

MR 203 (2) Sec. 1404 "WAR DEPARTMENT OPERATIONAL SUMMARY"

(MARCH, 1943)

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Date- AUG 29 1972

Signature- RANP

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 476

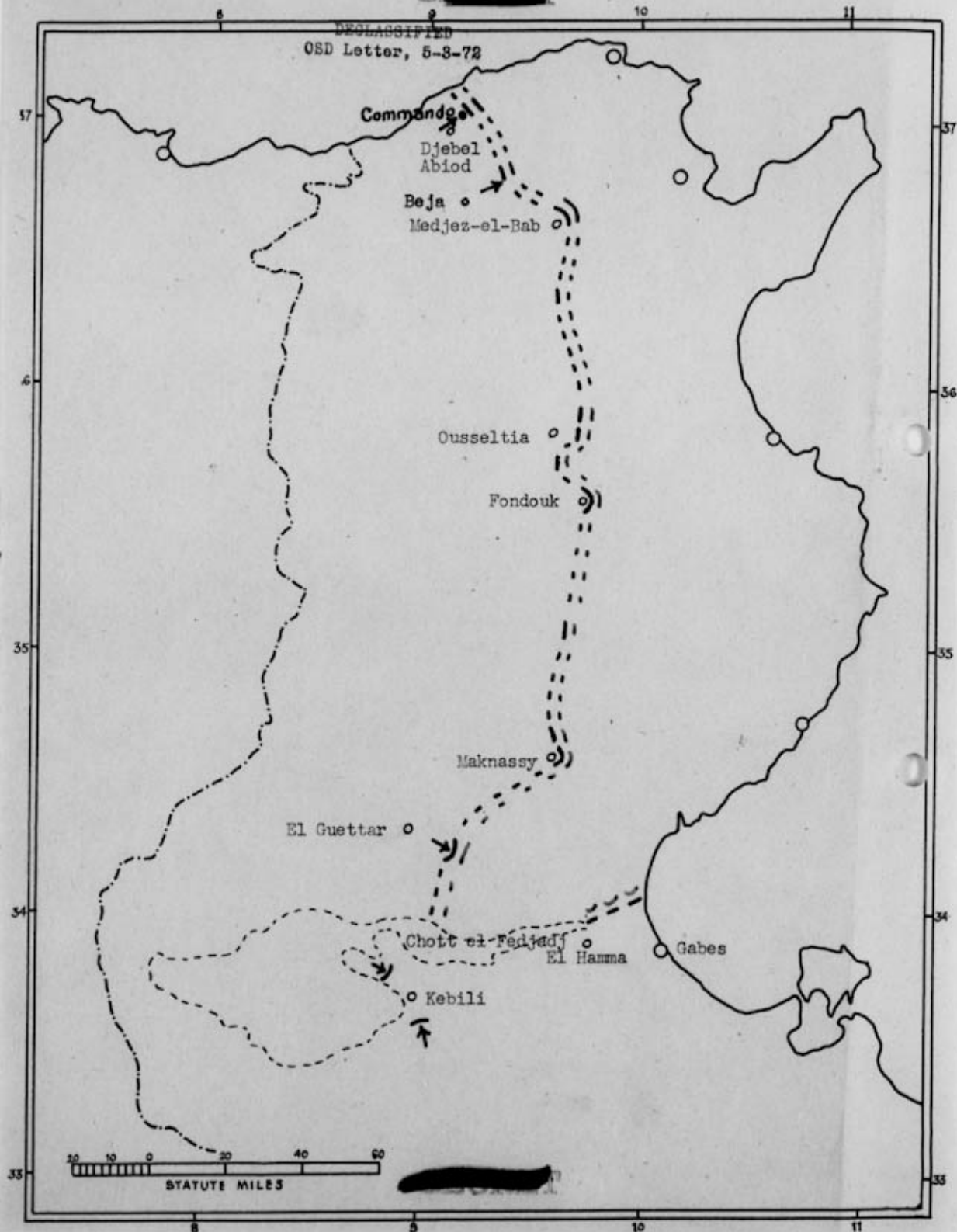
0700 March 30 to 0700 March 31, 1943 - *WAL*

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72



WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On March 29 six B-24's and six B-25's dropped more than 28 tons of bombs on the runway at Kiska, at least 12 hits being made on the target. Eleven P-38's, furnishing fighter protection for the mission, strafed the runway and main camp areas and gun installations in the vicinity. All of our planes returned safely although several were damaged by heavy and accurate antiaircraft fire.

EUROPEAN THEATER

In the March 28 bombing of Rouen our seventy B-17's dropped 209 tons of high explosives on the locomotive and repair sheds and in the railroad yards with good results. Our one B-17 which was lost was seen to crash in the water off the French coast. Excellent support was furnished our mission by RAF Spitfires.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. Elements of the British X Corps which had flanked the west end of the Mareth line, entered Gabes shortly before noon, March 29, and British armored columns occupied El Hamma. Other units of the British Eighth Army completed their occupation of the Mareth positions and pressed northward; by noon of March 30 contact had been made with enemy-prepared positions between the Gulf of Gabes and the Chott el



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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

Fedjadj. Allied units were advancing on Kebili from the northwest and south.

The March 29 attack of the US 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions carried them to their objectives dominating the Gafsa-Gabes highway 12 miles east of El Guettar. French patrols pushed across the Cusseltia valley.

In the north, enemy units were withdrawing north and east from Djebel Abiod in the face of a furious British attack; the commando force which landed four days previously was attacked by the enemy after penetrating 12 miles inland. The British also attacked east of Beja.

During March 28 and 29 Allied fighter and bomber attacks continued on the enemy forces retreating north from Gabes and on his airfields. Allied fighter sweeps in central and northern Tunisia were effective against troop concentrations east of Maknassy and enemy aircraft. General Brereton's bombers dropped more than 30 tons of bombs on Sfax.

2. General Spaatz reports that our P-40-L's are doing excellent work. This is a lightened form of medium-altitude fighter airplane. Last week while engaged in escorting bombers a group of P-40-L's destroyed five ME-109's and damaged two others. On March 28 this same group on a reconnaissance mission destroyed seven ME-109's, with a loss of one of our planes.

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

ASIATIC THEATER

1. On March 29 P-40 aircraft of the 14th Air Force flew numerous offensive reconnaissance missions during which enemy fuel storage installations near Bhamo were damaged, and eight locomotives either damaged or destroyed near Lashio. A pilot of the 51st Fighter Group flew a rescue mission in a primary trainer, landing and taking off under fire within one mile of enemy headquarters to pick up another fighter pilot who had been forced down behind enemy lines northwest of Myitkyina.

While P-40's of the 10th Air Force bombed and strafed enemy motor transport, headquarters installations and troop columns in northern Burma, four B-24's successfully attacked the docks at Tavoy (southern Burma) and a nearby mining plant; this target was some 1,100 miles from the bombers' base. On their return trip two ships and a lighthouse along the south Burma coast were bombed and machine-gunned.

2. During the month of February a total of 3538 tons of freight were carried from India to China by the air freight route. Due to bad weather airplanes could operate on 24 days only.

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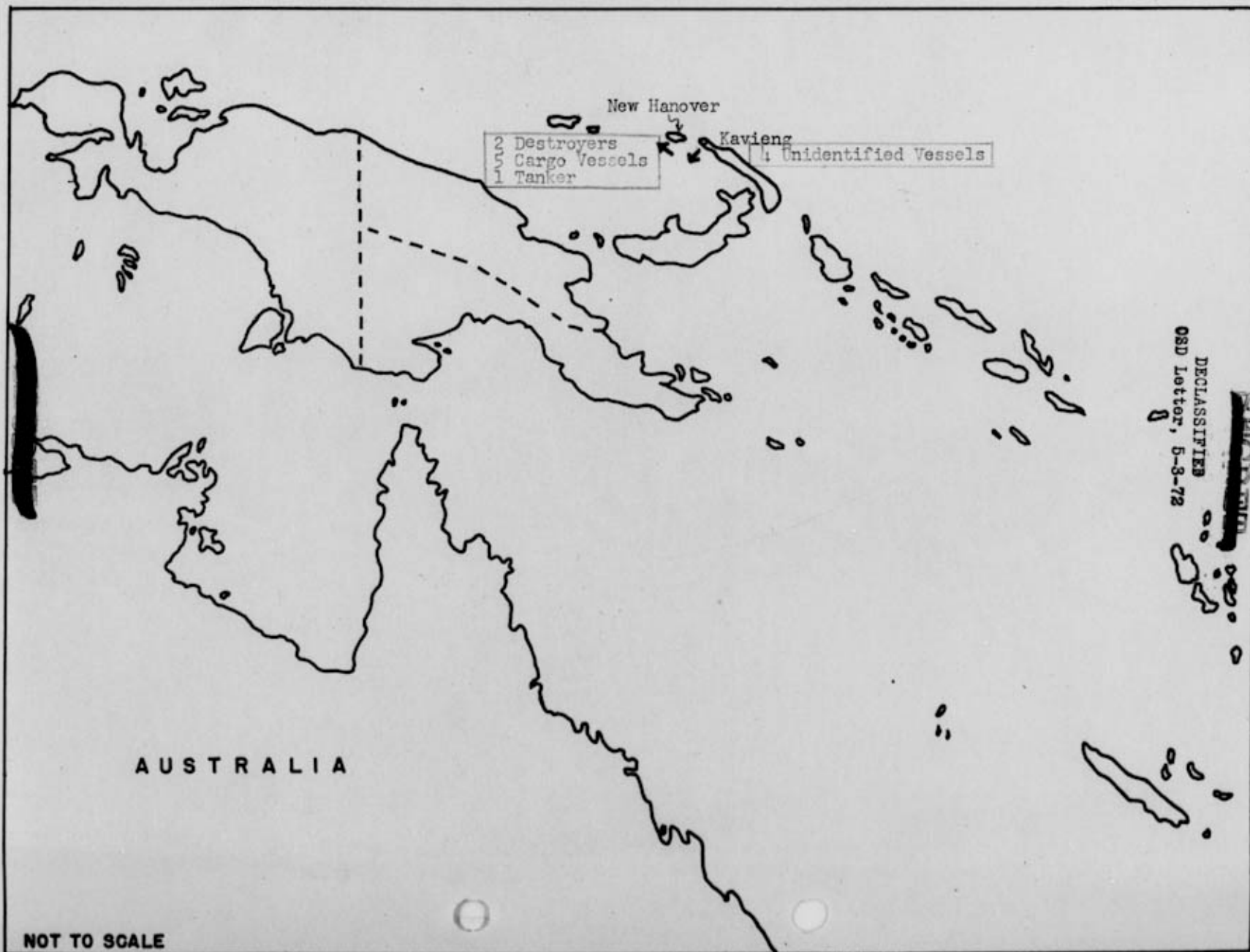
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1400 GCT, March 29, General MacArthur reports that six Australian bombers attacked targets in the Kai Islands, while other Allied reconnaissance planes attacked Gasmata airdrome and Cape Gloucester runway and Madang Harbor. In the Mubo area Allied patrols are in contact with enemy forward positions.

An 8,000-ton merchant vessel was discovered 30 miles north of New Hanover, a convoy of two destroyers, five medium merchant vessels, and one tanker 30 miles southwest of New Hanover, and a group of four unidentified vessels 50 miles southwest of Kavieng.

2. The Commanding General, Army Air Forces, has been directed to prepare one additional heavy bombardment group and one medium bombardment group for movement to Australia to serve with the 5th Air Force.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 475

0700 March 29 to 0700 March 30, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 28 the British Eighth Army advanced and occupied the Mareth positions with advanced elements of its X Corps, which had flanked the west end of this line, being reported two miles south of El Hama and 13 miles southwest of Gabes and moving on these towns. More than 6,000 prisoners, the majority German, have been taken.

The US 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions, meeting stubborn enemy resistance, attacked in an effort to capture the high ground north and south of the Gafsa-Gabes highway east of El Guettar. Allied patrols were aggressive along the Central Tunisian front. Little change was reported near Maknassy or Fondouk, but to the north a limited-objective British attack astride the Sedjenane road made some progress in spite of bad weather; by nightfall over 500 prisoners had been taken.

Bad weather restricted bombing operations, but Allied fighters and fighter-bombers continued to harass the enemy on both fronts; Axis aircraft performed battle missions on a reduced scale.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 28 five B-24's sowed 30 half-ton magnetic mines in the Rangoon River shipping channels.

The next day two P-40's of the 14th Air Force, while making an offensive reconnaissance of the western Yunnan front, set fire to

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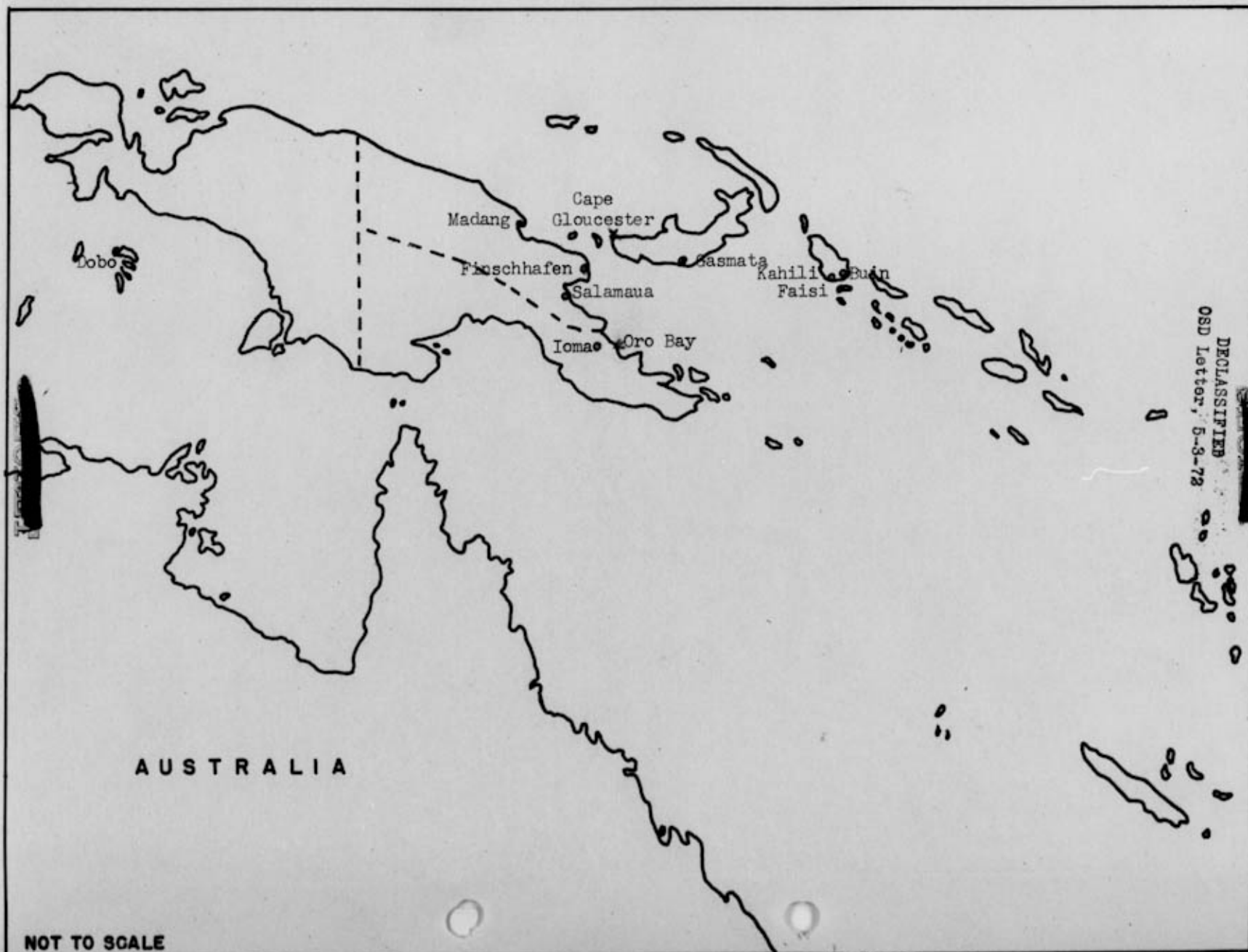
piles of enemy gasoline drums; the resultant fire was visible for fifty miles. One of our pursuit planes did not return from this mission.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

General MacArthur reports that 40 enemy bombers, escorted by a large formation of fighter planes, attacked shipping and wharf installations at Oro Bay on March 27; one small Allied ship was sunk, another set afire and beached, and the wharf was damaged. US pursuit planes destroyed 13 (probably 25) of the enemy aircraft; one of our fighter planes is missing. A small enemy air attack the same day in the Ioma area caused no damage. During the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 28, Allied bombers carried out small scale attacks on the Gasmata, Cape Gloucester, Finschhafen, Madang, Dobo, and Salamaua areas and destroyed one of two enemy barges found north of Finschhafen.

PACIFIC THEATER

Six US fighter planes, attacking the enemy float plane base at Faizi, March 29, set five to seven enemy aircraft afire and on their return trip strafed an enemy destroyer, leaving the vessel smoking. B-17's bombed the enemy air bases at Buin and Kahili; hits were observed on the runways and in the revetment areas. All of our planes returned safely.





WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 474

0700 March 28 to 0700 March 29, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 27 four B-24's, returning from an unsuccessful attempt to contact the enemy convoy reported west of Attu, made a minimum-altitude attack on Kiska, scoring hits on the radar site and in the hangar area. Army aircraft furnished cover for our naval task force.

2. The War Department notified Generals Brett and Walsh to use every effort to effect, in agreement with the French authorities, the earliest possible completion of an airfield near Cayenne for the tactical use of our units in the Antilles, as well as of our Air Transport Command.

3. The Army Ground Forces issued orders for the movement of the 1st Special Service Force from Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana, to Camp Bradford, 10 miles east of Norfolk, Virginia, for training in amphibious operations.

EUROPEAN THEATER

1. A Focke-Wulf Kurier was sighted over Iceland on March 27.

2. Seventy B-17's of the US 8th Air Force attacked the railroad yards at Rouen on March 28, and good results were reported in spite of cloudy conditions. Enemy air opposition was strong and persistent,

five (probably eight) enemy fighter airplanes being destroyed; one of our bombers failed to return.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

By night March 27, the US 34th Infantry Division, continuing its eastward advance, had entered Fondouk encountering but slight opposition. Allied fighter and light bomber aircraft attacked enemy movements along the roads to Gabes from El Hamma and the Mareth line, intercepted enemy fighters and dive-bombers deep within their own positions causing them to jettison their loads, and supported ground operations by striking at targets of opportunity. Weather impaired heavy and medium bomber operations and there was practically no enemy opposition except along the coast. Enemy torpedo aircraft made several attacks on an Allied eastbound convoy between Djidjelli and Bougie; one of our merchantmen was hit. Nine enemy and two Allied airplanes were destroyed in the day's operations. On March 26 the air transport movement between Italy and Tunisia was unusually heavy.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 27 six B-24's sowed magnetic mines in the shipping channels of the Rangoon River. As a diversion, six other B-24's bombed Rangoon and a nearby airdrome. Effective blackout of the area prevented precision bombing but it is believed that good results were obtained.

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SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 27, General MacArthur reports that a B-24 on reconnaissance bombed and machine-gunned an 8,000-ton cargo vessel in Bogia harbor (northeastern New Guinea). Two other B-24's, returning from reconnaissance missions, bombed the water front and damaged buildings at Saumlakki (Tanimbar Is.). Light bombers attacked enemy installations in the vicinity of Lae, Mubo, and Salamaua where a large explosion resulted.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 473

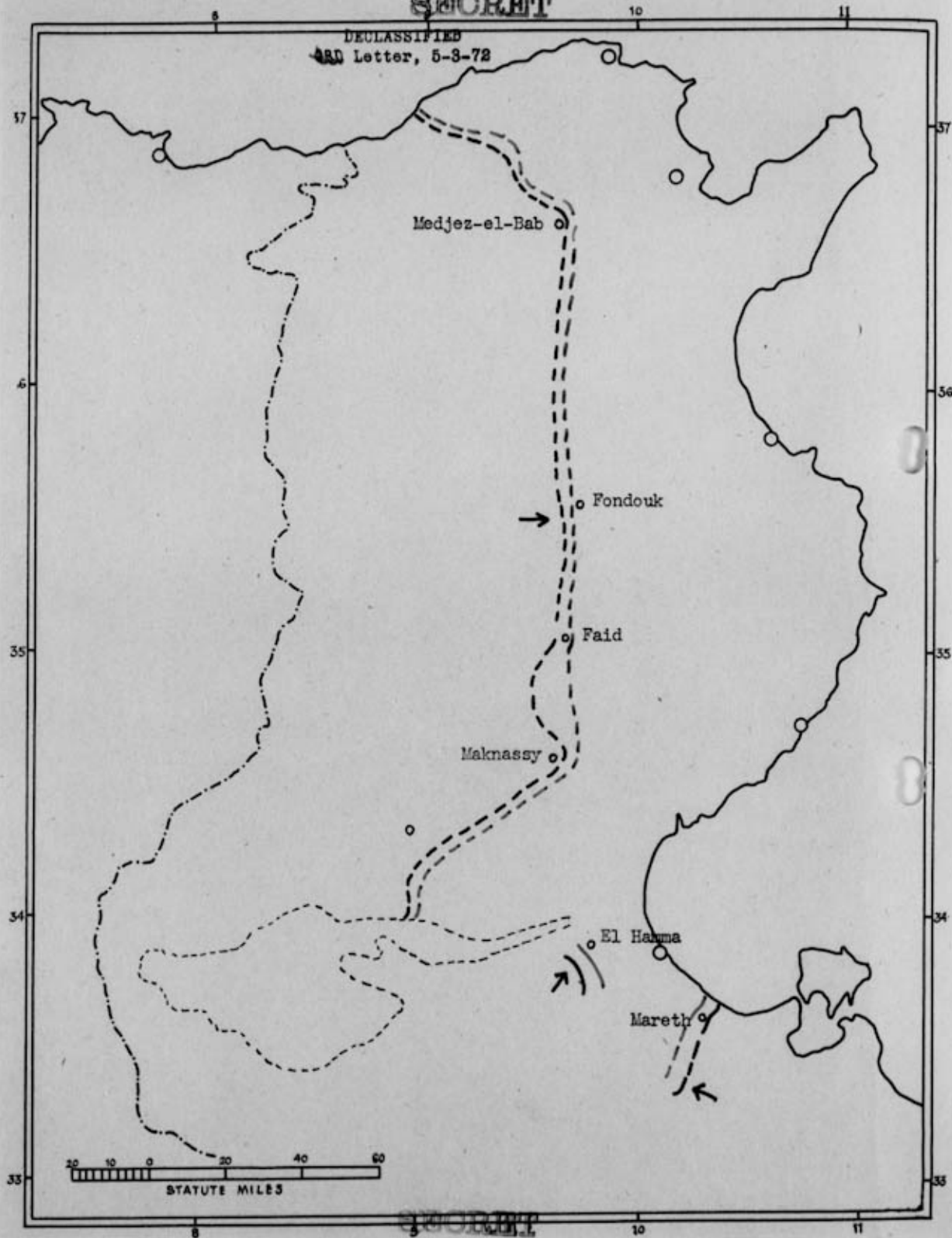
0700 March 27 to 0700 March 28, 1943

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AD Letter, 5-3-72



EUROPEAN THEATER

An unidentified airplane was plotted over Iceland on March 26.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On the afternoon of March 26, the X Corps (1st Armored Division, 2d New Zealand Division, 8th Armored Brigade, and Le Clerc's force) launched an attack which by evening of the 27th had reached a point two miles from El Hamma. The 4th Indian Division on the south of the Mareth Line, after being delayed by minefields and by enemy resistance, continued their advance during the 27th. Heavy Axis movements were reported on that day north and northwest from the Mareth Line and from El Hamma. At dawn on March 27, the US 34th Infantry Division attacked eastward in central Tunisia and by 1800 had reached a point ten miles southwest of Pondouk, after encountering slight opposition.

On March 26 Allied air forces supported ground operations. The enemy continued his usual air transport and reconnaissance missions. Shipping in Algiers harbor was attacked by six enemy bombers which hit one empty Allied ship. In the day's operations one Allied and two enemy bombers were reported destroyed.

ASIATIC THEATER

On March 26 two P-40's of the 14th Air Force flew an offensive reconnaissance mission during which they machine-gunned and burned two moving trucks in the vicinity of Myitkyina.

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OSD Letter, 6-3-78

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 26, General MacArthur describes a three-hour night bombing attack against Wewak where photographic reconnaissance showed enemy marine activity and a concentration of 34 landing barges in the harbor; one medium merchant vessel was badly damaged but other results were unobserved. Allied light and medium bombers attacked enemy positions near Lae, Salamaua, and Mubo. ~~SECRET~~

Reconnaissance confirmed previous reports of concentrations of enemy air and naval strength in the Bismarcks.

The enemy raided Marauke (western New Guinea), causing some damage to civil administration buildings. Our B-24's shot down one enemy fighter plane during the day's operations.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 26 fifteen B-24's of the 13th Air Force dropped eight tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs on Nauru Island (western Gilberts), hitting the runway, quarters and barracks area, and probably several airplanes on the ground.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 472

0700 March 26 to 0700 March 27, 1943

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ORD Letter, 6-3-72

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On March 26, following a report of an enemy task force of four cruisers, four destroyers and two transports, sighted about 137 miles west of Attu, our air forces were alerted to strike. Further details have not been reported.

Earlier in the day eleven B-24's and three B-25's dropped some 15 tons of bombs on the Kiska airfield, camp area, and defensive works. During this day and the previous two days P-38's escorted medium bombers and also attacked the hangar, beach, and camp areas.

EUROPEAN THEATER

At least two unidentified airplanes were reported over Iceland on March 25.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

German panzer units appeared to have been replaced northeast of Mareth largely by Italian troops and to have moved to the battle area southwest of El Hamma; hard fighting continued during March 25 on the front of the New Zealand Corps in the latter area. A light attack on the 1st US Infantry Division was repulsed; our 1st Armored Division continued its attack on the pass six miles east of Maknassy. Little

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activity was reported to the north. ~~That night B-24's attacked Mandalay,~~

During March 25 Allied air forces renewed their attacks on enemy positions, communications, and airfields while Axis aircraft performed similar combat missions on a somewhat reduced scale. Eighteen enemy bombers, intercepted by our fighters, were forced to jettison their bombs in their own area. RAF bombers attacked the railroad junction west of Sfax and Hurricane "tank-busters" were again successful against enemy armored vehicles. Six enemy airplanes were claimed destroyed; three Allied aircraft are missing.

More than 100 three-motored airplanes and a number of six-engined transports operated between Italy and Tunisia on March 24.

ASIATIC THEATER

On March 23, nine B-25's destroyed barracks and warehouses near the enemy airdrome at Meiktila (100 miles south of Mandalay). On March 24, two B-17's strafed river boats south of Mandalay, and 18 B-24's, dropping 48 one-ton bombs on the Myitnge bridge (in the same region), damaged both approaches and rendered the bridge unserviceable. The same day eight B-25's damaged enemy railroad installations at Maymyo (northeast of Mandalay).

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT,

March 25, General MacArthur reports that eight B-24's attacked Rabaul, causing fires in the town. Five light bombers raided the Salamaua area and attacks were made by heavy bombers on Gasmata, Lae, and on Ubili where one B-17 dropped bombs at half-hour intervals for three hours. Six B-24's scored direct hits on a wharf and two medium vessels at Ambon, shooting down one enemy fighter.

Photographs indicated the presence of 7 destroyers, other naval vessels, 145,000 tons of merchant shipping and 81 fighters and bomber aircraft in the vicinity of Rabaul.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 26 two enemy airplanes again approached Canton Island; one of them dropped eight bombs on the airfield, demolishing a Navy flying boat. Although the air warning system detected the approach of these airplanes, an attempt to intercept them was unsuccessful.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 471

0700 March 25 to 0700 March 26, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 25 nine B-24's and four B-25's bombed the landing strip and antiaircraft installations on Kiska Island, scoring some hits in the target area. Heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered but all of our airplanes returned.

2. A report has been received that the Northeast Greenland (native) sledge patrol was fired upon by a machine-gun in the vicinity of Eskimonaes (east coast of Greenland on 74th parallel). Headquarters, Greenland Base Command, is investigating.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

The enemy made several unsuccessful attacks against our 1st Infantry Division southeast of El Guettar on March 24; late that night another enemy attack was launched, details of which have not been reported. While the New Zealand Corps continued its pressure southwest of El Hamma, the coastal sector of the British Eighth Army front became quieter. Enemy pressure in northern Tunisia is diminishing; the area immediately northwest of Medjez-el-Bab was reported unoccupied.

Allied air forces continued their intensive attacks on enemy airfields, bombed enemy installations and positions near Mareth and Gabes, and attacked the dock area at Ferryville where one medium and two small merchant vessels were hit. Twenty-four medium bombers of General Brereton's force dropped 34 tons of bombs on Zarat, near the coastal

end of the Mareth line. Allied aircraft supported also ground operations and were especially effective against enemy tanks and motor transportation; nine (probably 10) enemy planes were destroyed and four Allied aircraft lost.

In the March 22 attack on Palermo by B-17's of the 12th Air Force one ship was blown up; another, a 12,000-ton vessel, received several hits causing an explosion and list, another large ship was hit once, and an escort twice.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

Heavy bombers of the US 9th Air Force attacked Messina on March 24 dropping 55 tons of bombs. Direct hits were observed in the target area causing fires in the railroad yards, naval oil and storage tanks, and ferry terminal. Two enemy fighter planes were destroyed.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 24, General MacArthur reports that Allied air activity consisted of a series of attacks on Gasmata, Lae, Buka, enemy positions in the Mubo area; west of New Guinea Japanese-occupied points in the Kei Islands were attacked.

A reconnaissance B-17 reported the presence of a destroyer and three freighters in the harbor at Wewak; this airplane shot down one, possibly



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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

two, enemy fighter aircraft. Enemy air raids on Milne Bay and Oro Bay did no damage.

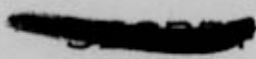
PACIFIC THEATER

1. On March 24, twenty-four torpedo bombers and three B-17's attacked the Kahili airdrome; results have not been reported.

2. The 172d Combat Team (172d Infantry Regiment, 103d Field Artillery Battalion and other units of the 43d Division) consisting of 157 officers, 34 warrant officers and 3,441 enlisted men arrived at Guadalcanal on March 23. These units were aboard the "President Coolidge" when that ship was sunk off Espiritu Santo on October 26, 1942 and since then have been on that island.

EUROPEAN THEATER

The Army Service Forces notified General Lee that the reduction in Russian requirements for the M-4 medium tank will permit the US to meet all present British requirements for this tank and also to send an additional 4,000 to England to replace an equal number of Cromwell tanks which the British propose to produce this year. Since shipping is inadequate to transport these tanks to England in addition to railroad equipment already on order, General Lee was instructed to suggest to Mr. Harriman that the British use their Cromwell tank facilities for the production of railroad equipment, thus freeing shipping for the transport of the M-4 tanks to the UK.





### DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

0700 March 24 to 0700 March 25, 1943

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

During the morning of March 23 enemy tanks raided the Hadjeb-el-Aioun area, apparently as a diverting mission, and withdrew. Further south, enemy forces, supported by about 50 tanks, twice attacked the front of the US 1st Infantry Division but withdrew after suffering considerable losses in men and tanks; another unsuccessful attack was made on this front early on March 24. During March 23 and 24 the enemy reacted violently along the Mareth line, particularly at the coastal end where the British were forced to withdraw; the situation is still obscure. The New Zealand Corps continued its pressure against the enemy southwest of El Hamma.

On the night of March 22-23 Allied night bombers attacked Sfax. The next day the Allied air forces supported front-line units, carrying out devastating attacks on enemy tanks, motor transports and troop concentrations; US B-17's and P-38's again attacked Bizerte. Enemy torpedo bombers were active over the Bay of Bougie; hostile fighter patrols and reconnaissance aircraft operated over the entire front. Enemy air transport activity between Italy, Sicily and Tunisia continued on a high level. During this period five (probably seven) enemy planes were destroyed and two Allied aircraft are reported missing.

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MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

On March 23 twenty-one US heavy bombers of the 9th Air Force dropped 50 tons of bombs on Messina, while 24 medium bombers dropped some 32 tons of bombs on targets in the Gabes area. A delayed report of March 22 states that 17 medium bombers attacked Gabes on that date also. Good results were observed on all missions.

US fighters were active in raids against enemy ground forces and as bomber escorts.

ASIATIC THEATER

Fighter airplanes of the 14th Air Force flew offensive reconnaissance missions on March 21, 22, and 23, damaging enemy locomotives and an enemy truck column.

On March 23 seven medium bombers attacked the Thazi Railroad Junction (75 miles south of Mandalay) with considerable effect.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 23, General MacArthur reports attacks by 27 B-17's against the Lakunai, Rapopo, and Vunakanau Airdromes near Rabaul where reconnaissances had revealed a concentration of more than 250 enemy airplanes.

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

Demolition, fragmentation, and incendiary bombs were used. Many small fires, presumably burning aircraft, were started as well as two large fires in the warehouses. An 8,000-ton vessel nearby was machine-gunned and set afire. Medium and light bombers made numerous other air attacks on targets in the vicinity of Salamaua and Mubo. Two Allied airplanes attacked Gasmata airdrome with unobserved results. The small (500 ton) ship attacked by our B-24 on March 21 was definitely sunk.

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DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

By: A/4

0700 March 21 to 0700 March 22, 1943

DATE FOR

THE MAIN BODY

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 469

0700 March 23 to 0700 March 24, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

GENERAL

The War Department informed all defense and overseas commanders of the development of a new type of very low barrage balloon battalion (operating 135 balloons singly or 270 in tandem one above the other). A lethal device attached to the mooring cable of these balloons explodes when the wire becomes entangled with an enemy plane. While these battalions, highly mobile, are normally used for protection against low-altitude bombardment and strafing aircraft, they can also be used in amphibious operations, ship convoys and for the defense of trains whenever the overhead clearance permits their attachment.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 22 aircraft of our 11th Air Force, in seven missions, dropped more than 24 tons of high explosives and incendiaries on the enemy positions and installations on Kiska; a heavy overcast impaired observation of results.

2. The Army Ground Forces issued orders for the movement of the 4th Motorized Division (Major General R. O. Barton) from Camp Gordon, Georgia, to Fort Dix, New Jersey, for permanent station.

EUROPEAN THEATER

Another unidentified airplane was reported over Iceland on March 22.

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Medjez-el-Bab

Pichon

Faid

Maknassy

US XX

US XX

Gafsa

El Guettar

FRENCH

Chott el Fedjedj

El Hamma

Gabes

Mareth

NZ

EIGHTH

STATUTE MILES



NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

The northern and central Tunisian fronts were relatively quiet during March 22. In the south, our 1st Armored Division, occupying Maknassy without opposition, reached a line four miles east of the town. By dark an attack by the US 1st Infantry Division against strong enemy positions southeast of El Guettar made some headway; the enemy, counterattacking the next morning, scored a local success but failed to dislodge our troops from the heights dominating the highway towards Gafsa. An enemy counterattack northeast of Mareth made some progress but at dark the British Eighth Army still maintained its bridgehead. On the morning of March 23 the New Zealand Corps was meeting with enemy tank resistance 10 miles southwest of El Hamma. In the current attacks more than 3,000 enemy prisoners have been captured.

The Tunisian and Western Desert Air Forces, closely coordinated, concentrated their attacks on enemy tanks, motor and troop concentrations, and airfields in southern Tunisia; British "Tank Buster" Hurricanes (armed with two 2-pounders) were particularly effective against armored vehicles. US B-17's and P-38's bombed Palermo harbor. The enemy's air force was active along the north coast, torpedoing an Allied transport midway between Oran and Algiers and a tanker anchored off Bone, and showed greater activity in the south where bomber, reconnaissance and battle missions were performed. During the day a total of 22 (probably 32) enemy airplanes were destroyed with a loss of four British planes.

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ASIATIC THEATER

On March 21 fifteen B-24's of the 10th Air Force dropped some 20 tons of bombs on the Gokteik Viaduct (northeast of Mandalay), demolishing one span and hitting the approaches. The next day nine B-25's repeated the attack, hitting the antiaircraft defenses.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 22, General MacArthur reports that the Japanese are strongly defending the Salamaua area. Three Japanese airplanes dropped 10 bombs on Milne Bay; no damage was caused. Four US B-24's and 9 Australian Beaufighters dropped 2,000-lb. bombs on the airfield at Gasmata and strafed the town and airdrome. The enemy airfield at Finschhafen also was harassed by one of our reconnaissance bombers.

2. The War Department informed General MacArthur that the rapid rehabilitation of rubber resources in reoccupied territory is of such importance that it must be undertaken as a military operation under his direct control until civilian management can be reestablished. Action has been initiated in Washington to make available such personnel and equipment as he needs.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

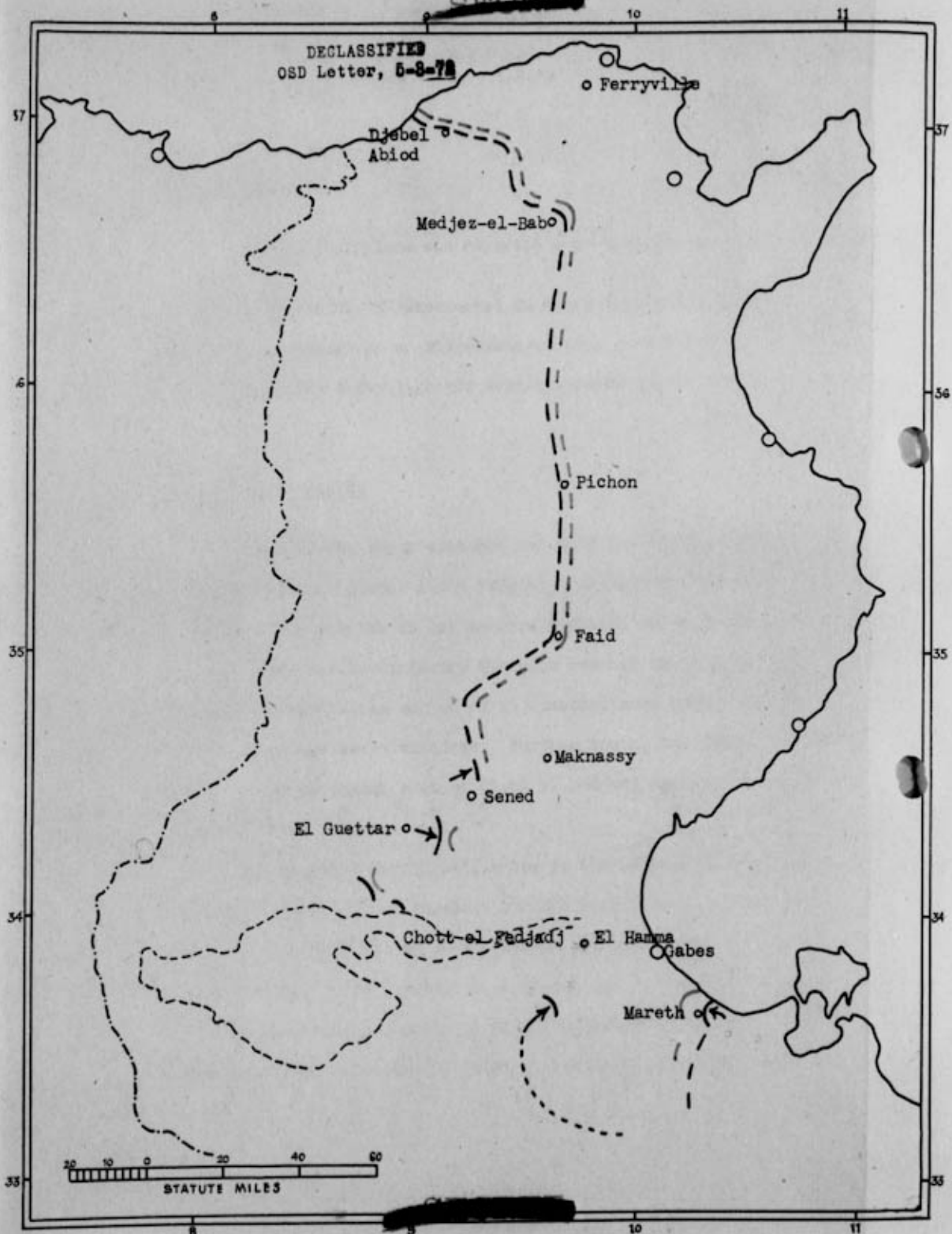
No. 468

0700 March 22 to 0700 March 23, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 6-8-78



EUROPEAN THEATER

1. A German airplane was reported over Iceland, March 21.
2. On March 22, 87 unescorted US heavy bombers dropped 230 tons of high explosives on Wilhelmshaven with good results. Twenty-six (probably 37) enemy fighters were destroyed for loss of three of our bombers.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 21 the enemy captured and held the high ground two miles northwest of Djebel Abiod despite a British counterattack. In southern Tunisia the US 1st Armored Division was advancing toward Maknassy while our 1st Infantry Division reached the general line shown on the map in the region of El Guettar; more than 1,400 prisoners were taken as the enemy withdrew. Further south, the French pushed a patrol to the northwest edge of Chott el Fedjadj against strong resistance.

On the night of March 20-21 units of the British Eighth Army attacked and secured a bridgehead through enemy obstacles and minefields at the northern end of the Mareth position. At the same time the New Zealand Corps flanked the southern end of the Mareth line and by afternoon was reported 15 miles southwest of El Hamma attacking in the direction of Gabes. Operations are continuing.

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QSD Letter, 6-8-78

The Allied air forces maintained their offensive, pounding enemy positions and installations near Gabes, Mareth and El Hamma, attacking enemy landing grounds in southeastern Tunisia, and dropping two-ton bombs and incendiaries on Ferryville; a reduction in hostile air reaction was noted. A total of six (probably ten) enemy planes were destroyed; two Allied aircraft were lost.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

Bombers of the 9th Air Force, dropping over 15 tons of explosives and incendiaries on Naples, March 20, scored hits on the town, railroad yards, and the Vittorio Emanuele Mole.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 21, P-40's of the 10th Air Force on offensive reconnaissance probably sank two 70-ft. paddle steamers near Myitkyina and attacked other ground targets. Eight P-40's dropped six 1,000-lb. bombs on Mogaung, destroying two blocks of the town.

On March 22, P-40's of the 14th Air Force continued their harassing operations in the Mangshih (Western Yunnan) area.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 21, General MacArthur reports that small scale attacks were made by Allied aircraft on various enemy vessels off New

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Guinea and New Britain, and on Gasmata, Madang, and Finschhafen. A destroyer and a small cargo vessel were hit and enemy ground installations damaged.

PACIFIC THEATER

1. One of two enemy airplanes approaching Canton Island, March 22, dropped six bombs from 16,000 feet altitude. No damage or casualties resulted.
  2. On March 22 US aircraft successfully mined the waters off Kahili. They were supported during this mission by B-17 and B-24 bombers.
- SECRET
- THE WHITE HOUSE

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 467

0700 March 21 to 0700 March 22, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. Lieutenant Colonel Le Bel of the Giraud mission left Trinidad on March 21 and was expected to arrive at Cayenne, via Surinam, the same day.

2. The advance echelon of Headquarters, 11th Air Force has closed at Fort Greely and will open at Adak in the near future.

#### EUROPEAN THEATER

In the first reports on the March 18 bombing of Vegesack, it was estimated that 30 (probably 40) enemy aircraft were destroyed in aerial combat. In the final claims just received the total enemy aircraft losses are now reported as 52 destroyed and 20 more probably destroyed.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. On March 20 the US 1st Armored Division occupied the high ground northwest of Station de Sened preparatory to a further advance in the direction of Maknassy. In the Djebel Abiod area the enemy followed up the Allied withdrawal.

On the night of March 19-20, the Western Desert Air Forces opened a new air offensive against the whole Mareth Line, bombing on a 24-hour basis. The following day medium bombers of the 12th Air Force in two attacks hit at least twelve enemy grounded airplanes on airfields northwest of Gabes. Allied fighters flew many combat missions,



25 enemy tanks being particularly heavily attacked north of Sened. On an anti-shipping strike in the Sicilian channel escorted US B-25's were attacked by 25 enemy fighters of which eleven (probably 12) were destroyed; our bombers set one enemy merchant ship afire. Losses for the day total twelve (probably 19) enemy planes and five Allied aircraft.

2. The units of the French XIX Corps have been reorganized, the divisions being decreased from four to two, with each division now consisting of three infantry regiments and supporting artillery. They are occupying a sector south of Bou Arada and north of Pichon. General Koeltz commands the XIX Corps and Generals Mathinet and Welwert are his division commanders. The remaining units, approximately seven reduced battalions, have been withdrawn from the Corps and are being used on the lines of communication.

3. At the request of the State Department Mr. Murphy was informed that the War Department has agreed to supply transportation for Spanish refugees who desire passage to Mexico, using Army transports returning from North Africa to the US, and railroad between the US and Mexico. The cost of this movement is to be defrayed by the Government of Mexico from Spanish Republican funds at its disposal.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

A fighter-bomber mission of the 14th Air Force, composed of six medium bombers and six fighter aircraft, attacked the docks at the

river terminal of the railroad from the phosphate mines in northern French Indo-China on March 19. Photographs reveal that the entire shipping and receiving area was destroyed, 12 hits being scored on the railway yards. That same day P-40's of the 10th Air Force bombed and machine-gunned a town 60 miles south of Myitkyina, and sank a ferry boat southwest of Myitkyina; a single P-40, on an experimental flight with a 1,000-lb. bomb, scored a hit on the approach to a bridge south of Myitkyina. On March 20 our fighter aircraft made a harassing raid with fragmentation bombs on Tiangzup (north of Myitkyina) and medium bombers scored 1,000-lb. bomb hits on approaches to the Myitnge bridge (south of Mandalay).

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 20, General MacArthur reports that two US B-24's started fires at Finschhafen and six others bombed the wharf area at Ambon. Other Allied bombers attacked Langgoer (Kei Is.), Kaimana (southwest New Guinea), and enemy shipping nearby, scoring a probable hit on an enemy merchant vessel. A reconnaissance plane, sighting five medium merchant vessels, one tanker, and two escorting vessels approaching Rabaul, unsuccessfully bombed one of the cargo ships.

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CSD Letter, 5-3-72

PACIFIC THEATER

Two B-17's bombed Kahili and Ballale on March 19 with unobserved results. On the same day two B-24's made harassing attacks on islands in the Shortlands area.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 466

0700 March 20 to 0700 March 21, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Major General Edwin F. Harding has been ordered to the Caribbean Defense Command to command the Panama Mobile Force.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 18 Allied fighter-bombers attacked enemy positions in front of the British Eighth Army. Considerable enemy activity was reported southwest of the Mareth line. Allied mine sweepers north of Bone shot down one of six attacking torpedo bomber aircraft. On that day, increased Axis air transport activity between Tunisia and the north was reported.

On March 19 the US 1st Infantry Division, with two tank destroyer battalions, was organizing the defenses of the Gafsa area; our patrols made contact with the enemy in the vicinity of El Guettar. In the north, only patrolling and artillery activity were reported in the Djebel Abiod area. Allied bombers attacked gun positions in the vicinity of Mareth; elsewhere on the front, weather and soggy airfields curtailed air activity.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 19, General MacArthur reports that Allied patrols were active against enemy positions in the Mubo area, our A-20's also attacking the enemy there with bombs and machine-gun fire.

An enemy submarine, reported to be unloading supplies at Lae the

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OSD Letter, 5-8-78

night of March 19, was subsequently attacked by five B-25's which obtained four direct hits, causing the vessel to disintegrate. Other air attacks were made on airdromes at Gasmata, Cape Gloucester, Penfoei and on Arawe (100 miles west of Gasmata), where buildings were set on fire and an ammunition dump destroyed.

An enemy air raid by 18 bombers escorted by 32 fighters against Portlock Harbor on March 19 damaged a dock and launch.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 18 two US B-17's harassed Kahili, Ballale and Vila; results were not observed.

No. 465

0700 March 19 to 0700 March 20, 1943

WFO: KRM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 465

0700 March 19 to 0700 March 20, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 17 two P-40's attacked Kiska harbor and the main camp area with fragmentation bombs. Sixteen enemy aircraft were observed on the beach and in the hangar area. On March 19 our reconnaissance airplane attacked two Japanese landing barges which were carrying personnel ashore at Attu, but caused little damage. During the 24-hour period ending 1200 Z, March 19, 21 tons of bombs were dropped by our fighter and bomber aircraft on Kiska. It is believed that the Japanese landing strip on Kiska will be ready for use by April 1.

2. At the request of the local French military commander, three officers were sent by General Pratt from the Trinidad Sector to Cayenne as members of a US military-naval mission. Complying with a request of the State Department, arrangements have been made for the immediate movement by air to Cayenne of Lt. Col. Albert J. P. Le Bel of the Giraud Mission in Washington; he will act as Governor pro tem.

EUROPEAN THEATER

In a successful unescorted daylight raid on March 18 under ideal weather conditions seventy-three B-17's and 24 B-24's dropped 268 tons of high explosives on the enemy shipyards and submarine base at Vegesack, Germany (10 miles northwest of Bremen). The entire target area became a solid rectangle of smoke and flame; aerial photographs disclose that the power-house and many machine shops and buildings in the shipyards were



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OSD Letter, 6-3-72

either completely demolished or very badly damaged. A smoke screen, started by the enemy in an effort to cover the target, was blown away by the wind. Strong and continuous fighter opposition was encountered from the coast to the target and until our aircraft were over the North Sea on the way home. Thirty (probably 40) enemy planes were reported destroyed; two of our bombers were lost.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

During the night of March 17-18 the British made a local withdrawal toward Djebel Abiod. On March 18 ground activity in north and central Tunisia was on a reduced scale. To the south, our II Corps occupied El Guettar, the enemy offering little opposition to the advance of our troops. Although weather restricted aerial activity, enemy dive bombers and other combat aircraft were active over southern Tunisia; Allied fighter-bombers attacked enemy positions west of Sedjenane.

Heavy German air transport traffic between Italy and Tunisia was maintained during the 17th. On the night of March 17 and the following day Malta-based fighters harassed enemy communications in southern Italy and Sicily.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

Seventeen B-24's of the US 9th Air Force attacked Naples on March 18; no details have been received.

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ASIATIC THEATER

On March 17 and 18 three attack missions of eight B-25's from the 10th Air Force again bombed the Myitnge (Mandalay) bridge and enemy installations in the vicinity. Hits were scored on the bridge and the approaches. 16 B-24's on March 18 dropped more than 38 tons of bombs on another important railroad bridge near Rangoon, scoring at least one hit on the bridge and many others on its approaches. One enemy fighter was destroyed.

Sixteen fighter aircraft bombed and machine-gunned Seniku (northeast of Myitkyina) where a large garrison of enemy troops was reported. Pilots report that the bombing and resultant fires destroyed more than two-thirds of the town. No US losses were reported for these two days.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for March 18 General MacArthur reports that US B-24's and P-39's and Australian Beaufighters heavily attacked Madang with demolition and incendiary bombs, causing large fires and explosions. Smaller attacks were made by Allied planes on Buka, Kahili, Gasmata, Salamaua, Alexishafen, Timika (Dutch New Guinea), Langgoer and Penfoei. In all of these operations one Australian A-20 was lost. A US B-24, on reconnaissance over Ambon, destroyed four (probably six) of ten attacking enemy fighters; our bomber returned to its base with one engine put out of action by a phosphorous bomb dropped by a Japanese airplane.

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

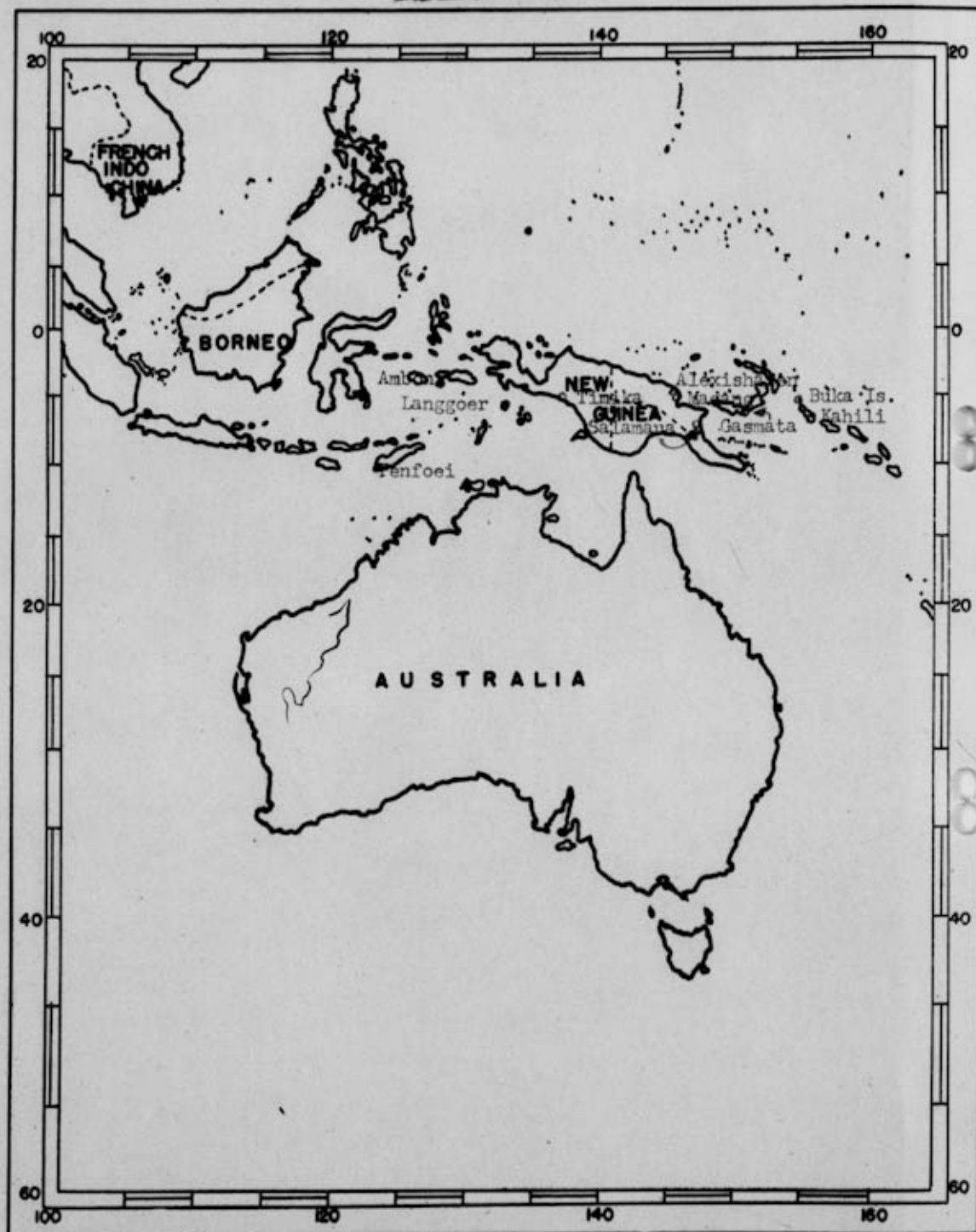
PACIFIC THEATER

On March 19 a single enemy plane bombed Canton Island. No casualties or damage resulted.

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OSD Letter, 5-8-78

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

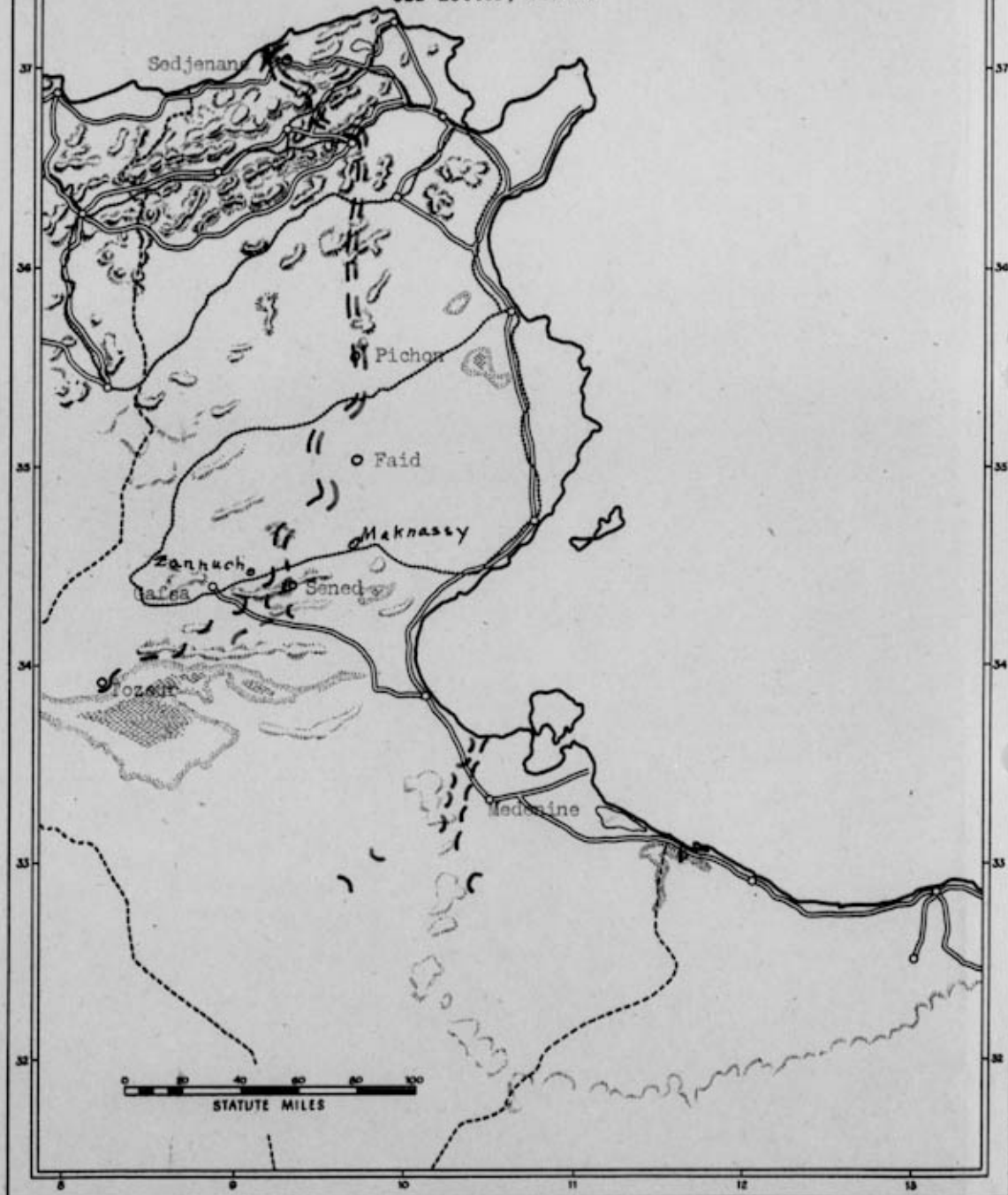
No. 464

0700 March 18 to 0700 March 19, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

DECLASSIFIED  
OSD Letter, 5-3-78



NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. On March 17 the US 1st Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions of our II Corps, under the command of Lt. Gen. Patton, closely supported by the 12th Air Force, reoccupied Gafsa and continued eastward beyond Station de Zannouch, the retreating enemy columns being repeatedly hit by our aircraft; little enemy opposition was offered other than bombing and artillery fire. In the north fierce fighting raged west of Sedjenane where the enemy attempted to turn the Allied north flank and made some local gains; considerable aircraft action accompanied the ground fighting, one enemy airplane being destroyed.

Weather curtailed heavy bomber operations; Allied light bombers and fighter aircraft flew offensive missions in the Gafsa-Maknassy-Faid area against enemy tanks, transportation and personnel. While Malta-based fighters bombed the Comiso airdrome Beaufort bombers attacked and sank an enemy tanker and destroyed one (probably three) enemy planes just east of the toe of Italy. Heavy enemy air transport traffic between Italy and Tunisia was reported for March 16.

2. The positions of the British Eighth Army in southeastern Tunisia were improved on the night of March 16-17 and during the following day. Enemy aircraft were active, several dive-bomber attacks being made near Medenine. One (probably two) enemy and two Allied planes were destroyed.

ASIATIC THEATER

On March 17 sixteen P-40's scored five hits on a railroad bridge and its approaches northwest of Myitkyina, and five more on adjacent trackage. Other P-40's dropped fragmentation bombs on an enemy motor pool in the same region causing considerable damage.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 17, General MacArthur reports that the enemy had abandoned his footholds at two river mouths south of Salamaua and had withdrawn nearly a mile north of Guadagasal.

PT-boats destroyed six barges and their crews near Morobe (60 miles south of Salamaua). Seven B-17's caused a large fire at Rapopo airdrome (Rabaul). Another B-17 bombed enemy installations at Ubili, and Allied bombers damaged barracks and docks at Langgoer (Kei Is.). An enemy submarine made an unsuccessful attack on an Allied convoy off Brisbane.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 16 and 17 US heavy bombers operated on harassing missions against Kahili, Munda, Ballale, and Vila; results were unobserved.



## WAR DEPARTMENT

## No. 463

0700 March 17 to 0700 March 18, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 15, six attack missions, in which 11 heavy bombers, 15 medium bombers, and 52 fighter aircraft participated, dropped more than 46 tons of bombs on the enemy main camp area at Kiska and machine-gunned beach installations there. Many hits were observed in the target area. One of our fighter aircraft, damaged by antiaircraft fire, crashed in the sea. The enemy did not attempt to intercept these missions although earlier in the day three Japanese fighters made an unsuccessful attack on our weather reconnaissance airplane near Kiska.

On March 16 the action was renewed, 12 B-24's, 16 B-25's, and ten P-38's making three raids in which 40 tons of bombs were dropped, probable hits on the camp area, radar station, and submarine base being reported. Heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered, costing us one B-25, damage to other bombers, and several casualties. Eight of our P-38's engaged eight enemy airplanes south of Kiska; two (probably six) of the latter were shot down with no loss on our part.

2. On March 16 General Buckner, with the forward echelon of his staff, arrived at the advanced command post of the Alaska Defense Command at Adak.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On the night of March 15-16 British bombers successfully attacked

an enemy airfield 20 miles northwest of Gabes, and the road and railroad between Gabes and Sfax. Malta-based planes attacked the Lampedusa and Comiso airdromes and destroyed an enemy airplane over Sicily. The next day while aircraft of the Western Desert Air Forces attacked enemy positions in front of the British Eighth Army, US B-17's and P-38's hit three ships of an enemy ferry convoy west of Sicily. The enemy's combat aircraft were active; two of his planes were shot down.

Only minor activity was reported by the ground troops for March 16.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

Fighter aircraft of the 14th Air Force attacked enemy storage and communication installations in eastern Burma and northern French Indo-China on March 16. That same day heavy and medium bombers of the 10th Air Force again scored heavy bomb hits on the approaches of two important railroad bridges near Mandalay and Rangoon; fighter aircraft made harassing attacks at two points in northern Burma.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 16, General MacArthur reports that Australian aircraft bombed Dobo, scoring a direct hit on a radio station. US B-25's and P-38's attacked Lae with unobserved results. Other Allied aircraft attacked

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

Salamaua and Ubili, shooting down one enemy bomber which attempted to intercept them. Aerial reconnaissances disclosed several ships moving in the region of the Bismarcks; on March 13 more than 85,000 tons of merchant shipping and some other craft were noted at Soerabaja, Java.

THE DEPARTMENT

DATE RECLASSIFIED

By: JAC

OSD March 14 to OSD March 17, 1943

DATE FOR

THE SECRET ARMY

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

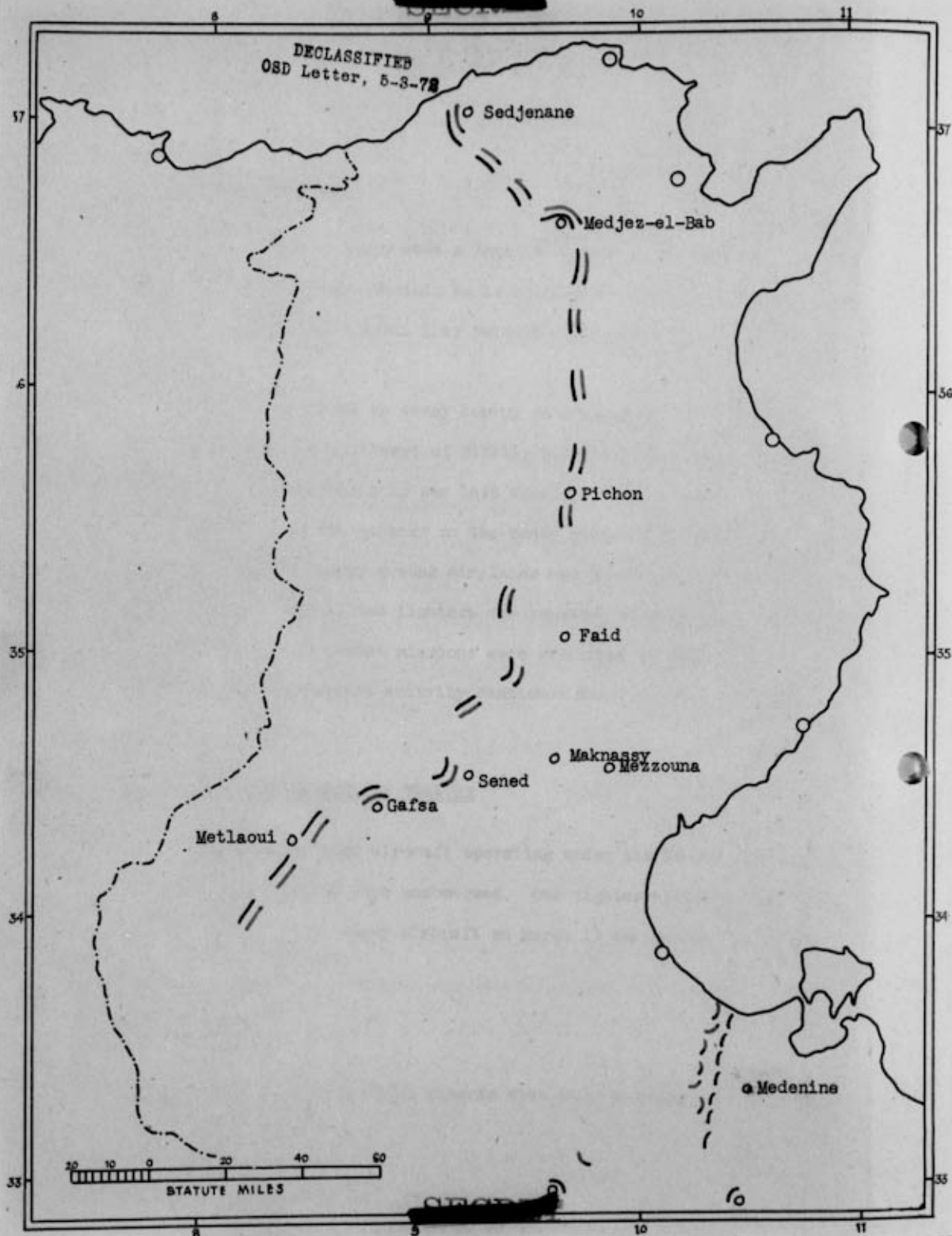
No. 462

0700 March 16 to 0700 March 17, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 8-3-78



#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 15 the enemy made a local withdrawal southwest of Sedjenane. In southern Tunisia he is holding a line  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Station de Sened. Eighth Army patrols were operating at points shown on the map.

US B-17's attacked an enemy convoy consisting of two merchant and four escort vessels northwest of Sicily; hits were observed on one merchantman and another ship was left smoking. Medium bombers with fighter escort, in two attacks on the enemy airfield at Mezzouna, destroyed about 12 enemy ground airplanes and shot down four more in aerial combat; four Allied fighters are reported missing and one was forced down. Other combat missions were performed by both sides. The usual enemy air transport activity continued March 14 between Italy, Sicily and Tunisia.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

On March 15 British aircraft operating under the US 9th Air Force bombed Naples; results were unobserved. Our fighter aircraft destroyed three (probably five) enemy aircraft on March 13 and another on March 15.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 15, unsuccessful attacks were made on bridges along enemy

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

lines of communication in northern Burma by our fighters and medium bombers; the fighters also attacked some enemy motor columns.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 15, General MacArthur reports that an enemy convoy of three small ships packed with troops approaching Dobo (Arce Is.) was heavily attacked by 13 Allied aircraft which used cannon and machine-guns and also made bomb hits on two ships. Other Allied air operations included raids on the Mubo area, Gasmata town and runway, Cape Gloucester, Finschhafen, and a merchant vessel off the south coast of Dutch New Guinea. One Allied airplane was lost in the above operations.

Enemy air attacks were made in the Buna area, where a small dump was set on fire, and on Darwin, where buildings and fuel tanks were damaged. In this latter raid, by 25 bombers escorted by 24 fighters, eight (probably 14) enemy aircraft were shot down with an Allied loss of four fighters.

#### PACIFIC THEATER

On March 13, B-24's bombed Munda, Kahili, and Ballale, starting fires on the latter two airdromes. Reconnaissance disclosed a concentration of eighty aircraft at Vila, Kahili, Ballale, and Faisi. Although weather hampered operations the next day, three B-24's bombed

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OSD Letter, 6-3-72

Ballale, Munda, and Kahili and targets in the Shortlands area. Off the northeast coast of Rendova I. (New Georgia) four P-38's set fire to a small vessel which blew up.

NAV REPORTING

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 461

0700 March 15 to 0700 March 16, 1943

NAVY USE

THE WHITE HOUSE

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WEST AFRICAN THEATRE

1. The attack March 12 by a British Battalion against the high ground west of Sidi Barrani was unsuccessful. A subsequent enemy attack in the same general area was repulsed.

On March 14 an unconfirmed report was received of a large enemy armored force east and southeast of Sidi.

In southwestern Tunisia WAR DEPARTMENT after mining and demolition operations, has evacuated the town east and southwest of Medenine.

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

Photo reconnaissance reports indicate the presence of enemy earth works and anti-tank ditches north and northwest of Gabes, between the Gulf of Gabes and the impassable Jebel-el-Bidjed.

No. 461

While practically all air operations for the day were cancelled because of the weather, Allied fighter aircraft drove up an enemy torpedo bomber attack on a convoy off the Algerian coast; one (probably

COPY FOR

four) enemy aircraft were destroyed without Allied loss. Enemy transport activity continued with THE WHITE HOUSE in Naples.

2. The 20th Field Artillery Regiment arrived at Taberna March 13 and is now under the command of the 1st AF Group; this is the original 1st AF group regiment of that Group.

3. The War Department suggested to General Eisenhower that, in view of the many important and complex fiscal problems incident to his present and future operations, it would be desirable for him to

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. The attack March 13 by a British battalion aimed at the high ground west of Sedjenane was unsuccessful. A subsequent enemy attack in the same general area was repulsed.

On March 14 an unconfirmed report was received of a large enemy armored force east and southeast of Faid.

In southeastern Tunisia the enemy, after mining and demolition operations, has evacuated two towns west and southwest of Medenine. Photo reconnaissance reports indicate the presence of enemy earth works and anti-tank ditches north and northwest of Gabes, between the Gulf of Gabes and the impassable Chott-el-Fedjadj.

While practically all air missions for the day were cancelled because of the weather, Allied fighter aircraft broke up an enemy torpedo bomber attack on a convoy off the Algerian coast; one (probably four) enemy aircraft were destroyed without Allied loss. Enemy transport activity continued between Tunisia, Sicily and Naples.

2. The 36th Field Artillery Regiment arrived at Tebessa March 13 and is now under the command of the US II Corps; this is the organic 155 mm gun regiment of that Corps.

3. The War Department suggested to General Eisenhower that, in view of the many important and complex fiscal problems incident to his present and future operations, it would be desirable for him to

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GND Letter, 5-8-78

designate on his staff a highly qualified officer as fiscal adviser. This officer would represent him on economic boards which deal with problems of interest to civilian departments as well as the Army. This fiscal adviser would be distinct from the finance officer and would have a qualified staff. In Washington the War Department would coordinate his problems with the Treasury, State Department and other offices.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 13 two of four B-24's unsuccessfully bombing a bridge near Rangoon were shot down. The enemy loss was one (probably two) fighters.

On March 14 four B-24's attacked the Moulmein dock area with apparently good results. Eight B-25's again bombed the Gokteik viaduct, this time scoring two direct hits on the bridge, and others underneath and on the approaches.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 14, General MacArthur reports that further searches for the convoy struck the previous day north of Wewak were unsuccessful. Aircraft dispatched to attack this convoy bombed Madang and the Wewak area; 54 barges and 3 small ships were seen in the harbor at Wewak. Three

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OSD Letter, 6-8-78

RAAF Flying Boats bombed the airdrome at Buka with unobserved results. Single heavy bombers attacked Gasmata, Ubili, and Dilli; one of two enemy fighters intercepting the heavy bomber over Timor was shot down.

TOP SECRET

NAVAL OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 144

0700 March 14 to 0700 March 15, 1943

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TOP SECRET

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 460

0700 March 14 to 0700 March 15, 1943

COPY FOR  
THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On March 14 two US fighter missions from Amchitka attacked the enemy runway, main camp area, and beached aircraft at Kiska, hits being observed among the enemy planes. Despite what was reported to be the heaviest antiaircraft fire yet encountered, all our airplanes returned safely.

EUROPEAN THEATER

In the March 13 attacks, reported yesterday, of 75 B-17's against the enemy railroad installations in northwest France, five (probably ten) enemy aircraft were destroyed and six Spitfires were lost. All our bombers returned.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. On March 13 a British battalion attacked the enemy on the high ground west of Sedjenane; details have not been reported.

While bombing missions were cancelled because of the weather, other Allied aircraft flew offensive and photo reconnaissances and interception patrols. A mission, dispatched to attack an enemy airfield, was intercepted by enemy aircraft; seven of our P-39's are missing. Malta-based aircraft torpedoed a tanker and a merchant vessel in convoy off Palermo, the night of March 12-13, and bombed Ragusa the next day. Axis bombers and torpedo bombers again operated

in the Bone area, damaging the power station; two of these enemy airplanes were destroyed.

The Advance Headquarters of the British First Army opened at noon fifteen miles north of Le Kef.

2. Responding to requests from General Eisenhower that the mail service for the troops in his theater be improved, the War Department informed him that, beginning on February 23, the Air Transport Command carried a weekly increase of 6,000 pounds in the amount of air mail transported. More extensive use of V-mail is suggested; V-mail should reduce materially the backlog of ordinary mail which usually accumulates at port of embarkation between convoys. In the US, letter mail is being separated from parcel post and is being packaged for subordinate units of the Army Postal Service in order to provide for faster delivery.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

On March 13 aircraft of the 9th Air Force bombed Naples Harbor; further details have not been reported.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 12, six B-24's although unsuccessful in an attack on a bridge at Rangoon, shot down one (probably two) enemy aircraft. Heavy

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but ineffective antiaircraft fire was encountered.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for March 13 General MacArthur reports that three B-17's, attacking another enemy convoy of five merchant vessels and three destroyers northeast of Wewak, scored hits on one (possibly two) 7,000 to 8,000-ton cargo ships, a 4,000-ton tanker and a destroyer; the tanker is believed sunk and a cargo ship was burning from bow to stern. Other US aircraft bombed enemy installations in the Gasmata, Wewak and Wide Bay areas. In western New Guinea a B-24 shot down one of six intercepting enemy fighter planes. RAAF Beau-fighters harassed enemy personnel on roads and trails near Salamaua.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 459

0700 March 13 to 0700 March 14, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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DECLASSIFIED  
CDD Letter, 5-8-72

GENERAL

1. The War Department informed the commanding generals of overseas commands of its establishment of a Civil Affairs Division immediately responsible to the Secretary of War. This Division will be the War Department agency for all matters other than military which concern enemy or enemy-controlled territory occupied as a result of our military operations; it will provide centralized control of all such activities as are now handled by other government agencies. Overseas commanders were directed to establish a similar office on their staffs if they are likely to participate in the capture and occupation of enemy-controlled territory; in areas where other United Nations are involved in such occupation combined representation on the Civil Affairs Staff may be necessary.

2. The Army Air Forces have supplied the commanding generals of our principal overseas forces with the technical details of the methods employed in the air attacks on the Japanese convoy which was destroyed in the Bismarck Sea and Huon Gulf on March 2 to 4. This victory is a classic example of the possibilities of minimum-altitude attack (not one of the airplanes attacking from mast-height was shot down) when used against the proper target and assisted by coordinated high-level bombing and fighter support and based on thorough training and understanding of the task to be accomplished.

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OSD Letter, 6-8-72

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. The 3,000-foot emergency landing strip at Ogliuga (Gareloi Is.) was completed on March 12.

2. General DeWitt reports that the advance Command Post, Alaska Defense Command, will move from Ft. Greely to Adak, beginning March 15; the movement will be completed by March 22.

#### EUROPEAN THEATER

1. Recent photographs having shown large concentrations of traffic in French main railroad yards, 75 B-17's attacked the yards at Amiens as well as other railroad installations in northwest France on March 13. The results were reported as below standard because of the heavy haze. 16 B-24's carried out a diversion mission along the coast. All our bombers returned.

2. In the March 12 attack on Rouen freight yards and engine sheds reported yesterday, 156 tons of high explosive were dropped; photographs of the target area indicate that considerable damage was caused. During an offensive sweep that day we lost a Spitfire.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

Only patrol activity was reported on the Tunisian battle front on March 12. US B-17's escorted by P-38's dropped 120 tons of bombs on the railroad yards, docks, oil storage area and powerhouse at Sousse,

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starting large fires; one ship was hit. B-26's escorted by P-40's effectively bombed supply dumps at Enfidaville, and Wellington bombers hammered at the docks at Tunis. Again attacking enemy shipping north of Cape Bon, B-25's escorted by P-38's sank at least three (probably eight) ferries. Other Allied aircraft carried out tactical reconnaissances and offensive patrols. Enemy airplanes twice attacked our advanced airdrome which has been reestablished at Thelepte, and other enemy aircraft were active over Bone and the battle area. In all of the aerial engagements for the day, including planes shot down by ground fire, 12 (probably 14) enemy aircraft were destroyed and four Allied planes were lost.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

The Bassein (Southern Burma) docks were the target for 30 500-lb. bombs dropped from four B-24's on March 8. Twenty hits were made on port installations and warehouses. On March 12, four P-40's attacked enemy positions around one of our aircraft warning stations in northern Burma.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 12, General MacArthur reports effective attacks by his heavy bombers on the Lakunai (Rabaul) and Cape Gloucester airdromes, as well as on shipping and wharf installations at Amboina, where a direct hit

was made on a 7,000-ton vessel and two intercepting fighters shot down. Five Allied aircraft attacked Fuloro airdrome (Timor), shooting down one, probably two, enemy fighters; a small motor vessel was also damaged by our airplanes on this mission. Ground targets in the Salamaua area were harassed by our light bombers.

Sixty ships, including 36 merchantmen totalling some 153,000 tons were sighted in Rabaul harbor.

#### PACIFIC THEATER

On March 13 three B-17's made harassing attacks on enemy airfields at Kahili, Ballale, Vila and Munda.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 458

0700 March 12 to 0700 March 13, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 11 the weather plane was attacked by five enemy float planes over Kiska, but landed safely at Adak.

2. Orders were issued for the movement of the 77th Infantry Division (Maj. Gen. R. B. Woodruff) from the Louisiana maneuver area (previous station at Fort Jackson, South Carolina) to Camp Young, California, for desert training.

EUROPEAN THEATER

Sixty-three US B-17's with RAF and US Spitfire support attacked the railroad yards at Rouen on March 12, with good results reported. Nineteen B-24's carried out a diversion along the Channel coast. Further details were not reported, but all our bombers returned safely.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

Only patrol activity was reported from the Tunisian battle front on March 11, except in the north where two enemy attacks west of Sedjenane were repulsed. An enemy patrol disguised as Americans captured three prisoners near Bou Arada. In the southwest Metlaoui has been occupied by Allied troops which continue to push eastwards. The enemy who had been attacking General Le Clerc's force southwest of Medenine withdrew on March 11, leaving 18 vehicles and seven guns.



While weather hampered air operations, US B-26's escorted by P-38's attacked an escorted enemy ferry convoy off the west coast of Sicily. Four ferries were hit, one blowing up, and three enemy airplanes were shot down with a loss of one of our bombers. Malta-based aircraft continued their offensive sweeps over Sicily on March 11 and 12.

On March 10 enemy transport activity totalled 80 airplanes, including more than 10 six-engine bombers; on March 11 enemy torpedo bombers were active near Bone, one being reported shot down.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

Six B-25's, bombing the Myitnge bridge (south of Mandalay) on March 8, scored some probable hits. On March 10, US B-24's obtained five hits on a bridge at Rangoon. The same day a B-25 mission, dispatched to attack the Gokteik viaduct (northeast of Mandalay), was unsuccessful. Four B-24's successfully bombed an enemy airdrome at Rangoon and destroyed three enemy fighter planes in combat. The next day seven B-25's again attacked the Myitnge bridge, near misses being obtained.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 11, General MacArthur reports that an attack by 24 enemy bombers and 16 fighters on an airdrome near Buna was intercepted by 24 Allied fighters, which destroyed 9 (probably 14) enemy aircraft. Allied losses

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were three airplanes destroyed on the ground and one in combat. Details of another Japanese raid that night have not been reported. No damage resulted from a night attack in the Wau area by two enemy bombers.

Small-scale Allied attacks were made on an airdrome at Rabaul, on warehouses and the airdrome at Finschhafen, on enemy ground troops south of Salamaua and on an abandoned vessel near Open Bay (New Britain).

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 457

0700 March 11 to 0700 March 12, 1943

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THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 6-3-72

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On March 9 six B-24's and four B-25's, escorted by 12 P-38's, dropped 21 tons of bombs on Kiska; clouds prevented observation of the effect. Although heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered, all US aircraft returned safely. On March 10, 36 - 1000 lb. bombs as well as smaller bombs were dropped on the antiaircraft, main camp and submarine base areas, hits being observed on all three targets.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

An enemy attack west of Sedjenane on the afternoon of March 10 was unsuccessful. Thirty enemy armored cars supported by artillery attacked patrols of General Le Clerc's force forcing them back to a line approximately 50 miles southwest of Medenine. The French main position was then shelled, bombed, surrounded and attacked. With the assistance of the RAF the enemy was held off and his attacks appeared to die down at the end of the day. Four enemy planes were destroyed; six British pilots are missing.

US B-17's escorted by P-38's dropped 11,154 - 20-lb. fragmentation bombs on airdromes near Tunis, covering the area and leaving eight to ten aircraft burning. B-26's escorted by P-40's dropped 1,080 - 20-lb. fragmentation bombs on Gafsa. Other Allied aircraft flew anti-submarine, harbor, convoy, and reconnaissance patrols. Our airplanes destroyed

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OSD Letter, 6-8-73

eight (probably ten) enemy aircraft in aerial combat without loss.

The previous night, enemy torpedo bombers were active in the Algiers area but caused no damage. Enemy air transport activity continued.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 10, General MacArthur reports that four B-17's attacked the water front and shipping at Wewak before dawn, setting afire at least one of three vessels. A B-17 bombed the Gasmata runway and a B-24 made a direct hit on, and set fire to, a 6,000-ton merchant vessel off Buton Island (Celebes). Three RAAF bombers attacked Saumlakki (Tanimbar Islands).

2. Discussing the effectiveness of the bombing technique used in the recent destruction of the enemy convoy in the Bismarcks, General MacArthur reports that the mast-high attacks by B-25's and A-20's scored practically 100 per cent direct hits; the B-17's bombing from 4,500 to 10,000 feet averaged 10 per cent direct hits.

#### PACIFIC THEATER

On March 10 an enemy attack mission of ten dive-bombers and 12 fighters was intercepted in the vicinity of the Russell Islands by US fighters. Three Japanese fighters and one dive-bomber were shot down without US loss.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 456

0700 March 10 to 0700 March 11, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Following a recent War Department survey, instructions have been issued limiting the activities of the Northwest Service Command to the maintenance and improvement of the Alaska-Canadian highway and its structures, and to such other works as are essential to the war effort. The Northwest Service Command is to have no present responsibility for the supply of the Alaska Defense Command other than petroleum products of the Whitehorse refinery.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

A minor Allied tank attack near Sedjenane on March 8 cost the enemy many casualties including some 200 prisoners; on March 9 he retaliated with persistent artillery fire which caused some 60 Allied casualties. Cusseltia was reported deserted by the enemy. Further south the enemy temporarily reoccupied the pass northwest of Hadjebel-Aioun and withdrew after heavily mining it. The Allies were in process of occupying Tozeur. *Enemy reoccupying*

On March 9 enemy aircraft attacked a convoy in the Algiers area, *after* damaging two merchant vessels. Dust in the forward areas and on air *refueling* fields greatly restricted Allied air activity. British aircraft from Malta scored hits on railroad installations in Sicily.

ASIATIC THEATER

On March 8, US P-40's heavily attacked enemy-occupied areas in

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

northern Burma with fragmentation bombs and machine-gun fire. Six B-25's bombed antiaircraft positions, railroad yards, and the industrial areas in the Mandalay region. The next day a series of four attacks by US P-40's resulted in a violent explosion in an ammunition dump and the destruction of one span of a railroad bridge at Mogaung (southwest of Myitkyina); other towns and airdromes in Burma were also attacked.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 9, General MacArthur reports that twenty-six enemy bombers and 21 fighters raided our airdrome at Wau, doing little damage. One B-17, intercepted by nine Zeros while on reconnaissance near Gasmata, shot down four (probably five) of them, with slight damage to itself.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 9 three B-24's harassed Vila, Munda, Ballale and Kahili. All our bombers returned.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 455

0700 March 9 to 0700 March 10, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On March 7 and 8 a total of seven B-24's, ten B-25's, four P-38's and four P-40's in three attacks dropped more than 21 tons of demolitions on Kiska and Attu. No enemy aircraft were seen and all of our airplanes returned. Four of the B-25's landed at Amchitka to remain there on alert.

#### EUROPEAN THEATER

On March 8, 54 US B-17's dropped 135 tons of high explosives on the railroad yards at Rennes, most of the bombs hitting the target; two of our bombers were lost. Thirteen B-24's dropped 39 tons on Rouen, encountering a fighter defense which resulted in the bombs being dropped short of the target; two of our bombers on this mission were lost. Preliminary reports indicate that 24 (probably 33) enemy fighter planes were destroyed.

Final reports on the bombing of Lorient and Brest, March 6, indicate that nine (probably 11) enemy aircraft were destroyed. (Our loss of three B-17's has been previously reported.)

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. Twenty-two B-17's, escorted by 34 P-38's with 22 Spitfires as top cover attacked an enemy 3-ship convoy north of Cape Bon with

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OSD Letter, 5-8-78

240 - 500-lb. bombs. While only near misses were reported, 17 (probably 29) enemy planes were shot down in aerial combat, two more enemy planes colliding and crashing into the sea. All of our aircraft returned safely. Other Allied planes flew offensive sorties and sweeps, operated on anti-submarine patrol and on convoy duty. In these operations one enemy plane was destroyed and three Allied Spitfires were lost.

Enemy air transport activity operated on a reduced scale March 8.

2. On March 8 the US II Corps was relieved from assignment to the British First Army (General Anderson) and placed directly under the command of the Eighteenth Army Group (General Alexander).

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 7, US B-25's again attacked the Gokteik Viaduct on the Mandalay-Lashio railroad, scoring three hits. One of four US P-40's operating on reconnaissance and harassing missions in western Yunnan and Burma was lost.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 8, General MacArthur reports that Allied patrols mopped up enemy survivors of the Bismarck Sea and Huon Gulf sinkings.

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Allied heavy bombers attacked Finschhafen, and enemy-held points on the west coast of New Guinea and the islands to the west. Nine enemy bombers sank a 2,800-ton merchant vessel southeast of Buna. Four P-38's, intercepting this mission, shot down one enemy bomber and one fighter without loss.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 8, single B-24's made harassing attacks on Kahili, Munda and Vila. One Japanese airplane dropped four bombs in the water off Guadalcanal.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 454

0700 March 8 to 0700 March 9, 1943

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. On March 7 four P-40's bombed the main camp area at Kiska, encountering heavy antiaircraft fire but no enemy aircraft. All airplanes returned.

2. Directives were issued for the constitution and activation of the 63d Infantry Division at Camp Blanding, Florida, and the 70th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. These divisions will be commanded by Brigadier Generals Louis E. Hibbs and John E. Dahlquist, respectively.

Orders were also issued for the concentration of the 36th Infantry Division (Major General Fred L. Walker) at the New York Port of Embarkation for movement to the North African Theater.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 7 the British made a local attack east of Beja. The enemy is digging in in this area, apparently intending to consolidate his gains. Little other activity was reported on the northern front. In the southwest French units are pushing towards Tozeur.

The Axis attack on the British Eighth Army was repulsed, positions being substantially restored; the enemy appears to be withdrawing from offensive action.

US B-25's and B-17's, escorted by P-38's, attacked an enemy convoy off Tunis, sinking two ships, leaving one in a sinking condition,

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setting two (possibly four) others afire, and destroying six (probably eight) enemy planes. All of our aircraft returned safely. Other B-17's and P-38's attacked the harbor and railroad yards at Sousse, making several hits on a large ship and on the docks. On the Eighth Army front four enemy fighters were destroyed by antiaircraft fire and Allied aircraft accounted for at least six others.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 7, General MacArthur reports that US A-20's bombed and strafed the Mubo area. Enemy airdromes at Gasmata, Cape Gloucester and Salamaua were attacked by B-24's on reconnaissance; Australian and Dutch bombers pounded Toeal.

Aerial reconnaissance disclosed a total of 63 vessels in the harbor at Rabaul, including nine destroyers, 13 large and 33 medium-sized merchant vessels.

PACIFIC THEATER

The War Department authorized General Emmons to appoint as Second Lieutenants in the Army of the United States 15 citizens of Japanese ancestry who are either infantry ROTC graduates or former reserve officers. Officers so appointed will be ordered to active duty immediately for refresher and indoctrination training, pending transportation to the United States for duty with the Combat Team being organized with this type personnel at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 453

0700 March 7 to 0700 March 8, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE



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OSD letter, 5-8-78

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 6, enemy forces estimated at two armored divisions with air, artillery and infantry support attacked the west flank of the Eighth Army, aiming at control of the high ground southwest of the Mareth-Medenine road. Two attacks, one shortly after dawn the other in the afternoon, were repulsed. Thirty enemy tanks were destroyed; British casualties were negligible. Our patrols have reached to the vicinity of Gafsa, but this town and others to the west are still held by the enemy. West of Sedjenane and northwest of Medjez-el-Bab there was little change; in his attacks in the latter area last week the enemy lost 45 tanks.

Allied aircraft actively supported ground operations, continuous sweeps being made over the Sedjenane area. Axis aircraft were also active, apparently directing their main effort against the British Eighth Army. One enemy and three Allied planes were reported destroyed during the day, making a total for the week of 31 Allied and 58 enemy airplanes destroyed.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

While US P-40's continued their harassing raids on March 6, B-24's dropped nine tons of bombs on the Moulmein docks with apparently good effect, 14 tons of bombs on the Myitnge bridge south of Mandalay, nine tons on ships (one of which was possibly hit) in the

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Rangoon River, and two tons on an airdrome in lower Burma. No air losses were reported.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 6, General MacArthur reports that air attacks were made by one B-24 on Cape Gloucester airdrome and by four RAAF airplanes on a village south of Salamaua. An enemy raid on Goodenough Island with nine bombers and fifteen fighters did no damage. One enemy medium bomber was shot down.

PACIFIC THEATER

1. On March 6, eight B-24's dropped 11 tons of bombs on enemy airdromes at Kahili and Ballale, apparently obtaining good effect. All planes returned safely.

2. General Harmon reports the arrival in the Fijis on March 6 of a detachment of division headquarters and certain infantry, field artillery and service units of the Americal Division. (This is in execution of his plan for the relief on Guadalcanal of this division by the 37th Division.)

WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 452

0700 March 6 to 0700 March 7, 1943

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THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

The War Department issued orders that the 2d Ranger Battalion be constituted, activated and prepared for early overseas movement. Personnel will be volunteers selected from as many divisions and separate units as possible so that it will be truly representative of the U. S. Army. (The 1st Ranger Battalion is now in North Africa.)

#### EUROPEAN THEATER

US B-17's bombed the navy yard at Lorient on March 6, while 15 B-24's attacked the naval base at Brest as a diversion. Results at Lorient were reported as excellent; those at Brest were termed fair. Preliminary reports indicate that two enemy fighters were destroyed and three B-17's lost.

#### NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

In northern Tunisia Allied troops withdrew to the west of Sedjenane on the night of March 4-5. During March 5 there was minor activity in the area northwest and south of Medjez-el-Bab. Further south our 34th Division recaptured Pichon and established its position on the hills north and south of that town. Near the southwest end of the Mareth line liaison has been established with the French force under General Le Clerc. Activity along the Mareth line was maintained by both opponents. Our bomber operations were

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

cancelled because of the weather, but other combat missions were flown over the Tunisian battle area.

MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

The six B-24's of the 9th Air Force which attacked Naples on March 5 dropped 15 tons of bombs, all of which hit in the target area. One B-24 is missing.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 5, General MacArthur reports that Allied aircraft repeated their heavy raids on Lae and Malahang airdromes shooting down three enemy fighters without loss to themselves. Other Allied aircraft attacked and sank barges, lifeboats and rafts in Huon Gulf, killing a majority of the personnel on them. Single bombers attacked Gasmata (New Britain) and Saumlakki (Tanimbar Islands).

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 451

0700 March 5 to 0700 March 6, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

EUROPEAN THEATER

The Army Air Forces informed General Andrews that the flight echelons of three heavy bombardment groups and one medium bombardment group are being prepared for immediate movement to the United Kingdom, to be followed by the flight echelons of three heavy groups and one medium group in April, and two heavy groups and one medium group each month thereafter. Replacement aircraft scheduled to move in March and April total 351 B-17's and 62 B-24's. Shipping may be provided in April, May, and June for movement to the United Kingdom of 51,000 air and ground support personnel.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 4, fighting continued in Sedjenane; the enemy unsuccessfully renewed his attacks northwest of Medjez-el-Bab. In central Tunisia he appears to be falling back to his former position on the line of hills through Pichon--Faid--Maknassy. A French force has occupied Nefta. The opposing forces were active along the Mareth line.

[ B-17's escorted by fighters dropped 41 tons of bombs on six ships in convoy northwest of Bizerte; four vessels were reported sunk and two damaged. ] Other Allied air activities included attacks against the enemy airfield at Djedeida, and in the Mateur--Beja--Medjez-el-Bab area. One enemy submarine was reported sunk by Allied Hudsons; the previous night British torpedo-carrying aircraft from Malta hit an enemy 7,000-ton

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

freighter east of Sardinia. The enemy was active during the day, performing bombing and other combat missions over our area. Enemy air transport activity between Italy and Tunisia increased on March 3.

A total of four (probably six) enemy planes were destroyed with the loss of one P-38.

#### MIDDLE EAST-CENTRAL AFRICAN THEATER

On March 3, bombers of the 9th Air Force attacked Messina and railroad and highway bridges in Sicily. The next day a mission was dispatched to attack Naples; no results as yet have been reported. In aerial combat during these two days one enemy fighter plane was reported destroyed.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 2, P-40's attacked an enemy town and some trucks in northern Burma. On March 3, 20 B-24's in three separate flights scored damaging hits on the docks, warehouse area, and railroad installations at Rangoon. On March 3 and 4, three B-25's scored hits in the railway yards near Mandalay, hitting a train on the second day.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 4, General MacArthur reports attacks by five A-20's, 31 B-25's and 1 B-17 on two destroyers and a burning transport, the remnants of

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OSD Letter, 5-3-72

the convoy previously attacked. At least 24 hits were made, and both destroyers were sunk. Lae and Malahang airdromes were also heavily punished while other attacks were made in the Salamaua region, on Ubili, and on targets in the islands southwest of New Guinea. In all the above operations, some 16 (possibly 22) enemy aircraft were destroyed without loss to ourselves.

PACIFIC THEATER

Being unable to locate shipping reported in the Buin area, six B-24's dropped eight tons of bombs on the Kahili and Ballale airdromes, March 4. All of these airplanes returned.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 450

0700 March 4 to 0700 March 5, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Kiska was attacked from the air on March 4, but results could not be observed because of the overcast.

EUROPEAN THEATER

On March 4, 17 B-17's attacked the railroad yards at Hamm while 30 attacked the secondary objective, the shipyards at Rotterdam. Five B-17's are missing from these missions. Preliminary reports indicate that 14 (probably 15) enemy aircraft were destroyed.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

Near Sedjenane on March 3 enemy forces surrounded an Allied battalion part of which fought its way back to our lines, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. Axis troops were being cleared from the area west of the Goubellat--Bou Arada road. In central Tunisia our forward elements continued to advance slowly, finally making contact with the enemy in the vicinity of Faïd.

Allied aircraft maintained their support of the ground troops; B-17's and P-38's attacked El Aouina and Tunis, our fighters destroying one ME-109 in the latter attack.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

1. In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 CCT, March 3, General MacArthur reports the results of his attacks in

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OSD Letter, 5-8-78

the Vitiaz Strait and Huon Gulf on the previously reported convoy, viz., 18 warships and merchant vessels were sunk with four others badly damaged and sinking; the enemy troop loss is estimated at 15,000. Allied airplanes participating in these repeated assaults were 32 B-17's, 1 B-24, 32 B-25's, 12 A-20's, 13 Australian fighters, 16 P-38's and one Catalina flying boat. Ten hits were scored with thousand-pound bombs and 31 with 500-lb. bombs alone. Enemy aircraft shot down on March 3 alone were 40 (probably 55); Allied losses were one B-17 and three P-38's.

Other Allied air operations included heavy attacks on Lae airdrome (a secondary objective for aircraft attacking the convoy) and effective attacks on Dobo (Aroe Islands) and Toeal (Kei Islands), during which six (probably nine) enemy aircraft were destroyed without Allied loss.

2. The Services of Supply requested General MacArthur to procure and ship to the Persian Gulf Service Command every month beginning with March, 1,000 tons of unground wheat and 100 tons of sugar. This will be used to barter for native labor.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 449

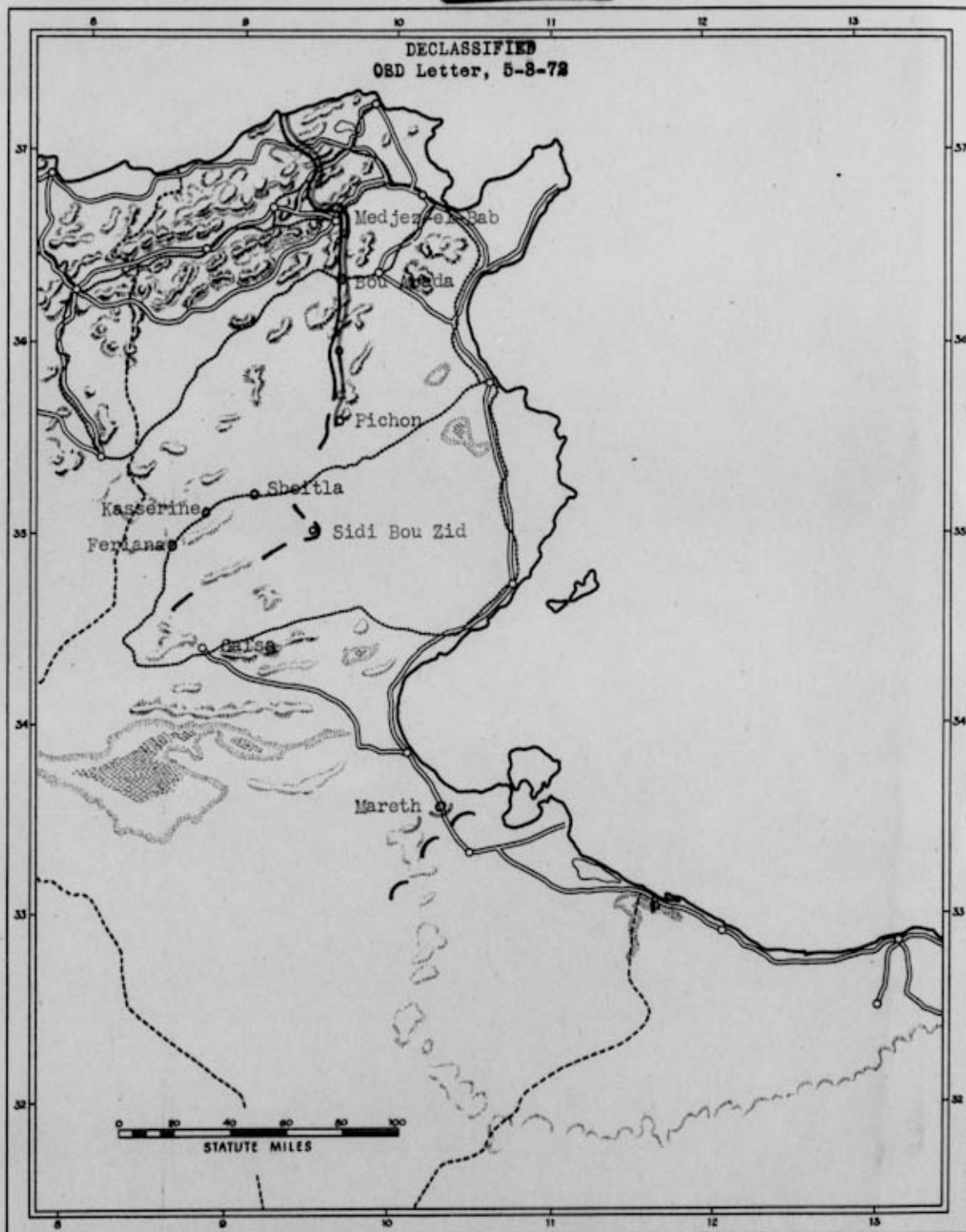
0700 March 3 to 0700 March 4, 1943

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THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72



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OSD Letter, 6-8-72

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On March 2 in northern Tunisia there were no important changes; the enemy northwest of Medjez-el-Bab was reported to have abandoned 25 tanks. Our forward elements advancing eastward in southern Tunisia had reached the points indicated on the map without reestablishing contact with the enemy; heavy mining was still retarding our advance.

On March 2 twenty B-17's, escorted by twenty P-38's, attacked Tunis with 54 tons of bombs; hits were obtained on the quays and in the industrial and warehouse districts of the city. Eighteen B-17's escorted by ten Spitfires successfully attacked the docks and power plant at La Goulette; over 53 tons of bombs were dropped. Effective support to our ground troops was given in several powerful attacks on enemy strong points, tank concentrations and truck columns. Important enemy aircraft transport movements were reported. During the day his combat aircraft were active; he heavily bombed Allied positions north of Bou Arada. On March 1 Bone was bombed with some damage to two British naval vessels.

In all of the above operations 12 (probably 15) enemy airplanes were destroyed with a loss of two Allied Spitfires.

ASIATIC THEATER

General Bissell reports that on February 27 and 28, US P-40's made offensive reconnaissances over the Salween front; one P-40 was lost. On March 2, twelve B-25's escorted by P-40's dropped over eight tons of

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

bombs on Myitkyina, securing hits on barracks and on installations in the town. Six escorted B-25's heavily damaged an enemy encampment northeast of Lungling.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 OCT, March 2, General MacArthur reports the results of his initial attacks northwest of Cape Gloucester on the enemy 14-ship convoy reported the previous day. Two medium-size cargo ships were sunk, one 10,000-ton transport damaged and probably sunk, and one destroyer and one cargo vessel damaged. Five (probably 13) enemy aircraft were shot down without Allied air loss. Additional enemy ships were reported in the same area. (A late communique reports the virtual destruction of this entire fleet.) A B-24 near Wide Bay, New Britain, sank a small enemy ship probably laden with ammunition, two B-17's bombed the airdrome at Gasmata, and six light bombers effectively attacked the airdrome at Lae.

An enemy air raid on Darwin, which resulted in the destruction of one Allied airplane, cost the Japanese three (probably six) airplanes.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

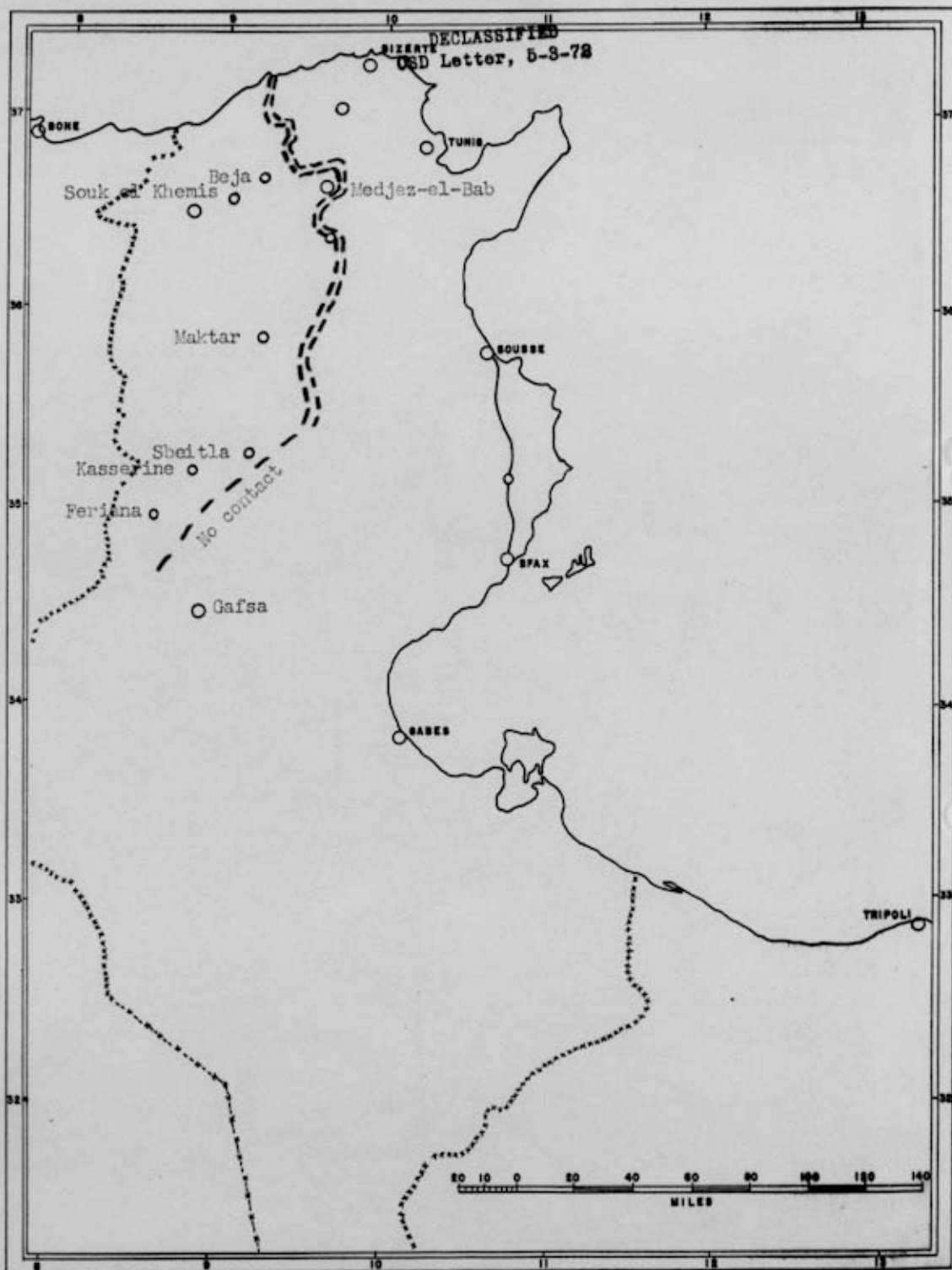
No. 448

0700 March 2 to 0700 March 3, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72



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OSD Letter, 8-3-72

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

1. The 9th US Division relieved the 1st US Division at 2359, 27 February.

2. On March 1 our troops ejected the enemy from his foremost positions between Medjes-el-Bab and El Arcussa. There were definite indications also that he was withdrawing from the area northwest of Medjes-el-Bab. During the three days of fighting in this region, the enemy probably lost more than 30 tanks. Further south, our advance elements had reached the general line indicated on the map without reestablishing contact with the enemy.

During the night of February 28-March 1 ten British Wellingtons dropped over 18 tons of bombs on the town, docks, and railroad installations at Bizerte. On March 1 thirty-seven B-17's in two attacks dropped over 93 tons of high explosives on Palermo, obtaining observed hits on one large and several smaller merchant vessels, the dry-dock, warehouse and shipbuilding areas. Fifteen B-26's destroyed the railway bridge at La Hencha and silenced antiaircraft guns in the vicinity. Allied fighters and bombers were especially active over the battle area, operating against enemy tanks, transportation and troop concentrations, and intercepting a formation of enemy planes attempting to bomb our airfield at Souk El Khemis. Twelve B-25's bombed the railroad and road junction east of Mateur. British Malta-based aircraft carried out their

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usual patrols over Sicily. On March 2 Malta-based planes obtained direct hits on the Lampedusa airdrome, and their fighter aircraft made offensive sweeps in that general area.

In aerial encounters resulting from all of these operations 21 (probably 24) Axis planes were destroyed as compared with a loss of two B-26's and one Spitfire.

#### AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER

Nine B-24's dropped more than 20 tons of explosives on Naples, March 1. One ME-109 was destroyed.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On March 1, P-40's from Dinjan obtained direct hits on bridges and strafed and bombed enemy-held villages in the Hukawng Valley (northern Burma). Eight B-25's successfully bombed the railroad north of Thazi (near Mandalay). All of our bombers returned safely.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for the 24-hour period ending 1300 GCT, March 1, General MacArthur reports that an enemy convoy of six destroyers, two 5,000 to 7,000-ton cargo ships and six smaller vessels, with fighter cover, was sighted sailing west, 40 miles northwest of Ubili; our B-17's had been unable to locate these ships due to inclement weather. (A late communique states that this convoy was successfully attacked.) The

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ODD Letter, 5-2-72

airdromes at Gasmata and Waingapoe (Soemba I.) and ground targets in the Mubo area were bombed.

PACIFIC THEATER

On March 1 two US B-24's attacked Ballale and two others hit Kahili with fragmentation bombs.

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WAR DEPARTMENT

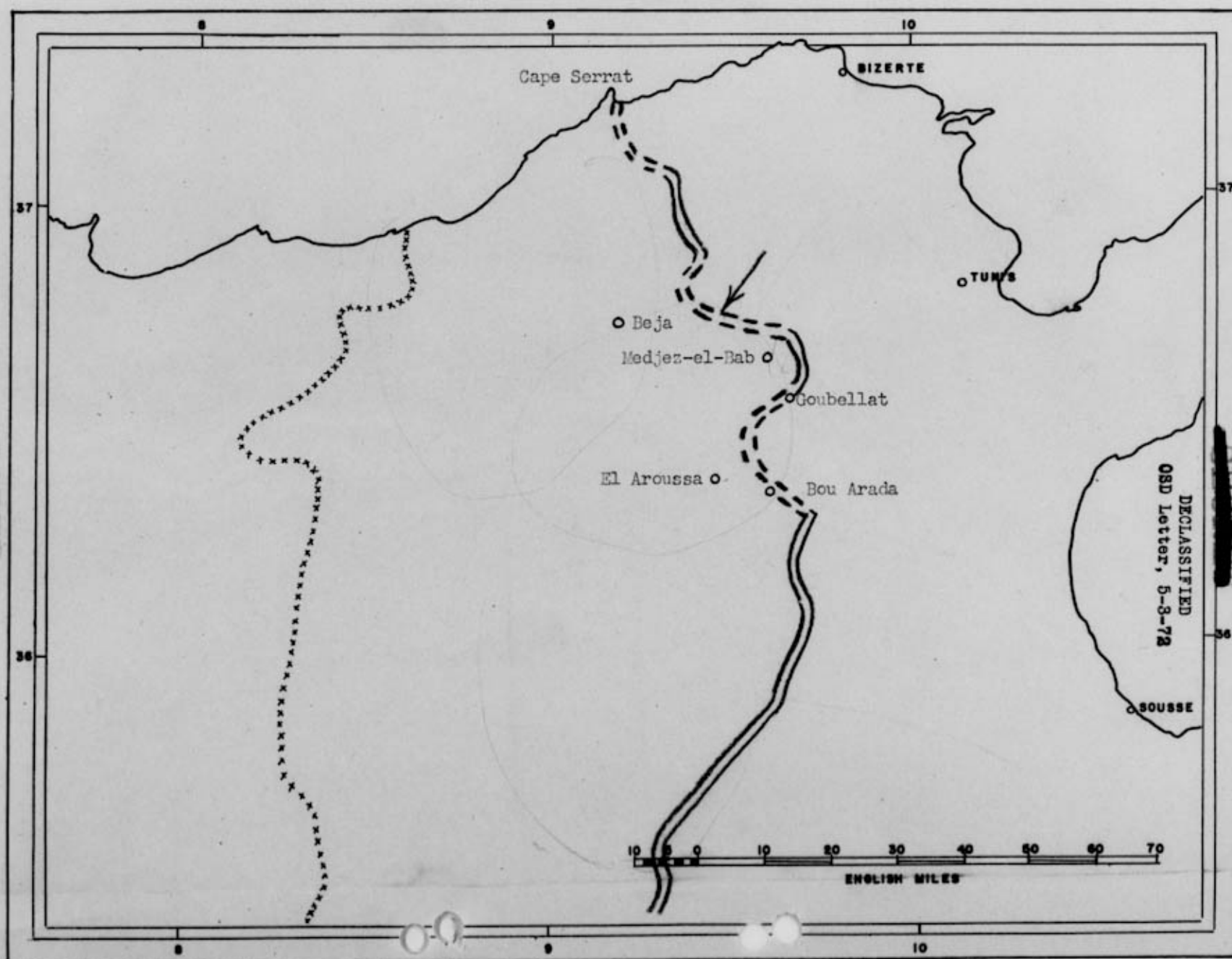
DAILY OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

No. 447

0700 March 1 to 0700 March 2, 1943

COPY FOR

THE WHITE HOUSE



WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On February 26 six B-24's and six B-25's, attacking the enemy camp area at Kiska, dropped more than 21 tons of high explosives from 6,000 feet altitude. Hits were observed in the target area; no enemy aircraft were seen and all of our airplanes returned safely.

Sixteen P-40's are now stationed at Amchitka.

EUROPEAN THEATER

A further report on the attack by our heavy bombers on the enemy port installations at Brest on February 27, discloses that 155 tons of high explosives were dropped. Although clouds obscured the aiming point, several direct hits were observed in the target area. RAF Spitfires provided excellent support for our bombers.

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER

On February 26 another enemy advance south of Cape Serrat was stopped. Although the Axis attack in the area northwest of Medjez-el-Bab made some progress towards the highway from Beja, Allied troops succeeded in checking it, at least 18 enemy tanks being destroyed. There was also renewed fighting in the Goubellat-El Aroussa-Bou Arada area. In southern Tunisia our patrols continued to advance slowly through mined areas; Sbeitla was reported clear of the enemy.

During February 27 and 28, Allied aircraft actively supported the ground troops in northern Tunisia and flew antishipping missions. On



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February 28, 49 B-17's dropped 134 tons of bombs on Cagliari, hitting a vessel, the docks, railroad yards, and town. Aircraft from Malta maintained their usual patrols, and attacked enemy installations in Sicily. The enemy continued his air operations against Allied convoys, his transport activity, and combat missions over the battle area. During these two days at least 17 enemy aircraft were destroyed with a reported Allied loss of two.

#### ASIATIC THEATER

On February 28 six B-25's and four P-40's attacked the enemy storage area at Mangshih (Western Yunnan); results were unobserved because of inclement weather. That same day US P-40's, attacking enemy installations in northeastern Burma, destroyed a bridge and effectively raided two enemy towns.

A delayed report on a bomber mission on February 24 by 11 B-25's against the Gokteik viaduct on the Mandalay-Lashio railroad states that several near misses or effective hits were obtained and one enemy airplane was probably shot down.

#### SOUTHWEST PACIFIC THEATER

In his operations summary for February 28 General MacArthur reports that Allied forward troops had established themselves within three miles southwest and four miles south of the enemy-held town of Mubo. Single B-17's on armed reconnaissance bombed the Pinschhafen and Lae airdromes.

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OSD Letter, 5-8-72

Australian aircraft attacked Toel (Kei Islands), and the Penfoel airdrome at Koepang, where at least 13 grounded enemy aircraft were destroyed. Antiaircraft and machine-gun positions were silenced and buildings set afire.

PACIFIC THEATER

On February 26 a weather mission airplane again bombed Munda on its return flight.

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