WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 387

0700 December 31 to 0700 January 1, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE
WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Directives were issued for the movement to Northwest Africa of the headquarters of the VI Corps (Major General E. J. Dawley).

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (LESS TORCH)

General Eaker submits a supplementary report on the December 30 attack against the Lorient submarine base indicating that attempts to intercept our bombers were more costly to the enemy than was previously reported. The final score claimed by our bomber crews now totals 28 airplanes destroyed and 9 others probably destroyed.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

Axis forces occupied the Heidous area after costly attacks on December 27 and 28 which forced the withdrawal of our covering forces. Although reinforced, the enemy attack southwest of Pont-du-Fahs which started December 28 is being held. In the Pichon area the French advance was checked on December 29.

The enemy continued to reinforce his positions. Aggressive patrols along the entire front by both sides were active during December 29; no unusual activity was reported for December 30.

On December 29, 18 "flying fortresses" attacked Sousse harbor (in addition to the attack by General Brereton's twelve bombers.
reported yesterday); there was considerable other air activity over the combat zone.

ASIATIC THEATER

The Army Air Forces were directed to organize and equip, without delay, a party as recommended by General Bradley, which will be prepared to make a survey of the airfields, installations, air routes and supplies necessary to maintain and operate an air force in Siberia.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

1. In his operations report for the twenty-four-hour period ending 1300 GMT, December 30, General MacArthur reports that Allied forces in New Guinea continued their pressure with no material change in positions. Allied detachments in central Timor are under enemy pressure.

   Single "flying fortresses" and Liberators on armed reconnaissance attacked Japanese airfields at Wewak and Lae, and the village of Madang in New Guinea; light bombers harassed enemy positions as far west as Salamaua. At least four enemy airplanes, including a bomber, were destroyed on the ground.

   Seven "flying fortresses", attacking the enemy fleet at Rabaul (estimated at 75 vessels including 233,000 tons of merchant shipping), obtained direct hits on each of two large ships setting
both afire, and scored other hits on an 8,000-ton transport and a near miss on a 10,000-ton transport.

Twenty-two Japanese bombers attacked Merauke (south coast of New Guinea) where half the town was destroyed without military casualties.

2. General Harmon reports that two enemy cargo vessels, located by our fighter aircraft on a reconnaissance over Munda (New Georgia) on December 29, were attacked by a striking force of twelve Navy-type bombers escorted by fourteen fighter aircraft. Although only near misses were reported, both vessels were set afire. Later, a second attacking force scored eight direct hits on these ships which were reported to be total losses. Enemy fighters in the vicinity failed to attack and all our planes returned safely.

3. The second echelon of the 25th Division (299 officers, 7,359 enlisted men) on the US transports "President Grant", "Republic", and "Holbrook" arrived at Guadalcanal on December 29. The arrival of one more ship will complete the movement of this division.
WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 386

0700 December 30 to 0700 December 31, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

On December 30th, heavy bombers from the Eighth Air Force were engaged in attacks against shipping in harbor areas of central Europe. They were directed by coastal radar to ensure accuracy, only slight damage was inflicted on any aircraft.
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (LESS TORCH)

Of seventy-seven "flying fortresses" dispatched to bomb German submarine installations at Lorient December 30, forty succeeded in reaching the target area which they successfully attacked despite heavy antiaircraft fire and a large number of enemy fighter airplanes. Seventeen enemy fighters are reported destroyed; three of our bombers are missing.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

General Spaatz reports that action has been initiated to reconstitute the French Air Force in North Africa. Twenty-five P-40 fighters have been turned over to the Lafayette Squadron which will shortly proceed to the front under the operational control of General Giraud.

AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER

On December 29 twelve heavy bombers from the Ninth Air Force were dispatched to attack shipping at Tunis. Because of overcast conditions they were diverted to Sousse where hits were observed on a merchant vessel and in the dock area. Although antiaircraft fire was heavy and accurate, only slight damage was inflicted on our aircraft.
ASIATIC THEATER

General Bissell reports that on December 27 twelve heavy bombers, operating from Pandavaswar (130 miles northwest of Calcutta), effectively attacked the railway station, docks, airdrome and arsenal at Bangkok.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

1. In his operations summary for December 29, General MacArthur reports that US and Australian troops, consolidating their gains near Buna Mission, have confined the enemy to the vicinity of the Buna Government Station and into a V-shaped area to the east. Lone heavy bomber raids were carried out against Lae and Gasmata; three light bombers harassed the enemy on a coastal sweep between Amboga and Salamaua.

2. The War Department informed General MacArthur that the Australian 9th Division and other remaining Australian troops in the Middle East, except the air personnel, will be returned to Australia, departing the latter part of January.

3. General Harmon reports that on December 28 Munda was attacked by 18 US airplanes which set fire to three Zeros and destroyed one antiaircraft gun and crew. Of nine Zeros and two
Japanese bombers encountered over Manda that day, one bomber was shot down.

General Harmon also reports that twelve of his heavy bombers have been transferred to Port Moresby to carry out, under General MacArthur, attacks against enemy shipping at Rabaul for about ten days or until remunerative targets there are exhausted.
A hostile intercepting sector was reported over Ireland, December 29.

AIRPLANE TARGETS

Nothing significant in Russia on January 7, were characterized by
a gradual shifting of both forces, although the main line of essentially
unaffected, increased enemy activity in the latter area was reported. On
December 30 an enemy counterattack in that area is reported to have made
considerable progress.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 385

0700 December 29 to 0700 December 30, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

During the night December 29-30, six Doolittle-Jerry raids, under Lt.
Amell, mounted the flakging and sector investigating in Boston, resulting
in no damage.
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (LESS TORCH)

A hostile four-motored bomber was reported over Iceland, December 28.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

Ground operations in Tunisia on December 27 were characterized by aggressive patrolling by both sides, although the main lines are essentially unchanged. Increased enemy activity in the Gafsa area was apparent. The French reported the capture of some 100 prisoners near Oued Kebir, but on December 28 an enemy counterattack in that area is reported to have made considerable progress. An enemy attack with an estimated battalion of infantry supported by artillery in the Hedjous area (north of Medjez-el-Bab) is reportedly being held.

In a destructive air attack on the harbor at Sousse on December 27, fourteen US heavy bombers, bombing from 23,000 feet, claimed hits on four ships, one of which was seen to blow up. Docks and warehouses also were severely damaged. Biskra was again attacked by three enemy aircraft, but no damage or casualties resulted. On December 28 enemy air transport and reconnaissance activities continued. Ten enemy fighters on a sweep were intercepted over Tebessa by American P-38 fighters, which shot down two of the enemy airplanes.

AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER

During the night December 27-28, six British heavy bombers, under US command, attacked the shipping and harbor installations at Sousse, causing
large fires; all bombers returned safely.

On December 28, during daylight hours, 22 US heavy bombers, again attacking Sousse harbor, obtained hits on two tankers and started fires along the quay. More than seven enemy planes attacked this formation, two of which were shot down. One of our bombers is missing.

ASIATIC THEATER

On December 27, a striking force of ten US medium bombers from Kunming escorted by eleven fighters bombed and machine-gunned aircraft and installations at Lashio airdrome. Three enemy aircraft were destroyed and others probably damaged in the dispersal area. One of our bombers which failed to reach the primary target bombed Mengmao (east of Lungling), obtained three direct hits on the barracks there, and observed a concentration of enemy motor transport in the vicinity. A striking force of three medium bombers and three fighters, dispatched to attack the latter target, reported that major damage was inflicted.

A lone fighter airplane machine-gunned a moving train north of Maymyo, setting coaches on fire and damaging the locomotive.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

1. In his operations summary for December 28, General MacArthur reports that US troops continued their slow relentless progress in the Buna area, repulsing enemy counterattacks and capturing thirteen enemy bunkers.
In addition to supporting these ground operations, our aircraft made destructive bombing attacks against the airfields at Lae, Kavieng and Gasmata. Eight heavy bombers, attacking Rabaul, scored direct hits on a heavy cruiser or large transport. Our aircraft also attacked a landing strip at Pulilro (Timor) with unobserved results. One enemy reconnaissance airplane was shot down. Enemy aircraft made an ineffective raid on Merauke (New Guinea).

2. General Harmon reports that the second enemy cargo ship attacked by a striking force of dive bombers, December 26, sank late that day.

The next day our pursuit planes attacked enemy supply parachutes at Tassafaronga. A striking force of twelve dive bombers and fourteen pursuit airplanes bombed and strafed the enemy bivouac area near Kokumbona.

Munda was again attacked, and Marine fighters shot down three Zeros over the field. One enemy airplane was destroyed on the field. All our airplanes returned undamaged.
No. 384

0700 December 28 to 0700 December 29, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (LESS TORCH)

An airplane, believed to be a Focke-Wulf, was fired on by our antiaircraft units in Iceland December 27.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

On December 26 eighteen "flying fortresses" attacked shipping at Sfax, sinking one small and two large ships. Bizerte was attacked by eighteen "flying fortresses" which started fires among the shipping and in the dock area. Successful Allied fighter sweeps were made during the day. Three enemy airplanes ineffectively bombed the Allied airfield at Biskra. In all, four US aircraft were shot down or missing, and two enemy aircraft were destroyed.

Ground activity in Tunisia was limited to patrolling during December 27.

AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER

General Brereton reports that, on the night of December 26-27, five of his heavy bombers attacked Tunis, Sousse and Sfax, hits being observed in the barracks and dock area at Sfax.

The next day, twelve US heavy bombers, attacking the harbor and shipping at Sousse, obtained numerous hits on dock installations, direct hits on one merchant vessel, and caused explosions on the
commercial wharf and in the railroad yards. All our aircraft returned safely.

**ASIATIC THEATER**

Enemy fighters and medium bombers caused no damage in a surprise attack against our airfield at Yunnanyi, December 25. The next day a similar force returned and were met in combat by a total of 17 US fighters. The few bombs dropped on our airfield did little damage and the enemy lost three bombers and five fighters while we lost two fighters.

The same day, five US medium bombers escorted by 11 fighters attacked Lashio, starting large fires in the warehouse area. On the return flight, our fighters shot down one Japanese airplane.

**PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS**

1. In his summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GMT, December 27, General MacArthur reports that, during operations furthering the reduction of the enemy area around Buna, direct artillery fire was employed to destroy enemy bunkers. A Japanese counterattack was repulsed. Our positions were shelled from the sea the night of December 27-28, probably by a Japanese submarine. Allied artillery engaged barges off Buna Mission with unobserved results.

Twenty to thirty enemy fighters and seven or eight dive bombers, attacking the Allied forces near Cape Endaedere, were intercepted by
twelve fighters over Buna; nine (probably twelve) enemy fighters and two dive bombers were destroyed. Our heavy bombers, attacking enemy shipping at Rabaul destroyed one large cargo vessel and left two medium cargo vessels afire. Other bombing attacks were carried out against the Buna Mission area, Finschhafen, enemy transportation near the mouth of the Amboga River, and Japanese installations and personnel on Timor. One Japanese and one Allied airplane were shot down.

2. General Harmon reports that, on December 26, a striking force of dive bombers escorted by pursuit aircraft attacked two enemy cargo ships in Wickham Anchorage (near New Georgia), sinking one 3,000-ton vessel. Lone "flying fortresses", dispatched on harassing missions from Guadalcanal, bombed Munda, Rekata, Kahili and Tonolei. The bomber attacking Tonolei scored a direct hit on an unidentified ship.
WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 383

0700 December 27 to 0700 December 28, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE
WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Orders were issued for the constitution and activation of the 17th Airborne Division (less one parachute infantry regiment) at Hoffman, North Carolina, on April 15, 1943. This will be the fourth division of this type to be organized, the others being the 11th, 82d, and 101st.

EUROPEAN THEATER (LESS TORCH)

An unidentified airplane was reported over Iceland, December 26.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

1. There was little change in the situation on the Tunisian front on December 26; the weather was fine but the ground still boggy. Enemy aircraft kept our area under surveillance; Algiers and Bougie were bombed.

2. General Eisenhower reports that the Imperial Council of French Africa, consisting of General Giraud, Governor General Boisson, General Bergeret, Governor General Chatel, Resident General Nogues, met December 26 to designate the successor of Admiral Darlan and unanimously decided to appoint General Giraud as High Commissioner in French Africa and Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces, this appointment to take effect immediately.

3. The War Department notified General Eisenhower that the Air
Echelon of the 325th Fighter Group will sail on the "Ranger", for fly-away delivery at Casablanca in January. The ground echelon of this group will be available for shipment on an early convoy.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT December 26, General MacArthur reports that an enemy vessel shelled Buna. US PT boats intercepted, torpedoed and sank an enemy submarine off the mouth of the Kumusi River; and a US submarine intercepted and sank an enemy submarine off Gasmata. Local gains were made by our ground forces who drove a wedge through the enemy position near Buna and reached the sea.

Japanese attacks were reported from Timor on December 24.

Enemy air attacks were carried out against our installations in the Buna-Gona area during the day but no damage resulted. Seven (probably eleven) Zeros were shot down for a loss of three of our aircraft. A US heavy bomber successfully attacked an 8,000-ton merchant vessel in convoy in St. George's Channel; the vessel, when last seen, was burning and being abandoned.

Other air attacks were carried out against enemy stores in Timor, the airdrome at Cape Gloucester, and installations at Finschhafen, Madang, Jacquinot Bay (New Britain) and along the northeast coast of New Guinea.
WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 382

0700 December 26 to 0700 December 27, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

1. On December 27, the Germans attempted to advance the enemy line and were stopped by heavy fire from the hill six miles east of Mendef-El-Ala. The fighting was very heavy and continued all day. Operations in the area are now being reviewed and plans are being made to continue fighting.

2. Several capture/losses were made by both sides. The Americans captured several tanks and vehicles, while our troops captured a hill, a town, and a bridge, which were then used to establish a defensive line. The enemy was repulsed in the area east of Mendef-El-Ala. The third day of fighting was marked by intense air activity with both sides engaging each other.

3. The War Department photoreconnaissance aircraft mission by B-24s was successful in providing valuable visual information.
GENERAL

Generals Eisenhower and Andrews were informed that a commission under Rear Admiral Charles Stephenson will leave for Cairo within a week to study typhus and preventative measures in the Middle East. It may also visit Portugal, Spain, Russia, Turkey, and possibly Northwest Africa.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

General Buckner reports that on December 25 a bomber-reconnaissance mission revealed eight enemy monoplanes on the beach at Holtz Bay, Attu, and five enemy barges near Kiska.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

1. On December 24, despite the rain and boggy ground, the Guards Brigade attacked the enemy who held the crest of the hill six miles NNE of Medjez-el-Bab. The fighting swayed back and forth during the day. Operations in the air were largely confined to routine patrolling.

   Strong enemy counterattacks at dawn on Christmas Day forced our troops off this hill, but later that day Allied troops, in a successful counterattack, recaptured the crest. Enemy activity continued in the area east of Medjez-el-Bab; attacks northwest of Kairouan and near Pichon were repulsed by Allied troops. There was little air activity on December 25.

2. The War Department authorized General Eisenhower to sell to
Spain the three transport airplanes interned there, delivery to be made when we are secure in the Mediterranean and when the airplanes could no longer be used against him.

ASIATIC THEATER

A report from General Bissell mentions operations December 22 and 23 in which our fighter aircraft successfully attacked enemy motor transport in the vicinity of Lungeing and destroyed one of two Japanese bombers encountered in that vicinity.

On December 24, four medium bombers attacked Tengchung, Western Yunnan.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

In operations on Christmas Day, General Harmon's "flying fortresses" attacked Munda airfield, Buka, and Rabaul. At Rabaul, three 500-lb. bomb hits were obtained on a large transport or cargo vessel and seven near misses were observed close to three other cargo ships. The enemy made no attempt to intercept any of these missions and all our bombers returned.
WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 381

0700 December 25 to 0700 December 26, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

On December 25 two fighter aircraft attacked Wellington, New Zealand. On December 26, five fighter aircraft attacked supply transporters at Wellington (burnt).
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (LESS TORCH)

An unidentified airplane was reported over Iceland, December 24.

NORTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS

On December 23 patrolling continued. In capturing and holding a
hill six miles NNE of Medjiz-el-Bab, the British Guards Brigade sus-
tained a hundred casualties. A battalion of the US 18th Regimental
Combat team relieved the 2d Bn. Coldstream Guards at this point.
Rainy weather impeded both air and ground activity.

ASIATIC THEATER

General Bissell reports that on December 22 five medium bombers
attacked the railroad yards at Sagaing (near Mandalay) while four
fighter aircraft attacked the airdrome at Son La (130 miles west of
Hanoi) where they shot down an enemy airplane. Five medium bombers
also attacked Lashio, scoring hits on the cantonment and warehouses.

On December 23 ten pursuit aircraft attacked Maingkwan, Burma.

On December 24, four fighter airplanes attacked enemy transporta-
tion at Taiphanga (Burma).

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300
GCT, December 24, General MacArthur reports that the steady progress
of his troops in the Buna area continued, supported by low-altitude air attacks on the enemy. Bombers attacked Lae, Madang and Gasmata air-dromes, and sank an 1800-ton transport in the harbor at Arawe (New Britain). One heavy bomber, intercepted by 13 enemy aircraft, shot down 3, plus one "probable". A 5,000-6,000 ton enemy vessel at Gasmata was sunk by six "flying fortresses", and nine Hudson bombers scored a direct hit on an enemy transport off the northwest coast of Timor.

2. In his summary for the period ending 1300 OCT, December 25, General MacArthur reports that 200 Japanese from Sohana landed at N.E. New Guinea, Tinuta Mission, Bougainville, destroyed the mission, and moved inland. There were no appreciable gains by Allied forces in New Guinea that day although they maintained their pressure on the enemy. An attempt by the Japanese to land small boats near Buna Mission the night of December 25-26, was engaged with artillery and mortar fire but results were unknown. Two enemy landing barges in the vicinity of Cape Ward Hunt were attacked by US PT boats the night of December 24-25; casualties were inflicted although the extent of the damage was unknown. Single bombers attacked Cape Gloucester and Lae, enemy troops and barges on northeastern Timor and a large submarine in a bay off the southeast coast of New Britain.

3. General Harmon reports that a force of nine Navy bombers, escorted by thirteen Army and Navy fighter aircraft, caught a large
number of enemy aircraft on the ground at Munda. Four of eight Zeros which attempted to intercept our mission were shot down by our escorting aircraft. Ten enemy airplanes were shot down while taking off and between ten and twelve more destroyed by bombing while awaiting take-off. Later that day, eight of our bombers and sixteen fighters bombed the runway at Munda and the defense installations around the field.

Another striking force dispatched to attack a small convoy encountered bad weather but sighted thirteen landing barges loaded with troops and supplies off Munda Point. Attacking with 100 and 500-lb. bombs, our planes sank all but four of the barges and report that only a few of the personnel escaped.

All of our airplanes returned.

4. General Emmons reports that on December 23, twenty-six heavy bombers attacked Wake Island from about 4,000 feet. 138 500-lb. bombs, plus incendiaries, were dropped with observed effect, and there was every indication that the attack was a complete surprise. All airplanes returned.
NORTH CHINA

General Marshall reports that on December 23 and 24 heavy bombing attacks were made on the industrial and port facilities at Shanghai, dropping over 40,000 short tons of bombs which caused many fires in the areas attacked.

The rail route from Nanjing (north of Atchab) was effectively blocked, December 21, by the Chinese defensive.

4. On December 27 five bombers arrived at Nanking, while additional bombers were being ready to strike the docks and warehouses.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

PACIFIC AND SOUTH PACIFIC AREA

No. 380

0700 December 24 to 0700 December 25, 1942

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

It was reported that 450days laden atSingapore on the southwest coast of Dutch New Guinea, December 21.
ASIATIC THEATER

General Miseell reports that on December 20 nine heavy bombers attacked the railroad yards and airdrome at Rangoon, dropping more than seventeen tons of bombs which scored many hits in the target areas.

Myoakung railroad junction (north of Akyab) was effectively bombed, December 21, by six medium bombers.

On December 22 five heavy bombers again attacked Rangoon, seventeen bombs being seen to strike the docks and warehouses.

PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREAS

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GMT, December 23, General MacArthur reports that US and Australian troops made a short advance in the Buna area, bringing the buildings of the government station at Buna under our fire. In New Britain our bombers attacked the airdrome at Cape Glouester twice and again bombed a camouflaged vessel off Arawe. Our aircraft also harassed the enemy in Timor. Four enemy aircraft were shot down during the day, with no loss of our own.

It was reported that 450 Japs landed at Kaukenau on the southwest coast of Dutch New Guinea, December 22.
2. General Harmon reports that on December 21 two "flying fortresses" attacking two cargo vessels near Buin scored a direct hit on one of them which was observed burning and settling. Other bomber raids were carried out against Munda, Kahili, and Sohana Island (Buka Passage).
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