operate against the enemy submarine off Yalta. She has orders to put in again at 0500 on 14 June.

2025 Italian E-boats IIS 570 and 573 left Yalta for anti-submarine operations between the meridians of Cape Kikineiz and Cape Agn Dagh.

Once the Russians had discovered that Italian midget submarines and E-boats were in Yalta, an M.T.B. attack was to be expected. Last night's attack was carried out as a combined air and M.T.B. attack (similar to St. Nazaire).

The protective harbor barrage consisting of 4 rows of torpedo nets (see War Diary 2 June) has not yet been laid as the material is not yet to hand. Presumably CB 5 must have been lying at a berth which was protected against torpedoes fired from outside the harbor. The following radiogram instructed Naval Shore Commander, Crimea to get ready some improvised form of protection until the net material arrived:

- "1. Where was CB 5 when she was torpedoed?
2. Investigate and report by return on the following:
 - a. Whether the harbor entrance and berths at Yalta could meanwhile be given an improvised form of protection against torpedoes by means of sheets of iron hanging from barges, boats or rafts.
 - b. Whether Italian E-boats and midget submarines could be placed at the north end of the mole where there is not much chance of success for long-range torpedo shots.
3. Expect further combined air and M.T.B. attacks.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdes. 950 A Op."

Net Barrage Formation has been requested to take all possible steps to get the nets here as soon as possible.

Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla has been instructed about the combined air and M.T.B. attack on Yalta, as the enemy will probably make similar attacks on the harbor at Ak Mechet, as soon as they have recognized that it is occupied.

1st E-Boat Flotilla has been ordered to go to Skadovsk after their next operation if the berths in Ak Mechet do not give any protection against torpedo attacks from the sea.

13 June 1942

During the night of 12/13 June, there were air raids on Simferopol, Yalta, Kerch and Genichesk. Kerch was also shelled by enemy artillery on the east coast of Kerch Strait on the morning of 13 June. Naval Radio Station, Kerch was out of action from 0530 to 0645. Two men belonging to the station were killed and 1 was badly wounded when a bomb landed nearby.

Otherwise no damage to naval installations.

Readiness:

"Regina Maria" operational.

"Delfinul" non-operational.

Torpedoboot "Smcul" operational with limitations.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported that heavy fighting was continuing with only small territorial gains.

Meschmann Detachment also reported heavy fighting on the Balaklava front. The attack is progressing slowly.

14 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

W winds, force 1, cloudy, visibility 12 miles, sea 1, temperature 22° C.

Enemy Situation:

Generally slight fleet activity. One submarine was detected in the western Black Sea as far as the Crimea about 60 miles south of Theodosia at 0900, while 1 destroyer was intercepted in the northeastern Black Sea. About 0800 cruiser E was in the Ghelenjik area. She spent the whole day cruising off the Caucasus coast, but no exact position could be determined. Cruiser D has been at sea since morning and is now probably in the Datum area.

Submarines detected: 6 in unidentified positions.

The main body of the enemy naval forces seems to be still in the bases.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

0200 Two Bulgarian E-boats put in to Zarebo from anti-submarine operations - see War Diary 13 June. No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

A fierce storm in the evening caused considerable damage to the communications lines between E force and Constantza and Bucharest. Until further notice only telephones can be used to reach Constantza.

14 June 1942

- 0725 Naval ferry barges Nos. 122 and 135 put out from Constantza for Ak Mechet with equipment etc. for the Italian naval forces. Motor minesweeper FR 1 accompanied them as far as Sulina.
- 1000 "Donalus" and motor minesweepers FR 3 and 9 put in to Bugaz from Odessa.

South Russian Area:

Minesweeping in Odessa Bay was continued by the groups of motor minesweepers (M) and (FR) of Danube Flotilla and 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla.

Two explosive floats appeared in the sea in 46° 18.2' N, 30° 35.2' E. They were shipped and sunk.(?) Otherwise no mines were swept. Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 escorted by 3 naval ferry barges swept the route between Sansica and Carlonia 7 time without result. Naval ferry barges Nos. 128, 138 and 1/4 provided anti-submarine protection for "Urdeal".

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported a small-scale landing attempt southeast of Mariupol about 2200, also several landing attempts near Ursuf(?) (between Berdyansk and Mariupol). No further details were given.

Mariupol harbor was bombed on the night of 13/14 June. No damage reported.

Crimea:

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported further air attacks on Simferopol, Genchesk and Yalta. A lighter was sunk in Yalta and the H.Q. of the Coastian Naval Detachment was badly damaged.

- 0615 S 28, 72 and 102 returned to Ak Mechet without incident from their operations during the night of 13/14 June.

The boats are to operate in the same area again tonight and then put in to Constantza to refuel. The damaged E-boat S 26, will join the boats as they return from the operational area to Constantza.

- 0905 Italian midget submarines CB 1 and 2 put in to Yalta from the reconnaissance line. No incidents.

Supplementary report on CB 3's attack on the heavy cruiser on the night of 12/13 June (see War Diary 13 June):

The attack took place at 0400 13 miles from Cape Svirich and bearing 190°. The cruiser was of the "Kisoo" class and was steering south. Two torpedoes were fired from a distance of 1,200 meters. Both sank shortly after firing.(?) A flotilla leader of the "Tschkert" class was proceeding towards the cruiser about 4,000 meters ahead.

14 June 1942

- 1200 Italian midget submarines CB 3 and 4 put out for the reconnaissance line in accordance with Admiral Black Sea Op. Gkdos 830 A Op - see War Diary 12 June.
- 0340 Italian E-boats ILS 570 and 573 put in to Yalta after uneventful anti-submarine operations.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported the following on the M.F.B. attack on Yalta harbor on the night of 12/13 June:

"Joint action at dawn just as our own boats were returning. First an air attack in which bombs landed in and off the harbor area developing clouds of smoke. The look out guard found it hard to see. While continued engine noises seemed to indicate another plane, an E-boat put out along the approach route of the expected boats(?). Smoke screen after the last approach. Torpedoes had a very shallow setting.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea F Gkdos
724 Nafn"

In answer to my radiogram of 13 June concerning harbor defense at Yalta against M.F.B. attacks (see War Diary 13 June), Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported:

"Italian boats were lying near the mole to avoid torpedoes. First air attack showed that this was impossible. Planes used the mole as a target, laid parallel rows of bombs and immediately scored hits. The only protection is the scattering of the vessels over the harbor. The places for the Italians have been chosen: 2 Italian midget submarines about 40 meters to the right and left behind the harbor lighter, CB 5 nearer the shore. The lighter was considered adequate. The Italians thought that their 2-meter draft gave complete protection against torpedoes. The lighter was sunk early this morning after air raid. A fishing vessel will replace the lighter and should have a draft of up to 2 meters. It is also intended to make a boom of attached iron garden railings about 2.2 meters deep. 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns to be brought.

F Gkdos 716 Nafn"

Hence Italian midget submarine CB 5 was not at the mole which was protected from torpedoes from outside the harbor, but offshore in the harbor. This place was particularly remote from any torpedoes (?),

Despite this incident, the scattering of the boats over the harbor as protection against night air attacks is not justified. The measures taken by Naval Shore Commander, Crimea to protect the harbor are definitely inadequate. However, until the anti-torpedo nets arrive I shall have to be satisfied with these temporary measures.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea pointed out that the assemblies of small vessels to be seen from the aerial photographs in Yeisk, Akhtari and Temriuk - each suitable to carry 2,000-3,000 men -

14 June 1942

were probable indications of enemy landing intentions in the Sea of Azov or on Kerch Peninsula. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was therefore ordered in the following radiogram to speed up the laying of the protective minefields in Kerch Strait:

"According air reconnaissance and radio intercept reports, landings are to be expected on Kerch Peninsula. Speed up the laying of the minefields prescribed in Admiral Black Sea Op. Ekdos A Op 225 and report probable date of completion.

Query: Have preparations been made to block Kerch Strait at short notice?

Admiral Black Sea Op. Ekdos 977 A Op."

Iron Gates: On 13 June, "Alzir" patrolled from Moldova through Kissilievo Arm. "Tronje" checked the Milanovt area on the morning of 14 June. No incidents.

Land Situation:

No situation report has yet been received from 11th Army H.Q.

15 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No report reached us owing to the breakdown of communications (see War Diary 16 June).

Enemy Situation:

Fleet activity still slight. Only a few vessels are at sea. Submarine activity has also decreased.

According to a report from 11th Naval D/F Station, Constantza, cruiser 3 has been called by 3 radio stations since noon without result.

Air reconnaissance sighted a probable heavy cruiser and a destroyer, course 150°, 80 miles south of Sevastopol at 0525. This may have been cruiser E. She could have put in to Sevastopol just before darkness, leaving again in the following morning shortly after dawn. If so, she must have maintained radio silence. However, it is more likely that the air observer over estimated the size of the vessel. It is possible(?) that warships are being used as fast troop and ammunition transports.

The main body of the naval forces is according to aerial photographs in the principal harbors.

Naval Liaison Officer to Air Commander, South reported that evaluation of aerial photographs taken after the Kerch offensive showed no change in the tonnage in the Sea of Azov. No gunboats were identified.

Own Situation:

Rumanian Area:

15 June 1942

0400 A group of motor minesweepers (RA) and 7 motor minesweepers (FR) of Danube Flotilla put out from Bugaz to continue the minesweeping assignment in Odessa Bay. The motor minesweepers (FR) had to break off operations because of the weather and put in to Bugaz at 1350.

The other minesweepers continued, sweeping 4 Russian explosive floats near the eastern limit of their operational area in 46° 15.9' N, 30° 54.3' E and 5 Russian explosive floats in 46° 17.8' N, 30° 56.3' E. All these floats were detonated.

0430 Naval ferry barges Nos. 122 and 135 which were carrying equipment for the Italian naval forces, put in to Bugaz because of the weather. They intend to proceed to Ak Mechet on 16 June.

0540 Destroyers "Regina Maria" and "Regele Ferdinand" put in to Constantza after escorting the Italian tankers "Celeno" and "Albaro" to the Bosphorus as scheduled.

1020 E-boats S 28, 72 and 102 put in to Constantza from their operations in the area south of Cape Sarich on the night of 14/15 June. The damaged E-boat, S 26, put in at the same time. She was picked up in grid square 5155 at 0500 by the boats returning from the operational area.

1200 Naval ferry barges Nos. 121, 126 and which put out from Sulina at 0400 put in to Bugaz because of the weather. The 3 barges are taking depth charges and equipment to Odessa for Danube Flotilla and 1st Special Duties Flotilla.

South Russian Area:

Group Lex comprising naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 completed the transfer of torpedoes to Ochakov for 1st E-Boat Flotilla. The barges will put out for Ak Mechet towing tanker "Elbe 5" on 16 June.

On the night of 15/16 June, a few enemy planes penetrated to Mariupol and dropped some bombs. No damage.

Crinea:

Naval Shore Commander, Crinea reported that at 2319 on 14 June 2 Russian M.T.B.s were attacked by our artillery, light anti-aircraft guns and machine-guns. No German losses.

The Italian E-boats were again unsuccessful on their operation from Yalta. No enemy naval forces or convoys were sighted.

1235 Italian midget submarine CB 3 torpedoes and sank an enemy submarine 40 miles south of Cape Sarich. In accordance with radiogram 1714/15/5, Italian Naval Command reported that CB 3 had sighted a dead man in a life-belt near the scene of the action. The sinking can therefore be regarded as certain.

Italian midget submarines CB 3 and 4 will occupy a patrol line tonight 20 miles south of Cape Aitodov. They have orders to put in to Yalta on the morning of 16 June.

15 June 1942

2030 Italian E-boats MS 571 and 573 put out from Yalta on anti-submarine operations 5 miles south and 5 miles east of Cape Mitodov. They are to return at 0400 on 16 June.

Yalta, Eupatoria, Ak Mechet and Gonichesk were again raided during the night of 14/15 June. Ak Burnu and Kerch were also shelled by enemy artillery on the east coast of Kerch Strait. No damage reported.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported in answer to Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos 977 A Op. (see War Diary 14 June) that he planned to lay the minefields off the petroleum harbor at Kerch and off Gosnetsavod iron works on 16 June.

Land Situation:

According to a report from Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q., the attack on Sevastopol is progressing in the north and south. Many important defense installations have been broken up. The enemy is still defending stubbornly.

(signed)

16 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

ENE winds, force 1, visibility 12 miles, sea 1, temperature 13° C.

Enemy Situation:

Slight activity of the Fleet continued. At 1420 the cruiser E accompanied by a destroyer was 100-110 miles southwest of Novorossisk, course probably northeast. With reservations her route might be drawn out as follows: at 0525 about 75 miles south of Cape Serich, course 150°, and at 1420 as mentioned above; at 1705 air reconnaissance reported two vessels, probably light cruisers, 60 miles southwest of Novorossisk, course 065°.

Probably these were again cruiser E and the destroyer. At 1745 a convoy, consisting of 1 tanker of 7,000 tons and 3 escort vessels, was sighted at 1745 55 miles southwest of Sukdun, course 290°.

At about 0600 a Turkish steamer of a maximum 3,000 tons was sighted off Cape Sinope Burun, course 300°. The main body of the enemy naval forces is still lying in the bases.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Naval Special Command; Varna reported that at 0745 on 16 June 1 submarine was sighted, attacked and sunk by planes in 42° 52' N, 28° 15' E. Bulgarian E-boats have left Zarebo for the place of sinking.

Rumanian Area:

I am giving up my original plan for further operations off Sevastopol today by the 3 E-boats S 28, S 72 and 102 which returned from their operation to Constantza on 15 June and the two new boats S 27 and S 40 which recently joined the Flotilla. The crews of the first three boats have been out on operations every day since 9 June and urgently require a rest day. I shall not send the two new boats out, as 1) an operation by the 5 boats altogether seems to me more promising, 2) the commanders of the new boats are not yet familiar with the conditions off Sevastopol and in Ark Mechet and the period of preparation allowed them was very short.

I am planning to send out the 5 boats from Constantza at noon on 17 June so that they can operate against supply traffic to Sevastopol on the night of 17/18 June.

South Russian area:

Minesweeping in Odessa Bay was continued. No mines swept. Mine-exploding vessel No. 191, escorted by 3 naval ferry barges, searched the route from Sanshika to Carolina. No mines swept.

Minesweeping and searching of the route will be continued on 17 June by groups of motor minesweepers (FR) and (RL); 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla and mine-exploding vessel No. 191.

16 June 1942

Crinca:

As we cannot yet foresee the capture of Sevastopol, Ak Mechet must remain the operational base for the E-boats. The E-boat berths in Ak Mechet are not safe against torpedo attack from outside the harbor. The laying of a torpedo net is therefore urgently required. The following teletype was therefore sent to Naval Group South and Net Barrage Formation requesting the preparation of the net material:

"Anti-torpedo net urgently required for the protection of the E-boat operational base at Ak Mechet.

For four rows of net, 1,000 meters of netting will be required. Depth of water 6 meters. Protective barrage for Ak Mechet takes priority over Balaklava. Therefore the material for Balaklava requested in Admiral Black Sea Gkdos 562 A Op should if necessary be diverted to Ak Mechet.

Send material to Simferopol.

Please request priority rail transport and report probable date of dispatch.

Admiral Black Sea Op Gkdos. 1034 A Op."

In the light of our experiences in Yalta, until such time as the protective barrage is laid the boats of 1st E-boat Flotilla are not to take the risk of spending the night in Ak Mechet. 1st E-boat Flotilla has therefore been ordered that on the nights when the boats are not out on operations they are to proceed to Skadevsk.

"On account of the danger to the E-boats in Ak Mechet from night torpedo attack, until such time as the anti-torpedo barrage is laid the E-boats will leave Ak Mechet before dark and proceed to Skadevsk, if they are not to operate on that particular night.

Admiral. Black Sea Op. Gkdos. 1032 A Op".

- 0335 Italian E-boats MAS 571 and 573 returned to Yalta from their anti-submarine operations south of Cape Mitodor which were without incident.
- 0800 Italian midget submarine CB 3 returned from a successful operation- 1 Russian submarine sunk.
- 1225 Italian midget submarine CB 4 returned. At 1100 on 15 June and at 0540 on 16 June, she sighted 1 enemy submarine without being able to attack.
- 1800 Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 2 put out for a patrol line between 43° 25' N, 43° 50' N and 33° 30' E; 33° 45' E. Boats have orders to return to Yalta early on 18 June.
- 1945 Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 571 left Yalta for a waiting position west of Cape Kheronese.

16 June 1942

During the night of 15/16 June a protective minefield of 31 FMB mines was laid off the petroleum harbor at Kerch and a minefield of 20 FMB mines off the Gosnetsavoda iron works. (See War Diary 25 May Gkdos Op 225 A Op.) According to a message from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea, preparations are also being made for quick laying of a minefield outside Kerch harbor.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Marastesti" non-operational from 17 June probably until 19 June on account of damage to her rudder.

Land Situation:

Heavy fighting continues before Sevastopol. Enemy attacks were repulsed and our attacks gained fresh ground.

The Mesemann Detachment also reported that the attack was advancing.

17 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, overcast, rain, visibility 15 km, sea 1, temperature 19° C.

Enemy Situation:

The slight activity of enemy naval forces continued:

Cruiser B was observed by Radio Intercept Service first in the northeastern, then in the central Black Sea; no exact position given.

Moderately lively activity of small units, such as patrol vessel and possibly also M.T.B.s off Sevastopol.

Submarines located: 2 in the sea area off Sevastopol and a third for which no position was given.

There are still a few small vessels at sea.

At 1645 air reconnaissance discovered a convoy consisting of 1 destroyer, 5 patrol vessels and 1 freighter of about 4,000 tons, 47 miles south of Cape Sarich, course 350°, medium speed.

Photographic reconnaissance confirmed that the shipping in the Sea of Azov harbors remains the same as previously.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Search has been made by E-boats for pieces of wreckage of the Russian submarine reported sunk by planes off the Bulgarian coast between Varna and Burgas. The search was without result. An inquiry has therefore been sent to Naval Special Command, Varna asking what evidence they have for claiming that the attacked submarine was sunk.

17 June 1942

Rumanian Area:

- 0230 E-boat S 26 left Constantza for Sulina and then further up the Danube to Linz for repairs.
- 1230 E-boats S 27, 28, 40, 72 and 102 left for their operation in the Sevastopol sea area. Their operational orders were as follows:
- "Today at 1230 5 boats of 1st E-boat Flotilla will leave Constantza, S 102, S 27 and S 72 will operate southwest of Cape Sarich tonight. S 40 and S 28 west of Cape Khersonese.
- Leading boats will be S 102 and S 40.
- At dawn the boats will put in to Ak Kochet.
- Their next operation will be on the night of 18/19 June. Thereafter they will have a rest day in Skadovsk.

Admiral Black Sea Op Gkdos 108C A Op".

South Russian Area:

- Minesweeping in Odessa Bay in preparation for the laying of flank-ing minefields was completed on 17 June. Apart from the previously reported Russian explosive buoys - see War Diary 14 and 15 June - no mines were swept. Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 swept the route from Odessa to Sulina without result.
- 0400 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla put out from Ochakov to sweep the route from there to Skadovsk and the branch route to Ak Kochet.
- Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that photographs clearly indicate that the shipping off the northeast coast of the Sea of Azov has been moving in the direction of Arhtari. It is not yet clear whether the heavy concentration of small vessels still to be observed on the east coast of the Sea of Azov has any connection with an enemy landing attempt against the north coast - Mariupol - Berdyansk area - or against Kerch Peninsula. We must now consider the question of whether to lay the projected minefield off Kossa Dolgaya immediately. The following radiogram requested Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to examine the question:
- "In view of your report of enemy landing attempts and preparations, investigate and report whether
1. it is practicable to lay the Kossa Dolgaya minefield immediately.
 2. the necessary minelaying vessels are available.

Admiral, Black Sea Op Gkdos 1110 A Op".

Crimea:

- 1130 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 135 put in to Ak Kochet from Bugaz with guns and equipment for the German E-boats and Italian forces.

17 June 1942

- 1300 The captured Russian M.T.B. put in from Eupateria. No incidents during the passage.
- 1645 Naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 with tanker lighter "Lilbe 5" - carrying 250 tons of Diesel fuel - towed by the "Ingara" put in to Ak Mechet.
- The naval ferry barges will thus have an assured supply of torpedoes and fuel in Ak Mechet for some time.
- 0310 Italian E-boats MIS 570 and 571 put in to Yalta from their waiting position west of Cape Khersonese. No special incidents.
- 2000 Italian E-boats MIS 570 and 573 sailed from Yalta to patrol between Cape Khersonese and Cape Feolent on the night of 17/18 June.
- 2030 Three motor boats left for Cape Khersonese and 2 motor boats left
2100 for the sea area off Balaklava.

Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 2 are still on their reconnaissance patrol - see War Diary 16 June. So far there are no reports from them.

According to reports from 11th Army H.Q., we cannot expect Sevastopol to fall soon. In view of their limited engine endurance, the available operational forces - E-boats, Italian E-boats and motor boats - must be so committed that they do not all have to be released simultaneously for dock overhaul before the fall of Sevastopol.

To clear up this question I sent the following radiogram to 11th Army H.Q:

"Please inform me when you expect the fall of Sevastopol.

Information is required to arrange for the optimum commitment of the E-boats which need full overhaul after 250 engine running hours.

Admiral Black Sea Op Gkdos 1111 A op".

In reply to Admiral, Black Sea Op Gkdos 921 A Op - see War Diary of 13 June - Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported:

"Entrance to Theodosia swept. No moored mines discovered. Sweeping for aerial mines will begin in the course of the next few days. Berth for the boat prepared. Apart from a few 2 cm. guns no anti-aircraft guns obtainable. Approach course reported by our Gkdos 398 of 18 May. On request, pilot boat will be sent out to position off Cape Ili. Billets ready."

Except for minesweeping against non-contact mines, all preparations have been made at Theodosia for the arrival of the E-boats and U-boats. When the minesweeping is completed - it will begin during the next few days - it will be possible to spread out the Italian forces lying in Yalta. At present there is no effective anti-aircraft defense in Theodosia. As we must expect enemy air raids as soon as they realise that the harbor is occupied, at least one heavy anti-aircraft battery is absolutely essential. A relevant request is again being submitted.

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0400 Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that the enemy landed 1 company 1 km. east of Cape Tarkhan - north coast of Kerch Peninsula. Immediate countermeasures have almost nipped up the landing.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea further reported renewed air attacks during the night of 16/17 June on Genichesk, Theodosia and Eupatoria. No damage reported.

Readiness:

Motor minesweepers FR 4 and FR 6 non-operational, proceeding to Galatz for dock overhaul on 18 June.

Land Situation:

Our attack on the northern part of the Sevastopol front scored a decisive success today. The main bases, in particular the forts of Maxim Gorki, Molotov and Sheka were captured and the breakthrough extended up to about 3 km. from Sevastopol Bay.

Further heavy fighting off Balaklava with only slight gains of territory.

18 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

SSW winds, force 1, fair, visibility 20 km, sea 1, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

Today there was noticeably increased activity of destroyers. At 0640 in the southern half of the Black Sea 35 miles north of Ince Burun, air reconnaissance sighted flotilla leader "Taschkent" course west, high speed. About 1240 Radio Intercept Service reported "Taschkent" in air grid square 23-center, also the large destroyer "Charkov", probably on courses at first in a northerly direction, veering east towards evening and at 2100 in air grid square 73 (center).

The deeper significance and purpose of this sortie cannot be clearly recognised.

It is possible that reinforcements for Sevastopol proceeding further north require flank protection.

Three more destroyers were sighted by the Air Force at about 1800 in the northeastern sea area, course west.

There is also plenty of activity of submarines: off Sevastopol there are 9 enemy submarines and 1 unknown warship. Fog.

Finally cruiser E and about midnight cruiser D were also detected at sea in the northeastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

CONFIDENTIAL

18 June 1942

Bulgarian Area:

In reply to our query about evidence for the sinking of an enemy submarine by Bulgarian planes - see War Diary of 17 June - the following report was received from Naval Special Command, Varna: "Pieces of wreckage floated up, large patch of oil, E-boats searched for three hours without result. Photograph taken by the plane has not yet been studied".

Rumanian Area:

- 1030 Motor minesweepers FR 1 and 11 and IR 7 sailed for Constantza where they put in at 2000.
- 1900 Tug "Vartosu" with the Rumanian tanker lighter "Prinzipessa Maria", tug "Eli" and 1 paddle-steamer sailed for Bugas. Escort: Gunboats "Stihi" and "Chiculescu" and naval ferry barge No. 144.

South Russian Area: No incidents.

Crimea:

- 0600 E-boats S 102, 27, 72, 40 and 28 put in to Ak-Mechet. 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported: S 72 and 102 attacked a 1,500-ton steamer towards dusk. Three misfires through unexpected changes of course.
- 1800 E-boats S 72, 102, 40, 27 and 28 put out to the reconnaissance line 12 miles southwest of Cape Sarich. They will be drawn up in 2 groups in an east-west direction, distance apart 5 miles.

As the E-boats have orders to proceed to Skadovsk after tonight's operations - see War Diary 17 June - naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 have been ordered to sweep the route from Ak-Mechet to Skadovsk on 19 June:

"Naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 are to sweep the Ak-Mechet-Skadovsk route via 45° 59.6' N, 32° 55' E with oropesa gear. They will start at dusk on 19 June. Report execution. Return to Ak-Mechet with sweeps out on 20 June.

Admiral Black Sea Op Gkdos 1131 A Op".

- 0312 Enemy M.T.B.s attacked Yalta. They joined an Italian E-boat as she was entering Yalta. Two torpedoes were fired into the harbor. They exploded on the north quay, damaging buildings. Coastal guns shelled the M.T.B.s. One M.T.B. claimed as sunk.
- 0340 Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 573 put in to Yalta. They were south of Cape Khersonese with 5 motor boats on the night of 17/18 June. No convoys were sighted. At 0100 one Italian E-boat sighted a submarine 10 miles south of the Cape, making for Sevastopol. No opportunity to attack. In the early morning there were hard battles between the motor boats and Italian E-boats and Russian boats carrying landing troops. Two rowing boats carrying some 30 men were badly damaged and probably sunk. Seven miles south of Cape Kikeneiz a motor boat was pursued by Russian M.T.B.s for a long time. In the action the motor boat and an Italian E-boat were damaged slightly but remained operational. One officer, 1 petty officer and one sailor were wounded.

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18 June 1942

Two Italian E-boats and 4 motor boats returned to their bases early on 18 June. According to radiogram Italian E-boat Command 1058/18/66, one motor boat has not yet returned to Foros. The boat sent her last radiogram at 0830. I have requested Air Commander, South to send out planes to search for the missing boat in the Cape Khersonese area.

According to a report from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea, the last motor boat put in to Foros about 1200.

0500 Italian midget submarine CB 2 sank a Russian submarine 30 miles south of Cape Sarich. The boat put in to Yalta at 1200 on 18 June.

During the night of 17/18 June, midget submarine CB 1 was chased about 22 miles, west of Cape Khersonese and depth charges were dropped. Early on 18 June the submarine put in to Yalta undamaged.

2100 Two motor boats put out for the reconnaissance line between Cape Sarich and Foros.

2045 Three Italian E-boats MAS 570, 571 and 573 proceeded to the sea area between Cape Nikitin and Cape Aitodor to take up a patrol line about 5 miles away from the coast.

2015 Italian midget submarine CB 6 left to take up position 10 miles southeast of Yalta.

The Italian E-boats, motor boats and CB 6 have orders to return to their bases early on 19 June. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported air attacks on Cape Ili, Cape Ivan Baba and Theodosia. Some damage to buildings.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Marasesti" again operational on the evening of 18 June.

Land Situation:

The bitter fighting on the northern Sevastopol front continues and new ground has been gained. Our attack is slowly gaining ground on the Balaklava front.

11th Army H.Q. reported further lively shipping traffic between Taman and Cape Tuzla. Following the report from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine about concentrations of small vessels - see War Diary 17 June - and movements in the direction of Akhtari, we must expect further enemy landing attempts on Kerch Peninsula.

19 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

S winds, almost entirely overcast, visibility 20 km, sea 1, temperature 19° C.

Enemy Situation:

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19 June 1942

Enemy naval activity has greatly decreased.

Larger vessel - from flotilla leader upwards - were not detected, only 1-2 destroyers, apparently on their way to and from Sevastopol.

In the western Black Sea area there were some submarines, 1 M.T.B. depot ship, 1 H.T.B. and a guardboat.

Air reconnaissance spotted a row of small vessels ("boats") proceeding to the east midway between the Crimea and the Turkish coast.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Special Duties formation carried out minesweeping off Varna. No mines swept.

Rumanian Area:

Four motor minesweepers (RA) of Danube Flotilla checked route Green from Odessa to Bugaz.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 with naval ferry barge escort swept the route from Sulina to Constantza. No mines swept.

0630 Motor minesweeper FR 10 and tug "Lykurgos" with towed loop gear put in to Bugaz from Sulina.

The two tugs are now ready to check the routes etc. for non-contact mines.

0900 Tug "Vartosu" put in to Bugaz with tanker lighter "Prinzipessa Maria", tug "Eli" and 1 paddle-steamer, also naval ferry barge No. 144. Gunboats "Stihi" and "Chiculescu", which were escorting the convoy, put in to Sulina at 1400.

The paddle-steamer broke in two behind the wheel-house while on passage. The crew were rescued by naval ferry barge No. 144. While putting in to Bugaz the paddle-steamer sank; salvage attempts seem pointless.

0230 E-boat S 102 of the E-boats which left yesterday reported as follows:

"Have sunk troop transport of 3,000 tons in air grid square 5583".

The steamer was steering south. According to the statement from the E-boat commander, she was a troop transport coming from Sevastopol. She had a full cargo - probably casualties or troops being evacuated.

E-boat S 102 saw the steamer going down. Shortly after the torpedo exploded, 3 torpedoboats and 3 destroyers appeared at the place of sinking. Apart from this incident, 1st E-boat Flotilla fired the following torpedoes last night:

19 June 1942

1. S 102: 1 torpedo at a Russian destroyer,
2. S 72: 2 torpedoes at a steamer.
3. S 27: 3 torpedoes at a destroyer.

During S 72's attack on the steamer (probably the vessel later sunk by S 102), the torpedoes passed ahead and astern. The destroyers were able to evade the torpedoes, as the exceptionally strong phosphorescence showed up the impact of the torpedoes in the water and the bubble track a long way off. This factor has made E-boat attacks on recent nights much more difficult and has been the cause of our failure.

1030 S 102, 72 and 27, at 1400 S 40 and S 26 put in to Constantza.

As the flotilla has been out on operations for the past two nights, I think that a night's rest is imperative tonight.

After they have taken in fresh supplies of torpedos and the damage to the propeller of S 40 has been repaired, the flotilla will leave at noon on 20 June for further operation in the sea area off Sevastopol.

Commander Mirbelli and the other interested stations have been informed of this decision.

In the forenoon there was a conference at Eforia with C-in-C, Naval Forces, Captain Bardescu, about minelaying in Glesca Bay.

Agreement was reached on all points of the discussion:

The minefield is to be laid in 2 sections. For situation see Admiral, Black Sea op Okdos 879 Aop in War Diary 12 June. Depth setting 3 meters, average distance between the mines 50 meters, 560 UMB mines required. Mines to be carried by "Murescu" and "Dacia". Escort on passage from Constantza to Bugaz: 3 destroyers. From Bugaz and during the laying: 2 torpedo boats, a group of motor minesweepers (Ri) of Danube Flotilla, a group of motor minesweepers (FR) of Danube Flotilla - so far as operational - and 1st Special Duties Flotilla with about 5 naval ferry barges. Minesweeper escort from Bugaz onwards by 2 gunboats.

The same escort forces are ready for the return passage to Constantza.

The mines for section 1 will be taken on in Constantza, for section 2 in Odessa.

The minelaying vessels will leave on 21 June so that minefield section 1 will be laid early on 22 June, section 2 early on 23. Long-range reconnaissance, close air protection and fighter escort will be provided for the laying formation. Naval Special Duties Detachment has been directed to work out the operational orders and laying directives with these points in mind.

In the afternoon I had a conference with Captain Bardescu on operations of U-boat "Delfinul". He informed me that the U-boat will probably be operational on 22.

19 June 1942

Plans to make the U-boat's operations complementary to the operations of the German and Italian naval forces led us to decide on the following operational area for "Delfinul": Between the longitudes 34° 15' E and 35° 0' E and the latitudes 44° 0' N and 43° 0' N. Duration of the operation about 15 days.

The limitation imposed in previous operations, i.e. that the "Delfinul" is not to attack escorted vessels, will be dropped for the coming operation. I shall discuss further points concerning the operation at my tomorrow's conference with the Rumanian Naval Command.

0655 Motor fishing vessel No. 2263 struck a mine about 4 miles south of Mariupol and sank. Of the crew, 2 Ukrainians are dead and 2 seriously wounded.

As the mine situation is not clear, the transport traffic to and from Mariupol will have to be further restricted. It is already hampered by heavy enemy air activity, against which we have not always adequate fighter protection.

Naval Construction Inspectorate, Odessa reported that it will take about 6 weeks to get "Ardeal" afloat again (she is aground at present). A condition is that they succeed in making her watertight and pumping her empty.

Crimea:

0625 Italian midget submarine CB 6 returned to Yalta from her waiting position 10 miles southeast of Yalta. No special incidents.

During the early hours of the morning the Italian E-boats and motor boats returned from their reconnaissance patrol to their bases in Yalta and Foros. No special incidents.

1700 Italian midget submarine CB 6 sailed from Yalta for the waiting position south of Cape Sarich.

1300 Italian midget submarines CB 2 and CB 3 were severely damaged by bomb splinters in Yalta.

Periscopes were damaged. Repairs not possible in Yalta. Italian E-boat flotilla has therefore made plans that, after repair of minor damage to the hulls, the boats will proceed to Constantza for complete repair. Date has not yet been fixed.

During the same attack, splinters caused small leaks in the fuel tank of one of the Italian E-boats.

1945 Two Italian E-boats left Yalta to chase a submarine sighted off Cape Aitodor. The boats have orders to proceed to a reconnaissance line southwest of Cape Sarich and put in again early on 20 June.

2223 Italian E-boat MAS 571 torpedoed and sank a "Shchuka" Russian submarine. Sinking confirmed by 2 prisoners.

19 June 1942

Following radiogram received from C-in-C, Naval Group South:

"Am planning operations by light forces directly off Sevastopol. Difficult situation there means that the risk must be taken. Report immediately whether you have any more precise and up-to-date information on the mine situation. Urgent."

In reply I sent the following radiogram to Naval Group South:

"Ref. your radiogram 2358/18/77.

I have no more precise and up-to-date information on the mine situation off Sevastopol. Our information to date is scanty and makes no claim to accuracy.

Previous commitment of light forces has brought good results. Every day they engage the enemy successfully. In view of the unknown mine situation off Sevastopol I consider that the most practical course is to continue these operations, particularly as there will probably be strong patrols off the harbor, which will reduce the possibilities of success.

Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos 1178"

Reasons: With the exception of a torpedo hit on an assault boat off Cape Khersonese, the attacks and successes against Russian supply ships and escort forces have all been carried out in the sea area south of Cape Sarich.

Operations off Sevastopol Bay seem to me impracticable for the following reasons:

- 1) The unknown mine situation, which may cause losses - in view of the limited number of forces available these must be avoided as far as possible.
- 2) Strong patrols off Sevastopol harbor. The appearance of the E-boats would soon be reported and they would not have a chance to attack.
- 3) The area is too restricted to allow the E-boats to give chase if their first attack does not succeed.
- 4) The boats will be interfered with by searchlights and perhaps bombarded by shore batteries.
- 5) Combined operations by Italian E-boats and assault boats with German E-boats in a limited area would lead to confusion which would endanger our own boats.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine sent the following reply to Admiral, Black Sea Op Gkdos 1110 Aop - see War Diary 17 June - re. the flanking minefield in Dolgaya Bay:

"Ref. radiogram Admiral Black Sea op Gkdos 1110 Aop:

19 June 1942

1. The main purpose of the minefield - flank protection for crossing of our troops - will only be achieved if the mines are laid immediately before the operation. The operation is not yet planned.
2. Minefield does not seem to have any promise of success against a Russian landing.
3. As the area in question is now being watched day and night by both air and naval patrols, it is impossible to lay the mines unnoticed by the enemy. Our available forces are not sufficient to provide the necessary escorts and patrols.
4. Tug "Solomhola" and 2 lighters are available as improvised mine-layers. Maximum towing speed about 4 knots.
5. I suggest that for the present we do not lay the mines.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, Gkdos. Chfs. 500/42"

Bearing para 3) in mind, I have decided not to lay the minefield at present.

Readiness:

Motor minesweeper FR 1 temporarily non-operational.

"Regina Maria" operational on the evening of 19 June.

Bulgarian E-boat No. 2 operational, No. 3 non-operational until 27 June.

Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 non-operational.

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. reported that the fighting on the northern Sevastopol front is continuing around the positions still in enemy hands.

20 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, almost entirely overcast, fog within field of vision, visibility at sea 1 km. on shore 2 km., sea 1, temperature 20° C.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of small vessels increased considerably. Seven submarines were at sea in the Novorossisk area along, also a number of minesweepers, M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers. Further submarines and destroyers are at sea, position unknown.

No important movements of shipping off Sevastopol.

Study of the aerial photographs of Novorossisk by Air Commander, South reveals a concentration of M.T.B.s. Altogether 54 motor boats were recognised.

20 June 1942

For the first time a camouflaged merchant ship (zebra stripes) was observed in Novorossisk, apparently a tanker of 2-3,000 tons.

Finally cruiser D was at sea, apparently proceeding south along the Caucasus coast, while flotilla leader "Taschkent" reached the north-eastern sea area from Poti about midnight.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

Naval Group South informed me that tanker "Dresden" left the Piraeus for Constantza on 13 June. According to Group South, she entered the Dardanelles today.

Although the tanker is only a small vessel of 130 tons, in view of the submarine situation close to the Turkish-Bulgarian coast, I intend to provide escorts for her passage from the Bosphorus to Constantza. Bulgarian forces will accompany her up to the Bulgarian-Rumanian frontier where Rumanian vessels will take over.

The following orders were issued to Naval Special Duties Detachment and Naval Special Command, Varna:

"Further to my Gkdos 1201 Aop:

- 1) Tanker "Dresden" will await orders for passage to Constantza at the Bosphorus.
- 2) Escorts will be provided by Naval Special Duties Detachment:
 - a) Bulgarian vessels from the Bosphorus to the Bulgarian-Rumanian frontier.
 - b) Forces of Naval Special Duties Detachment from the frontier to Constantza.
- 3) Naval Special Duties Detachment will give orders to tanker "Dresden" for time of sailing, rendezvous etc. via Group South.
- 4) In view of the delay in issuing orders, sailing will not be before 23 June.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos 1243 Aop"

Motor minesweepers FR 1 and 11 carried out a check sweep from Sulina to St. George estuary. No mines swept.

1818 FR 1 and FR 11 were attacked with torpedo by a submarine in 44° 53' N, 29° 45' E. Misfire. Gunboats "Stihi" and "Chiculăscu" were immediately sent out from Sulina on a submarine chase. They put in again at 2345 without result.

20 June 1942

This attack again gives proof of the systematic way in which enemy submarine attacks are directed against our supply route from Constantza to Nikolaiev. Our convoys must therefore be given every possible protection against submarine attacks. In view of our lack of other suitable escort forces, I find myself compelled to use the naval ferry barges for this purpose. Thus these barges will not be available for transport work for some time to come.

2015 Gunboat "Dumitrescu" left Constantza for Sulina.

1st E-boat Flotilla again operational today at noon. Following the directives from C-in-C, Naval Group South about operations by light forces off Sevastopol (see War Diary 19 June), I have decided to send 2 boats on operations directly off Cape Khersonese tonight. The 3 other boats will proceed to their former operational area 10 miles southwest of Cape Sarich.

Air Commander, South, Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q., Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force and Commander Himbelli were informed about the E-boat operations in the following priority radiogram:

"At 1230 Commander, 1st E-boat Flotilla will leave Constantza with S 27, 28, 40, 72 and 102 for the Sevastopol operational area.

During the night of 20/21 June, 2 boats will be 5 miles west of Cape Khersonese, 3 boats 10 miles southwest of Cape Sarich.

They will put in to Ak Mechet early on 21.

Admiral, Black Sea Op. Gkdos 1223 Aop"

South Russian Area: No incidents.

Crimea:

1400 After unloading gear, arms etc. for 1st E-boat Flotilla and the Italian forces, naval ferry barges Nos. 122 and 135 sailed from Ak Mechet for Bugaz; on account of unfavorable weather the two naval ferry barges had to put in to Skadovsk at 2230.

2350 After sweeping the route from Ak Mechet to Skadovsk in both directions without incident, naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 put in to Ak Mechet.

Italian E-Boat Command sent the following supplementary report on the sinking of the Russian "Shchuka" submarine (see War Diary 19 June, 2223):

"One of the two Italian E-boats (MAS 571), which was hunting the submarine located off Cape Aitodor, attacked the submarine with 2 torpedoes at about 2200 and sank her. The boat was hit beneath the conning tower and went down. One electrician and 1 engineer were saved. 33 men of the submarine's crew lost their lives."

The sinking took place on a line bearing 120° from Yalta, 38 miles out to sea.

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20 June 1942

1555 Italian midget submarine CB 4 left Yalta for reconnaissance patrol 45 miles south of Cape Sarich with orders to return to Yalta early on 22 June.

On account of their need of repair, the Italian E-boats and motor boats will not go out on operations today. Exception will be MAS 571 which will leave at 2130 for anti-submarine operations in the sea area off Yalta.

Italian E-boat Flotilla is planning to send the two midget submarines CB 2 and CB 3 which were damaged by bomb splinters (see War Diary 19 June, 1300) from Yalta to Constantza on 21 June. I gave my consent and sent further directives to Italian E-boat Flotilla by the following radiogram:

"In reply to Italian E-boat Flotilla 193 Gkdos:

- 1) Agree to your plans.
- 2) Expect to meet our forces as follows:
 - a) On passage from Yalta to Tuzsila-Rumanian U-boat "Delfinul" leaving for the east.
 - b) Own forces between Yalta and Constantza.
- 3) Inform Italian midget submarines CB 2 and CB 3 that they are not to proceed south of 43° 30' N.
- 4) Inform Air Commander, South and Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force promptly about sailing time, course and speed.
- 5) Report sailing here.

Admiral, Black Sea Op Gkdos 1242 Aop".

In reply to my enquiry Gkdos 1111 Aop (See War Diary 17 June), Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. informed me that Sevastopol will probably fall in about ten days' time.

I have therefore decided that until the fall of Sevastopol the light forces will continue forced operations in their previous operational area between Cape Khersonese and Cape Sarich and south of Cape Sarich.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea informed me that 11th Army H.Q. is most anxious that minefields should be laid in Kerch Strait. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was instructed by Admiral, Black Sea Op Gkdos 1218 Aop to lay a minefield off Kamish Burun. As I am planning to use Kamish Burun as the operational base for light forces, Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was given additional instructions to leave a gap (to be marked) for vessels of up to 4 meters draft. When this minefield has been laid, the main points on Kerch Strait used for landing heavy equipment (petroleum harbor at Kerch, Gosmetsavoda iron works and Kamish Burun) will all be protected by minefields. We have made preparations for immediate laying of a minefield outside the main harbor at Kerch.

20 June 1942

Land Situation:

11th Army H.Q. gained further successes in the face of continuing heavy resistance on the northern Sevastopol front.

No real changes in the situation on the other parts of the front.

21 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Light winds, fair to cloudy, visibility around 15 miles.

Enemy Situation:

Enemy naval forces were again little in evidence.

According to a radio intercept report, there were no naval forces in the western Black Sea and the Crimean area apart from a few patrol vessels off Sevastopol.

Only the radar station at Alupka detected some submarines about 40 km. off within the critical bearing range of 159° to 206° between 1100 and 1300.

Cruiser D, flotilla leader "Taschkert" and cruiser A were intercepted in the eastern Black Sea.

Cruiser D and the flotilla leader were proceeding from north to south and the other cruiser was proceeding north from Batum. A formation of 2 destroyers and 3 patrol vessels probably from Novorossisk made for a point some 160 miles west of Sukhum, presumably to pick up a convoy.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Naval Special Command, Varna reported in answer to my query that the photographs taken during the sinking of a Russian submarine by Bulgarian planes (See War Diary 18 June) had given no confirmation. Thus we have no proof of the sinking either as a result of the searches of the E-boats or in the evidence of the photographs.

Rumanian Area:

The preparations for the laying of the flanking minefields in Odessa Bay have been concluded. The mine-carriers have taken over the mines for section 1 in Constantza. The laying courses and approach and return routes from route Green to the minefield sections were again checked today for moored mines.

However, the sailing of the minelaying formation scheduled for 1600 must be postponed for 24 hours because of the weather.

South Russian Area:

21 June 1942

1315 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla put in to Skalovsk via Tendra after checking the route from Ochakov. No mines swept.

Crimea:

Naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 put in to Ak Kochet from Skalovsk in the morning. Route checked without result.

0530 E-boats S 27, 28, 40, 72 and 102 put in to Ak Kochet, S 72, 40 and 27 operated unsuccessfully against a submarine which surfaced for a short time in grid square 5543. No shipping traffic was encountered by these boats south of Cape Sarich or by the second group of Cape Khersonese.

1645 The boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ak Kochet to operate in 2 groups against Russian Sevastopol traffic in the same area as on the previous night.

0500 Italian midvet submarine CB 6 put in to Yalta from her waiting position south of Cape Sarich. No enemy forces were sighted.

1000 One Italian E-boat and 2 motor boats put out from Yalta and Ferros to search for a submarine sighted off Cape Mitodor. They dropped depth charges at the probable submerging position without result and then put in to the same ports again in the afternoon.

1600 Italian midvet submarines CB 2 and CB 3 put out from Yalta for Constantza for repair of the damage caused by the air attack (see War Diary 20 June). They have the following routing:
Via $45^{\circ} 30' N$, $34^{\circ} 10' E$ to $43^{\circ} 30' N$, $33^{\circ} 40' E$ to $43^{\circ} 56' N$, $28^{\circ} 52' 45'' E$. Speed 5 knots.

2015 Italian E-boats M.S 571 and 572 put out from Yalta for the operational area between Cape Sarich and Kherson. There were also 3 motor boats operating in the same area.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported 2 air raids on Eupatoria and 4 on Yalta during the night of 20/21 June. The south dockyard at Kerch was also shelled from the eastern shore of Kerch Strait. No damage.

Readiness:

Italian E-boat M.S S 72 operational.

22 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No report received.

Enemy Situation:

Activity of small naval vessels had again decreased since 20 June. According to a radio intercept report, there were no surface forces or submarines in the western Black Sea apart from a few small vessels in the Sevastopol area. The camouflaged merchant ship reported in Novorossisk is a tanker and, according to a report from

22 June 1942

Air Commander, has again left Novorossisk. Cruiser D probably put in to Poti or Batum on the morning of 21 June. Flotilla leader "Taschkert", according to more or less confirmatory radio intercept and air reconnaissance reports, was operating south of the Crimea. A submarine tender and 1 submarine were presumed to be at sea in unidentified positions.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 escorted by naval ferry barges checked route Green as far as the Rumanian-Bulgarian border. No mines swept.

In view of the continued bad weather and the unfavorable weather forecast, the minelaying operation off Odessa must again be postponed for 24 hours.

South Russian Area:

No incidents.

Crimea:

Five boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ik Mchet again in the morning from the Sevastopol area. The flotilla commander reported on the execution of the assignment:

"Despite a heavy swell both groups carried out their operations. E-boats S 72 and 28 attacked a northbound destroyer in grid square 5551 at 2100. One torpedo failure and some misses. The rough sea prevented exact aiming. About midnight S 102 attacked the destroyer which was then proceeding south. She too was unsuccessful as the destroyer was proceeding at 28-30 knots and it was impossible to aim accurately. S 40 lost 2 depth charges in the rough sea. All boats shipped water in the commander's cabin and the radio room. Planks were damaged in the hard operation. Sea 4-5, SE winds, force 5-6."

The plan to operate in the same area on the night of 22/23 June must be abandoned in such weather.

1st E-Boat Flotilla transferred to Skadovsk with 5 boats. They arrived at 1910.

At dawn the 2 Italian E-boats and 3 motor boats put in to Yalta again from night operations. No incidents. The execution of the assignment was hampered by the rough sea. Italian midget submarine CB 4 put in to Yalta in the afternoon from the reconnaissance line south of Cape Sarich. At 1400 on 21 June she sighted an enemy torpedo boat about 45 miles south of Cape Sarich. The enemy boat dropped 5 depth charges without result. Otherwise no enemy encounters.

22 June 1943

Commander Minbelli also reported that his vessels would be unable to operate during the night of 22/23 June because of the weather.

Readiness:

"Delfin 7" (German Special Duties Detachment, Varma) was commissioned.

Land Situation:

The attack on the northern front at Sevastopol is gaining ground in very hard fighting. On the eastern and southern fronts heavy fighting continues against particularly stubborn enemy resistance. Not much territory gained so far.

23 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 5-7, backing, cloudy, visibility about 20 miles.

Enemy Situation:

Slight activity of light naval forces continued in the Black Sea.

Flotilla leader "Taschkent" was located south of the Crimea.

Three submarines were intercepted somewhere in the western Black Sea.

According to visual reconnaissance the battleship and 1 heavy cruiser were in Poti dock at 1855 on 22 June.

Aerial photographs of Novorossisk taken by Air Commander, South at 0908 on 21 June showed the 14 M.T.B.s, 5 motor minesweepers and 46 motor boats which were reported there on 20 June.

Merchant shipping was approximately the same, being about 44,000 tons.

No change in Kerch Strait on the Sea of Azov.

Further evaluation of aerial photographs on the same day revealed 1 light cruiser, 7 M.T.B., 7 motor minesweepers, 6 minesweepers and about 24,000 tons of merchant shipping.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

Because of the continuing bad weather, the execution of the mine-laying operation off Odessa was again postponed for 24 hours.

23 June 1942

- 0845 Accompanied by Lieutenant Commander Signanna, Operations Officer and Lieutenant Commander Gounald, 4th Admiral's Staff Officer. I left Eforia by air via Odessa and Nikolaiev for Simferopol to take control of naval operations until the capture of Sevastopol and to establish close cooperation with 11th Army H.Q. and Air Commander, South. When we landed at Odessa, I reported to Commanding Admiral, Naval Group South who had arrived there on a return flight from the Crimea to Sofia. I explained my operational plans to him.
- 1400 We continued to Simferopol. There I had a discussion with the deputy commander (OBD), Nikolaiev on outstanding questions.

South Russian Area:

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that an unsuccessful landing was attempted in Melekino Bay (some 20 km. southwest of Mariupol) on the night of 22/23 June. No further details as communications were cut.

To protect the nearby Battery Yalta, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine temporarily transferred 150 of his men there and also requested a company to be sent from the nearest Army Station.

Crimea:

Because of the bad weather, no German or Italian naval forces are to operate tonight.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported an air attack on Yalta during the afternoon. About 50 bombs were dropped in the harbor area. No damage reported.

Our anti-aircraft guns were proved to be entirely ineffective.

This attack and the failure of our anti-aircraft guns again show how urgent it is that the heavy battery requested by Naval Shore Commander, Crimea be transferred to Yalta. I hope that the supporting request sent by me and by Naval Group Command, South will be successful, otherwise we must expect further damage to the naval forces lying at Yalta.

Commander Minbelli reported that Italian midget submarines CB 1 and 4 had put out in good weather at 1800 for a reconnaissance line in 34° E between 43° 55' N and 44° 05' N. They are to put in to Yalta again at 0600 on 26 June.

Iron Gates Area: Guardboats "Alzir" "Gernat" and "Tronje" checked for mines without result.

Land Situation:

On the northern front at Sevastopol detached enemy groups are still putting up a stubborn resistance.

On the eastern and southern fronts our attack is gaining ground.

CONFIDENTIAL

24 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Light winds, sea wind by day, fair to cloudy, visibility about 15 miles.

Enemy Situation:

Slight activity of naval forces (mainly light) continued in the Black Sea. In the narrow Sevastopol area there were 2 minelayers and some small vessels.

In the western Black Sea as far as the Crimean coast there were probably 1 submarine tender and 6 submarines of which two were located off the southwest Crimean coast in the forenoon.

The frequently reported flotilla leader "Taschkent", 4 destroyers and 3 submarines were in the northeastern Black Sea as far as the south Crimean coast.

According to aerial photographs there were no unusual vessels in ports on the Sea of Azov.

For the first time 60 detached waggons were detected in Yeisk railroad station, also 110 waggons at Primorsko Alhtari. They were indications of the arrival of troops, material etc.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

1600 The following put out from Constantza for the minelaying operation off Odessa:

Minelayers "Margesci" and "Dacia".

Escort: "Regala Ferdinand", "Regina Maria", "Mirasesti" and motor minesweeper MR 7.

At 0400 on 25 June the vessels are to be picked up at the Bugaz rendezvous by Commander, Danube Flotilla with 7 motor minesweepers (FR), 4 motor minesweepers (RM) and 4 naval ferry barges. At Sulina gunboats "Chiculescu", "Stihi" and "Daunitrescu" and torpedo-boat "Sneul" also joined the escort. The 3 destroyers returned from Bugaz to Constantza.

The Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 which left Malta on 21 June have been badly hampered by the weather in the last 2 days. According to a report from Commander Minbelli received at 1620 today both submarines were in 43° 47' N, 31° 38' E (some 129 miles from Constantza at 2015 on 23 June. CB 2's speed was reduced as the result of damage to her vertical rudder and a compass failure. Measures to support the submarines do not appear necessary from their reports.

CONFIDENTIAL

24 June 1942

South Russian Area:

0400 I flew on from Nikolaiev to Simferopol. There I had discussions with Naval Shore Commander, Crimea and instruction from the various experts of the naval shore commanders on their special activities.

16th Harbor Defense Flotilla was directed by Naval Special Duties Detachment to check the area between $46^{\circ} 34.6' N, 31^{\circ} 25' E$, $46^{\circ} 32.8' N, 31^{\circ} 25' E$ and $46^{\circ} 34' N, 31^{\circ} 19' E$.

In this area south of Beresan Island on the south side of the fairway, there are the wrecks of the tugs "Therese Wallner", /illegible/ and "Drossel" which ran into a minefield on 24 October 1941. Probable depth of the mines: 1 meter.

0400 Harbor Defense Flotilla put out from Skadovsk to check the route to Ak Mechet. At 1215 they put in without sweeping any mines.

1630 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ak Mechet with 5 boats to operate in the area 12 miles west of Cape Sarich. The boats had to abandon the operation at 2330 because of the bright moon. They had fired at and missed several enemy destroyers which had to be attacked at very long range. They returned to Ak Mechet.

1800 Owing to minor damage, Italian midget submarine CB 4 cannot put out for the reconnaissance line south of Alupke as planned. Therefore only CB 1 proceeded to a line on $34^{\circ} E$ north of $44^{\circ} 10' N$.

2045 Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 572 put out on reconnaissance 30-35 miles southwest of Cape Aitodor.

2030 Three Italian motor boats put out from Foros for Cape Khersonese.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported enemy planes over Yalta during the night of 23/24 June. No bombs dropped. Some bombs were dropped on the harbor area at Theodosia. No damage reported.

I expect that during the battles for Sevastopol 11th Army H.Q. will intend to launch landing operations supported by the Navy. For such operations Eupatoria is the most suitable jumping-off base for naval forces. The following tasks must therefore be expected:

1. The route to Eupatoria and Eupatoria harbor entrance must be swept.
2. Naval forces for possible landing operations must be prepared now.

I therefore issued an order to 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla to sweep the route around Cape Tarkhankutzki to Eupatoria and then await further orders there.

Readiness:

Motor minesweeper RA 52 non-operational owing to deflection of a screw shaft bearing. As this must be repaired in Galatz, the boat is to proceed there towed by Rumanian tug "Vartosu" on 25 June.

24 June 1942

Probable duration of repairs - 1 week. Italian E-boat IIS 573 and 2 Italian motor boats temporarily non-operational for engine overhaul.

25 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

Light winds, sea wind by day, fair to cloudy, visibility about 15 miles.

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intercept and air reconnaissance reports, there was still only slight activity of light surface forces and submarines.

At 0355 a bomber formation sighted a destroyer, course east, light speed, south of Yalta. According to another reconnaissance report, the destroyer joined 2 more destroyers an hour later to form a position line roughly from southwest to northeast. This was confirmed by later reports. A second formation of destroyers, also reported by reconnaissance, formed a second position line roughly from north to south about 60-70 miles south of Sevastopol. About 20 miles further south a third group of destroyers was sighted.

At 2038 Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza reported that cruiser E had been detected in the southeastern Black Sea, while cruiser A was located 120 miles south of Kerch Strait at 2115. No further reports were received up to midnight, so we have no clues as to why these vessels were operating.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

No incidents.

Rumanian Area:

Naval Command, Constantza reported that Army Coastal Artillery Detachment 789 comprising three 10.5 cm. batteries was no longer ready for action owing to preparations for transfer. The detachment is to be moved to the Crimea in accordance with the Army High Command's decision.

The withdrawal of Army Coastal Artillery Detachment 789, which cooperated particularly well with the Navy and was also supported by the Rumanians who had tried to get it to remain in our area, marks the noticeable weakening of coastal defense in the Constantza sector. There are at present no Rumanian batteries available as replacements.

1150 Motor minesweeper RA 52 put in to Bugaz towed by "Vartosu". She will continue to Galatz under her own power.

25 June 1942

Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 escorted by 3 naval ferry barges from Constantza checked route Green to Sulina without result.

Since the 2 Italian midget submarines CB 2 and CB 3 were located this forenoon still about 100 miles east of Cape Fuszla, a plane of the sea rescue staffel and later a crash boat were sent out to help them. During the afternoon torpedo boat "Sborul" also put out. Both Italian midget submarines put in to Constantza in the evening without further incident (CB 2 about 1900 and CB 3 about 2100). The plane, the crash boat and the torpedo boat all failed to sight them. Probably they were really much further west than expected. The transfer of the 2 midget submarines from Yalta to Constantza took 4 days and at times the weather was very bad. It was a real navigational accomplishment and may be taken as proof of the training and powers of endurance of their crews. The crew consists of 4 men who must be on duty always without reliefs.

- 1630 "Delfinul" put out from Constantza for the operation (for operational area, see War Diary 19 June). Operation to last 15 days.
- 2000 E-boat S 27 put in to Constantza from Ak Mechet to take in torpedoes.

South Russian Area:

The Odessa minelaying operation (Part 1) was carried out as scheduled.

The escort for the mine-carriers "Margescu" and "Dacia" changed at the Bugaz rendezvous when the 3 destroyers handed over to Commander, Danube Flotilla with 7 motor minesweepers (FR), 3 motor minesweepers (M) and 1st Special Duties Flotilla with 4 naval ferry barges.

Destroyers "Regele Ferdinand", "Regina Maria" and "Ibrasessti" returned to Sulina where they arrived at 1130.

After laying their mines, the formation put in to Odessa at 1015.

- 1415 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla put in to Ochakov from Odessa. The route from Odessa to the island of Pervomeisk was swept with towed loop gear by cutters "Lykurgos" and "Proteus". No result.

Crimea:

- 1000 I reported to Major-General V. Harstein, C-in-C, 11th Army H.Q. at his H.Q. behind the Sevastopol front.

The following questions were discussed at a conference at which Chief of General Staff and Operations Officer, 11th Army H.Q. were also present:

1. Naval operations:

I stressed that all available operational forces i.e. 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Italian E-boats, motor boats and midget submarines had been used to support the Army, principally by tying down supply traffic to Sevastopol and that they had been thus employed since 1 June.

25 June 1942

As a result of our successes I have noticed a decrease in supply traffic to Sevastopol and only vessels up to the size of destroyers are being used. I finally pointed out that our forces were limited by the weather.

2. A feint landing operation:

The Army is anxious that the enemy does not withdraw any forces from the coastal positions to strengthen the land fronts, particularly the position east of Sevastopol which we are to attack on the morning of 27 June. To tie down the enemy forces on the coast, we shall make a feint landing. 11th Army H.Q. suggested the evening of 26 June and the night of 26/27 June. I promised that all available forces would carry out the operation then. We have available:

- a. 1st E-Boat Flotilla.
- b. Italian E-boats and motor boats.
- c. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla which has been transferred to Eupatoria.

Allocation of forces:

- a. 1st E-Boat Flotilla off Cape Khersonese.
- b. Italian E-boats and motor boats with combined operations assault boats east and west of Cape Feolent. (Italian E-Boat Flotilla will make detailed arrangements for these small operations directly with the combined operations commander).
- c. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla will thrust from Eupatoria to some 5 miles north of Sevastopol Bay to reach this position before dark so that the enemy can observe the boats.

The following orders were issued to the flotillas:

- a. 1st E-Boat Flotilla:
3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla will be off Cape Khersonese about 2200 on 26 June.
Task:
 1. Feint landing operation to tie down Russian forces: Transmission of radiograms by an Army radio operator aboard, firing of stars etc.
 2. Disruption of Russian supply traffic by warships and merchant ships. After the execution of the operation, put in to Ak Mechet on Constantza at your discretion.

Admiral Black Sea Ckdos Acp.

- b. Italian E-Boat Flotilla:
On the night of 26/27 June Italian E-boats and motor boats will operate close to the coast east and west of Cape Feolent with combined operations assault boats.
Task:
Feint landing operations. Protection of combined operations assault boats. Cooperation with combined operations boats will be arranged direct by Italian E-Boat Flotilla. Enemy ships met in the operational area should be attacked if this does not interfere with the main assignment.

Admiral Black Sea Ckdos Acp.

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- c. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla:
On 26 June, 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla will leave Eupatoria with 8 motor pinnaces for the coastal area as far as 44° 43' N. Sailing should be arranged to reach this position shortly before nightfall. Remain there in open formation until dark, then return to Eupatoria. Avoid encounters with the enemy. Air Commander, South is asked to inform his air forces and Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. the coastal authorities.

Admiral Black Sea Gkdos Aop.

Naval Group South was instructed as follows on the planned operation:

"After discussion with C-in-C, 11th Army H.Q., the following forces are to feint a landing thus tying down Russian forces:

1. 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla off Cape Khersonese.
2. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla will put out from Eupatoria, housting to the south close to the coast as far as 44° 43' N.
3. Italian E-boats and motor boats between Balldava and Cape Khersonese in cooperation with and as protection for the combined operations assault boats.

Re 1., 2 and 3:

The boats will pretend that they are about to attack the coast by a striking procedure - firing stars, radio traffic (Army operator on board) etc.

3. Minefield in Kerch Strait.

11th Army H.Q. was informed of the minefields already laid and the defensive minefields to be laid in Kerch Strait.

- a. Pavkovski minefield.
- b. Minefield off the petroleum harbor at Kerch.
- c. Gosnetsavoda minefield.
- d. Kamish Burun.
- e. Preparations for the sudden mining of Kerch harbor.

The Army also wants a protective minefield off Eltigen. I pointed out that no landings could be made with equipment at Eltigen and that the other places on Kerch Strait were also unsuitable for landings. I therefore proposed to reject the laying of a minefield off Eltigen. 11th Army H.Q. agreed.

4. Anti-aircraft protection for Yalta. The continuous air raids on Yalta which have already led to damaging of Italian naval forces caused me to request increased anti-aircraft protection for this important operational harbor.

11th Army H.Q. cannot comply with my request as they have no more heavy batteries available.

5. 11th Army H.Q. thinks it would be advisable to station a naval officer on the north shore of Severnaga Bay to observe the nightly shipping traffic to Sevastopol. I assigned them Commander Gohring whom I ordered to proceed on 26 June to the battery area where there is an Army Radio Intercept Station.

25 June 1942

- 0510 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla put out from Ak Mechet to check the route to Eupatoria (see War Diary 24 June). They swept no mines. At 1750 the flotilla put in to Eupatoria where they are to be available for any operations ordered by 11th Army H.Q.
1650. E-boats 540 and 528 put out from Ak Mechet in to the operational area about 12 miles southwest of Cape Sarich.

Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 572 which were operating southwest of Cape Mitodor on 24/25 June and the 3 Italian motor boats in a coastal strip west of Balaklava put in to Yalta at dawn. No encounters with the enemy.

Tonight Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 572 will operate against enemy shipping traffic off Cape Feolent and 2 motor boats off the coast west of Balaklava.

Readiness:

"Defin 8" (Special Duties formation Bulgaria) was commissioned on 25 June.

26 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

W winds, force 2, fair, sea 0, visibility 16 miles.

Enemy Situation:

Contrary to expectation the radio intercept and reconnaissance reports made no mention of the battle group - cruisers A and B and the destroyer formation of 10 vessels which was standing on and off on a north - south course far to the west of them. Air reconnaissance was extended to the southeastern Black Sea, but no incidents were reported.

On the other hand there is an assembly of small vessels such as we have never seen here before off the southern tip of the Crimea as far as Sevastopol. They are mainly M.T.B.s, patrol vessels and minelayers.

The reconnaissance line reported yesterday from northeast to southeast along the southeast Crimean coast was confirmed again today by Radio Intercept Service and air reconnaissance. It was led by flotilla leader "Aschkent".

At 2132 a bomber grappe which successfully attacked this formation reported the sinking of a destroyer and a submarine some 50 miles south of Theodosia. Both vessels were definitely seen to sink.

The aerial photographs taken by Air Commander, south on 26 June showed 14 paddle-steamers in Tuapse. They might have been withdrawn from the Sea of Azov, as only one was observed in their previous anchorages at Yeisk and Akitari. According to Army reports, there was lively shipping traffic off the east coast of Kerch Strait for the night of 25/26 June.

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It may have had some connection with the above report.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

0500 "Delfin 5-8" (Special Duties formation) put out from Varna for Garebo on anti-submarine operations. At 0602 "Delfin 7" sighted a periscope some 300-400 meters away in $43^{\circ} 08.3' N$, $27^{\circ} 59' E$. It was visible for 2 minutes in the calm sea. The other boats also saw it and at once dropped 10 depth charges. Thereafter for an hour large air bubbles were observed in an area 15 by 3 meters. Two Bulgarian E-boats and 1 German seaplane were sent out to check the spot.

The 4 boats returned to Varna for more depth charges. "Delfin 1-4" checked the northern entrance to Varna Bay for mines. No result.

Rumanian Area:

0900 E-boats 3 28 and 5 40 put in to Constantza from the operation southwest of Cape Sarich. Both boats missed when firing torpedoes at one outward and one inward bound destroyer in grid square 5519.

Many of these misses (18 in all in recent operations) are due to the unusually bad light during the short moonlight nights which does not allow the E-boats to approach to sure firing range. Moreover many torpedoes and their tracks are easily visible in the peculiar sea light, so that they can be avoided.

These unfavorable conditions which prejudice the imminent decisive E-boat operations off Sevastopol make new measures mandatory. The laying of a minefield on the known approach route of the Russian ships in line with south of Cape Khersonese on both sides of the approach buoy might give some success. In view of the exact knowledge of the enemy course, a small minefield at this spot might also promise success. To prevent a later hold up on our own supply route which will be directly off the coast, the minefield should be laid about 5 miles from the coast. Depth setting of 3 meters is considered advisable to avoid hindering our E-boats and Italian E-boats during the operations off Sevastopol.

Preparations for the minelaying will be made immediately. 30 FMC mines were transferred by truck from Theodosia to Ak Mechet.

1st E-Boat Flotilla is to lay the mines on 27 and 28 June.

Group South was informed of the plan in the following radiogram:

"On bright nights E-boat attacks are not likely to be successful, as is apparent in the 18 torpedo misses of 1st E-Boat Flotilla in recent night. Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was therefore ordered yesterday to prepare for a minefield to be laid on the known Russian approach route i.e. on a line with a point south of Cape Khersonese. 30 FMC mines are already en route to Ak Mechet. The minefield is to be laid on 27 or 28 June some 5 miles from the coast so that it will later form a flanking protection for the

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supply route round Cape Khersonese. Depth setting minus 3 meters, average distance between mines 35 meters, effective distance about 20 meters by the oblique setting of the minelaying course to the approach route.

Admiral Black Sea Ckdos. Rep.

0430 Naval ferry barges Nos. 122 and 135 put in to Bugaz from Skadovsk.

South Russian Area:

The Odessa minelaying assignment (Part 2) was carried out as scheduled. The minelaying formation did not then return to Constantza as planned, but put in to Odessa. This was because of a Rumanian report about 0300 to the effect that an unidentified vessel had been sighted off the Sulina estuary and that gunfire had also been observed at sea. It is possible that enemy naval forces were laying mines off the Sulina estuary. Until the area could be checked, the minelaying formation was sent to Odessa. Danube Flotilla was directed by Naval Special Duties Detachment to have motor minesweepers (FR) and (RA) check the route from Bugaz to Sulina immediately.

About 0900 the check revealed that the Rumanian report had been a false alarm. The measures were then canceled and the minelaying formation ordered to put out from Odessa to be picked up at the Bugaz rendezvous at 1900 by the 3 destroyers proceeding from there to Sulina. Later passage to Constantza.

1430 The minelaying formation put out from Odessa for Constantza and passed Bugaz at 1900 as scheduled. Motor minesweepers (FR) and (RA) of Danube Flotilla and 4 naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla which had escorted them from Odessa put in to Bugaz.

These 2 minefield sections off Odessa have exhausted the supply of UMB mines (560 UMB) of Mines and Barrage Command, Constantza. In planning the minefield off Odessa, the use of UMB mines was rejected because the necessary sounding of the laying course would have uselessly exposed the laying formation to submarine attack at their state of training as there were few escort vessels available.

In Ckdos 1142/420 Qu. of 13 June, Group Command requested from Naval High Command an allocation on request of a further 600 UMB mines with 150-meter mooring rope and 500 UMB mines with 100-meter mooring rope. Group Command South was asked to request the 600 UMB mines to be sent from Germany to Constantza at once.

Commander, Danube Flotilla reported that after the execution of the Odessa minelaying assignment motor minesweepers RA 51, 54 and 56 were non-operational, as the screw shaft bearings of all boats were badly deflected (see War Diary 24 June regarding RA 52). Motor minesweeper ER 7 is also non-operational as all her elastic leads would have to be re-flanged. More detailed report follows from Danube Flotilla.

26 June 1942

The 3 motor minesweepers (RA) and motor minesweeper M 7 must go at once to Galatz dockyard to carry out the necessary repairs and will therefore not be available for escort duty for the convoys which are to be resumed. I must have a detailed explanation of the breakdown of these boats which were brought from Germany only a few days ago.

0810 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143 put in to Odessa from Ochakov. They were at once loaded with fuel for 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ak Mechet. They put out at 1645.

16th Harbor Defense Flotilla reported that they had searched the area south of Beresan without result (see War Diary 24 June).

0530 Tajanrog harbor area was shelled by enemy artillery from the land front. No damage to naval installations.

Crimea:

0800 I went to Ak Mechet via Eupatoria. The installations of both harbors were thoroughly examined. I discussed today's operation (feint landing) in detail with Commanders, 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla and 1st E-Boat Flotilla.

1500 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla put out from Eupatoria to carry out task ASH Gch. Aop. of 25 June (see War Diary 25 June).

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported from Ak Mechet that the Russian M.T.B. captured on 25 June had been given to 1st E-Boat Flotilla.

Italian E-boats MAS 570 and 572 and the 2 motor boats which had been operating on the night of 25/26 June put in to Malta at dawn. No encounters with the enemy.

0945 Italian midget submarine CB 1 put in to Yalta from the reconnaissance line south of Alupka. No enemy vessels were sighted.

2025 CB 4 put out to a reconnaissance line 30 miles south of Cape Sarich. She will return on the morning of 28 June.

Italian E-Boat Flotilla reported that CB 6 must go to Constantza owing to a leak in her oil tank. She is to put out from Yalta on 28 June.

When the battles are over north of Severnaya Bay, a detachment of Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol is to occupy the north shore of the bay and in particular the north dockyard to ensure the preservation of all installations of interest to the Navy.

Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol (Commander V. Richthofen) was ordered to follow with the other detachment on 2 July.

Readiness:

Motor minesweepers RA 51, 54 and 56 non-operational for about 4-5 days.

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26 June 1942

Motor minesweeper MR 7 non-operational for an indefinite period.

27 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

No wind, no cloud, sea 0, visibility 15 miles, temperature 23° C.

Enemy Situation:

Both battle groups appeared again today. Cruisers A and E and the 10 destroyers were not in evidence, so they must have returned to their bases on the night of 25/26 June.

The reconnaissance line some distance from the Crimean coast in the northeastern Black Sea, consisting of "Taschkent" and 3 destroyers with Commander, Light Force aboard one of them, broke up at noon on 27 June. "Taschkent" and a destroyer with 14 M.T.B.s drawn from the assembly off the southern tip of the Crimea then acted as escort to 2 coast command steamers of about 2,000-3,000 tons. The other 2 destroyers with Commander, Light Forces aboard proceeded to the southeastern Black Sea accompanied by several minesweepers and minelayers, so that from noon on 27 June there was still only very slight activity of surface forces observed.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Two boats of Special Duties formation put out from Varna for Garebo to check the area where the submarine was attacked yesterday. A plane observed increasing oil and marked the spot with a buoy for the approaching boats.

Further check intended on 28 June.

Rumanian Area:

Supply Traffic:

- 0645 Seven motor minesweepers (FR) of Danube Flotilla put out from Bugaz to transfer 3 Siebel ferries to Ochakov. Steamers "Sar Ferdinand" and "Oiltaz" joined the convoy at Odessa. Four naval ferry barges of 1st Special Duties Flotilla acted as anti-submarine protection.
- 1600 Convoy put in to Ochakov as scheduled. No incidents.
- 0045 Torpedoboat "Smeul" put in to Sulina.
- 0310 Gunboat "Chiculescer" put in.
- 0630 Minelayers "Margescu" and "Dacia" put in to Constantza with destroyers "Regele Ferdinand", "Regina Maria" and "Marasesti".

The minelayers returned from Odessa with the above escort forces without incident.

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- 0600 Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 put out from Sulina escorted by 3 naval ferry barges to check the route to Bugaz. They put in at 1540. No mines swept.
- 1415 E-boats S 27, 28 and 40 put out from Constantza for Ak Mechet where they arrived at 2130. They had on board minelaying personnel and mine rails for the execution of the Sevastopol minelaying assignment (see War Diary 26 June).
- 1840 Naval ferry barge No. 122 put out from Bugaz for Ak Mechet with torpedoes, equipment etc. for 1st E-Boat Flotilla. Naval ferry barge No. 128 acted as escort.
- 2130 Motor minesweepers RM 51, 54 and 56 and MR 7 put out from Bugaz for Galatz via Sulina - dockyard repairs (see War Diary 26 June).

South Russian Area:

- 0600 The 2 naval ferry barges detailed to protect the beached steamer "Ardeal" heard a loud explosion to the south off Ochakov. Cause not known. It may have been the first success of the new minefield laid against enemy submarines. The area will be checked.

Crimea:

E-boats S 102 and 72 which put out for the feint operation in the Sevastopol area reported in War Diary 26 June operated until 0015 and then put in to Ak Mechet because of the weather.

17th Harbor Defense Flotilla carried out their task off Eupatoria. The boats proceeded by the coastal route to 44° 43' N and from there back to Eupatoria which they reached again at 0130.

No encounters with enemy forces and no shelling from land although the flotilla commanders reported that they were definitely observed by the enemy.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered in radiogram 1127/27/22(?) to carry out the minelaying assignment south of Cape Khersonese (see War Diary of 26 June):

"1st E-Boat Flotilla with 4 boats will lay a minefield on the Russian approach route some 5 miles from the coast, transit bearing south of Cape Khersonese, on the night of 28/29 June.

Mines required: 30 MFC. Depth setting minus 3 meters, average distance between mines 35 meters. Laying course about 45° obliquely to the Russian approach route. No fouling. Report exact navigational position. Lay the mines unobserved.

ADM Gkdos. Aop".

- 0715 Naval ferry barges 132 and 143 put in to Ak Mechet from Odessa (see War Diary 26 June). The Italian E-boats and motor boats which were to be employed on the feint operation in the Sevastopol area cannot put out because of the weather. Enemy air activity is as heavy as ever. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported air attacks on Theodosia, Eupatoria, Yalta and Foros on the night of 25/26 June and on Sevastopol north dockyard, Eupatoria and Simferopol on the night of 26/27 June. No damage reported.

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27 June 1942

As the advance detachment of Naval Port Commander 8 had arrived in Sevastopol north dockyard on 26 June, Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol started his activity there today with the other detachment and assumed responsibility for the security of the dockyard.

Naval Port Commander 8 reported:

"My detachment occupied Sevastopol north dockyard at 1130. Slight enemy mortar fire and machine-gunfire. Anti-aircraft fire from our naval machine-guns. On 27 June Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol assumed his duties. Protection of the dockyard, anti-submarine nets, mooring material and special mine gear assumed. Slight enemy shelling. Docks are still being shelled and are still mined. Scheduled security measures are being taken. Naval Port Commander's H.Q. is Sevastopol north dockyard.

Naval Port Commander 8"

Naval Port Commander 8 also reported that about 1,200 meters of anti-submarine netting were available in the north dockyard, also buoys and mooring material.

I intend to use this material for the vital net barrages off Yalta, Ak Mechet, Theodosia and Balaklava. I sent the following radiogram to Station East and Net Barrage Formation:

"Russian nets available in the north dockyard, Sevastopol. I intend to use it for the barrages off Yalta, Ak Mechet, Theodosia and Balaklava. Please send Commander, Net Barrage Formation to advise.

Admiral Black Sea Ckdos. Rep."

The enemy is still shelling Kerch Strait from the eastern shore. The lively enemy convoy traffic detected off the Taman coast was shelled successfully by our coastal batteries.

Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Operations Division pointed out that, despite enemy landing attempts near Kerch, the center of our naval operation would remain Sevastopol until that town was captured. This coincides with my plans and promise to 11th Army H.Q.

Iron Gates: Guardboats "Alzeir" and "Tronje" swept for mines without result.

Land Situation:

The preparations for the continuation of the attack on Sevastopol are concluded. We intend 54th Army Corps - now on the north shore of Severnaya Bay - to move round the bay and thrust westwards from the south coast.

On the Sevastopol eastern front heavy fighting continues. The enemy is putting up a stubborn defense. Territorial gains in places.

28 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

S winds, force 2, cloudy, visibility 10 miles, sea 1, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

The slight activity of surface forces continued today. Many submarines were reported in the area south of the Crimea and in the western Black Sea - 14 in the latter area alone. The great number may partly be due to the fact that the position lines may have been relieved. Neither Radio Intercept Service nor Air Commander, South reported any special observations.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

The 2 boats of Special Duties formation which checked the area off Garbo where the submarine was attacked made no further observations.

Rumanian Area:

- 1000 The first group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla (R 66 and 35) put in to Sulina on their way down the Danube. At 1045 they continued to Constantza where they arrived at 1845.
- 1530 Motor minesweepers FR 2, 3, 7 and 10 put in to Bugaz from Ochakov. The group is ready to carry out the next convoy assignments.

South Russian Area:

While checking the area where naval ferry barge No. 45 was wrecked, 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla detected no moored mines within a radius of 1,000 meters, while cutters "Lykrgos" and "Proteus" swept 2 mines which damaged their towed loop gear.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported increasing enemy air activity from Tiganrog to Berdyansk during the night of 27/28 June.

Slight damage was caused by bombs in Mariupol harbor.

Crimea:

I traveled to Balchhisarai to a conference with Air Commander, South on cooperation with the Air Force and in particular on deployment of naval forces at the instigation of air reconnaissance reports.

Air Commander, South showed me an aerial photograph in which a new Russian jetty could be seen southeast of Cape Khersonese. The jetty is probably used for landing troops and material from smaller vessels. The print gives valuable pointers for deploying the Italian E-boats and motor boats operating in this area.

Air Commander, South also informed me that anti-aircraft guns at Sevastopol had not been so violent in the last few days. He said this was probably due to lack of ammunition as a result of the disruption of their supplies by our naval forces and planes.

28 June 1942

1300 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143 put out from Ak Mechet to buoy the mine-free route via Dzharulgach to Ochakov. At 2020 the boats put in to Skadevsk. They are to continue passage on the morning of 29 June.

11th Army H.Q. asked for a feint landing operation east of Cape Feolent tonight. The operation was executed by the Italian motor boats and assault boats escorted by Italian E-boats.

As this operation was in the immediate vicinity of and at the same time as the minelaying operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, I considered it necessary to postpone the minelaying task for 24 hours. I gave the required order.

In the morning Italian midget submarine CB 4 put in to Yalta from the reconnaissance line south of Cape Svirich. The boat reported that she had sighted and attacked 2 destroyers 25 miles south of Cape Kikenciz on the morning of 27 June. She was then discovered and attacked by a destroyer - obviously equipped with search gear - and 2 guardboats. 58 depth charges were dropped, but they caused only slight damage.

1430 Italian midget submarine CB 6 put out for Constantza for repairs.

Commander Mirbelli reported that the repairs of CB 2 and 3 which had been transferred to Constantza would probably take about 3 weeks.

2150 Italian E-boats 571 and 573 put out for a special operation off Sevastopol. Six motor boats joined them from Foros.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported further lively enemy air activity over Yalta, Foros and Alushta on the night of 27/28 June. No bombs observed.

From Kerch lively shipping off the enemy coast was again observed at night. The vessels put up a smoke screen when shelled by Army coastal artillery detachments.

0400 Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that combined operations ferries laid the MB minefield off Karsish Durun without incident.

I decided to extend the minefield to be laid by 1st E-Boat Flotilla south of Cape Khersonese as soon as possible and made the necessary preparations. In particular I organized immediate transport of the required mining material from Mariupol to Ak Mechet. 4th Air Force made 5 Ju52 available for this traffic on 29 June after I had sent in a request via Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force.

Iron Gates Area: No incidents.

Land Situation:

No important engagements were reported from the Sevastopol front. The renewed attack planned for today was postponed to 29 June. Mesemyan Detachment reported that their companies had been operating on Hill 212 (about 1 km. north east of Balaklava) and in advanced security positions since 24 June. They have been reinforced by Army personnel including officers with heavy weapons.

28 June 1942

We carried out 2 scouting operations without loss. Five men were badly wounded in repelling an enemy attack and three were slightly wounded.

Readiness:

Destroyers "Regele Ferdinand", "Regina Maria" and "Mirasesti" will be non-operational for repairs for a few days.

Naval ferry barge No. 144 operational.

29 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 4, overcast, visibility 10 miles, sea 2, temperature 18° C.

Enemy Situation:

According to radio intercept and air reconnaissance reports, only submarines were detected. There were 11 in all in the northern Black Sea. The submarine tender "Ochakov" was also reported to be in the southeastern Black Sea with 2 submarines.

Air Commander, South reported that the aerial photographs showed no change in the ships in ports on the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

1950 Tanker steamer "Driscen" (140 tons) put in to Varna via Burgas from the Bosphorus. The small tanker steamer was escorted by 3 boats of special Duties formation as far as the Turkish - Bulgarian border, where they were joined by 2 Bulgarian E-boats.

Supply Traffic:

1000 Steamers "Suceava", "Salzburg" and "Lola" and tugs "Engeran" "Hainburg" and "Moliere" puts out from Ochakov as the southbound convoy. They were escorted by 3 motor minesweepers (FR).

1500 Steamer "Suceava" put in to Odessa.

1900 The convoy was handed over to gunboats "Chiculescu" and "Daniltrescu" and torpedo boat "Smeul". They continued to the south. At 1915 the 3 motor minesweepers (FR) put in to Bugaz.

Rumanian Area:

0600 Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 put out from Bugaz with naval ferry barges Nos. 126 and 137 as anti-submarine escort to check the route to Odessa. They put in at 1130. No mines swept.

South Russian Area:

2100 Naval ferry barges Nos. 132 and 143 put in to Odessa after buoying the mine-free route from Skadovsk.

29 June 1942

0310- 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla checked the area south of the island of Beresan without result.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported heavy air raids on Mariupol harbor during the night of 28/29 June. Slight damage.

2250 An enemy landing attempt from 5 boats was repulsed near Melekino. No further vessels reported:

Crimea:

I visited Yalta harbor and the Italian naval forces lying there. I also discussed with Commander Mambelli the operations of the Italian E-boats and motor boats tonight.

To strengthen 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla for possible landing operations near Sevastopol. I have transferred naval ferry barges Nos. 127 and 139 from Ak Mechet to Eupatoria where they arrived at 2130. I decided that naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132, which are now proceeding from Skalovsk to Ochakov, should also be held in readiness for landing operations. I ordered them to proceed to Ak Mechet immediately.

1630 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out with 3 40, 102, 27 and 28 to carry out the minelaying task off Sevastopol.

0300 Italian E-boats IIS 571 and 573 put in to Yalta from their special task in the Sevastopol area.

The 6 motor boats also put in to Foros again at dawn. Italian E-Boat Flotilla reported only slight enemy defenses.

1800 Italian midget submarine CB 1 put out for the reconnaissance line some 30 miles south of Yalta. She is to return at 1200 on 1 July.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported air attacks on Theodosia and Eupatoria during the night of 28/29 June. No damage to naval installations reported.

Commander Gohring reported from his observation station that Kherson lighthouse is lit up and that 2 small fast vessels put in to Sevastopol. Italian E-Boat Flotilla, Yalta was immediately informed.

0100- 13 small vessels which were attempting to approach the coast were 0130 shelled by our artillery. They at once put up a smoke screen.

With reference to the sighting and shelling of an enemy ship formation in Kerch Strait reported in War Diary 27 June, Naval Shore Commander, Crimea further reported that there had been 1 large and 15 smaller vessels involved. They were proceeding north close to the Taman coast. Seven vessels were set on fire by our artillery. The formation then retreated to the south. Our planes also attacked but had no visible success.

Readiness:

Destroyer "Marasesti" operational. Minelayer "Murescu" non-operational. Duration of repairs will be reported later.

29 June 1942

Land Situation:

The attack in front of Sevastopol is gaining considerable ground both on the northern front (west and southwest of Severnaya Bay) and on the eastern front. The enemy is still defending stubbornly.

30 June 1942

Weather forecast (Constantza):

N winds, force 4, sea 3, almost entirely overcast; visibility 12 miles, temperature 17° C.

Enemy Situation:

Continued submarine activity. In the northern Black Sea 11 submarines were detected by Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza, while there were 2 submarines and submarine tender "Ochakov" in the western area of the central part of the Caucasus coast.

No surface forces were detected at sea. Coastal Radio Station, Sevastopol transmitted only 3 messages on 29 June. The last time at 2000, they called Novorossisk with a radiogram covered in the radio traffic for the Sevastopol area.

Own Situation:

Bulgarian Area:

Supplementary report for 29 June:

Three Bulgarian motor minesweepers swept the area between Konstantin and the wreck "Regele Carol" without result.

In the evening Italian midget submarine CE 6 put in to Balzic from Malta. She was driven south by the strong north winds and she also had engine trouble. She is to continue passage on the morning of 1 July.

Rumanian Area:

The southbound convoy ran as scheduled. In the morning steamers "Salzburg" and "Lola", tugs "Bugaran" and "Hainburg" and the Rumanian escort forces put in to Sulina. Tug "Moliere" grounded off the entrance but was towed off during the forenoon.

South Russian Area:

- 1000 16th Harbor Defense Flotilla put in to Odessa from Ochakov to take in more equipment, provisions etc.
- 1720 Naval ferry barges Nos. 143 and 132 put out from Odessa for Ak Mechet.
- 1130 Mine-exploding vessel No. 191 put in to Ochakov from Odessa with naval ferry barges Nos. 137 and 126 as anti-submarine escort. They checked for magnetic mines without result.

30 June 1942

Several air raids on Mariupol harbor. Slight damage.

Critica:

Naval Liaison Officer to 11th Army H.Q. reported that, with a view to surrounding Sevastopol, they intended to land on the coast or in the bays west of the town. 11th Army H.Q. requested naval support for this operation. I went to the Staff H.Q. of 11th Army for discussion of the situation and plans. There in the presence of C-in-C, 11th Army H.Q. and his Chief of Staff, the following agreement was reached:

1. The landing will take place west and east of Strelitzkayer Bay.
2. The operation will be carried out at night. Date was not fixed, but it will be published at least 48 hours in advance.
3. Army units taking part:
70 combined operations assault boats.
12 rubber ferries.

They will ferry across 1 infantry regiment and 1 engineer battalion moves.

4. Admiral, Black Sea has the following tasks:
 - a. Sweeping of a route from the loading places in the bay east of Morlela Bashna to the landing area on the night before the landing. This will be by 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla, which will be protected against M.T.B. attacks by naval ferry barges of Group Burow.
 - b. Transferring of anti-aircraft and assault guns, ammunition and provisions in naval ferry barges immediately after the troops land by combined operations assault boats.
 - c. Protection of the landing operation on the seaward side by E-boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla.
5. Protection of 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla against shore guns during the minesweeping task will be the responsibility of Corps artillery which must keep the enemy batteries down.
6. Erection of jetties for loading the naval ferry barges is the Army's task. An engineer captain will be sent to Ruxtoria to inspect the naval ferry barges so that the jetties will be right for them.
7. A naval officer will be seconded to 54th Army Corps as Liaison Officer.

I reported to Naval Group South:

"The Army intends to land east or west of Strelitzkaya Bay in combined operations assault boats. At a conference with 54th Army Corps, I promised naval support. I intend to employ:

1. 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla to clear a mine-free route.
2. Four naval ferry barges to transport light guns, ammunition etc.

The naval ferry barges will also protect 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla against Russian M.T.B. attacks when the flotilla is on minesweeping duty on the night before the landing. If the shore batteries open up, support from Corps artillery is guaranteed. Date of execution not yet fixed. Commander of the naval formation: Lieutenant Commander Kuster.

Admiral Black Sea Gkdos. Kop"

30 June 1942

0230 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ak Mochet after carrying out the minelaying operation. The minefield lies from
44° 28.4' N, 33° 23.2' E to
44° 27.9' N, 33° 23.6E,
on both sides of the Russian approach buoy. 30 FIC mines were used. Distance between mines 35 meters, depth setting 3 meters.

The following radiogram was received from Group South:

"We suggest use of aerial mines also against Sevastopol traffic to lessen the operational hours of our light forces. Plans:

1. Blocking of all bays west of and including Strelitzkaye Bay which can be navigated. As operations will increase nightly use aerial mines "blue" and "yellow" or B1000 with period delay mechanism 3 at the most. No "blue", "green" or "green" (Sic). No higher delay mechanism. Because of our using the bays later, the minelaying should be confined to the bays only and not stretch to the coastal route.

2. Tie down enemy shipping traffic close to the coast and direct it either onto the minefields to be laid or into the arms of our light forces operating there. Drop the B1000 where the enemy can observe the operations not less than 1 mile from the coast from Strelitzkaye Bay via Cape Khersonese to Cape Feolent. The uselessness of the B1000 minefield because of the depth of water involved is of no importance, as Russian observation of the operation will have the desired tactical effect.

3. Additional note for Admiral, Black Sea:

Examine these proposals and execute them if your survey of the situation allows them.

Naval Group South Op. 3916/12 Gkdos"

I have examined the advisability of the proposed minelaying in detail and have decided it would not be successful. Reasons:

1. Chief of Staff, 11th Army H.Q. told me that Sevastopol was expected to fall about 5-6 days after the Sapun heights were taken. They have already been stormed.
2. Air Commander, South informed me that all available planes were engaged on bombing assignments and that he could not spare any planes for minelaying in the next few days.
3. Even if there were adequate planes for the minelaying task, the prospects would in my opinion still be slight, as the enemy has only been employing small vessels in Sevastopol traffic recently and they would not be endangered in water of the depth in that area.

I presume that, even if the minelaying were observed, the Russians would continue to employ their small vessels in the Sevastopol traffic.

I therefore reported to Naval Group South:

30 June 1942

"Operations against Sevastopol have continued to go well in the last few days. 11th Army H.Q. believes that after the Sapun heights are taken 90% of our difficulties are over. They expect to occupy the remaining area - apart from small pockets of resistance - within 5-6 days. In view of this situation, after a discussion with Air Commander, South I no longer consider aerial minelaying to be necessary and in any case there will be no planes available.

Admiral Black Sea Op. Gkdos. Aop

On the other hand, I intend to extend the shallow minefield on the Russian approach route south of Cape Khersonese as quickly as possible. As mines have meanwhile arrived in Ak Mechet by air from Mariupol, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was given the following order:

"On the night of 30 June/1 July, 1st E-Boat Flotilla with 5 boats will extend the minefield laid on 29/30 June. Depth setting minus 3 meters, average distance between mines 17.5 meters, 48 FIC mines. No fouling, remain unobserved and report exact laying position. After execution, 3 boats are to proceed to a waiting position about 10 miles southwest of Cape Sarich and 2 boats to south of Cape Khersonese.

Admiral Black Sea Gkdos Aop"

2000 Owing to the bad weather forecast, the minelaying task by 1st E-Boat Flotilla must be postponed for 24 hours.

The Italian E-boats MAS 570, 571 and 573, which put out at 2010 on anti-submarine operations south of Sudak, had to break off operations and put in to Yalta again because of the high seas.

2230 Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported lively enemy air activity over Yalta (bombs caused no damage) and Alushta (machine-gunfire) on the night of 29/30 June.

A Russian submarine unsuccessfully shelled a rowing boat at 1400 on 29 June. The boat had put out from Theodosia to shoot up some mines reported south of Theodosia.

Land Situation:

The attack on Sevastopol is progressing favorably. In the eastern part of the town Fort Malakov was stormed. Troops crossed the Sapun heights (north of Balaklava) and the enemy has been forced to withdraw far to the west.

Readiness:

Motor minesweeper FR 7 non-operational. Motor minesweepers R166 and 35 of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla operational.

(Signed) Hurnbach

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