

Great Britain: Military Situation: May 1941

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~Secret~~

May 2nd, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the  
latest report on the military situation.  
It is dated April 30th.

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 received from London  
dated April 30th, 1941.

Naval. At 1.37 p.m. April 29th Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean reported that probably at least 40,000 men evacuated from Greece.

Coastal convoy attacked by E-Boats night of 28th/29th; one British ship of 1,500 tons sunk. E-Boats engaged by two destroyer motor launches and motor gunboats; two E-Boats damaged and two repeatedly hit by gunboats.

62 rounds fired into Dover April 29th without damage.

Night of 27th/28th British merchant vessel claims to have shot down an enemy aircraft off East Scotland and on the 28th mine sweeper shot down German bomber off East England.

Reference telegram of April 29th, second paragraph. Three ships mentioned were tankers totalling 18,400 tons, one has sunk, other on fire and unsalvageable, the third was British vessel "Port Hardy" 8,900 tons on passage from New Zealand. Survivors have been picked up in the North Western approaches from British City of Nagpur 10,150 tons from Glasgow to Fredericktown and from British Beacon Grange 10,100 tons from Tyne to Buenos Aires both independently routed.

Royal Air Force. 29th. During daylight attacks on enemy shipping 2,000 ton and 1,000 ton vessel hit; two of our aircraft missing.

Night of 29th/30th 71 bombers sent to Mannheim and 31 to Rotterdam. Majority of aircraft detailed

for/

for Mannheim dropped bombs in target area. One bomber missing. Five offensive fighter patrols sent over Northern France; one ME 110 destroyed.

German aircraft. Night of 28th/29th. Plymouth anti-aircraft guns destroyed three enemy bombers, 42 persons killed and 13 wounded at Naval training establishment considerable damage caused to the dockyard.

Night of 29th/30th. About 156 aircraft attacked Plymouth where attack lasted about four hours; damage in centre of the city thought very severe and casualties heavy; 36 others operated over Cardiff and further 36 engaged against shipping and bombing over various localities. Night fighters and anti-aircraft defences each destroyed one enemy aircraft.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

May 3rd, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy  
of the latest report on the military  
situation. It is dated May 1st.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*W. L. Campbell*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

Telegram received from London  
dated May 1st, 1941.

Naval. One destroyer and one minesweeper badly damaged air raid Malta night of April 29th-30th. Yard craft and stores also suffered. One minesweeper damaged by mine deep water Malta.

2. New cruiser slightly damaged by bomb Plymouth night of April 29th-30th.

3. H.M.I.S. Parvati A/S vessel sunk by mine southern Red Sea.

4. On April 29th Naval units carried out heavy bombardment of enemy M/T concentrations southeast of Tobruk.

5. Armed boarding vessel Cavina captured Italian tanker Sengro, 6,466 tons, loaded fuel oil in North Atlantic.

6. Early April 30th Air officer commanding Iraq informed by Officer Commanding an Iraqi mechanised unit that "in the course of training" he had taken up positions on hills surrounding Habbaniya and any aircraft or troops leaving cantonment would be fired upon. He was told this contrary to Anglo-Iraqi treaty and that aircraft would carry out normal training.

7. Enemy intelligence. German supplies to North Africa. 4 ships arrived at Benghazi on April 25th (2 over 3,000 tons) with fuel and bombs. 3 more ships left Tripoli for Benghazi on April 26th with fuel bombs and ammunition.

8. Royal Air Force. April 29th. Additional reports. Direct hits made on 2 merchant vessels off Stavanger/

Stavanger of 5,000 and 4,000 tons respectively.

9. April 30th. Ship of 700 tons hit and wireless station North of Bergen successfully attacked.

10. Night of April 30th/May 1st. 96 bombers despatched, attacked Kiel (82) Berlin (10 Stirlings) Rotterdam 4. All returned safely.

11. German Air Force. Night of April 29th/30th. Total of 8 enemy aircraft destroyed.

12. April 30th and night of April 30th/May 1st. Enemy activity slight.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 5th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of  
the two latest reports on the military  
situation. They are dated May 2nd and  
May 3rd.

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 received from London

dated May 2nd, 1941.

Naval. From "Wryneck" 1 officer 28 ratings, from "Diamond" 10 ratings saved.

2. P.M. May 1st. Single enemy aircraft dropped 5 bombs on Whitehead factory, Weymouth, production interrupted.

3. On May 1st Upholder sank two north bound merchant vessels east of Kerkenah Island; Ladybird and Aphis were bombarding enemy Gazala area.

4. Military. Evacuation operations from Greece now reported complete, total number of army personnel got away about 43,000 out of total in Greece now assessed at between 55,000 and 56,000. Of those embarked not more than 500 understood to have been subsequently lost. Of 1700 Royal Air Force personnel, all but about 100 were evacuated.

5. During the night of April 30th/May 1st, enemy attacked Tobruk and penetrated southwest perimeter; morning of May 1st, 30 tanks were reported attacking in this area; at 2 p.m. battle was still in progress and 60 enemy tanks were reported within perimeter and were being engaged by our tanks and artillery.

6. Enemy Intelligence: anticipated German and Italian effort in Libya shortly to be increased. Strenuous efforts being made to bring up remainder of 15th armoured division to forward area and reinforcements of men and material being transported to Cyrenaica by air.

7. Royal Air Force. May 1st. Blenheims attacked shipping off Holland, near miss made on 5000 ton tanker.

Rotterdam/

Rotterdam petrol stores successfully attacked by one aircraft. 10 aircraft bombed Den Helder hitting power house and dock installations. One aircraft missing.

8. Night of May 1st/May 2nd. Bomber command operations cancelled but 5 coastal aircraft attacked Brest, 3 dropped mines there.

9. German Air Force. May 1st/May 2nd. 73 aircraft operated all but 2 against Liverpool area. No heavy damage caused and casualties not serious. Night fighters destroyed one bomber and damaged another.

10. Tobruk was bombed 6 times each day April 29th and April 30th. Two Junker 87s destroyed and two damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

Telegram received from London

dated May 3rd, 1941.

Naval. A/S trawler bombed sunk May 1st off Start Point. During air raids Malta "Encounter" and "Permoy" were further damaged and one auxiliary mine-sweeper sunk. "Jersey" sunk by mine May 2nd.

2. May 2nd. His Majesty's ships in Persian Gulf were ordered to commence hostilities against Iraq. A large troop convoy arrived at Suez a few days ago, two other convoys totalling about 200,000 tons have just arrived, and another totalling 164,000 tons due shortly.

3. Military. Tobruk. Determined attacks by enemy from direction of Acroma on western perimeter throughout May 1st resulted in capture of our foremost defended localities on 5,000 yards front. Enemy tanks concentrating on infantry forward posts. Counter attack on with tanks, portion of enemy withdrew after losing 4 tanks in mine fields, at least 3 by Molotov Cocktails and 4 knocked out by our tanks. Our losses during the day were 3 infantry and 4 cruiser tanks while additional 5 infantry tanks broke down mechanically. That evening counter attack by one battalion was unable, owing to enemy tank action, to restore all localities and general line was adjusted to exclude salient at El Medawar.

4. On the morning of May 2nd 30 medium tanks followed by two companies of infantry advanced against our new line but were stopped by artillery fire.

5. Iraq. May 2nd. Operations began round Habbaniya aerodrome. Iraqi artillery fire continued in spite of active bombing but later subsided owing to suspected shortage of ammunition. Up to now we had

suffered/

suffered about 40 casualties. 22 of our aircraft were put out of action. Iraqi aircraft made unsuccessful bombing and machine gun attack on camp. Iraqi forces in this area are estimated at about 1 infantry brigade, 1 mechanised artillery brigade of about twelve armoured cars and probably one mechanised machine-gun company.

6. Similar situation exists at Basra where an Iraqi battalion is reported dug in north of the town with a pack battery guarding southern approach to the railway bridge on Basra-Baghdad railway.

7. Royal Air Force. May 2nd. Blenheims bombed 2 merchant vessels off Juist. One vessel sunk and other set on fire.

8. Night of May 2nd-3rd. 119 aircraft despatched against Hamburg industrial centre (94) Emden Docks (22) and Rotterdam petrol stores (3). Four of our aircraft have not reported to base.

9. Mediterranean. May 1st. Destroyer and merchant vessel were sunk and on May 2nd direct hits were scored on 3 merchant vessels and on a destroyer by Blenheims off coast of Tunis.

10. Night of April 30th-May 1st. Benghazi attacked, many fires started and ammunition dump destroyed.

11. German Air Force. Night of May 2nd-3rd about 150 enemy aircraft operated, Liverpool area main target. Three aircraft destroyed by night fighters and one by anti-aircraft fire.

12. Tobruk attacked by dive bombers escorted by fighters on May 1st. Four ME 109s were shot down, one Hurricane being destroyed.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 6th, 1941.

~~Secret.~~

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ latest report received from London on the  
military situation. It was dated  
May 4th.

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 May 4th.

1. Naval. Home Waters. Night of May 3rd/4th. His Majesty's Cruiser "Sirius" (completing) hit by bomb at Portsmouth. Damage also done to dockyard.
2. North Atlantic. Italian ship (5,600 tons) with fuel oil for Brest intercepted 350 miles from North Azores and has sunk. French ship (3,500 tons) intercepted by Ocean boarding vessel on May 1st arrived at Gibraltar.
3. Attacks on Shipping. May 3rd. Two convoys bombed off East coast, one Norwegian ship (13,050 tons) being sunk and one (1,150 tons) damaged.
4. British ship (7,310 tons) independently inward bound reported being fired on by U-Boat 450 miles from west Iceland (C.).
5. Total numbers evacuated from Greece 51,640.
6. Royal Air Force. Night of May 2nd/3rd. 81 tons of H.E. (including 7 very large bombs) and 12,500 incendiaries dropped on industrial centre of Hamburg with good results in clear weather. Emden (16 tons) and Rotterdam petrol, harbour also attacked, fires started.
7. May 3rd. Blenheims obtained hits on 2,000 ton cargo ship (stern awash) 500 ton trawler (down by the bow) and 5,000 ton cargo ship (damaged) in Channel.
8. Night of May 3rd/4th. 144 aircraft despatched to attack Cologne industrial area (101) Brest (Scharnhorst and Gneisenau) (33) Rotterdam (9). All crews returned safely.
9. Libya. Night of May 1st/2nd. Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour and M.T. near Derna.
10. Iraq. On May 2nd and May 3rd. Wellingtons attacked Iraqi forces Habbaniya and bombed enemy positions. Landing grounds still in use by our aircraft.

11. Night of May 3rd, May 4th. 270 bombers operated. Our night fighters destroyed 12, probably destroyed another two, damaged two. One Spitfire destroyed.
12. Home Security. Night of May 2nd, 3rd. Casualties Liverpool, reported 60 killed, 121 seriously injured, Birkenhead 10 killed and 11 seriously injured.
13. Night of May 3rd/4th. Merseyside heavily attacked, Liverpool 150 aircraft, Portsmouth 15, Damage Liverpool and Bootle again severe, and fire situation at one time serious; Clarence Dock Power Station and Lister-Drive Power Station involved, details not yet available. Feared casualties heavy.
14. German Air Force. May 3rd. Enemy activity confined to patrols in the Straits. Enemy aircraft destroyed over Dungeness.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 7th, 1941

~~SECRET~~

REF ID: A66666  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy  
of the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was dated  
May 5th, 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 May 5th, 1941.

- Naval. Parachute mine dropped in  
Waveney Dock Lowestoft night of May 3rd and 4th.  
Sank one M/S trawler and damaged an A/P trawler.
2. Gloucester on passage in Mediterranean was  
bombed and damaged April 4th (sic).
3. During air raid on Liverpool night of  
May 3rd/May 4th the "Adventure" minelayer slightly  
damaged, eight merchant ships sunk or burnt out and  
one damaged.
4. Two convoys on the East Coast night of  
May 4th/May 5th bombed without damage but South Down  
shot down one enemy aircraft.
5. Military. Libya. Counter attacks by our  
troops Tobruk on night of May 3rd/May 4th unsuccessful  
owing to the enemy's bold use of tanks, machine guns,  
flame throwers. Enemy casualties thought severe.
6. Dump of Royal Air Force bombs abandoned seven  
miles east of Sollum destroyed by our patrols during  
night of May 2nd/May 3rd.
7. Iraqi reinforcements which have reached  
Samawa on Euphrates by rail from the North likely to  
be used to attack our camp at Shaiba and Basra port  
area. Rashid Ali has informed His Majesty's Ambassador  
that if any Government building in Bagdad is bombed  
buildings in which British subjects are collected will  
be bombed.
8. Royal Air Force. Night of May 4th/May 5th.  
97 aircraft sent to battle cruisers at Brest, ten to  
Havre and nine to Rotterdam and Antwerp. All returned  
safely.

9. Iraq. May 2nd. Aircraft from our flying training school carried out nearly 200 sorties - 16½ tons of bombs dropped on enemy gun emplacements, troops and transports around Habbaniya. We lost 2 aircraft in the air, 2 on the ground and others damaged on the ground.

10. During the night May 2nd/May 3rd Wellingtons attacked Baghdad aerodrome causing heavy damage to buildings and aircraft and in daylight attack May 4th destroyed 24 enemy aircraft on the ground; during these operations one enemy fighter shot down, 2 more unconfirmed.

11. German Air Force. Night of May 4th/May 5th. Estimated 220 aircraft operating mainly against Liverpool, Belfast and Barrow areas. About 15 others against shipping and 25 enemy night fighters over East Anglia. Preliminary reports indicate that our night fighters destroyed two, probably destroyed 3 and damaged 5 more; anti-aircraft shot down one.

12. Malta. Night of May 3rd/May 4th; during raid by about 40 aircraft considerable damage done to military and civilian property; one enemy aircraft shot down and another damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

13. Home Security. Night of May 3rd/May 4th; Liverpool. This raid heaviest yet on Merseyside. Central Post Office was burnt and there were many other large fires. At 8.00 p.m. on May 4th several were still visible. The Central Railway Station is temporarily closed, as well as several local lines on account of debris and unexploded bombs. Casualties at present 406 killed and 641 seriously wounded. Barrow in Furness

Production at one Vickers Armstrong Naval  
Construction Works said to be seriously affected.

14. Night of May 4th/5th. Belfast; large  
fires were caused in the city and damage occurred  
in shipyards and at Shorts aircraft factory.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 7th, 1941.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*file*  
~~SECRET~~  
Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the  
latest report on the military situation.  
It is dated May 6th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Law Campbell*

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

  
Telegram received from London  
dated May 6th, 1941.

Naval. Suda Bay attacked by 20 Junkers 88s on 4th. Three shot down by fighters, 2 probably by anti-aircraft guns. One British ship 7,000 tons hit and beached.

2. Upholder reports sinking 3rd enemy ship in addition to 2 reported on 2nd sunk by British submarine off Kerkenah Islands, also she surveyed ships wrecked by captain of D14 March 16th. She boarded and on fire 1 with cargo of motor vehicles.

3. British hospital ship "Karapara" 7,000 tons bombed and set on fire Mersa Tobruk the 4th. Fire extinguished damage slight, arrangements for casualties.

4. Royal Air Force reports direct hit on vessel about 1,500 tons off Neuzen and another of 3,000 tons off Mandal.

5. "Camito" and captured Italian tanker "Sangro" torpedoed early on the 6th 450 miles west by south of Dingle Bay. The former proceeded slow speed.

6. "Furious" sustained damage to hangar during air raid at Belfast night of the 4th/5th.

7. "Gloucester" damage by bombs on 4th not serious. Fleet minesweeper "Selkirk" damaged by bomb and beached night of 4th/5th.

8. Two destroyers landed troops at Mersa Tobruk night of the 3rd/4th. Heavy air attacks Tobruk continue but no serious damage reported.

9. Royal Air Force. Night of 5th and 6th. 150 bombers sent to Mannheim and few to Boulogne and Cherbourg. Coastal command sent 20 aircraft against enemy shipping and ports. All have returned.

10. German Air Force. 5th. Enemy activity slight. Two enemy aircraft destroyed, 1 probably destroyed; we lost 1 Spitfire, pilot safe.

11. Night of 5th and 6th. About 270 enemy aeroplanes came over, about 170 went to the Clyde Side area. Seven bombers destroyed.

12. Crete. On the 3rd 30 enemy aircraft dive-bombed Suda Bay damaged 1 ship. Our fighters and anti-aircraft destroyed 4, probably destroyed 4 and damaged 4.

13. Iraq. On May 2nd our bombers cut the railway 70 miles southeast of Bagdad; Rashid and Bagdad (some words omitted) bombed and many enemy aircraft destroyed and damaged on the ground. Patrols maintained in Habbaniya area and direct hits obtained on enemy gun positions.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 9th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation dated May 7th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Walter Campbell*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

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

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON MAY 7th, 1941.

Naval.

During air-raid on Belfast night of May 5th/ May 6th two naval corvettes badly damaged and considerable damage done to merchant shipping.

2. Naval Boarding vessel mentioned in yesterday's summary has sunk.

3. His Majesty's Submarine Taku reports sinking enemy tanker north of Sicily.

4. On May 6th British Franconia 20,175 tons home-ward bound from Cape Town reported attacked by submarine 180 miles west of Free Town.

5. Military.  
We have occupied H 3 station 28 miles west of Rutba.

6. Fao at the mouth of Shatt-el-Arab has been reinforced by our troops.

7. Royal Air Force. May 6th.  
Medium bombers sank one enemy trawler and damaged another off Texel. Two are missing.

8. Night of May 6th/7th.  
115 bombers sent to attack industrial area and shipyards at Hamburg; small numbers sent to Le Havre and Lorient. One aircraft missing.

9. Lybia. Night of 4th/5th.  
8 heavy bombers attacked Benghazi harbour and enemy aerodromes. At Benina five aircraft including one or two Focke-Wolf destroyed. One aircraft missing.

10. Iraq.  
Aircraft from flying training school successfully bombed gun positions, armoured cars and troops in Habbaniya area. Blenheim fighters on reconnaissance Mosul damaged two enemy aircraft.

11. German Air Force. May 6th.  
A Kent aerodrome machine-gunned by ten enemy  
/aircraft

aircraft. Over the channel during the day we destroyed one and probably two fighters and lost six fighters, four pilots safe.

12. Night of May 6th/7th.  
260 enemy aircraft estimated operating, of which 180 over Clydeside and 60 over Liverpool area. Night fighters destroyed 8 and probably 2 more.

13. My telegram of May 6th. Paragraph 1. Correction. Suda Bay bombed on May 4th by 16 Junker 88's; our fighters and anti-aircraft destroyed one probably two, and damaged five.

14. Iraq.  
On May 6th two Gladiators on the ground destroyed at Habbaniya aerodrome.

15. Home Security. Night of May 6th/7th.  
Considerable damage to property occurred in Greenock district of Clyde-side. Some damage done to John Brown's ship-yard and serious fire reported at Royal Ordnances factory Ardeer.

16. Attack on Merseyside concentrated mainly on Liverpool but did not assume serious proportions and no important damage reported.

17. On Tyne-side and Tee-side damage and casualties reported as slight.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 9th, 1941

~~SECRET~~

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated May 8th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*Amos Compton*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

  
Telegram from London dated  
May 8th, 1941.

- NAVAL. A.P. trawler and one yacht bombed sunk home waters.
2. Hospital ship "Karapara" has arrived at Alexandria.
  3. British tanker 3600 tons at 02.55/7 reported shelled by raider 340 miles East southeast Cape Guardafui.
  4. Night of May 6th/7th. Royal Air Force claimed direct hit on 5000 ton merchant ship anchored at Terschielling.
  5. Military. Iraq. Habbaniya. Night of May 6th/7th, quiet. Our patrols remained on the high ground captured which was occupied in the morning. Bridge between Ramadi and Habbaniya was blown up by enemy during the night.
  6. Convoy containing one Infantry Brigade from India arrived at Basra afternoon of May 6th.
  7. Ethiopia. One Italian General and 170 Europeans have been captured at Alomata. The enemy have evacuated Debarech (40 miles Northeast of Gondar).
  8. Royal Air Force. Night of May 7th/8th: 87 bombers sent to attack battle cruisers at Brest, 15 St. Nazaire docks, others to Bremen docks and to attack shipping. Hits with one 2000 lb. armour piercing bomb and one 500 lb. bomb on each ship are claimed. Two bombers missing.
  9. Mediterranean. On May 7th five Blenheims attacked convoy of 8 merchant ships and two escort vessels south southeast of Pantellaria. Two ships of 3000 and 1500 tons were hit.

10. German Air Force. May 7th; activity off the southeast coast. Our fighters destroyed 8 enemy aircraft. We lost two Spitfires.
11. Night of May 7th/8th. About 200 aircraft operating, mainly against Manchester, Merseyside, Hull and Bristol; 23 were destroyed, 4 probable, 13 damaged.
12. Iraq. May 6th. Three of our aircraft destroyed on the ground during air attacks in Habbaniya area.
13. Home Security. Two-thirds of the workmen have resumed at John Brown's after raid the night of May 6th/7th; two other shipyards at Greenock damaged the same night. Ardeer production on military side likely to be reduced by about 25% for some weeks.
14. The night of May 7th/8th. Extensive fires at Bootle, Hull and Bristol.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.  
May 11th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated May 9th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Lawrence Campbell*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

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

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Telegram from London dated May 9th.

1. Naval. Night of the 7th/8th; two destroyers severely damaged at Liverpool and two destroyers slightly damaged at Hull.
2. On the 8th one armed drifter sunk by aircraft, one minesweeping trawler mined and sunk in Estier.
3. Suez Canal closed near Kantara by mines.
4. At Tobruk the 8th, "Ladybird" shot down two enemy aircraft. We lost one minesweeper by bomb hit.
5. P.M. 8th; 600 miles northeast of the Seychelles His Majesty's Ship "Cornwall" sank armed merchant raider and sustained slight damage and two minor casualties from two hits. 53 Germans picked up. Out of 67 British and 166 Lascars only 11 British and 16 Lascars were saved.
6. Military. Habbaniya. During salvage operations our forces have brought in armoured cars, lorries and six serviceable 3.7 inch howitzers.
7. Royal Air Force. 8th. 6 medium bombers attacked 700 tons anti-aircraft ship off Stavanger, left down by the stern. One missing.
8. Night of the 8th/9th. 183 bombers sent to attack shipyards and industrial centre of Hamburg, 133 to shipyards, mostly smaller numbers to Berlin, Kiel and to attack shipping. Out of the 359 aircraft 10 did not return.
9. German Air Force. 8th. Strong patrols operated over Dover Straits, small formations over Kent. Fighters destroyed 12 enemy aircraft and probably five more; 3 hurricanes shot down, two pilots safe.
10. Night of 8th/9th. About 230 aircraft operating mainly over Midlands and Hull. Enemy casualties - destroyed 11, probable 1, damaged 4.
11. Home Security. Night of 8th/9th. Hull attack/

attack severe. Docks and centre of the city again principal targets. Many fires and widespread damage. Nottingham industrial key point and public utilities not seriously affected.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 12th, 1941.



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Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herewith copies of  
the latest reports received from London  
on the military situation. They were  
dated May 10th and 11th.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Walter Campbell*  
(for the Ambassador)

**REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED**

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

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED

MAY 10th, 1941.

During March and April 4,470 tons of cargo destined for enemy seized in prize. Main items 2,183 tons of oil seed mostly from French ships. Total since beginning of the war 781,211 tons.

2. Merchant ships lost by enemy up to May 6th, 1941 - German, 61 captured or seized, 102 scuttled or sunk, unidentified ships reported by submarine, aircraft, etc. sunk or destroyed 179. Total tonnage, 1,756,000 tons. Italian 40 captured or seized, 71 scuttled or sunk unidentified ships 102. Total 1,090,000 tons. In addition thirty-seven ships 66,000 gross tons under enemy control have been sunk. Also fifty-three ships totalling 320,000 gross tons placed under United States and South American ports.

3. His Majesty's Ship "Neptune" unsuccessfully attacked by enemy aircraft.

4. Two British tankers damaged by enemy aircraft in east coast convoy. Another convoy unsuccessfully attacked in St. George's Channel.

5. Two or three U-boats attacked outwardbound fleet 400 miles from west Iceland sinking four merchant ships three of which in ballast; another in the same convoy torpedoed, another merchant ship out of convoy torpedoed west of Freetown.

6. Military

Habbaniya Iraqi have withdrawn from Ramadi and Falluja and carried out demolitions and inundations covering these towns.

Basra.

Bazaar area was occupied early on May 8th. Local situation appeared to be returning to normal and restrictions are being lifted.

7. Royal Air Force Night of May 8th - 9th

Hamburg

139 aircraft dropped 150 tons including nine 4,000 pound bombs and 9,000 incendiaries; large fires started in dockyards and buildings in industrial areas were blown into the air. At Bremen 112 aircraft dropped 105 tons of bombs and 24,250 incendiaries; results equally successful. Numerous other objectives in Germany and German occupied territories bombed by single aircraft.

8. May 9th

During offensive and defensive operations we lost three fighters (2 pilots safe); two enemy fighters claimed as destroyed.

9. Night of May 9th - 10th

One hundred and thirty-six bombers sent to attack Mannheim and forty-three to engage coasts, others to Berlin and Calais. Out of 195 all but three have returned.

10. Iraq. May 7th and 8th.

During attacks on enemy aerodrome, hangars and buildings were hit, petrol dump set on fire and ten enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground.

11. German Air Force. May 9th.

Activity negligible during the day.

12. Night of May 9th-10th.

About fifty aircraft overland further seventy against coastal shipping. Two enemy aircraft destroyed.

13. Libya.

Tobruk attacked twice on May 7th; damage slight. Three raiders shot down by anti-aircraft fire, two more probably destroyed.

14. Malta.

Heavy attack night of May 6th - 7th achieved little success. Our fighters destroyed one bomber and probably a second, two others were shot down by anti-aircraft.

15. On May 9th our fighters destroyed one and probably two dive bombers attacking shipping.

16. Home Security. Liverpool area.

Seventh consecutive raid took place night of May 7th-8th. At Bootle about four thousand houses have been destroyed, homeless estimated at twenty thousand.

Hull.

Casualties so far reported nights of 7th-8th are two hundred and fifty killed, three hundred and six seriously wounded. Several thousand people rendered homeless. No dismay, general situation well in hand.

17. Night of 9th-10th.

Bombing widely dispersed. No area seriously affected, casualties light. Fire broke out at Vickers Armstrong, Barrow.

COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM LONDON DATED

MAY 11th, 1941.

1. Naval.

May 9th. (words omitted) A.M.C. intercepted Vichy French "Criton" 4564 tons 400 miles northwest of Freetown.

2. Night of May 9th/10th

Mines dropped Suez Canal. Canal open Kantara to Suez.

3. On May 10th Hilary boarding vessel intercepted Italian tanker 5719 tons 25 miles north of the Azores.

4. 0100/8, Ajax, Hotspur, Havock and Imperial bombarded shipping at Benghazi. Two ships along side the jetty were hit. Two laden ships 3,000 tons and 6,000 tons intercepted approaching the harbour from the south were destroyed; one carried ammunition and believed fuel also.

5. May 10th

Twenty-three Blenheims twice saved convoys from air attack. One destroyed enemy aircraft about to attack east coast convoy others drove off Fokke Wulf from convoy western approaches.

6. Iraq.

Situation at Basra improving but Iraqi officials are still boycotting.

7. Night of May 10th - 11th.

Hamburg plastered by 118 bombers, twelve went to Berlin, forty-four coastal shipping, few to Emden. Seven bombers missing.

8. German Air Force. Night of 10th - 11th.

/Out

Out of 386 enemy aircraft estimated operating over British Isles about 340 attacked London. Preliminary reports give thirty-three destroyed, seven probable four damaged.

9. Further German casualties: Night of May 8th - 9th by A/A destroyed one May 9th confirmed two, additional two.

10. Home Security.

Attack on London lasted from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. Damage chiefly in the centre south-east and east; numerous fires. Docks and residential property suffered extensive damage, main line terminus, two gas works and five hospitals hit. Westminster Hall, Westminster Abbey and Westminster Cathedral, Houses of Parliament and British Museum all damaged.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 14th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

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

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*Avila Butler*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

Telegram from London dated May 12th.

1. Naval. Owing to raid night of 9th/10th, Suez Canal now closed between Port Said and Lake Timsah and Lake Timsah and Deversoir. Between Suez and Deversoir and in Lake Timsah traffic can move.
2. Night of May 10th/11th. Royal Air Force claim sinking by two direct hits destroyer approximately 2,000 tons.
3. Two 500 ton vessels were hit and probably destroyed. Unobserved attacks also made on three convoys off Frisian Islands.
4. Attacks by enemy aircraft on two East Coast convoys night of 11th/12th were unsuccessful.
5. Iraq. Rutba Fort was captured by the Royal Air Force armoured cars early May 11th. This area including aerodrome is now in our hands.
6. Royal Air Force. Night of 10th/11th.  
Hamburg. About 107 tons of H.E. and 10,000 incendiaries dropped under good visibility: in particular Blohm and Voss shipyards, electric power station, main railway station, and marshalling yards repeatedly hit. 13 tons of H.E. dropped on Berlin.
7. Night of 11th/12th. 187 bombers sent to Hamburg (92) Bremen (81) 3 German occupied ports (10) 1 striling to Merignac aerodrome and three aircraft to attack shipping. Weather good over Northwest Germany and 80% of attack on primary targets. Four aircraft missing.
8. During the daylight 10th, two aerodromes in Sicily were attacked by 9 Beaufighters which have destroyed at least five aircraft and inflicted heavy damage.
9. Iraq. Four Bjenheims which attacked Rutba on May 9th were damaged and 1 destroyed by anti-aircraft fire on May 10th.
10. German Air Force. May 11th, daylight. Activity slight.

Fighters/

Fighters bombed and machine gunned South End Aerodrome, damaging two aircraft. Our fighters destroyed four without loss, ground defences a fifth.

11. Night of 11th/12th. 260 aircraft operating overland, 15 more minelaying. Bombing widely distributed. Royal Air Force stations attacked: some damage to hangars and buildings, casualties few. No serious loss of aircraft. 7 enemy aircraft destroyed, four by night fighters.

12. Home Security. Night of 10th/11th. Casualties so far reported 646 killed, 14,004 seriously wounded. May 9th Westminster and Bermondsey reported damaged.

Factories. Damage to war industry thought not serious.

Docks. Damage less heavy than expected.

City. Many main thoroughfares blocked but those from north to south now mainly cleared.

Railways. Considerable suspension of traffic principle Termini but largely precautionary during survey of the permanent way. Several sections of the underground temporarily closed.

Electricity. Some temporary dislocation of supply.

Gas. Damage to gas works not serious but fracture of mains has cut off supply in some S.E. districts.

Telephones. Little dislocation.

Public Buildings. Houses of Parliament. Chamber of House of Commons severely damaged by H.E. and fire. Extensive damage to corridors, ceiling, etc. in House of Lords.

Westminster Abbey. Lantern Tower over Transept collapsed into the Abbey. Damage reparable.

Westminster Hall. Serious damage to roof.

Lambeth Palace. Serious damage to chapel and part of the Palace.

City Guilds. Five Halls destroyed.

Queens Hall. Extensive damage by fire.

British Museum. Most treasures had been removed. Damage comparatively slight.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 15th, 1941.

~~SECRET~~

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated May 13th, 1941.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Harold Butler*

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

TELEGRAM FROM LONDON MAY 13th, 1941.

- Naval.  
Night of 10th/11th. 5 British destroyers fired 866 rounds at shipping and military objectives at Benghazi. One merchant vessel was engaged from the harbour entrance and hit. Our ships were attacked by dive-bombers and shore batteries but no damage was sustained. British gun boat also bombarded landing ground at Gazala and caused fires.
2. Military.  
Ethiopia. Our troops advancing from South have reached 12 miles south of Amba Alagi. In Southern Abyssinia we have occupied the last enemy position at Wadara.
3. Libya.  
Believed 7 Italian divisions now in Libya including one armoured, one motorised.
4. Italy.  
Italian concentration South of the Matterhorn group. Size not yet known. Possibly consists of troops from Albania but may be first movement to induce closer collaboration with Switzerland and Unoccupied France with the Axis.
5. Royal Air Force.  
Night of 12th/13th. 100 bombers sent to attack industrial centre of Mannheim, 13 shipping off French Coast, 1 aircraft missing.
6. Libya.  
Night of 11th/12th. 9 heavy bombers attacked Benghazi harbour and 2 enemy aerodromes in Cyrenicia. Large fires started at Benghazi and on aerodromes; 4 aircraft set on fire and others damaged.
7. German Air Force.  
Day of 12th; enemy activity slight. Night of 12th/13th, only 50 aircraft came over land; further 90 were minelaying, 1 enemy bomber destroyed by night fighters.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 16th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

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

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

*Halifax*

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

22

Telegram from London dated May 14th.

1. Naval. During Fleet operations in the Central Mediterranean between May 6th - 12th, 9 enemy aircraft shot down and 1 damaged; our losses 5 Fulmars and 2 Albacores, only 2 were due to enemy action.
2. A.M.C. believed "Salopian" reported torpedoed and abandoned A.M./13th 650 miles Southwest of Iceland (O).
3. Bulolo P.M./13th intercepted French 4484 ton ship about 100 miles south west of Dakar. She carried 400 native troops for Madagascar.
4. At 20.30/12.4 naval aircraft attacked convoy on passage Tripoli hitting 1 destroyer and one 8,000 ton merchant vessel.
5. Military. Sollum Area. Early 12th. Enemy advanced in several columns with approximately 30 armoured cars and 30 tanks; Afternoon. Air and ground reconnaissance reported enemy columns had converged and were stationary near Bir Sofari; Evening. Whole force was reported to have withdrawn while successfully bombed and machine gunned by 22 Hurricanes and Blenheims. One Hurricane missing.
6. Ethiopia. Amba Alagi area. Operations are continuing satisfactorily and 200 Italian prisoners have been captured.
7. Royal Air Force. May 13th. Blenheim obtained direct hit on deck of "Nazaire" and claims to have destroyed it.
8. Night of 13th/14th. All bombing operations cancelled.
9. German Air Force. Day 13th. Enemy activity slight. 1 Dornier bomber shot down into the sea.
10. Night of 13th/14th. 40 enemy aircraft operated against shipping and 6 mine-laying.
11. Libya. May 12th. 46 enemy aircraft bombed Tobruk harbour, hitting 2 anti-aircraft gun positions. Our anti-aircraft defences probably destroyed 3.

12. Malta/

12. Malta. Night of 11th/12th. Luqa aerodrome attacked by 30 enemy aircraft. I hangar hit and Maryland (Glen Martin light bomber) burnt and two others destroyed. Following night attack repeated; damage caused in dock yard.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~  
May 16th, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation. It was  
dated May 15th.

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 RECEIVED FROM LONDON

DATED MAY 15th, 1941

Ladybird after long period on North African coast during which she regularly successfully bombarded enemy forces and positions was sunk by two direct hits from dive bombers Tobruk harbour p.m. /12th. After-part .... of disintegrated remains on fire many hours. Foremost gun continued firing after the ship hit and on fire.

2. Suez Canal closed Port Said to Kantara, Lake Timsah to Great Bitter Lake.

3. A.M./14th Fokke Wulf A/C sank Norwegian ship in outward convoy western approaches but Wellington aircraft drove it off convoy.

4. 14 Beaufort aircraft torpedoed 5000 ton merchant ship out of convoy of 5 off IJmuiden. Both battle cruisers sighted Brest; balloon barrage was seen.

5. Night of 12th/13th Suda Bay attacked by single aircraft for 7 hours. No damage, no casualties.

6. IRAQ.

About 1000 Iraqis who withdrew from Basrah area are reported to be reforming at Qurna and Hammadiya.

7. GERMAN AIR FORCE. Day 14th.

About 20 enemy aircraft came over land,

our/

our fighters damaged four enemy bombers.

8. Night of 14th/15th.

About 50 aircraft engaged in mine-laying or against shipping; 1 destroyed in Humber by Naval Anti-Aircraft gunfire.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

May 19th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of  
the two latest reports on the military  
situation. They are dated May 16th and  
May 17th.

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 May 16th.

1. Naval. 278 survivors from Amc Salopian have been picked up.
2. Minesweeper Puriri lost sweeping minefield laid June 1940 in Hauraki Gulf, North Island, New Zealand.
3. Suez Canal closed Port Said to Tineh and Lake Timsah to Great Bitter Lake. One mine exploded by aircraft on 12th.
4. Night of 13th/14th, Gnat bombarded Gazala.
5. P.M. 15th, bombers attacked convoy of 5 merchant ships near Heligoland. 3 ships 5,000, 4,000, and 1,600 tons left burning considered total losses. 2 ME 109's attacked, 1 shot down, 1 damaged. We lost 1 Blenheim.
6. Royal Air Force. Daylight 16th; fighters carried out offensive patrols. 1 troop carrier destroyed over Northern France, another damaged on the ground; 1 bomber shot down into the sea and one ME 109 probably destroyed and another damaged.
7. Night of 15th/16th. 146 aircraft sent to attack Hanover (102) Berlin (5 Stirlings and 8 Manchesters) others to channel ports to attack shipping and to lay mines. Four bombers missing including 1 Manchester.
8. Night of 13th/14th. Wellingtons bombed two aerodromes in Rhodes; also Benghazi. Following night Royal Air Force raided two aerodromes in Cyrenecia and one south of Athens. Our aircraft have attacked Iraqi aerodromes; three enemy aircraft damaged on the ground at Erbil and successful attacks made on Mosul station and enemy communications.
9. German Air Force. United Kingdom. Night of 16th/17th. About 59 enemy aircraft operating of which 32 came inland.
10. 14th. 25 dive bombers attacked Tobruk without results/

results; several enemy aircraft damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

11. Malta. Heavily attacked nights of 13th/14th and 14th/15th also by fighters on 14th and 15th. Luqa aerodromes objective. About 7 of our aircraft damaged on the ground and three Hurricanes shot down.

12. Crete. Harbour at Suda Bay and two aerodromes attacked by enemy aircraft on 13th and 14th without serious damage. 8 enemy aircraft shot down, 1 damaged.

Telegram from London dated May 17th.

1. Naval. During transport of expeditionary forces to Greece merchant shipping lost 36,000 tons, damaged 6,000 tons. During evacuation of Greece 147,000 tons lost, 57,000 tons damaged.
2. Imports into Great Britain by ships in convoy during week ending May 10th, 891,156 tons compared with average of 695,048 tons for past ten weeks.
3. Apart from Mediterranean, shipping losses have tended to show improvement in April. For first time losses by air attack have exceeded those by U-boat largely due to heavy casualties in the Mediterranean.
4. A.M. 15th. Harbour patrol vessel shot down an enemy aircraft off Humber.
5. Military. Iraq. By morning of the 15th our advance troops from Palestine were reported 70 miles from Rutba.
6. Syria. French troops especially vicinity of aerodromes reported standing to expectation of imminent attack by British.
7. Iraq. Tribes along Tigris Euphrates also..... tribes Northern Iraq reported solidly against Rashid Ali.
8. Royal Air Force. 16th. Eight Blenheims sent to attack shipping, sank 2,500 ton merchant vessel which had been Norwegian. One missing.
9. Night of 16th/17th. Main operations: 93 aircraft sent to Cologne and 22 to attack shipping. Out of total of 135, one missing.
10. Syria. 15th. Eight Blenheims escorted by two Tomahawks attacked aerodromes at Damascus, Rayak and Palmyra. At least 16 German aircraft were seen, one was burnt. Two French fighters followed our aircraft to Palmyra but did not attack.

11. German Air Force. 16th. Continuous small fighter sweeps carried out over Kent. Two Messerschmidts 109 shot down by aerodrome defences. Our fighters destroyed five enemy fighters. We lost one Spitfire, pilot safe.
12. Night of 16th/17th. About 150 enemy aircraft came over, 120 attacked Midlands, 20 were sea mining 100 H.E. bombs were dropped on a Cornish aerodrome. Night fighters destroyed 2 enemy aircraft. We lost one Beaufighter.
13. Iraq. 16th. Three Heinkel bombers attacked Habbaniya destroying engine repair section and causing other damage. One was damaged by fighters, we lost one Gladiator destroyed and another damaged. One training type aircraft also destroyed by Messerschmidt. 110's.

*file personal*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

19th May, 1941.

My dear Mr. President,

On June 19th next, as you will recall, you are honouring the University of Oxford by accepting the degree of Doctor of Civil Law which it will be my privilege as Chancellor to confer upon you.

I think that you may be interested to have copies of the letter and telegram which I and the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford have sent to President Conant asking permission to hold a special Convocation of the University of Oxford at Harvard.

It is proposed that the ceremony, which will be quite short, will begin by the University Marshal reading out the Vice Chancellor's letter, and then the formal  
/permission

The Honourable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

permission of Harvard University for the  
Convocation to be held. Dr. Conant,  
acting as Public Orator of the University  
of Oxford, will present you, and I shall  
confer the degree. in a very short speech, of  
which I will, if I may, send you a copy.

Believe me,

My dear Mr. President,

Yours very sincerely,

*Ascham*

COPY

May 18th, 1941.

My dear President Conant,

I have great pleasure in communicating to you a telegram which I have to-day received from the Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford, asking the University of Harvard to permit the holding of a special Convocation within its precincts for the purpose of conferring the Degree of Doctor of Civil Law (honoris causa) upon the President of the United States of America.

In transmitting this request, which I trust may prove agreeable to the University of Harvard, I wish to invite you to act as Public Orator of the University of Oxford, pro hac vice, and in that capacity to present the President of the United States for his Degree.

I need hardly say how much pleasure it will give, not only to myself, but also to Oxford, if you felt it possible to do this honour to my University on so unique an occasion.

Believe me,

My dear President,

Yours very sincerely,

(signed) HALIFAX.

Dr. J. B. Conant, Ph.D., D.C.L.,

President,

Harvard University,

Cambridge, Mass.

OXFORD,

May 17th, 1941.

My dear President,

The Council of the University of Oxford has charged me with the pleasant duty of conveying to you with warm fraternal greetings the following: The University of Oxford has empowered its Chancellor Viscount Halifax to confer upon the Honourable Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law at a special Convocation to be held at an appropriate time and place in the United States. This is a departure from our customary practice but wholly in keeping with the conception of Universities as a spiritual federation pledged to guardianship of free learning and the unfettered search for truth. This search is universal and knows no restriction of place or race or creed. Each of our Universities is therefore proud to have its members widely scattered through the world. An academic function of Oxford is to be held outside its own walls. For this no place can be more fitting than the home of its sister society in Massachusetts. They share a common tradition by which they live and which both are concerned to maintain. I am therefore asked to express the hope that it may be agreeable to Harvard University to permit the holding of this special Convocation within its precincts on the occasion of its forthcoming Commencement. Thus may be furnished one more bond in the history of the happy intercourse between our Universities.

Believe me to be,

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE GORDON.

Vice Chancellor.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

20th May, 1941

SECRET

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated May 18th.

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 MAY 18TH, 1941

Naval

During air attacks on Suda Bay 15th and 17th British 6300 ton ship severely damaged feared total loss. Another 6000ton ship damaged by near miss. 1,000 ton tanker set on fire and Greek 5700 ton ship caught fire, blew up and sank. Suez Canal now understood to be open. South East Crete on 17th British Hospital ship attacked by aircraft.

2. Registan ocean boarding vessel intercepted French schooner 420 miles north of the Azores. Escorting her to harbour.
3. Malta Air raids on morning of 16th and during night of 16th - 17th. One destroyer was hit and three torpedo aircraft damaged at an aerodrome.
4. Military Tobruk. On 15th our fighting patrols supported by cruiser tanks advanced 2500 yards west within Medawar salient. Night of 15th - 16th we repulsed enemy counter-attacks within salient. On 16th the salient was consolidated with an average of 600 yards gain.
5. Sollum At least 40 tanks mostly medium but some thought larger were used to recapture Capuzze by the enemy; ten of our infantry tanks destroyed. Enemy later brought up further tank reinforcements in the area Capuzze-Bardia.

Our mechanized force withdrawn 12 miles South West of Sollum harassing enemy vigorously. Operation cost the enemy 500 prisoners and considerable loss of armoured fighting vehicles.

6. Iraq - On 16th our advance troops from Palestine reached the area south of Lake Harbaniya.

7. Royal Air Force. Night of 17th - 18th. 124 aircraft sent out, Cologne 95, Boulogne 15, Rotterdam 14, one aircraft missing.

8. Libya. 16th - Our fighters destroyed two enemy fighters on the ground and one in the air and destroyed vehicles of large M. T. convoy near Derna. Two Hurricanes lost.

9. Greece On the 17th - Beau fighters from Crete attacked 3 aerodromes. Large number of enemy aircraft seen on the ground and several hit by machine gun and cannon fire. One of our aircraft failed to return.

10. Syria and Iraq On 16th aircraft on reconnaissance reported several enemy machines on Syrian aerodromes. Following day Iraqi aerodromes attacked; one large enemy aircraft set alight on the ground and two M.E. 109's shot down by Gladiators.

11. German Air Force 17th - Fighter sweeps by small formations took place over Kent. One enemy fighter destroyed and two damaged; 2 of our fighters lost. Night of 17th - 18th. Only 70 aircraft were operating including 20 mine layers and 20 night fighters.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

21st May, 1941

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

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

MAY 19TH, 1941.

Naval

Newcastle has intercepted French 6,100 ton ship carrying 1700 Indo Chinese troops about 300 miles south of Freetown. No attempt sabotage, but Captain refused to cooperate., Armed guard placed on board. Ship being escorted.

2. A.M. May 18th Suda bombed. "Salvia" Corvette damaged, oiler Olna set on fire.
3. Night of May 17th/18th. Suez Canal mined again - now only open south of kilometre 60.
4. British "City of Shanghai" torpedoed and sunk by gun fire from U-Boat P.M. May the 10th about 900 miles west of Freetown.
5. Military Tobruk. Now known that two posts reported captured by the enemy are still in our hands. Dawn May 17th our troops recaptured further post. Two enemy medium tanks and 25 German prisoners were taken.
6. Duke of Aosta has accepted terms of capitulation, Our troops to occupy Toselli Pass at 6 A.M. May 18th, enemy allowed to collect wounded May the 18th, Duke of Aosta, General Grusci and the whole garrison of approximately 7,000 formally surrendered May 19th.
7. Iraq. One of our columns from Palestine has arrived at Habbaniya having been twice attacked by German aircraft. Our casualties slight.
8. Royal Air Force. Night of May 18th/19th. Of 77 aircraft, 70 attacked shipyards at Kiel; all returned safely.
9. Libya. Night of May 16th/17th. Heavy bombers attacked Benghazi harbour. May 17th Hurricanes machine gunned large enemy supply columns moving east towards Tobruk, Bardia and

Capuzzo./

Capuzzo. Nineteen vehicles destroyed, others damaged road, traffic interrupted and petrol dump destroyed,

10. Greece. Same night heavy bombers attacked three German occupied aerodromes good results. At one, hangars hit, 4 enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground. Two Wellingtons also attacked Maritza aerodrome Rhodes set fire to petrol or ammunition dump.

11. Syria May 17th. Three Blenheims set fire to two enemy aircraft at Palmyra and met inaccurate anti-aircraft fire returning over Damascus.

12. German Air Force. May 18th. Enemy activity slight; one fighter destroyed, two damaged. Night of May 18th/19th. Only little sea mining; one enemy aircraft destroyed.

13. Egypt. During operations by eight enemy bombers against the Suez Canal night of May 17th/18th two enemy aircraft destroyed by anti-aircraft fire, one by fighters.

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

21st May, 1941

*T. A. G.*  
BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~  
Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of the latest report received from London on the military situation. It was dated May 20th, 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 MAY 20TH, 1941

Naval Bangor, mine sweeper and two M/S trawlers attacked, Lyme Bay by 9 enemy aircraft A.M. May 19th. Slight damage only. Two aircraft damaged.

2. Ships in Lowestoft night of May 19th/20th shot down one enemy aircraft.

3. CRETE A.M. May 20th. Heavy air attack developed on Maleme and Suda Bay A/A defences. Large forces of enemy aircraft engaged. 6 A.M., G.M.T. reported air borne troops landed south and southwest of Canea. Reported 9 A.M., G.M.T. about 1500 enemy troops in New Zealand battle dress landed from gliders parachutes and troop carriers Canea and Maleme areas and military report the situation in hand. Enemy bodies of parachute troops have landed at Retimo.

4. ROYAL AIR FORCE EGYPT, MAY 18TH. Sollum area 28 Blenheims bombed and continually harassed advancing enemy mechanized forces until they withdrew towards Capuzze; the same day fighters attacked convoys southwest of Appolonia destroying and damaging several vehicles.

5. IRAQ, MAY 19TH Our aircraft active over Fallujah and Habhaniya, providing patrols and attacking military targets in support of ground operations. Two Valentias and four Douglas aircraft carried troops Fallujah, occupied by us May 19th without any casualties.

6. GERMAN AIR FORCE, May 19th. Fighter engagements took place over Kent and the channel, 5 German, 4 British aircraft destroyed. We lost one pilot. Night of May 19th/May 20th 85 enemy aircraft were plotted, majority engaged against shipping and mine-laying.

7. CRETE May 17th/May 18th. Enemy aircraft carried out  
severe /

-2-

severe bombing raids. Heraklion Aerodrome was rendered temporarily unserviceable. Two enemy aircraft shot down by anti-aircraft fire. No Royal Air Force casualties reported.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 23rd, 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 May 21st.

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 MAY 21st.

1. Naval.  
Reported 11 enemy merchant ships, 2 large warships, 3 destroyers with 10 to 12 aircraft passed through Kattegat northwards May 20th.
2. Suda Bay May 18th.  
York hit by bomb further extensive damage May 20th, Widnes mine sweeper damaged by near miss.
3. May 20th.  
Heavy casualties inflicted on convoy south of Iceland by U-boat. 8 ships torpedoed, 2 being tankers.
4. One or 2 enemy aircraft damaged attacking Suez canal north kilometres 60 night of May 17th, May 18th.
5. We have occupied Guardafui lighthouse.
6. Gnat bombarded Gazala aerodrome night of May 17th, May 18th.
7. Crete.  
16.30/20 further airborne attack developed. Approximately 3,000 men dropped at 18.30/20 1,200 not accounted for, fighting continuing Maleme Canea areas and at 21.00/20 situation in hand. Parachute troops landed P.M. May 20th Herakleon aerodrome - Retimo - Candia. Prisoners 2000 seaborne attack west of Herakleon on May 21st. Troop carriers which attempted to land mostly crashed and parachutists in Herakleon were reported in English battle dress.
8. Military.  
Iraq. We have occupied point H2 on pipe-line (30 miles northeast of Rutba).
9. Royal Air Force.  
Greece. Night of May 18th, May 19th. 7 Wellingtons made effective night attack on aerodromes at Hassani and Eleusis.
10. German Air Force.  
May 20th and night of May 20th, 21st. Enemy  
/activity

2.

activity against the United Kingdom slight.

11. Iraq. May 20th.  
10 ME 110's attacked Fallujah; 3 HEI.111's  
and 4 ME 110's twice machine gunned and bombed Habbaniya  
aerodrome. 2 hangars containing trainer aircraft set  
on fire, 5 aircraft damaged, 7 others damaged on the  
ground.

12. Home Security.  
Night of May 20th, May 21st.  
2 aerodromes Cornwall and 1 Norfolk attacked  
but little damage reported.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 24th, 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  
May 22nd.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Neville Butler*

The Honourable,

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

Telegram from London dated May 22nd.

1. Naval. Thirteen thousand four hundred ton French tanker bound for Casablanca intercepted by Diomedes eight hundred miles east of Bermuda being taken in.
2. Two enemy cruisers, three destroyers sighted off Lampedusa p.m. 21st. Later two cruisers, three destroyers sighted off Pantellaria and convoy of seven ships, four destroyers.
3. P.M. 21st. Santa Lucia reported one aircraft carrier, one other war ship off Castries - probably Bearn and Emile Bertin.
4. Twenty first, Juno bombed and sunk southeast of Crete, six officers and ninety-nine ratings saved.
5. P.M. 21st. One Bismarck, one Hipper, one destroyer, six merchant vessels sighted Bergen.
6. Italians at Tukom surrendered a.m. May 20th - H.M.S. "Clive" embarked prisoners.
7. 21st. Thorshaven and Sumbo Sydero (Faroes) machine-gunned.
8. Fokke Wulf aircraft shot down by S.S. "Umgent" three hundred and fifty miles west of Ireland, 19th.
9. Crete. Dive bombing machine gunning resumed Canea area early twenty-first followed by more parachute troops Maleme and south west of Canea. 1500 21st. Maleme Aerodeome and part of Herakleon harbour in enemy hands. Estimated at 1505 enemy convoys were approaching Crete one of thirteen ships, one of fifteen ships, one of nine ships, one of seventeen fishing vessels escorted by two and three destroyers respectively. At 2250 RAD with Dido, Orion, Ajax and two other destroyers engaged one convoy seventeen miles north of Canea. We sunk one destroyer, two merchant ships and number of Caiques. At about 0930/midnight convoy of  
thirty/

thirty vessels twelve miles south of Milo. Six British destroyers reported ten miles distant. Otherwise convoy situation obscure. 0722 C/22 reported from Suda no sea borne landings during night owing to the presense of our light forces.

10. MILITARY CRETE

Situation up to 3:20 p.m. May 21st generally. No reports of any sea borne landings night of 20th May, 21st or during May 21st. Strenuous enemy attack estimated at one parachute regiment attacking East of Maleme areas and South West of Canea, Retimo and Herakleon.

11. During fighting May 20th our casualties comparatively light, enemy's were heavy.

12. HERAKLEON AREA. At 7 a.m. on May 21st call for assistance was issued to any of His Majesty's ships in neighbourhood. By 3 p.m. Herakleon town partly occupied by enemy who had mounted machine guns on the mole.

13. RETIMO SECTOR. Enemy attack on aerodrome reported successfully held no further reports of fighting this area.

14. CANEA. Suda Bay sector at 4 a.m. 21st heavy air attacks lasting one hour directed mainly on our anti-aircraft defenses. Further parachute landing south west of Canea 3:15 p.m. heavily engaged by artillery and machine guns.

15. Maleme Sector during morning heavy air attack forced our troops to withdraw to east of aerodrome but aerodrome still under fire. Later report stated Maleme aerodrome and area west held by enemy.

enemy. Elsewhere in this sector coast line in our hands.

16. ETHIOPIA. Amba Alagi; approximately 5,000 prisoners have been counted total taken in this area between eighteen thousand and nineteen thousand including the Duke of Aosta, five generals, many senior officers.

17. ITALIAN EAST AFRICA: Remaining centres of Italian resistance areas Gondar, Chelsa and Simma - estimate of eight thousand white, nine thousand native troops former area, twenty thousand white, twelve thousand native latter.

18. IRAQ. Falujah. May 19th. Three hundred prisoners and considerable quantity of stores and equipment have been taken.

19. ROYAL AIR FORCE. 21st. Eight Blenheims successfully attacked Heligoland, one missing. Later eighteen Blenheims with escort of three fighter squadrons attacked oil refinery near Bethune inflicting strategic damage. Five enemy fighters destroyed, eight damaged, our loss one Blenheim, six fighters.

20. LIBYA. 20th, Hurricanes destroyed Junker fifty two's and Messerschmidts one hundred and tens on the ground Mechile.

21. SYRIA: Night of 19th/20th. Five Hurricanes attacked Damascus aerodrome, damaged two German aircraft.

22. GERMAN AIR FORCE. Malta attacked four times between 19th and 21st during attacks on Luqa and Takali aerodromes by fifteen - twenty fighter bombers, one Beaufort, two Welsley's destroyed, four other aircraft damaged.

23. IRAQ. 21st. Two Messerschmidts 110's damaged three of our aircraft Habbaniya aerodrome.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 26th, 1941

REGRADED  
UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein copies of the latest reports received from London on the military situation. They were dated May 23rd, May 24th and May 25th, 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 MAY 23rd, 1941

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1. CRETE. Enemy bombing continued uninterrupted throughout May 22nd but situation at Heraklion reported well in hand and at Canea - Suda Bay road only few German detachments still on the road but Maleme area enemy holds aerodrome and troops and stores continue to reach him by air. Enemy troop carrying aircraft have been destroyed. At 18:00 on May 22nd situation was reported to have deteriorated at Maleme. Subsequent report states that bombardment of Maleme aerodrome by naval units was most successful. Up to last report received 21:00 May 22nd fighting still continued in latter area.
2. Losses and damage to naval units to be expected in view of impossibility of fighter protection and gradual diminution of ammunition. His Majesty's Ship "Gloucester" hit, abandoned and sunk, His Majesty's Ship "Fiji" hit, and sunk later. His Majesty's Ships "Greyhound" and "Kelly" and "Kashmir" sunk. His Majesty's Ships "Warspite" "Valiant", "Naiad", "Ajax" and "Carlisle" also received damage all by bombs.
3. Enemy convoy of 30 ships attacked by our light forces at 10:00 on May 22nd; details not known but Italian destroyers and other craft appear to have been searching for survivors and convoy dispersed northward. No seaborne enemy force had landed in Crete up to the morning of May 23rd. The enemy's main objective was Maleme their attacks on ..... have certainly failed so far.

4. One of His Majesty's submarines sank 7,000 tanker and 9,000 troop ship west of Lampedusa on May 20th and on May 21st she attacked three cruisers and four destroyers north of Lampedusa and probably sunk a destroyer. Another submarine harried coastal shipping off the coast of Libya between May 13th and 20th, sinking large schooner and shelling another.

5. Air reconnaissance P.M. May 22nd, shows that German battleship and cruiser have left Bergen.

6. IMPORTS.

Imports in convoy week ending May 17th exceeded one million tons for first time since the week ending March 14th.

7. ABYSSINIA.

Our forces have captured Geluti; 800 prisoners taken after enemy counter-attack with tanks had been repulsed. Our troops have also entered Hula without opposition.

8. IRAQ.

Night of May 21st enemy penetrated ..... We counter-attacked and re-occupied our original positions. Bad weather prevented bombing operations night of May 22nd/23rd.

9. During daylight May 22nd two Hurricanes on offensive operations over N.W. France shot down ME 1 16's and probably destroyed JU 52's. 4 enemy occupied aerodromes - Greece were heavily attacked by British aircraft night of May 20/21st.

10. Enemy activity over United Kingdom during daylight May 22nd and during night of May 22nd/23rd very slight.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON DATED  
MAY 24th, 1941

1. At 20.32 May 23rd Norfolk Suffolk sighted one enemy battleship Bismarck class and one 8-inch cruiser in Denmark Strait courses W. high speed. They shadowed enemy till 05:40 May 24th when Prince of Wales Hood with destroyers gained touch. Snow and rain storms rendered shadowing difficult. Operations continuing.
2. CRETE. Kipling damaged by collision wrecked about 50 miles south of Crete.
3. On May 23rd Suda dockyard heavily machine gunned by aircraft all our M.T.B.'s out of action. At 19:30 May 23rd reported Heraklion town clear of enemy who had dropped supplies including field guns and shells which were collected by our troops who claimed shooting down 16 troop carrying aircraft since May 20th. Further enemy troops dropped mopping continues. Rethymon situation satisfactory. Maleme enemy hold landing ground; we hold defensive position to the east. Royal Air Force attacked landing ground our troops much encouraged. May 23rd small ships landed German troops N.E. of Canea.
4. Mediterranean forces are refuelling and embarking ammunition.
5. YUGOSLAVIA. Withdrawal of Italian troops reported from Kicevo and further withdrawals Gostiver and Tetovo. These towns are in area originally claimed by Italy as part of great Albania.
6. Night of May 23rd/24th.  
53 aircraft sent out, 51 to Cologne works returned safely after attacking primary targets.

On/



7. On May 23rd four Elenheims attacked enemy merchant vessel 15 miles W. by S. of Pantellaria and left her on fire and stopped.

8. Beaufort aircraft p.m. May 22nd claimed direct hit on amidships on tanker Altmark type at La Pallice.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM LONDON

DATED MAY 25th, 1941

1. NAVAL. Hood and Prince of Wales engaged enemy ships and at 06:15 May 24th the Hood blew up. Destroyers detached searched for survivors. The Prince of Wales sustained some damage, speed reduced to 27 knots. Chase continued South Westward and the Bismark obviously suffered damage, later reported leaving trail of oil fuel.

At 18:30 Prince of Wales again engaged the Bismark who altered to Westward thereby breaking off the engagement. At 0020 May 25th aircraft torpedo attack from Victorious was completed, one hit observed. At 0306 our shadowing forces lost touch with the enemy whose speed it was later reported had been no more than 22 knots for some time.

2. Royal Air Force claimed hits on 2 or more vessels off Frisian Isles May 24th.

3. S.E. of Augusta (Sicily) p.m. May 24th. Upholder attacked three large troop ships escorted by destroyers and scored two hits.

4. CRETE.

Small force of cruisers and destroyers swept waters north of the island night of May 24/25 but sighted nothing. At Heraklion enemy bombers on May 23rd heavily bombed town but not the jetty.

On May 24th 1,000 enemy parachute troops dropped west of town bombing and machine gun fire frustrated our attacks. Greek troops in town short of ammunition. At Rethymon we hold our positions

despite/

despite heavy air attacks. At Maleme enemy still hold aerodrome. Enemy tanks reported this area. At Maleme on May 23rd Royal Air Force destroyed troop carriers on the ground and damaged others and Beau fighters machine gunned aircraft disembarking troops destroying 4 on the ground. Estimated 80 troop carriers landed at Maleme on May 23rd.

Same evening one JU 52 towing six gliders accompanied by 32 more Ju 52's and fighter escort were sighted in Maleme area.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  

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THE SECRETARY

May 27, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The attached was received  
this morning for transmission to  
you.

C.H.

Telegram from London received late May 26th.

Please pass the following at once to the President.

Begins.

On Tuesday May 20th one of our east-bound convoys was attacked by U-boat when some 200 miles south of Greenland. Several of our merchant ships were sunk and cargoes lost, including wheat, aeroplanes, newsprint and steel.

2. According to our present information 8 ships were torpedoed of which details are as follows:-

<u>Ship.</u>	<u>Gross ton.</u>	<u>Time.</u>	<u>Position.</u>	<u>Voyage.</u>	<u>Cargo.</u>
Norman Monarch	4,718	0250 May 20th G.M.T.	58° 47 N. 40° 55 W.	Halifax- Avonmouth	8,000 tons of grain.
Harpagus	5,173	0250 May 20th G.M.T.	56° 47 N. 40° 55 W.	Baltimore- Cardiff	8,250 tons of grain.
Cockaponset	5,996	? May 20th	57° 20 N. 41° 52 W. about	Houston- Holyhead & Liverpool.	Steel, carbon black, sundries 30 trucks, 295 tons of T.N.T., 303 tons of powder.
Darlington Court.	4,974	1300 May 20th	57° 28 N. 41° 07 W.	New York- Liverpool	8,116 tons of wheat, 3 Hudson planes, 2 Douglas planes.
British Security	8,470	1300 May 20th	57° 28 N. 41° 07 W. (may still be afloat)	Curacao- Clyde.	6,000 tons of white spirit, 5,000 tons of pool spirit.
Rothermere	5,356	1548 May 20th	57° 53 N. 41° 39 W.	Botwood Newfoundland- London.	4,750 tons of newsprint, 1,998 tons of steel.
John P. Pedersen (Norwegian)	6,128	1624 May 20th	57° 02 N. 40° 21 W. about	Curacao- Clyde	9,100 tons of Admiralty fuel oil.
Elusa (Dutch)	6,235	0412 [word undecypherable] May 21st	59° 00 N. 38° 05 W. (may still be afloat)	Curacao- Manchester	8,000 tons of crude oil.

3. There are four other ships as yet unaccounted for, but we hope that these are safe.

4. President is of course free to make what use of this information he sees fit, although we are not issuing any statement here. The fact that two of the vessels may still be afloat should of course be kept secret.

5. The Germans claim to have sunk 9 ships of a total tonnage of 70,000 tons. This figure pending any further information is considered to be an exaggeration. Ends.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 27th, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report on the military  
situation. It is dated May 26th.

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 received from London

dated May 26th, 1941.

Naval. Since 0306/25 neither Bismark nor the Prinz Eugen were sighted until 1030/26 when a battleship was sighted by aircraft about 450 miles west southwest of Ireland course 150° speed 20 knots. At 1300/26 she was again reported by aircraft approximate position 49° north - 20° west course 125° 20 knots.

2. Suez Canal raided by about 8 aircraft on the 24th northern section is closed. Reported that the Juno in engagement with E-boats Kafi Strait night of the 20th/21st sank two and damaged two others.

3. Rorqual sank by gunfire in Cretian waters two caiques full of German soldiers. In Crete on the 24th enemy air activity intense - no change in the situation generally but enemy attempting to establish position west of Heraklion to cut the road south and west. He is strongly established between the town and aerodrome at Ratimo. In Maleme-Canea area we are deepening our defensive position. Enemy aircraft were landing and taking off from Maleme aerodrome on the 24th and a patrol encountered 200 Germans on Akrotiki peninsula north of Suda Bay. Strong enemy attack accompanied by heavy bombing of our forward areas in Maleme-Canea area began just before dusk on the 25th. Estimated casualties since May 20th British killed 400 wounded 1100 missing 400. Enemy killed 2300 prisoners 950 of whom wounded 400.

4. On the 25th coastal aircraft attacked merchant vessel off Norway one probable hit. Two Blenheims claimed two hits each on 5000-ton merchant vessel in Bay of Biscay

large/

large columns of smoke amidship. Bomber command on the 24th four aircraft attacked four merchant vessels of 2000 tons off Borkum. One ship claimed as total loss. Two other vessels off enemy coast were hit by one bomb each. Two Blenheims on the 25th made two direct hits on a merchant ship 4500 tons N.E. of Sfax.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 29th, 1941

Dear Mr. President,

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

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 May 27th.

1. Bismarck. At 15.00 hours May 26th naval aircraft flown off carrier experienced difficulty in locating Bismarck but Sheffield made contact at 17.40 at ten miles range. At 19.30 Naval torpedo aircraft again attacked, scoring one hit amidships, one probable hit starboard quarter. Bismarck reduced speed and turned two complete circles.
2. Fourth destroyer flotilla attacked during night May 26th/27th, Cossack and Maori probably scoring one hit each. Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces in King George V, whose speed was reduced to conserve fuel, now in company with Rodney commenced to work into advantageous position to attack early on May 27th. Details of final engagement not available but by 11.07 May 27th, Dorsetshire had torpedoed the Bismarck from both sides and sank her in position  $48^{\circ} 9'$  north  $16^{\circ} 7'$  west. Bismarck had ceased firing and went down with colours flying.
3. "Formidable" between Crete and Alexandria was hit and damaged by aircraft afternoon of May 26th. "Glenroy" on Government service was bombed and set on fire 50 miles south of Crete afternoon of May 26th. Fire controlled and she returned towards Alexandria.
4. "Grimsby" sloop, and British tanker - 3,400 tons - feared sunk by aircraft off Tobruk on May 25th.
5. No material change in military situation in Crete but Retimo and Heraklion have been again heavily bombed. At 10.00 May 25th enemy aircraft heavily bombed and machine gunned Ganea and our forward troops west of the town; enemy then attacked and our line was forced to yield somewhat. Attempts are being made to stabilise position; situation is obscure but

gives/

gives cause for anxiety. Retimo Sector. Enemy holds road from Perivolea to the west for 2,000 yards.

6. May 25th. Our aircraft attacked aerodrome and landing grounds at Maleme, destroying at least 24 aircraft for loss of two Hurricanes, three Blenheims, and one Maryland.

7. Malta, May 25th. Enemy fighters destroyed two grounded Hurricanes at an aerodrome and probably lost one fighter to our anti-aircraft.

8. Afternoon May 20th. "Upholder" hit leading ship, 4,000 ton laden tanker, of convoy off southern entrance Messina Straits. Afternoon May 23rd, she torpedoed 5,000 ton ship in convoy in same area and saw her sinking.

9. "Unbeaten" torpedoed and probably sunk 5,000 ton merchant ship 50 miles northeast Palermo afternoon May 19th. Troop ship southbound in escorted convoy torpedoed and sunk by the "Upholder" on May 24th, thought to be of Conte Grande class 23,860 tons.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 30th, 1941.

REGRADING  
UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report received from London  
on the military situation dated May 28th.

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 MAY 28th, 1941.

Naval.

In Denmark Straits engagement at 05.53/24

Hood, Prince of Wales opened fire 25,000 yards on Bismarck who replied with extreme accuracy on the Hood, second or third salvo straddling. Fire broke out in Hood port side abreast after superstructure spreading rapidly to main mast. Our ships turned away to enable all guns to bear. 060 Hood again straddled, huge explosion occurred between after funnel and mainmast, sank in 3 to 4 minutes. Bismarck shifted to Prince of Wales who two minutes later was hit on bridge and suffered some damage to fire control. Prince of Wales with 2 Officers 11 ratings killed 2 officers 7 ratings wounded then turned away behind smoke screen. Action was not resumed until 18.30.

2. 08.48/27 Bismarck engaged by King George V & Rodney and kept under heavy fire until 10.20 ranges down 3300 yards. Norfolk after flank marking joined in before the end. Heavily damaged, no guns in action, Bismarck torpedoed by Dorsetshire sank 11 hours. While picking up survivors Dorsetshire compelled to abandon search on sighting possible partly submerged submarine. During action only Cossack Zulu suffered slight damage few casualties.

3. Registan ocean boarding vessel bombed set on fire off Land's End night of May 27th-28th assistance sent.

4. Barham hit by one bomb on Y turret May 27th 120 miles North West of Alexandria also damaged by near miss. Nubian damaged by bomb still capable of 25 knots.

5. Convoy of eight enemy merchant ships 2 cruisers 6 destroyers sighted 120 miles South East of Malta 11 hours May 27th course South South-West. 15.50 aircraft made successful attacks on two merchant ships and reported

/cruisers

cruisers retiring northward.

6. May 27th coastal command aircraft bombed, hit 1000 ton merchant vessel Bay of Biscay.

7. Bomber command report following successes May 26th: direct hit 5000 ton ship off Den Helder resulting in explosion and flames direct hit 6000 ton ship in large convoy off Ameland resulting in large column of black smoke; also several direct hits 6000 ton ship and believed 4000 ton ship same convoy seriously damaged.

8. Royal Air Force.  
May 27th. Afternoon 8 Blenheims attacked aerodrome northern France scored several direct hits on grounded enemy fighters and on hangar which was destroyed.

9. Night of May 27th-28th.  
63 aircraft were sent to industrial centre of Cologne, 17 to Boulogne; one bomber missing.

10. Crete.  
Night of May 25th-26th and on day May 26th aerodrome and beach at Maleme heavily bombed, many enemy aircraft on the ground set on fire. Our fighters shot down at least 5 fully loaded troop carriers and machine gunned 100 others on the ground damaging several. Three Blenheims missing.

11. Heraklion May 26th enemy continued building up his troops east of aerodrome and south and west of the town.

12. Retimo May 26th practically all enemy positions cleared by my midday.

13. Canea-Maleme; in spite of destruction of many of their aircraft, Germans continued to land reinforcements May 27th - Canea has fallen. Situation obscure but probability that penetration has reached area North West of Suda Bay. Enemy forces landed by seaplane are reported to

/ have

have moved behind our rearguard to the east of Suda Bay.

14. Libya May 25th enemy attacked and occupied Egyptian frontier post at Bir Shegga 60 miles south of Solum.

15. Afternoon May 26th enemy attacked with tanks and artillery support in Halfaya district, obliged our troops to withdraw by morning of May 27th to area 15 miles east of Solum. South of Escarpment enemy advanced to Bir Habata 50 miles south east of Halfaya.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 31st, 1941.

Dear Mr. President,

I enclose herein a copy of  
the latest report on the military  
situation. It is dated May 29th.

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 May 29th.

1. Naval. Norfolk Mashona, Tartar returning from Bismarck action 60 miles southwest of Slyne Head a.m. 28th were attacked by five Fokke- Wulfs. Mashona hit and abandoned; 183 survivors. From Bismarck four officers and 99 ratings have been saved.
2. Registan is in tow. 36 survivors picked up of whom 8 died, Captain and 5 ratings remaining on board.
3. On May 28th Tirpitz, Hipper and Admiral Scheer sighted in usual positions at Kiel.
4. Suez Canal. Northern section still closed.
5. Edinburgh, 400 miles off Azores p.m. 22nd, intercepted German Lech 3,290 tons, who scuttled herself with explosive charges.
6. Coastal Command. A.m. 28th Beaufort aircraft attacked merchant vessel of 5,500 tons escorted by five trawlers off enemy coast, two direct hits estimated and possibly a third below water line. Ship left with list and appeared to be sinking.
7. Throughout 28th aircraft protection provided for Naval units returning from Bismarck action; off northwest coast of Ireland determined attacks made on enemy aircraft; one H.E. 111 shot down, others damaged.
8. Ten Blenheims sent to attack St. Nazaire night of the 28th/29th and bomber command night of 28th/29th sent 14 aircraft to attack docks, Naval units at Kiel but majority compelled to attack alternative targets owing to cloud.
9. On May 28th two Blenheims attacked 4,500 ton ship in Sfax Harbour. Eight direct hits obtained, resulting in huge explosion.
10. Scale of air attack in Crete waters again heavy. Ajax hit p.m. 28th but carrying on. Hereward, Orion and Dido hit;/

hit; no details about damage. Damage to Glenroy was not serious .

11. Night of 26th/27th. Abdiel, Hero and Nizam landed troops and stores Suda Bay. Returning with British personnel and prisoners.

12. Royal Air Force. Bombers night of 26th/27th probably destroyed five aircraft Maleme aerodrome. On the 26th two squadrons of Blenheims attacked concentration of 100 aircraft at Maleme, destroying many on the ground, same day fighters intercepted 6 J.U. 88's proceeding from Greece to Maleme and shot down three for loss of one Blenheim fighter.

13. Situation in Crete causing grave anxiety. Suda Bay-Canea after continuous dive bombing and three ground attacks the Germans captured Galatas. It was subsequently recaptured by us but it was then decided to shorten our line and link up with Australians south of the Alikianou Road. Communication difficulties make situation obscure. Maleme aerodrome now unusable and strewn with debris but enemy airlanding on beaches. Position at Heraklion stalemate, but enemy troops increasing. Position at Retimo believed fairly satisfactory. No definite news of enemy tanks being air-landed or of any sea-borne landings but Fokkers and light artillery air-landed in plenty. German reinforcements continually arriving.

14. Iraq. Early 28th advance troops reached Khan Nuqta about 20 miles west of Bagdad, elsewhere nothing important to report, though southeast of Fallujah one of our patrols was in action.