

Great Britain: Military Situation: Mar 1941

~~SECRET~~  
REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON.

March 1st, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report on the military  
situation. It is dated February 27th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

  
Telegram received from London  
dated February 27th, 1941.

Naval. Outward convoy of 39 ships during February 26th and early 27th was attacked by U boats and aircraft.

2. Four ships torpedoed of which one certain sank, one probably sank, one returning to harbour. Eight bombed of which one sank, four burning, three hoped to salve.

3. British ship of 7,764 tons bombed, set on fire off Cromarty in the a.m. February 26th. Fire soon controlled and ship towed into harbour.

4. Two British trawlers off Fastnet shot down Fokke Wulf aircraft, escorted by two fighters which attacked them on February 23rd.

5. Royal Air Force. Night of February 26th/27th. 145 bombers despatched to attack industrial areas at Cologne and invasion ports. Four aircraft have not yet returned to their base.

6. German Air Force. Daylight February 26th. With the exception of submarine patrols in the Straits activity consisted mainly of occasional raids over coastal districts in East Anglia and Kent. Industrial damage reported is negligible and casualties very few.

7. Night of February 26th/27th. About 150 aircraft operating of which 50 attacked Cardiff-Bristol area.

8. Malta. On February 26th Luqa aerodrome attacked by about 60 German bombers escorted by 20-30 fighters - 2 Junker 87s were destroyed and 7 others probably destroyed by our fighters. A.A. fire brought  
down/

down 5 Junker 87s and probably 4 more. Three of our fighters are missing. Damage was caused to hangars and buildings and aerodrome was rendered unserviceable but there were only 4 service casualties. Six of our aircraft on the ground were burnt and four were badly damaged.

9. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles: British: Fighters 5 (two pilots safe), Bombers 4. Germans: Nil.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 3rd, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of  
the two latest reports received from  
London on the military situation.  
They are dated February 28th and  
March 1st respectively.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Arthur Fox*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

  
Telegram from London dated February 28th

1. Naval. A/P Trawler mined and sunk off Humber night of 26th/27th.
2. H.M. Minesweeper "Sarna" mined and sunk in Suez Canal on 25th February.
3. During the night after the capture of Castelorozzo Island two enemy motor torpedo boats raided the Island but withdrew before contact could be made. Reported "Ladybird" withdrew after heavy raid when she was damaged slightly.
4. Reference to air and U-boat attack on outward convoy 26th/27th, position as now known:- fourteen ships attacked, three sunk and three set on fire, eight damaged, of which one in tow and two proceeding under own steam to United Kingdom.
5. On 27th, East Coast convoy twice bombed and machine-gunned. One ship sunk, one damaged, one reported being attacked, but no further details.
6. Glasgow and raider. Now made clear Glasgow's only available aircraft did sighting and shadowing, Glasgow seventy miles distant with maximum speed of 24 knots. Position of "Canadian Cruiser" 480 miles E.S.E. Mombasa and Dutch ship was 280 miles E.S.E. of "Canadian Cruiser".
7. "Leander" a.m. 27th, 250 miles W.S.W. of the Maldive Islands intercepted Italian ship "Ramb 1." The ship under red ensign. When ordered to stop, hoisted Italian colours and opened fire. Five salvoes from "Leander" ended the engagement, "Ramb 1." then set on fire, abandoned and sank within one hour, 100 prisoners.
8. Military. Libya. Considerable movement of mechanical transport has been reported in coastal area between a point fifty miles W. of Agheila and Misurata. About fifty enemy aircraft were seen on the ground in Misurata area.

Advance/

Advance elements of our mechanised forces drive back a reconnaissance unit of armoured fighting vehicles, believed German, west of Agheila.

9. Royal Air Force. Night of 26th/27th. Three aircraft (not four reported yesterday) are missing, three crashed on return, one of the crew saved.
10. A night fighter on offensive patrol probably destroyed one enemy aircraft, and damaged another over an aerodrome in Northern France.
11. 27th and 27th/28th. No operations took place.
12. Malta. On 25th Hurricanes shot down two enemy bombers, probably destroyed another, and damaged a third.
13. Albania. Nineteen Blenheims with fighter escort dropped 3½ tons of bombs in Tepelene area and 4 tons on Fier with good results. Italian Fleet headquarters and two ships off Valona were machine-gunned.
14. German Air Force. 27th. About fifty enemy aircraft were operating. An aircraft factory was attacked, also 12 Royal Air Force Stations and 2 military establishments. Production at factory will be reduced by about 50% for 48 hours.
15. Night of 27th/28th. No enemy activity.
16. Malta. It is now reported that during the attack on Luqa aerodrome on 26th four further Wellingtons were damaged.

Telegram from London dated March 1st.

1. Naval. Of convoy reported attacked February 26th/27th now learnt one damaged ship has not been located and one damaged now been abandoned in sinking condition.
2. British force in Kasteloritzo was withdrawn night of February 27th/28th. During withdrawal Jaguar attacked with torpedoes, ship located in inner harbour, four explosions heard. Later she located an enemy destroyer which escaped although hit twice.
3. Military. Eritrea. To 7 p.m. February 27th. February 25th our forces in the North were in contact with enemy fifteen miles northeast of Keren. Free French force sustained fifty casualties during attack.
4. Libya. German reconnaissance units and possibly also units of an armoured division are operating in Libya. There is no evidence that a large German force has arrived.
5. Royal Air Force. February 28th. Three medium bombers attacked Hotel at Quiberon believed occupied by submarine ..... : three direct hits were scored. Our fighters on Channel patrol probably shot down one bomber.
6. Night of February 28th/March 1st. One hundred and sixteen aircraft attacked targets at Wilhelmshaven including "Tirpitz" and six bombed port of Boulogne. One aircraft is missing. Results unobserved.
7. Albania. On 27th, nine medium bombers escorted by 9 Hurricanes attacked aerodrome at Valona with good results. Hurricanes shot down seven enemy fighters and two more were destroyed in collision. On February 28th, 25 Italian aircraft shot down and nine more probably destroyed over Greek lines.
8. German Air Force. 28th and 28th/1st, very little enemy activity.
9. Malta./

9. Malta. Early on 28th parachute mines were dropped in and near Grand Harbour, two exploded in Valetta and caused considerable damage to property. Anti-aircraft fire detonated one in the air and probably destroyed one enemy aircraft.

10. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles.

German: One bomber probably destroyed.

British: One bomber missing.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 4th, 1941.

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Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 2nd.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States

of America,

Washington, D. C.



Telegram from London dated March 2nd.

1. Naval. Since commencement of hostilities 54,693 ships have been convoyed, out of which 192 British and 31 allied and 19 neutral have been lost. Imports into Great Britain by ships in convoy week ending February 22nd 931,433 tons. Merchant ships lost by enemy up to February 26th:  
German 268 of 1,345,000 tons,  
Italian 133 of 683,000 tons.  
In addition 34 ships of 61,000 gross tons under enemy control or useful to enemy have been sunk.
2. During daylight March 1st, two Merchant ships from Canada were bombed and severely damaged off Cardigan Bay. East and West-bound convoys also attacked off Kinnaird Head, 2 ships being hit and set on fire, 1 ship torpedoed in North West approaches.
3. Military. Italian Somaliland. Our troops occupied Bardera on February 27th; up to the afternoon of February 28th, prisoners taken during our advance along the coast and at Mogadishu numbered 9,000 and many more are surrendering in Mogadishu.
4. Royal Air Force. Yesterday our fighters made an offensive sweep over Northern France and destroyed 3 enemy fighters.
5. Night of March 1st/2nd. 131 aircraft attacked industrial targets in Cologne and three bombed Channel ports. Results unobserved.
6. Eritrea. February 28th. Our aircraft dropped over 6 tons of bombs on Asmara railway station, scoring several direct hits.
7. German Air Force. March 1st. Daylight activity slight. A bomber was destroyed by our fighters off the  
Isle/

Isle of Wight.

8. Night of March 1st/2nd. 110 aircraft were over this country, bombing was widespread and not intense. One enemy bomber was destroyed off the coast of Scotland.

9. At Malta six J.U. 88's escorted by fighters made an attack on March 1st. Many bombs were dropped, but only slight damage was done.

10. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles.

German: three fighters destroyed and two bombers destroyed.

British: nil.

11. Home Security. Night of March 1st/2nd. Some residential damage was caused at Hull rendering several persons homeless and a bus depot was damaged by fire at Southampton.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 4th, 1941

RECEIVED  
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Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was dated  
March 3rd, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON

DATED MARCH 3rd, 1941.

1. NAVAL

Three coastal aircraft a.m. second attacked convoy of seven merchant vessels off Danish coast. One 2,000 ton was hit amid-ships with torpedo.

2. There is evidence that Italian reinforcements have recently arrived in Tripoli. No details of strength are now available but identifications are being sought.

3. ROYAL AIR FORCE.

Night of 2nd/2rd. 71 bombers were sent out, principal target being cruiser at Brest. No reports at present available.

4. GERMAN AIR FORCE.

March 2nd. Activity slight consisting chiefly of North Sea reconnaissances. A Hurricane shot down one enemy bomber off east coast and 2 Hurricanes damaged a Focke-Wulf off Shetland. Night of 2nd/3rd, enemy activity negligible.

5. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from Great Britain.

German bombers destroyed, 1, damaged, 1.

British: 6 bombers missing.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 5th, 1941

REGRATED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 4th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honorable,

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

Telegram received from London  
dated March 4th, 1941.

Naval.

1. Small force of bombers attacked Hipper class cruiser at Brest night of 3rd/4th - no results known yet.
2. Naval aircraft bombed North Harbour Massawa after dark on March 1st. Bombs hit small floating dock believed to contain U-boat. "Upright" reports she put one torpedo into unescorted ship south east of Sfax on February 23rd, ship burst into flames and believed sank, also night of February 24th/25th she hit with one torpedo out of four the largest of 3 enemy warships either Armando class cruiser or Navigatore class destroyer but fate of ship not observed.
3. A.P. trawler "Cobbers" bombed and sunk off Lowestoft on March 3rd: troop convoy of 16 ships totalling 314,599 G R tons has arrived at Suez.
4. Military - Bulgaria.  
Reported 20 German divisions including 4 armoured and 3 motorized are moving South from Roumania. German troops crossed the Danube at 6 points and moving on three main routes towards Gorna Djumaya, Provdiv and Stara Zagora. Advance units appear to have reached a line Maritsa. Large numbers of German troops reported in Burgas and anti-aircraft units at Varna.
5. Libya.

Total Italian Libyan prisoners taken in Libya alone is 133,000.

6. ROYAL AIR FORCE.

Night of March 2nd/3rd, weather conditions at Brest were good, 53 tons of H.E. dropped, many bursts seen around dock where enemy cruiser reported.

7. Night of March 3rd/4th.

72 bombers sent to industrial targets at Cologne, 7 to cruiser at Brest and 10 to Channel ports. One Hampden and one Stirling missing. Fighter Command sent four aircraft on night offensive patrols over North West France. One enemy aircraft probably destroyed and another damaged. One of our aircraft missing.

8. ALBANIA.

On March 2nd, medium bombers escorted by fighters attacked Berat aerodrome. 2 enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground and others damaged.

9. GERMAN AIR FORCE.

March 3rd, patrols took place over Dover Straits some of which flew in over East Kent. Manston aerodrome dive bombed but material damage slight. Our fighters destroyed one Messerschmidt 109 and another enemy aircraft crashed on landing.

10. Night of March 3rd/4th. Enemy activity although not heavy was larger than of late. 160 aircraft plotted of which 20 probably mine laying. Cardiff main objective and scattered bombing occurred elsewhere.

11. Aircraft casualties from operations over and from the British Isles.

German/

GERMAN:

<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>probable</u>	<u>damaged</u>
2	1	1

BRITISH:

2 Bombers missing.

12. HOME SECURITY.

CARDIFF

More than 50 fires started by incendiary bombs. Considerable damage chiefly to business premises, done by H.E. Some dislocation of railway services.

SUNDERLAND.

An electric sub-station hit causing dislocation of supply of several factories.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 7th, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 5th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D. C.

  
Telegram from London dated  
March 5th, 1941

Naval.

Further mines dropped by aircraft Suez Canal on March 3rd. It had been expected the Canal would be open by March 3rd. The positions of the new mines as plotted considered fairly accurate.

2. "Canberra" and "Leander" P.M. March 4th, 300 miles South East of the Seychelles sighted merchant vessel and tanker. Within 20 minutes both were on fire and later sank. Merchant ship was German S.S. "Coburg" of 7400 tons which recently left Massawa and the tanker was Norwegian "Ketty Brovig" of 7000 tons previously on passage from Bahrein to Lourenco Marques.

3. On March 4th, successful operation against fish oil plants in four principal fishing ports Lofoten Island successfully completed by units of the Home Fleet.

4. Prisoners taken were German or Quisling Norwegians. Special service and Norwegian troops were employed.

5. Aircraft on patrol Dutch coast dropped 250 pounds of bombs Den Helder docks night of March 3rd/4th, which caused very heavy explosion. Aircraft reconnaissance Tripoli harbour p.m. March 3rd, showed eight large ships, 21 medium, 24 small craft. Two miles North were two large merchant vessels and two destroyers - 15 miles North a warship with one destroyer standing by was seen to be on fire.

6. Military. Italian Somaliland.

We have occupied Bullo Burti, our patrols have reached Isha Baido, and have captured 200 prisoners, much transport and 20,000 gallons of petrol. Prisoners now exceed 10,000.

7. Bulgaria.

Sixteen of Bulgaria's seventeen infantry divisions are now reported mobilized and movement of Bulgarian troops towards Turkish frontier continues.

8. Royal Air Force night of March 3rd/4th.

43 tons of H.E. and 7500 incendiaries were dropped on Cologne; a fire 3/4 of a mile long was left burning on the West side of the river.

9. March 4th, in the afternoon 2 sweeps were carried out over the Channel each by 3 squadrons of fighters but no enemy aircraft were seen. A Spitfire on photographic reconnaissance shot down an enemy fighter near Brest.

10. The night of March 4th/5th, bad weather on the Continent prevented operations.

11. Greece.

On March 3rd, Hurricanes shot down five out of ten Italian bombers returning from Larissa.

12. German Air Force.

Night of March 4th/5th, about 50 enemy aircraft were operating of which about 12 were minelaying in the Thames Estuary, the remainder swept South Wales area. One aircraft was destroyed by our night fighters and two others are reported to have been shot down.

13. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from the British Isles.

<u>German</u>	Destroyed	Probable	Damaged
	2	2	4
<u>British</u>		Nil	

14. Home Security.

Night of March 3rd/4th. Casualties at Cardiff estimated 46 killed and 85 seriously wounded.

15. Night of March 4th/5th. Some fires were started in Cardiff area but were quickly under control, Penarth railway station received a direct hit. Very little damage, very few casualties anywhere.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

7th March, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 6th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON  
DATED MARCH 6th, 1941

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NAVAL

Suez Canal still closed but ships drawing less than 20 feet may enter Port Said through a swept channel.

2. 8 mines were exploded Liverpool Bay on March 5th among others exploded elsewhere one was exploded in Midway three miles above Rochester Bridge. One Junkers 88 shot down by Sunderland off South-West Ireland on 5th. Probably two Blenheims shot down one Heinkel same area.

3. Results of raid on Loften Island on 4th German factory ship 9780 tons, seven German, 1 Norwegian small vessels, 1 armed trawler and 1 unarmed trawler destroyed. Total tonnage about 18,000 tons. 198 German prisoners of all three services taken, also 10 Quisling Norwegians, one German Naval officer and six ratings killed. We suffered no damage, no casualties and reception of our troops on shore most friendly.

4. Cruiser torpedoed and believed sunk by Upright on 25th now reported a Condottieu A class.

5. MILITARY. ETHIOPIA.

Enemy evacuated Burye on March 4th owing to patriots pressure and are withdrawing through Debra Marcos. 1500 Banda and 200 Colonial troops have deserted from the enemy with their arms.

6. ALBANIA.

Italian divisions of all types in Albania now total 24.

7. ROYAL AIR FORCE.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

Night of 5th/6th. All operations cancelled.

8. GERMAN AIR FORCE.

Night of 5th/6th. Activity negligible.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Mines were again dropped in the Suez Canal on the night of 3rd/4th and on the 5th another bombing attack was made on Hefar aerodrome Malta causing considerable damage.

9. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles.

GERMAN:

<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
2	7	2

BRITISH:

Destroyed - 4 fighters.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

10th March, 1941.

~~SECRET~~  
REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies  
of the two latest reports received  
from London on the military situation.  
They were dated March 8th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Hahfax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

Telegram from London dated March 8th, 1941.

1. Naval. Norwegian loaded tanker (3000 tons) was sunk off the East coast yesterday and a British ship (6,400 tons) outward bound in convoy, with general cargo, was torpedoed in the North Western approaches early March 7th.
2. Military. British Somaliland. Ferfer 210 miles north of Mogadishu on Harar road has been occupied and Belet Uen aerodrome is fit for use; the roads and bridges are intact, water plentiful and large quantities of petrol and oil have been captured. Patrols have been sent forward to Oddur and Dolo (North West of Lugh Ferrandi). Among material captured at and on the way to Mogadiscio are 345,000 gallons of M/T petrol and 8,000 gallons of aviation petrol.
3. Bulgaria. German reconnaissance detachments reached the vicinity of the Greek frontier on March 3rd and by March 5th the main concentrations were developing in Sliveno Yambol area, where heavy tanks are reported and in the Struma Valley near Gorna Djumaya and Petrich. Estimated that 8 divisions of German troops are in Bulgarian territory.
4. Bulgarian divisions appear to be disposed as follows: Yugoslav frontier 1 motorised, 2 infantry, 2 reserve infantry forming ..... Turkish frontier, 2 motorised, 7 infantry, Macedonian frontier 4 infantry, Southern Dobrudja 1 infantry. Bulgaria general headquarters is reported at Stara Zagora.

5. R.A.F./

5. R.A.F. March 6th 1 medium bomber attacked railway targets at Ghent.

Night of March 6th/7th. Operations cancelled.

6. G.A.F. Night of March 6th/7th. 40 aircraft were operating over this country but only 5 came inland, the remainder were mine-laying.

7. Malta. Malta was attacked March 5th as reported yesterday by about 100 aircraft including 60 bombers. Damage was slight at one aerodrome but at Hal Far barracks and hangars considerably damaged; 4 aircraft were destroyed on the ground and all remaining aircraft on the aerodrome were rendered temporarily unserviceable. 11 of our fighters intercepted and shot down 7 enemy aircraft probably an eighth and damaged four more. Anti-aircraft destroyed a further nine and damaged four. One of our fighters is missing.

8. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles.

German destroyed one, damaged one. British nil.

9. Home Security. March 7th. Two R.A.F. aerodromes were attacked by .....; some damage to buildings but no serious casualties.

Telegram received from London dated March 8, 1941.

1. Naval. In the Suez Canal divers have located mines which were counter-mined. Believed 3 mines remain to be dealt with, expected Canal will be open March 7th. Twenty-three mines were exploded at various home ports on March 7th.
2. One enemy aircraft laid mines off Sayers p.m. of March 7th. L.L. sweepers detonated these the same afternoon. Between 14.30 and 16.30 hours March 7th six aircraft laid mines in the Humber entrance, fifteen were seen to drop.
3. On March 7th convoys were attacked by U-boat in the Western approaches and off the East Coast by aircraft, and during the night of March 7th-8th by E-boats. Of the nine ships torpedoed or damaged by aircraft four sinking or sunk. One aircraft shot down one damaged.
4. On March 7th off the Hook of Holland a 2500 ton merchant vessel was bombed and left sinking by coastal aircraft.
5. Ethiopia. In Gojjam area patriot operations continue against retreating garrison of Burye. 300 prisoners and four guns have been captured and an aeroplane shot down. 1,700 deserters have surrendered.
6. Kenya Colony. Heavy rain has fallen on Ethiopian border and many roads are under water.
7. R.A.F. March 7th. During the day aircraft from the Coastal Command bombed an aerodrome in Holland hitting hangars also naval dockyard at Denhelder and left a 2,500 ton merchant vessel in a

sinking/

- sinking condition off the Dutch Coast.
8. Night of March 7th-March 8th. Operations cancelled.
9. German Air Force. March 7th about fifty enemy aircraft were operating overland in wide localities and forty more were working off East coast. One enemy aircraft was destroyed by anti-aircraft shore battery and one by a Naval trawler, a third hit the mast of a ship and crashed.
10. Night March 7-March 8th. Activity negligible.
11. Malta. Night of March 6th/March 7th. Twelve enemy aircraft made individual attacks on various objectives without causing serious damage or casualties.
12. March 7th. Four bombers escorted by 10 ME 109's damaged a Sunderland by machine-gun fire, shot down a Glen Martin and also one Hurricane out of seven which intercepted. Pilot saved. Two enemy aircraft were probably destroyed by anti-aircraft fire.
13. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles. German, three destroyed. British nil.
14. Home Security March 7th. A ball-bearing factory was hit and seriously damaged. Thirty-six persons were killed and forty-seven seriously injured; production has been stopped probably for seven days.

15. Six Royal Air Force stations, a balloon barrage centre and an infantry training centre were attacked. Little damage and few casualties.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 12th, 1941.

~~SECRET~~  
Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of the latest reports received from London on the military situation. They were dated March 9th and March 10th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

  
TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 10th, 1941.

1. Naval. E Boats approaching two convoys off East Coast night of 9th/10th, were driven off by "Worcester" and "Southdown". No apparent damage to any ship. One Mine-sweeper is mined and sunk off Dungeness.
2. During attack on Malta by fifteen enemy aircraft night of March 7th/8th, His Majesty's Ship "Imperial" slightly damaged, S.S. "Essex" damaged by two hits and one near miss.
3. M.S. Trawler "Nadine" attacked by Heinkel aircraft off Yarmouth a.m. March 8th was not damaged but she severely damaged and set on fire the aircraft with machine guns. Last seen diving towards the sea.
4. Two East Coast Convoys bombed p.m. March 9th off Aberdeen Coast - no damage - but one ship of channel convoy in the Straits of Dover was hit by bombs night of March 9th/10th.
5. Military. South East Europe. Total German divisions in South East Europe now probably twenty-eight. Total of thirty to thirty-two divisions may be reached in the near future. Approximately thirteen German divisions reported in Bulgaria.
6. Royal Air Force. March 9th and March 9th/10th. No operations by bomber command owing to weather.
7. Albania. On March 8th eighteen medium bombers escorted by fighters bombed Tepelene and large enemy convoys in the vicinity.
8. Ethiopia. Medium bombers from Aden dropped two and one-half tons of bombs on Diredawa.
9. German Air Force. March 9th. In earling morning twelve Messerschmidt 109's made an ineffective attack on

/Manston

Manston aerodrome.

10. Night of March 9th/10th. Chief attack again against London by about 120 aircraft and subsidiary attack was made on Portsmouth.

London. Raid lasted longer than previous night but there was less damage. Slight damage was caused in two docks and to house property in the East end.

Portsmouth. Some damage was done to barracks and also in docks.

Malta. At dawn March 9th four enemy fighters and a bomber approached at sea level and attacked an aerodrome where one Hurricane was burnt and another damaged. Bomber crashed on Gozo and crew were killed.



TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 9th, 1941.

1.           Naval.   Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were sighted p.m. March 8th by an aircraft from H.M.S. "Malaya" whilst escorting a convoy midway between the Canaries and Cape Verde Islands. "Malaya" turned towards and subsequently sighted one battle cruiser but on receiving aircraft's report of two battle cruisers, "Malaya" retired to cover the convoy. This convoy was attacked by U-boat one hundred and eighty miles west of Cape Blanco early a.m. March 8th and five merchant ships were sunk out of fifty-four.
2.           In the East Coast convoy attacked by E boats on the night of March 7th/8th one further British merchant ship of 2,000 tons was also sunk making total of three sunk, two beached.
3.           His Majesty's Destroyer "Greyhound" sank Italian submarine "Anfitrite" forty miles south of Creta on March 6th and took thirty-nine prisoners.
4.           Military. Eritrea, to 8.50 p.m. March 7th. In the Red Sea area our troops are now ten miles North of Keren. In Barentu area our patrols have reached a point three miles East of Aressa.
5.           Ethiopia. In Metemma area patriot forces have occupied a camp fourteen miles north of Gondar. In Gojjam area retreating garrison of Burye were ambushed by Ethiopian troops north of Dambacha and suffered three hundred casualties including one hundred killed.
6.           Yugoslavia. Three armies stationed on the Bulgarian and Roumanian frontiers are reported mobilising; strength of Yugoslavia March 9th would therefore be about 500,000 and is expected to reach 600,000 by March 10th.
7.           Royal Air Force. March 8th no major operations /undertaken.

undertaken.

8. Night of March 8th/9th no night bombers sent out owing to probable weather deterioration but nine aircraft of the Fighter Command went to attack aerodromes in Northern France and probably damaged two enemy aircraft.

9. German Air Force. March 8th, only twelve aircraft were plotted over the country during the day.

10. Night of March 8th/9th. About 120 enemy aircraft were operating and a short but intensive attack was directed against London by about sixty of them; other localities visited were South East England, East Anglia and Portsmouth from which no serious damage or casualties have been reported. Anti-aircraft claim three enemy aircraft destroyed and two damaged.

11. Malta. Night of March 7th/8th, fifteen enemy bombers caused slight damage to a naval store.

12. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from the British Isles.

German: probable three, damaged four.

British: nil.

13. Home Security. London, fifty casualties were effected; damage of military importance was slight; fires in London and Cheney Docks soon put out. Cafe de Paris received a direct hit and twenty-six persons are reported killed and over eighty injured. The North Lodge of Buckingham Palace was demolished.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 13th, 1941.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~  
Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 12th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

  
TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 12th, 1941.

1. Naval. Air reconnaissance p.m. March 10th showed Hipper cruiser out of dry-dock and alongside jetty.
2. One destroyer was seriously damaged and a mine sweeping trawler and submarine floating dock sunk in air attack on Portsmouth night of March 10th/11th.
3. Same night destroyer "Holderness" destroyed by direct hit from four inch guns an enemy aircraft minelaying in the Thames Estuary.
4. A British ship (5,250 tons) was torpedoed and sunk by a submarine in the North Thames approaches on March 8th.
5. Military - Balkans. There are now probably twenty-eight German divisions in south-east Europe. Increased railway movements into Roumania are reported and a total of thirty - thirty-two divisions may well be reached in the near future.
6. Eight German divisions including motorised divisions have entered Bulgaria via Dobrudja. Troop movements were reported in the various districts between March 9th/10th and large petrol, munition and food dumps at Karmovat. It would appear that about thirteen German divisions are represented in Bulgaria although several are unlikely to be at full strength.
7. Royal Air Force. Night of March 9th/10th. Thirty-nine heavy and medium bombers attacked three Channel ports and nineteen heavy bombers raided industrial area of Cologne. Two aircraft are missing.
8. Albania. Night of March 8th/9th. Harbour installations at Durazzo were successfully attacked by our bombers.
9. March 9th. Fifteen Gladiators engaged a formation of thirty-five enemy bombers and thirty fighters over

/Kelcyre.

Kelcyre. Six fighters and a bomber were destroyed and one fighter and one bomber probably destroyed. One Gladiator shot down (pilot safe), and another damaged.

10. German Air Force. Night of March 10th/11th.

An attack was made on Portsmouth by about 150 aircraft. Our night-fighters destroyed one bomber and another forced-landed in East Anglia.

11. Malta. On March 10th, enemy fighters carried out a low-flying attack on St. Paul's Bay. One "Sunderland" was burned and another slightly damaged. Ground defences claimed one enemy aircraft destroyed and two damaged.

12. Aircraft casualties over and from British Isles:-

German - Destroyed	Bombers	1, destroyer.
		1, night fighter
		<u>1, forced landed</u>
	Total:	3

British - Damaged	1 fighter
	1 fighter missing
	2 bombers missing

13. Home Security. Portsmouth and district. Attack was heavy. Considerable damage by fire to Royal Naval barracks; several fires started in the dockyard where power station and two electric workshops were damaged. Three oil cisterns set alight at Gosport and Victualling Yards reported burned out. Damage to utility service in the district and some temporary railway dislocation.

14. Bulgaria. Movement of German Air Force into Bulgaria continues. Bulgaria anti-aircraft and fighter defences are now under German Air Force operational command and will co-operate with them.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

14th March, 1941

~~SECRET~~  
**REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED**

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 12th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

  
TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON  
DATED 12th MARCH, 1941.

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1. NAVAL

Hipper class cruiser at Brest was exercising in Douarnenez Bay p.m. 11th. Later observed returning to Brest. She was unsuccessfully attacked by coastal aircraft night of 10th to 11th but several bombs close to target.

2. NIGHT OF 10th to 11th.

Reported eight mines dropped in three separate parts of Suez Canal. Three exploded.

3. Further report on Portsmouth raid night of 10th to 11th. Tynedale, Marshal Soult, and two trawlers slightly damaged. Two trawlers damaged.

4. Naval casualties 87 killed, 224 seriously injured. Camper Nicholson burnt out. Total of eight enemy aircraft destroyed that night.

5. Worcester escorting convoy off Southwold 1.00 a.m. March 11th drove off E boats and believed hit one with pom pom.

6. Ursula on February 22nd west of Tripoli sank Sicilia class transport heavily laden and believed carrying troops, with her were one merchant vessel and escort of three general E torpedo boats and air escort. Heavy counter attack failed to damage Ursula.

7. Report received that Italian cruiser Armando Diaz troop ship Conte Rosso 18,000 tons and Citte di Messina 2,500 tons have been sunk with heavy loss of life.

8. MILITARY. YUGOSLAVIA.

Report so far unconfirmed states that

that strength of Yugoslav army nearing 800,000.

9. ROYAL AIR FORCE.

Daylight 11th. Elenheim registered direct hit on petrol storage cistern at Rotterdam.

10. NIGHT OF 11th/12th.

Twenty-seven Wellingtons despatched to attack naval ship yard at Kiel. All have returned.

11. GERMAN AIR FORCE.

NIGHT of 10th/11th.

Now known eight enemy aircraft were destroyed.

12. DAYLIGHT 11th.

Activity slight. One enemy fighter destroyed.

13. NIGHT OF 11th/12th.

206 aircraft, 8 minelayers operated. Main effort directed against Birmingham-Coventry area though raids were widespread over Midlands, as far north as Manchester and Liverpool. One bomber probably destroyed and another damaged by night fighters.

14. Malta was attacked on night of March 10th/11th by twenty bombers. Damage was done to dockyard and Luqa aerodrome. One bomber destroyed by our fighters.

15. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles :-

GERMAN: Destroyed, bombers 6,

(Night of 10th/11th additional report)

probably destroyed, 1, damaged, 1, fighter destroyed, 1.

BRITISH: N11.

16. HOME FRONT NIGHT OF 11th/12th.

Manchester area suffered most. Serious fire now under control was started at Anglo-American Oil Company premises at Trafford-Park. Ships in Salford Docks and Manchester Ship Canal were attacked with some success. Casualties do not appear to be heavy.

17. In Birmingham area bombs were mostly incendiaries damage was well restricted by fire-fighters.

18. At Southampton fires were started and some 250 people rendered homeless.

19. PORTSMOUTH, bombs fell on centre of city and nine people were killed and seven seriously injured.

20. In London there were only minor incidents.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 14th, 1941.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~  
Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herewith a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was dated  
March 13th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED MARCH  
THIRTEENTH, 1941.

1. (A) Naval. Home waters: attacks by aircraft.

Norwegian ship (1,530 tons) damaged off west coast on 10th has reached port in tow.

Night of the 11th/12th. Attack on ships in Manchester Ship Canal resulted in one British (6,000 tons) and one Swedish ship (1,200 tons) being sunk and two British ships (totalling 16,900 tons) damaged. Daylight of the 12th. One British ship (7,000 tons) in home-bound convoy with cargo of wheat seriously damaged off west English coast and two British ships (totalling 8,670 tons) were bombed off the East Coast.

(B) By mines. One Dutch ship (400 tons) damaged off the South west English coast.

2. Mediterranean. Two French ships (totalling 3,060 tons) passed Gibraltar west bound March 11th escorted by a French mine sweeper.

3. Military. Italian Somaliland. Our troops occupied Daghbur (100 miles south south east of Jijiga). On March 10th. Enemy losses since our crossing Juba River on February 17th now estimated at over 31,000.

4. Yugoslavia. All armies now mobilising. Covering troops in position on all frontiers on which attack by Germany or Italy can come.

5. Turkey. One division has moved to Reconnza area from near Uzunkopru and a second division from the same area is reported to have moved to East Ergen River in support. Troops in Catalca line have been reinforced by one division.

6. Royal Air Force. Night of 12th/13th. Total of 255 aircraft dispatched. Main targets Berlin (72), Hamburg (88), Bremen (86), Boulogne and Calais (7). Preliminary

/reports

reports show that a large per cent of bombers attacked their primary targets. Seven aircraft have failed to report to their base. Five fighters were dispatched on offensive operations against aerodromes in North France. Six Beauforts carried out a special sweep in Skagerack and a direct hit by torpedo was made on one enemy destroyer.

7. Tripoli. Night of 10th/11th. Three Wellingtons successfully attacked the harbour and another destroyed five aircraft on the ground at Makina (forty miles south of Sirte) and damaged several others.

8. Rhodes. Night of the 10th/11th. Aerodromes at Catavia and Calato were attacked by twelve bombers.

9. Albania. Daylight. Gladiators destroyed four fighters (G.50) and damaged three others.

10. All our aircraft returned safely from the above operations in the Middle East.

11. German Air Force. Daylight of the 12th. Enemy made two small fighter-sweeps off East Kent and an increased number of sea reconnaissances. After an attack on Hawkinge aerodrome, our fighters destroyed one Messerschmidt 109 and damaged a second.

12. Night of the 12th/13th. 230 to 250 aircraft attacked this country, the larger proportion operating in Liverpool area. Reports so far received show that our fighters destroyed five, probably destroyed four and damaged two enemy aircraft. One enemy aircraft was destroyed by balloon barrage.

13. At home. Home security. Heaviest and most widespread attacks for some months. Greatest concentration on Merseyside where many bombs fell on docks at Liverpool, Wallasey and Birkenhead, but none of the damage appears

vital. A large floating crane was sunk. Seaforth wireless station near Liverpool suffered a major breakdown. House property and utility services in Liverpool area have suffered extensively. Casualties - at present - difficult to assess but do not appear to be heavy in proportion to the scale of the attack. In the rest of the country, major incidents occurred only at Southampton where damage was caused to reservoir and to Harland and Wolff's Yard and at St. Eval aerodrome.

14. Aircraft casualties over and above British Isles:-

<u>German</u>	<u>Destroyed.</u>	<u>Probably destroyed.</u>	<u>Damaged.</u>
Bombers	8	5	5
Fighters	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	9	5	6

British: seven bombers missing.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 17th, 1941.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It is dated March 14th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

Telegram received from London  
dated March 14th, 1941.

NAVAL

His Majesty's Sloop SCARBOROUGH intercepted two Norwegian whalers sent in prize by German raider in South Atlantic, 350 miles west of Cape Finisterre, March 13th. Both whalers scuttled themselves, 1 German officer, 7 ratings and 22 Norwegians were picked up.

2. Minesweeper MILFORD QUEEN attacked and almost certainly destroyed a D.O. 17 off Great Yarmouth, March 12th.

3. Submarine TRIUMPH sank two merchant vessels of 2,500 tons each anchored off Melito South of Italy.

4. Correction to casualties at Portsmouth.

Night of March 10th/11th. Services: 54 killed, 113 wounded. Civilians, 10 killed, 131 wounded. This was for the whole of the Hampshire area, not only Portsmouth.

5. MILITARY

There is reliable evidence that German forces in Tripolitania continue to be re-inforced mainly by armoured units. Total German strength so far thought not to exceed 1 division.

6. Royal Air Force. Night of March 12th/13th. Bombing results very satisfactory. Targets hit included Blohm and Voss shipyard, Hamburg, Focke Wulf factory, Bremen, industrial and docks area in Berlin and docks at Boulogne.

7. March 13th. 9 fighter squadrons carried out sweep over Northern France some escorting medium bombers to attack Calais aerodrome. During day 3 enemy  
aircraft/

aircraft destroyed, 2 probable and 1 damaged; 2 Spitfires shot down, 1 pilot missing. Merchant vessel of 2,000 tons was hit by bomb off Norway and another (3,700 tons) probably damaged by near miss off Dutch coast.

8. Night of March 13/14th.

153 bombers sent to Hamburg (139) Rotterdam (14); some mine laying and leaflet dropping over Northwest France also carried out. Six aircraft missing and 1 Wellesley shot down over this country. A Beauford torpedoed and sank 3,000 ton merchant vessel off Dutch coast.

9. Rhodes.

On night of March 11th/12th, 5 heavy bombers attacked harbour and 2 aerodromes, at both of which large fires were started.

10. German Air Force. March 13th.

About 33 enemy aircraft approached our coasts and 3 R.A.F. stations were attacked.

11. Night of March 13/14th.

About 400 aircraft came over of which about 80 concentrated on Glasgow area.

12. Bombing was widespread and very (words omitted) Glasgow, Humber, Mersey Side and Southampton areas were attacked. In Glasgow area damage was caused to railway services and docks and high explosives fell in 2 shipbuilding yards; fires were started in Hillingdon industrial estate. At Clydebank fires occurred at John Brown's yards and at a Distillery. Serious damage was caused to Royal Ordnance Factory at Dalmuir. On Merseyside considerable damage was caused to property in Wallasey area but

no vital points were hit. Some damage was caused to industrial property in Hull.

13. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from the British Isles.

German:

Destroyed by day 3, by night 13, on March 12th; probably destroyed; day 2, night nil, March 12th: damaged day 1, night 5 March 12th.

British.

7 bombers, 2 fighters (1 pilot safe)

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

 **REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED**

March 18, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of the two  
latest reports received from London on the military  
situation. These were dated March 15th and 16th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

  
TELEGRAPH FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 15TH, 1941.

NAVAL

1. During an air attack on the Clyde area night of March 13th/14th two destroyers building damaged. Other ships superficial damage only.
2. At Liverpool night of March 12th/13th 7 merchant vessels were damaged.
3. Off Lowestoft and Yarmouth night of March 14th/15th E-Boats were active. "Versatile" on escort missed by 2 torpedoes.
4. Early on March 15th coastal aircraft bombed docks at Brest also warship which may have been a German cruiser.

5. ROYAL AIR FORCE

Night of March 13th/14th. Attack on industries and shipyards at Hamburg very ferocious; 84 tons of high explosive and 13,000 incendiaries dropped under good conditions.

6. NIGHT OF MARCH 14th/15th

159 aircraft sent out with main objective synthetic oil plants at Gelsenkirchen (101 aircraft), other objectives industrial centres at Dusseldorf (24), petroleum, harbour at Rotterdam (13), also some mine laying. Two of our aircraft missing. Four fighters also carried out offensive operations over aerodromes in north west France.

7. RHODES. Same night 14 aircraft attacked 4 aerodromes with satisfactory results.

8. GERMAN AIR FORCE

Reports show that during the night of March 13th/14th, 13 enemy aircraft were destroyed and 6 damaged.

9. MARCH 14th. Activity limited to reconnaissance flights and sea patrols.

10. NIGHT OF 14th-15th. About 310 bombers and 69 mine-layers came over. Attacks widespread and scattered although main concentration was in Glasgow area. From preliminary reports 3 enemy aircraft destroyed and one probably destroyed

/by

2. (Telegram from London Mar. 15/41)

by fighters, also one by anti-aircraft.

11. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles night of March 14th/15th.

German: destroyed 4, probable 1  
British: 2 bombers missing.

12. LIBYA. On March 11th enemy aircraft made 8 low flying attacks on our forward troops at Agheila. Result: 2 casualties, 4 enemy aircraft shot down by anti-aircraft fire.

13. HOME SECURITY. Night of March 14th/15th. Glasgow. Fire caused among residential property and at 2 factories, 3 tenement buildings demolished. Leeds Telephone Exchange hit. Considerable damage to shop and industrial property, mainly by fire. London. Some damage at Tilbury Docks. Plymouth. Some damage was caused in Naval Dockyard and a training establishment was hit.

14. Casualties. Night of March 12th/13th. Liverpool and Birkenhead 156 killed and 70 seriously injured.

Night of March 13th/14th. Glasgow, Clyde Bank. 115 killed. March 15th. Ordnance factory at Dalmuir, production temporarily stopped owing to interruption of utility services. No extensive damage reported.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 16th, 1941.

NAVAL

- Britomart bombed in Rye Bay on March 15th has proceeded to harbour. Officer commanding and 88 killed.
2. P.M. March 15th. Four British merchant ships in area about seven hundred miles west - North-west from Azores made enemy raider signals, two reported being shelled. Further signal received indicated one ship being abandoned.
  3. During air raid on Manchester 11/12th 10 merchant ships damaged in varying degrees. One sank.
  4. A.M. March 16th. British forces successfully landed east and west of BERBERA supported by bombardment by His Majesty's ships.
  5. Photographs A.M. of March 15th show HIPPER class cruiser alongside torpedo boat stations. Three merchant ships off Ostend attacked by bomber command aircraft p.m. March 15th. One ship near miss. LORIENT attacked by aircraft night of March 15th/16th. Seventeen mines were detonated home waters March 15th.
  6. R.A.F. Night of March 15th/16th. Weather conditions reduced operations; 37 aircraft were sent to LORIENT submarine base and 21 to industrial target at Dusselldorf; one aircraft has not returned.
  7. Albania. Over Kelcyre on March 14th fifteen British fighters intercepted an enemy formation of 15 bombers escorted by 36 fighters and definitely destroyed seven enemy aircraft and probably five more. Two of our fighters shot down but pilots saved.
  8. German Airforce. March 15th. Strong defensive patrols were maintained in Dover Straits. A few aircraft penetrated a short distance over Kent; our fighters probably destroyed one Messerschmidt 109.
  9. Night of March 15th/16th. About 100 enemy aircraft /were

2. (Telegram from London Mar. 16/41.)

were operating over wide areas although London was the chief objective. Country was clear shortly after midnight. Owing to deteriorating weather conditions action by our night fighters was almost impossible.

10. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from the British Isles. German: destroyed one, probable one, damaged one. British: one bomber missing.

11. Home Security. Night of March 15th/16th. Several bombs were dropped in London and Home Counties but no important damage reported although casualties, considering the scale of the attack appear rather high: preliminary estimate 70 killed and 200 wounded. Some fires were started in the dock area, at a paint factory and a gas works but were soon put out.

12. Clyde Bank. Situation reported completely in hand although damage especially to dwelling houses is extensive.

An orderly voluntary evacuation from the area of about 205,000 has taken place. Morale is excellent. Casualties night of March 14th/15th reported 120 killed and 394 wounded.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*File personal confidential*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

~~SECRET~~

19th March, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 17th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*A Halifax*

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

L

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON MARCH 17, 1941.

1. NAVAL. Part of Suez Canal open; Southern portion remains closed.
2. British Indian troops landed each side of Berbera dawn March 16th British flag again flew over the town. H.M.S. GLASGOW and destroyers silenced some artillery and M.G. fire. 100 prisoners more coming in. Our casualties negligible.
3. Three more merchant ships reported attacked by raider in the Atlantic on March 16th. H.M.S. Rodney sighted warship raider and probably tanker p.m. of March 16th. She chased but lost the enemy warship which disappeared in a North-easterly direction in the dark. The tanker also got away in the dark.
4. NIGHT OF MARCH 14/15th. Swordfish aircraft attacked shipping at Valona, scored one hit with torpedo.
5. MILITARY ERITREA. On March 15th attacks were launched against Keren. A peak 3 miles west of the town was captured and a footing gained on the heights  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles South-west of Keren. Strong enemy resistance encountered.
6. ALBANIA. Italian offensive appears broken for the present. The Greeks claim 3000 prisoners and very heavy casualties to four Italian formations.
7. GREECE. Civilian morale at Athens is good; less satisfactory in Salonika. Large number of refugees moving westwards from Thrace and E. Macedonia.
8. ROYAL AIR FORCE. Night of March 16/17th. All operations cancelled.
9. ALBANIA. Aerodromes at Berat and Valona were bombed on March 15th. A petrol dump was set on fire and four aircraft destroyed on the ground.
10. ETHIOPIA. The same day S. African Airforce Hurricanes shot down 2 enemy fighters over Driedawa and destroyed

2. (Telegram from London Mar. 17)

5 aircraft on the ground.

11. GERMAN AIR FORCE. March 16th. Very slight activity.

12. Night of Mar. 16/17th. About 156 enemy aircraft operating. One crashed near Salisbury and another was damaged by our fighters.

13. HOME SECURITY. Night of Mar. 16/17th. Main attack was upon Bristol area. Several fires started all under control by 5 a.m. Large number of gas mains broken and supplies may be considerably reduced for a period. Damage to several water mains some of them large. Very little serious damage to electrical services. No damage to important factories reported except to some plant and buildings at the National Smelting Works at Avonmouth.

14. CORRECTION. Telegram of March 16 paragraph 12. For figure "250,000" read "25,000".

*File personal confidential*  
*15F Just Britain Reports from London on Military Situation*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED March 20th, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of a telegram which has just been received here for you from the Prime Minister.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

Telegram from London dated March 19th, 1941.

On March 8th the German battle cruisers "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" approached one of our convoys north of Cape de Verde island but on seeing our battleship escort retreated. On the morning of the 15th our shipping which was returning independently to America was attacked by them at a point about five hundred miles south-east of Newfoundland where owing to fog on the Great Banks the shipping is at this season compelled to concentrate. Several ships were sunk by gun fire.

2. The attack was renewed on the sixteenth near the same area where three more ships were sunk. In the evening one enemy warship with a tanker in company was sighted by one of our battleships guarding a convoy continuously before dark but was lost sight of as night fell. The presence of these battle cruisers so far to the west of the thirtieth meridian is the latest phase in the battle of the Atlantic. While these powerful raiders are our the whole of our available battleship strength has to be employed on escorting convoys but there are many ships on the seas with no protection.

3. The enemy appears to have based himself on the central areas of the North Atlantic where he maintained his supply ships and from thence he carried out raids against our various routes. This central area is almost unknown water to us today because with the multiplicity of calls on our limited resources for convoy escort we have no vessels to spare to round up hostile supply ships and search the areas. Moreover against these two battle cruisers our light forces would be thrown away.

4. It would be a very great help if some American warships and aircraft could cruise about in this area as they have a perfect right to do without any prejudice to neutrality. Their mere presence might be decisive as the enemy would fear that they might report what they saw and we could then despatch an adequate force to try to engage them. The more ships that go out to cruise and the sooner they go the greater advantage.

5. I will report any further enemy moves of which we become aware.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

March 20, 1941

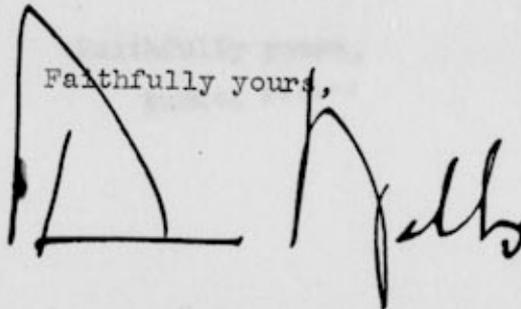
My dear Mr. President:

This afternoon the British Ambassador left with me the accompanying note, together with its enclosure which is a copy of a telegram for you from the Prime Minister. A copy of this telegram from London has been made and transmitted to Admiral Stark.

Will you let me have, at your convenience, the text of the reply you desire made so that I may transmit it to Mr. Churchill through our Embassy in London.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. H. H. H.', written over the typed words 'Faithfully yours,'.

Encs.

The President,  
The White House.

PERSONAL AND PRIVATE

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States

of America,

Washington, D. C.

*File  
personal  
confidential*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 21st, 1941.

**REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED**

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of  
the two latest reports received from  
London on the military situation. They  
are dated March 18th and 20th respectively.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of American,

Washington, D. C.



Telegram from London dated March 18th.

1. Naval. Hipper class cruiser has left Brest.
2. 23 mines were detonated on the 17th, between Shoeburyness and Sheppey.
3. Dutch 7000 ton merchant ship torpedoed p.m. March 17th 200 miles west of Dakar.
4. At 05.52 March 18th, coastal Beaufort Aircraft sank 5000 ton enemy merchant vessel off Frisian Islands.
5. Three convoys in the Thames Estuary were bombed March 17th, but only one ship of 2200 tons damaged.
6. Military. South East Europe. Minimum of 32 German divisions now believed to be in South East Europe, of these - 13 including possibly two armoured and three motorised - believed to be in Bulgaria. Several more divisions probably moving into Bulgaria from Roumania.
7. Albania. Italian casualties in recent operations reported by Greek sources 25,000 - excluding 3,000 prisoners. 15,000 of these believed to have been suffered by three divisions.
8. British Somaliland. Berbera Harbour has been swept and unloading of stone is in progress. Air reconnaissance reports no signs of the enemy on the roads leading to Berbera.
9. Eritrea. To 9.30 p.m. March 16th. North of Keren-Agordat road our troops have maintained their positions. On the 16th, 200 of the enemy surrendered west of Keren, and on the South Road our troops captured the heights  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles Southwest of Keren, taking 400 prisoners and repelling two counter attacks. Total number of prisoners estimated at 800; some said that our bombing and artillery have inflicted heavy casualties.
10. Royal Air Force. Night of 17th/18th. 82 Bombers were sent to Wilhelmshaven-Bremen and Rotterdam.

11. Libya. Night of 15th/16th. Heavy bombers successfully attacked enemy aerodromes near Tripoli-Sirte and destroyed four aircraft on the ground.
12. Albania. Night of 15th/16th. Aerodromes at Tirana and Valona were successfully attacked, one Wellington is missing.
13. Ethiopia. In Keren area on the 15th and 16th, our aircraft bombed and machine-gunned enemy positions and obtained direct hits on gun emplacements. One fighter is missing. Seven enemy aircraft were damaged on the ground at Dire Dawa; two Hurricanes are missing, one pilot safe.
14. German Air Force. 17th. Only slight enemy activity. One enemy bomber damaged by our fighters.  
Night of 17th/18th. Very little enemy activity.
15. On the 13th, two Italian fighters machine-gunned a landing ground in Southeast Ethiopia and shot down a Hurricane taking off; both were destroyed.
16. In the Clydeside and Merseyside, damage to industry is less than at first estimated. In the Clydebank - only two out of six important factories on war-work were seriously affected. House property has, however, suffered chiefly.

Telegram from London dated March 20th.

1. Naval. 15 U-boats at Dieppe on March 18th and on March 19th. 14 U-boats at Lorient.
2. Helvellyn, small anti-aircraft ship bombed and sunk Surrey Dock night of 19th-20th.
3. Supplies of forces Western Desert being maintained through Mersa-Tobruk. All other captured N. African ports useable except Benghazi where anti-aircraft defences still weak.
4. Naval aircraft laid mines at Tripoli night of March 18th-19th, also bombed and scored one hit and two near misses on 7,000 ton ship and started fires on the quays.
5. On the 9th Utmost torpedoed merchant ship heavily laden believed carrying troops. Ship believed sunk. On the 10th the Unique sank escorted Italian merchant ship of 2600 tons 100 miles off Tripoli.
6. Royal Air Force. Night of 19th-20th. 36 heavy bombers sent to attack industrial area Cologne and two oil depots Rotterdam. All returned safely.
7. Night of 17th-18th. Heavy bombers dropped 7½ tons of bombs on docks at Durazzo and following day 7 medium bombers escorted by Gladiators attacked enemy camps and mechanical transport in Tepelene area.
8. German Air Force. 19th. Only slight enemy activity. Our fighters destroyed one enemy bomber and one fighter; we lost one Hurricane.
9. Night of 19th-20th. A concentrated attack by about 250 aircraft made on London. One enemy aircraft reported destroyed by anti-aircraft and another damaged by night fighters. Large number of fires of which 16 were major. About 1600 pumps used and all fires under control by 6.30 a.m. Attack chiefly fell on docks and East End causing considerable material/

material damage. Six gas installations and several factories and industrial premises received damage.

10. Eritrea. During enemy air attack at Agordat on the 18th one Hurricane destroyed, another damaged.

11. Bulgaria. Estimated there are now about 300 German operational aircraft in the country.

12. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles. German: by fighters: destroyed two, damaged one. By anti-aircraft: destroyed one. British: one fighter.

*File  
personal  
confidential*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
March 21st, 1941.



Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 19th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

COPY OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON

MARCH 19TH, 1941.

1. Naval One anti-submarine trawler sunk and one slightly damaged by Fokke-Wulf aircraft ninety miles West-North of Blacksod Bay on March 16th.
2. Expect Suez Canal to be reopened March 19th.
3. During night of March 16-17 Tripoli Harbour bombed and large fires started. A Swordfish aircraft torpedoed at Valona a cruiser or destroyer. Other Swordfish also attacked shipping at Durazzo scoring two certain - two probable - hits.
4. R.A.F. Night of March 17-18. During raids on Wilhelmshaven and Bremen three enemy night-fighters were shot down by our bombers.
5. Night of March 18-19. 162 Aircraft were sent to attack industrial objectives at Kiel (100 heavies) and Wilhelmshaven (43 Medium) and upper Harbour at Rotterdam. All but one have returned.
6. G.A.F. March 18. A few enemy fighters penetrated inland over Kent and Sussex and some reconnaissance flights were reported. Our fighters destroyed two enemy aircraft.
7. Night of March 18-19. About 390 enemy aircraft were operating an area East of a line - Isle of Wight - of these 100 have attacked Hull, Middleborough and Scarborough and about 230 were active against the Midlands and East Anglian Aerodromes. The remainder were engaged in Bristol Channel and Southampton areas and in mine laying. About 40 passed over London. No fighter interceptions reported.
8. Aircraft casualties - over and from the British Isles.  
German - 5 destroyed.                      British - 1 bomber missing.

*File  
Personal  
Confidential*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

~~SECRET~~

24th March, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 21st.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.



TELEGRAM FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 21st, 1941.

1. NAVAL. Scharnhorst and Gneisenau sighted by Naval aircraft at 18.30 hours March 20th about 600 miles West North-west of Finisterre, course North 20 knots. Low visibility prevented night shadowing or attack by aircraft. Hunt by Naval Forces today.
2. Suez Canal open 19th. Illustrious through.
3. Rosaura armed boarding vessel mined and sunk off Tobruk p.m. 18th.
4. P.M. 20th. Coastal aircraft made several attacks on E. Boats off the east coast, dive bombing and machine gunning. Several near misses and many hits by machine guns.
5. A Beaufort near missed a drifter off Ameland. Crew abandoned ship.
6. Between the 12th and 17th Naval aircraft at Valona torpedoed 20,000 tons liner, 8,000 tons merchant ship and scored direct bomb hit on cruiser or large destroyer.
7. At Durazzo Naval Aircraft scored hits on two ships.
8. Strong Force of heavy bombers attacked Lorient night of 20th/21st, also extensive mine-laying carried out by aircraft at various occupied ports.
9. R.A.F. Night of 20th/21st. 24 heavy bombers including three Wellesleys sent to Naval Base at Lorient and 42 mine-laying aircraft to occupied Atlantic ports. All returned but one.
10. GERMAN AIR FORCE. Night of 20th/21st. 150 enemy aircraft plotted, of total 15 probably mine-laying. Plymouth and London attacked by 65 and 45 aircraft respectively. Plymouth many fires

/started

2. (Telegram March 21st, 1941)

started no serious damage elsewhere.

11. Aircraft casualties in operations over  
and from the British Isles: German by Naval Drifter,  
one destroyed. British: nil.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~  
24th March, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 22nd.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Arthur*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON MARCH 22nd, 1941.

1. NAVAL. Last week the first occasion since the beginning of August 1940 on which imports in convoy into the United Kingdom exceeded 1 million tons.
2. During the week ending March 19th 822 ships convoyed and 10 lost in convoy.
3. Two enemy battle cruisers and a destroyer reported by aircraft 130 miles WSW from BREST P.M. March 21st steering East. The weather has impeded further search.
4. R.A.F. March 21st. Nine medium bombers attacked Enemy shipping off the Dutch and Belgian Coasts; a direct hit reported on the stern of 5,000 ton tanker.
5. Night of March 21st-22nd. Eighty aircraft sent out -- 66 to Lorient, 6 to OSTEND - 7 on mine-laying and one to drop leaflets over BRITTANY. Two not yet reported back.
6. G.A.F. Little activity.
7. Night of March 21st-22nd. About 170 employed chiefly against Plymouth.
8. HOME SECURITY. PLYMOUTH. Night of March 20th-21st. Casualties estimated at 95 killed and 300 wounded. Night of March 21st-22nd. Many thousands of incendiary bombs dropped in addition to H.E.'s. Fires more serious than on the previous night, and direct water supply failed. Owing to dislocation of telephone service during previous night and to the movement of the report centre, details so far are incomplete but only slight damage to dock-yard and Naval establishments reported. The municipal buildings, the G.P.O. and an area around the Guildhall reported burned.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 25th, 1941.

~~SECRET~~

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 23rd.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Herle Butler*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED  
MARCH 23rd, 1941.

1. Naval. Nothing more seen of Scharnhorst, Gneisenau. Weather on March 22nd prevented air reconnaissance except over St. Nazaire.  
A.M. March 22nd. "Severn" reported enemy merchant raider eight hundred miles west north-west from Fredericktown steering eastward at eighteen knots. By 18.45 "Severn" lost touch. Raider resembled Weser 9,197 tons and was reported having altered course to westward.
3. Mine-sweeper Trawler bombed and sunk at Plymouth (words omitted) night of March 21st - 22nd. On that night during air raid in Plymouth some damage done south yard of Royal Military barracks, Royal Navy hospital. Naval casualties very slight.
4. Military. Albania. Reported fortifications are being constructed between Fieri and Hassan Beut (north-west of Berat).
5. Bulgaria. Bulgarians have ten or eleven infantry mobile divisions Turkish frontier. Two infantry divisions Greek frontier. Three or four infantry one mobile division Yugo-slav frontier.
6. Royal Air Force. Night of March 21st and March 22nd. Fifty-three tons of high explosives dropped on submarine bases at L'Orient. Bursts seen in docks and on power station. Minelaying operations successfully completed. A Blenheim scored two direct hits on a 2,000 ton merchant vessel Egersund harbour and set her on fire.
7. Night of March 22nd/23rd. Operations  
/cancelled.

cancelled.

8. German Air Force. March 22nd. Some minor unsuccessful attacks made on shipping off the East Coast.

9. Night of March 22nd/23rd. Activity negligible. One H.E. 111 hit a balloon cable at Hull and crashed and another aircraft was damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

10. On March 22nd, ten Junkers 88's preceded by twelve M.E. 109's bombed Grand Harbour, Malta, damaging buildings in the dockyard. Eight Hurricanes intercepted and destroyed one M.E. 109. One Hurricane was shot down and four others have not returned.

11. Aircraft casualties over and from the British Isles.

German: one destroyed, one damaged.

British: two bombers missing, March 21st/22nd.

12. Home Security.

London. Night of March 19th/20th. Casualty figure 461 killed.

Plymouth. Nights of March 19th/20th/21st/22nd.

Preliminary estimate about 150 killed and 230 seriously wounded. 5,000 persons homeless; trunk water mains intact but supply interrupted in some districts. Serious fire damage to East side of one dock.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

26th March, 1941.

~~SECRET~~

Dear Mr. President,

In the absence of the Ambassador I  
enclose herein copies of the latest reports  
received from London on the military situation.  
These were dated March 24th and 25th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*W. A. Butler*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON  
MARCH 25th, 1941.

1. Naval. Night of 24th-25th. "E" boats active off NORFOLK Coast. Though one torpedo boat sighted by "Worcester" no engagement reported and "E" boats appeared to be driven off from the convoys.
2. Merchant vessel intercepted and scuttled off PERIM on March 23rd was German "ODER" 8,516 tons.
3. On the 24th, Bomber Command Aircraft sank small ship off the Hook of Holland.
4. MALTA - dockyard attacked by 6 aircraft at 4 a.m. March 24th. Some damage to buildings and small Ex-Italian merchant vessels.
5. MILITARY. ERITREA to 7.50 p.m. March 23rd. Night of the 21st-22nd March, an enemy battalion with three light tanks again counter-attacked 2½ miles South-West of KEREN and was repulsed. Successful mortar action compelled enemy to vacate hill 4 miles West of Keren.
6. YUGOSLAVIA. At least 21 out of 30 divisions are now mobilised.
7. S.E. EUROPE. A minimum of at least 35 German divisions are now believed to be in Roumania and/or Bulgaria. Rail movements suggest further reinforcements likely in the near future. 16 divisions and elements of 5 more believed already in Bulgaria.
8. ETHIOPIA. GABALLAT sector - Patriots astride CHELGA-GONEA road.
9. ROYAL AIR FORCE. March 24th. Blenheims attacked docks at Havre and Cherbourg and also shipping in the Channel. One is missing.
10. Night of 24th-25th March -- operations cancelled.
11. ALBANIA. On March 23rd, our bombers and fighters attacked BERAT aerodrome and destroyed two enemy fighters in the air and 4 more on the ground. We lost one Hurricane  
/but

but the pilot is safe.

12. GERMAN AIR FORCE. March 24th. Enemy activity slight. Three Royal Air Force Stations attacked at dawn; at one a hangar was destroyed and four Hurricanes damaged. Enemy casualties during the day were - 2 destroyed  
2 probable  
2 damaged.
13. Night of March 24th-25th. No enemy activity.
14. LIBYA. March 23rd, two enemy aircraft machine gunned SOLUCH damaging railway station and destroyed some rolling stock and 12,000 gallons of petrol.
15. DODECANESE - Considerable increase in activity of the Italian airforce in the Aegean Sea and evidence of small increase of Italian fighters and long-range bombers in the Dodecanese area.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON  
MARCH 24th, 1941.

NAVAL. During air attack on Malta yesterday, British cruiser and destroyer slightly damaged by near misses, 2 British merchant vessels received direct hits and some damage; some damage in dockyard.

2. His Majesty's ship "Leander" intercepted French ship (5,300 tons) off Mauritius March 23rd and sent her to Mauritius under armed guard.

British sloop intercepted merchant vessel off Perim March 23rd which later blew herself up.

3. GREECE. Morale of army in Macedonia excellent; that of civilian population is satisfactory though some evacuation frontier villages and Salonica area. Government tried to prevent evacuation but large-scale movement of refugees probable when hostilities commence.

4. ROYAL AIR FORCE. Night of March 23rd-March 24th. 128 heavy and medium bombers sent to industrial targets in Berlin, Keil and Hanover docks, Calais and an oil plant in Rotterdam. One medium bomber missing.

5. GERMAN AIR FORCE. March 23rd. Very little enemy activity. Two enemy bombers destroyed and two more damaged.

6. Night of March 23rd-March 24th. Only 23 aircraft came in overland.

7. MALTA. On March 23rd 2 large formation of dive-bombers and fighters, dive-bombed convoy in Grand Harbour. From preliminary reports, at least 9 dive-bombers were destroyed by our fighters and 4 other aircraft by anti-aircraft fire. A Hurricane was shot down but the pilot safe.

8. ALBANIA. On March 22nd, 5 Italian bombers escorted by 15 fighters attacked Paramythia Aerodrome (S.W. of Yanina) without success; later 12 fighters machine-gunned aerodrome, destroying 3 Blenheims on the ground and  
/damaging

2.

damaging another, also a Wellington. One enemy fighter reported destroyed and another damaged by anti-aircraft fire. A third attacked aerodrome, was driven off by our fighters.

9. AIRCRAFT CASUALTIES in operation over and from British Isles: German: Bombers destroyed 2; damaged 2. British: One Bomber missing.

10. HOME SECURITY. Only a few minor incidents during the period.

*File personal confidential*  
*131*  
*Great Britain*  
*Report of war*  
*handwritten*  
*Military*  
*Situation*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 27th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

In Lord Halifax's absence in  
New York I send you herewith, on Mr.  
Churchill's instructions, copies of two  
telegrams received at the Foreign Office  
today from the British Minister in  
Belgrade. I also enclose the text of a  
message for you from the Prime Minister  
regarding the situation in Yugoslavia.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Ernie Campbell*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D. C.



Telegram addressed by His Majesty's Minister  
at Belgrade to the Foreign Office on the  
morning of March 27th.

Military coup d'etat took place  
two twenty a.m. this morning no casualties in  
Belgrade. President of the Council and a number  
of other Ministers including Minister of War  
have been placed under arrest. I have as yet no  
news regarding Prince Paul (whom Minister of War  
told me last night was leaving Belgrade for a  
few days rest) and his wife but there is a rumour  
that they have left the country. Officers guarding  
police station demand young King will be proclaimed  
and that General Simovitch will head the government.  
No news as yet from Provinces.



Telegram addressed by His Majesty's Minister  
at Belgrade to the Foreign Office on the  
morning of March 27th.

I shall see new President of the Council  
as soon as possible and if as I anticipate his  
policy is more satisfactory from our point of view  
than that of the last Government I shall assure him  
of the support of His Majesty's Government.



I hope you will agree that in the present situation we are bound to do all we can to help and encourage the elements prepared to resist German penetration. If new Government shows readiness to share in Greek heroic resistance, we propose to recognise it at once as the Government of Yugoslavia, and extend to it in the fullest possible measure the aid which we are already giving to Greece. We should encourage the Yugoslavians to roll up the Italians in Albania which would produce result of prime importance and give them a good packet of arms. I trust that you will take similar line and will sustain the new Government with promise of America's powerful support and backing.

232

TELEGRAM SENT BY BRITISH MINISTER IN BELGRADE  
TO FOREIGN OFFICE ON MARCH 26th, 1941.

At my request I was afforded an interview with General Simovitch (Chief of Yugoslav Air Force) this morning. As this officer is head of an organisation intending to carry out a coup d'etat meeting was arranged with great secrecy. The General seemed to be in very good health and had an appearance of alertness, energy and ability which I have rarely observed among senior officers in Serbian Army. He was confident in his speech but cautious in his utterances and gave the impression of sincerity, truthfulness and a belief in what he said. For the sake of simplicity in recording a conversation which ranged over various subjects it is summarized as follows:

(a) He stated that there was no doubt that the country felt very strongly about signing of pact with Germany and wished to repudiate both the pact and present Government. They understood that this almost certainly meant war and they preferred this alternative to continuing on present lines.

(b) There existed an organisation which was working for the overthrow of present Government. General had confidence in its success and he asked us to have confidence in it and him. We should not have to wait more than a few days before coup d'etat.

(c) He was anxious to know how many troops we had in Greece and hoped that we would send a great many there and that we intended to defend Salonica. I replied that we must consider our left flank and this depended/

depended a great deal on the Serbs.

(d) He foresaw that Yugoslavia would go to war in Albania immediately after the coup d'etat. He asked if Turks would then join in to which I replied that it was very possible but that I had no positive assurance regarding exact circumstances he described.

(e) He then asked what could the British do to help Yugoslavia if she went to war against the Italians, Bulgarians and Germans. I replied in the sense of Secretary of State's telegram *from* to Cairo of March 25th. He seemed impressed by conception of a common pool for materials and asked if it included supply of food to which I replied that although I spoke on this matter without precise authority, I felt sure that it did.

(f) He appeared to be disappointed that we could not promise precise numbers and quantities of war material but agreed that they should do well out of Italian loot in Albania. He feared however that types of weapons were not the same and that Italian ammunition could not therefore reinforce Yugoslav units. Reserves of 76.5 and 75 mm. ammunition for field artillery would be required.

(g) In answer to a question he replied that the Prince Regent and even the President of the Council appeared to be very depressed over the signing of the pact. This may indicate that the Prince Regent intends to try and remain in power in the event of the Government being/

being overthrown. From an officer on General Simovitch's staff I hear that it is intended to hand the Prince Regent over to the British.

The impression I gained from journalists as a whole was that the General was now committed to a course of action from which nothing would deter him. Please inform General Wavell for his own secret information, but otherwise regard as highly secret as any leakage would compromise chance of success for the coup d'etat.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~██████████~~  
March 28th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated March 26th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*Lennox Campbell*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.



Telegram from London dated March 26th, 1941.

NAVAL. Thick weather has continued to prevent observation by aircraft of shipping in Brest. Position of German battle cruisers still unknown.

2. "Britannia" British (8,799) tons at 10.55 March 25th reported shelled by Warship raider 480 miles South of Cape Verde Islands.

3. "Memnon" British 7,500 tons was torpedoed 270 miles north east of Cape Verde Islands on the 11th.

4. "Sturgeon" torpedoed south bound tanker probably Norwegian "Drafn" 8,205 tons off Obrestad p.m. March 20th. Tanker last seen with only after part above water.

5. British 1,100 ton snip in convoy off Sheringham night of March 24th-25th fired three bursts at 200 ft. range into E boat which was stopped when last seen.

6. Military. March 24th enemy employing M13 tanks occupied Fort Aghella and by evening had advanced 18 miles further east and then turned south east.

7. German motorized column believed to be operating in the neighbourhood of Brak (about 375 miles South of Tripoli).

8. Royal Air Force.

March 26th; minor operations only against enemy shipping in the channel. 1 Beaufort missing - at night no bombers despatched owing to bad weather.

9. German Air Force. March 25th; during daylight only nine aircraft flew overland. Allied convoys were unsuccessfully attacked off east coast. Our fighters damaged two enemy aircraft.
10. No enemy activity over Great Britain at night.
11. Malta. March 24th, in the afternoon Grand Harbour ineffectually attacked by 10 J.U. 88's escorted by 20 ME 109's-. Enemy avoided contact with our fighters but one enemy aircraft probably destroyed by anti-aircraft fire and probably two damaged.
12. Aircraft casualties in operations over and from British Isles. Germans; two aircraft damaged. British: one Beaufort missing.
13. Home Security. Afternoon of March 25th. Very slight damage caused by bombs dropped at Ports Lade Sussex Evercreech Junction, Somerset and Gorleston, Norfolk. No bombs dropped during the night.
14. Plymouth. As the result of raids on March 20-21st all buildings within an area of a mile east and west and one sixth of a mile north and south of Guildhall are to be demolished.

③

file  
secret



TELEGRAM TO BRITISH EMBASSY, WASHINGTON  
FROM FOREIGN OFFICE DATED MARCH 28th.

We are much concerned at recent heavy increase in German pressure on Portugal. This pressure is taking the form of (a) propaganda in the German press and wireless often minatory in character and containing frequent references to alleged British and United States designs on Portuguese territory. (b) A great increase in the numbers of German officials, business men and tourists in Portugal, who may be organizing Fifth Column activities and have already had some effect on Portuguese press. There are reports of increased German influence over Portuguese international (sic) police. (c) Increased activity of Germans in Cape Verde Islands.

2. There are accordingly serious indications that Germany is preparing the ground for possible action in the Iberian Peninsula.

3. Control of Portugal would give Germany working advantages in the battle of the Atlantic and would also put an end to any serious possibility of Spanish resistance to German pressure. The likelihood of an air-borne or sea-borne invasion accompanying an internal coup of German kind cannot be excluded in view of the comparatively defenceless position of Portugal. Transit through Spain might then be unnecessary.

4. We have warned Portuguese Government of the dangers of German infiltration and there is no doubt of their desire to resist German pressure. But it is uncertain whether in view of the limited military support which we can at present afford, the Portuguese Government will withstand the continued heavy pressure or in the end offer armed resistance to the German attack.

5. We are doing and will continue to do everything possible to stiffen Portuguese morale but our means to action are at present limited and we feel that one of the most effective steps which could be taken would be the return to the Tagus of the United States naval squadron which was withdrawn early in the war.

6. Please approach United States Government and inform them of our fears that the situation in Portugal may develop unfavourably, that we cannot effectively go to the help of Portugal at the present moment, and that in our view a most effective step to strengthen Portuguese morale and resistance to German pressure would be for the United States Government to send back one or more United States war ships to Portuguese waters immediately. The United States Government might also like to consider a naval visit to the Portuguese Atlantic Islands.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

March 29th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated March 27th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Louis Campbell*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

CORRIGENDUM.

For paragraph 14 in telegram from London dated March 26th please substitute following paragraph:

Plymouth. As a result of raids on March 20th - 21st all buildings within an area of one quarter of a mile east and west and one sixth of a mile north and south of Guildhall are to be demolished.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON DATED MARCH 27TH, 1941.

NAVAL. Mediterranean Fleet operated in Central Mediterranean 21st to 24th covering convoys. No enemy surface craft sighted. One enemy aircraft shot down and at least one other damaged.

2. His Majesty's Ship York torpedoed and damaged "Suda Bay" 26th Oiler "Peracles" torpedoed and damaged at same time, but able to steam.

3. Traffic normal in Suez Canal.

4. As result of bombing attack on British convoy south-east of Crete, one Greek ship sunk and one Norwegian ship abandoned. Another vessel also believed sunk.

5. British aircraft torpedoed 6000 ton merchant vessel off Ymuiden.

6. Military. Eritrea. Up to 9.30 p.m. March 25th. Our forces have pushed forward both sides of Keren Road and repulsed three counter attacks, number of prisoners, including complete mortar platoon, taken. Work on moving block on road proceeding satisfactorily.

7. Royal Air Force. Night operations cancelled on account of bad weather.

8. Royal Air Force. Ethiopia. On the 24th 24 bombers of S.A.A.F. attacked railway Harar sector hitting 3 bridges. 25th-26th Blenheims bombed Addis Ababa Jibuti railway,

9. Dodecanese. 25th. 4 Blenheims attacked aerodromes at Scarpanto and Calato, 5 Heinkel 111's severely damaged. Direct hit on 7000 ton merchant vessel off Astropalia Island.

10. German Air Force. Daylight 26th. Enemy activity on moderate scale and over wide area; about 24 aircraft crossed coast. Two enemy bombers destroyed, one by fighters and one by anti-aircraft and a third probably destroyed by fighters.

11. No enemy activity by night except two raids North Shetlands.

12. Mediterranean. On 25th 3 CR 42's machine gunned aerodrome Heraklion (Crete) and destroyed 1 Blenheim.

*PSF  
Great Britain  
Report from head of  
Military Liaison*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PERSONAL AND ~~SECRET~~

March 29th, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I beg to enclose herewith the text of a personal and secret message addressed to you by Mr. Churchill which was received today by cable.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Yours sincerely,

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*Walter Campbell*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President.

PERSONAL AND ~~SECRET~~

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The following is the text of a message received from Mr. Winston Churchill for the President, March 29th, 1941.

Begins.

Since my telegram of March 12th about feeding unoccupied France, we have been confronted with the agreement between Darlan and Berlin for the supply of large quantities of foodstuffs to unoccupied France in exchange naturally for a quid pro quo to the occupied zone from which the German army of occupation is a heavy gainer. There are also press reports of Vichy trying to negotiate purchases of foodstuffs in Latin-America. If we were to put up with this it would mean that French ships unhampered by the fetters of convoy, would soon be doing a big trade and Germany would secure at least half of the import. This seems to put the matter in a new light.

Parliament and the public will ask me why when we are ourselves suffering a grievous blockade and British rations are reduced week by week the French and Germans should have these advantages thus prolonging the war. Moreover the Belgians, Dutch and Norwegians, whose privations and sufferings are far worse than those of Vichy France, may soon ask that their own ships in our service should carry food to their own countries. We ourselves in Britain need more ships and food more stringently every week in order to carry on the war with its present vigour.

I am therefore instructing the Admiralty to tighten up the blockade of unoccupied France as far as our naval resources and opportunities allow and I hope that you will not think that this is unwise or unreasonable. The two gift-ships will of course be let through as agreed between us.

We/



-2-

We are cabling in detail through Lord Halifax.

Ends.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

31st March 1941.

~~SECRET~~  
REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of  
the three latest reports received from  
London on the military situation. They  
were dated March 28th, March 29th and  
March 30th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.



Telegram from London dated March 28th.

1. Naval. Enemy aircraft attacked shipping off Milford Haven evening of March 22nd. Four small ships totalling 2,337 tons damaged. Two enemy aircraft were badly damaged.
2. H.M.S. "Leith" attacked by two enemy aircraft with bombs S.W. off St. David's Head, March 27th, was undamaged but destroyed at least one aircraft. On March 27th, the Coastal Blenheims on reconnaissance of Lorient attacked Pokke-Walf aircraft and cruiser presumably the "Voltaire" results unobserved. Two Blenheims dive-bombed near missing about 6,000 ton.....and two naval auxiliaries off Brest.
3. Military - Albania. No indications of Italians yet able to resume the offensive. Defensive preparations being made in the southern sector. Total forces north of line Durazzo - Tiranha probably not more than 12,000.
4. Yugoslavia. The army loyal to the new Government and reported concentrating southwards. Minimum of 23 divisions mobilised. The whole country appears enthusiastic and orderly.
5. On March 23rd - British Colonial and Belgian forces occupied Bengali (about 331 miles west of Addis-Abbaba) after severe fighting.
6. Royal Air Force March 27th. Daylight attacks were made on shipping from Ushant to La Rochelle and on small naval craft off the Dutch coast. Alderney harbour, buildings and small merchant ship hit. Two Blenheims shot down by enemy fighters.

7. Night/

7. Night of March 27th/28th. Ninety-seven bombers sent to attack Cologne (39) Dusseldorf (39) Dunkirk, Calais and Brest. Three aircraft missing.
8. Eritrea.- During March 25th-26th. Sixteen tons of bombs dropped on enemy positions near Keren; two enemy fighters reported destroyed.
9. Ethiopia. Three trains on Addis-Abbaba Djibuti Railway Station at Awda received direct hits.
10. Greece. On March 25th four Gladiators intercepted 20 enemy fighters escorting 6 bombers. They probably destroyed 1 fighter and damaged another. One Gladiator destroyed on the ground at Parangtha.
11. German Air Force. March 27th. Two enemy fighters over Kent. One ME.110 damaged and one Spitfire missing.
12. Night of March 27th/28th. A few aircraft reported off the coast.
13. Syria. French reported building a defensive line in northern Syria facing Turkey.



Telegram from London dated 29th March

Commander in Chief Mediterranean with strong force of Mediterranean Fleet on the 28th got into touch with strong Italian forces south of Yildiz west of Crete. Enemy cruisers first sighted 8 a.m. By noon the enemy forces in two groups retiring westwards at high speed one group consisting of two battleships three cruisers five destroyers, second group three cruisers three destroyers with possibly two battleships. Air attacks by aircraft and strong force of Elenheims from Greece made several attacks. Former scored possible torpedo hit on one cruiser; latter claim two bomb hits on one cruiser two heavy bomb hits on another cruiser, one hit heavy bomb on destroyer. One Littorio class reported to have speed reduced to fifteen knots by day torpedo attacks. Commander in Chief reported at 12:28 a.m. 29th March also two eight-inch cruisers severely damaged by our battleships in ensuing night action - hoped sunk. Result of destroyer night attacks not yet reported. Survivors from believed six inch gun cruiser reported by aircraft.

2. On the 16th Parthian fired torpedoes at 6000 ton merchant ship and 10,000 ton tanker in escorted convoy in the Straits of Messina, two explosions heard believed two ships hit.

3. Scharnhorst Gneisenau were at Brest on 28th. One in dry dock one in Rade Abou.

4. Royal/

4. Royal Air Force. Night of 27th/28th. Industrial centres Cologne and Dusseldorf each attacked by 33 aircraft; 26 tons H.E. dropped on the former and 33 tons and 3,000 incendiaries on latter. Many fires and explosions caused.
5. Night of 28th/29th. All bombing operations cancelled.
6. Dodecanese. Enemy aerodrome in Rhodes bombed on 27th one enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground.
7. German Air Force, 28th. Only slight enemy activity; our fighters destroyed one enemy bomber and probably destroyed a second.
8. Night of 28th/29th. No enemy operations reported.



Telegram from London dated 30th March.

- Naval. No further news yet received about the action in the Mediterranean March 28th and 29th but Greek destroyers have picked up 110 Italian survivors and have been directed by Sunderland aircraft to the position to pick up 600 more.
2. March 29th, several enemy air attacks made on east coast convoys; one British tanker was hit and sunk.
3. Royal Air Force. Night of March 29th/30th. All bombing operations cancelled.
4. Italy. March 28th. Six medium bombers attacked aerodrome at Lecce (near Brindisi) destroying at least one aircraft and damaging 20 others.
5. German Air Force. Night of March 29th/30th. About 40 aircraft operating principally in Avonmouth area, and 36 more suspected of mine laying.
6. In central Mediterranean German dive bombing force has been reinforced from units previously located in northern France.
7. Whole dive bombing force in the Balkan theatre (160) now located in south west Bulgaria.
8. Home Security. Night of March 29th/30th. Bombing not heavy but sharp attacks on Avonmouth and Bristol. At Avonmouth three oil cisterns set alight and still burning. Fires all under control. Casualties so far reported not serious.
9. Add to paragraph 1 above. Three Italian eight inch cruisers, two destroyers now confirmed sunk, one six inch cruiser possibly sunk. Our losses nil.