

RESTRICTED

HIGH LEVEL REPORTS AND DIRECTIVES
DEALING WITH THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN
IN 1944

RESTRICTED

TRANSLATED BY

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C O N T E N T S

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28th January	Chief of General Staff, Luftflotte 2	Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII	Hitler Order.
29th May	Kesselring, C. in C. South West	G.O.C. Luftwaffe Close Support Corps, Southern Area	Defence plans.
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11th June	Operations Division, Luftflotte 2	G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy	Defence measures.
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23rd June	C. in C. South West	OKW Operations Staff	Survey of partisan situation.
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18th August	OKL Operations Staff	G.H.Q., Luftflotte 2	Defence measures.
4th September	OKL Chief of General Staff	Chief of General Staff, Luftflotte 2	Aircraft fuel situation in September.
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29th December	Appendix to a report by German A.O.C. in C., Italy: conduct of air warfare in Italy.		

To:- Chief of General Staff, Luftflotte 2

H.Q., 12th January, 1944

Subject: Preparations for defence against enemy landings.

I. Fresh enemy landing operations must be expected soon in the Italian theatre. These may coincide with the reported large scale offensive against another part of Europe, or may be carried out only in Italy. The middle of February is often given in enemy news reports as the time for the invasion; however, a landing in Italy is possible at any other time and would serve as a feint move preceding the large scale landing.

In order to repel successfully a landing in Italy, which will certainly be carried out at the same time as a heavy attack on the 10th Army front, it will be necessary to concentrate all available forces of C. in C. South West and to motorise reserves extensively.

At present the following areas in particular are possible objectives for an enemy landing in Italy (apart from landings in areas near the front):

- (a) The Rome area (code-word "Richard"),
- (b) The Leghorn area (code-word "Ludwig"),
- (c) The Genoa area (code-word "Gustav"),
- (d) The Rimini - Venice area (code-word "Victor").

The possibility of a feint attack, e.g. at Rome, so that the bulk of the enemy could then land at Leghorn, cannot be excluded. Also a landing in Istria (code-word "Ida") is not impossible.

II. In the event of landings, provision has been made for the transport of forces to threatened sectors. The army G.H.Qs., G.H.Q. Parachute Corps and G.H.Q. Fliegerkorps XI will make immediate preparations to ensure the speedy transfer of forces, and their operation in the threatened area.

In particular, preparations must include the following:

(a) Forces to be released for action must be made ready to move at a moment's notice.

(b) Reconnaissance and determination of routes for these forces; designation of authorities responsible for their constant maintenance.

Preparation of anti-aircraft cover in direct conjunction with Luftflotte 2 (G.C.C. Flak, Southern Area):

(c) Despatch of outposts, and also collection of newly transported troops by officers of the receiving command authorities at definite points.

(d) Transport announcements: priority establishment in this case.

(e) Requisition of all available transport. 10th Army G.H.Q. has issued special instructions regarding the establishment of a transport unit (6 companies, each with 120 tons loading space). In an emergency the vehicles of units active at the front will also be taken over.

(f) A reserve stock of fuel will be laid in for units to be transferred by motor transport, according to the presumed distance to be covered. In addition a reserve stock of ammunition (1/2 consignment) and of food supplies for 5 days will be formed to accompany the troops en route.

(g) Baggage and supply troops accompanying units to be released for operations will be limited to the absolute minimum necessary for the battle. When the force moves off all units not required for this purpose will be at

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the disposal of the regional command authority for coastal defence, and also for the protection of railways and main transport routes. They will be formed into emergency units as quickly as possible.

(h) Field replacement battalions, Italian units, and, in certain circumstances, draft battalions will be used in unthreatened coastal areas to release further German forces (at least 2 Italian coastal battalions for every division being used in coastal defence at present).

(j) Preparation of Eastern battalions, Italian engineering battalions or other reorganised Italian units and labour companies for the speedy repair of railways and main roads.

(k) Defence measures against enemy airborne landings in rear areas, especially on airfields.

III.

(a) If a threatened enemy landing should become apparent beforehand, the code-word "Himmelfahrt" will be issued as a warning, and if possible the area code-word "Richard" etc. will also be given. In particular, the following are to be examined:

- (i) Units' readiness to move.
- (ii) Preparation of the requisite supply transport.
- (iii) Supplies of fuel, ammunition and food.
- (iv) Routes to be used for the movement of units.
- (v) Transport announcements.

(b) Units will be formed up and made ready to move on reception of the code-words "Richard", "Gustav" etc., giving details of units to be despatched and also the zero hour (date, time).

IV. All preparations must be made as quickly as possible. Every order which will effect economy in German forces and thus release units for operations in threatened areas must be issued; every opportunity must be exploited to make units mobile.

The command authorities taking part, (Army G.H.Qs., G.H.Q. I Parachute Corps, G.H.Q. Fliegerkorps XI, Luftflotte 2, SS and police chiefs in Italy) will cooperate directly with one another in bringing up forces.

The state of preparations must be reported to C.in C. South West before 30th January, 1944 giving the following details:

- (a) Designation and organisation of units to be released for operations.
- (b) Period required to make units ready to move, in so far as this has not been ordered by C.in C. South West.
- (c) Degree of mobility of these forces.
- (d) Military routes provided for movements.
- (e) Presumed time of arrival of units in the receiving authorities area.
- (f) Other special measures to increase defensive power in the threatened sectors.

V. Luftflotte 2 and German Naval Command Italy must introduce the necessary transfers of their units on reception of the warning (see III(a)) or the code-word (see III(c)).

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VI. Luftflotte 2, German Naval Command Italy and SS and police chiefs in Italy are requested to report whether further units can be made available for operational and security tasks. (Details regarding time, degree of mobility and equipment in weapons are to be included). In addition Luftflotte 2 is requested to give details of measures taken to safeguard airfields against enemy airborne landings.

Kesselring,
Field Marshal,
C. in C. South West

20th January, 1944

To:- G.O.C. Flak, Southern Area

The following order by the Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is to be brought to the attention of all troops as quickly as possible:

"The enemy in Southern Italy has apparently commenced his offensive on the XIV Army Corps sector, with the capture of Rome as his objective, by attacking the 94th Infantry Division. No position is shorter, more favourable as regards terrain, and more economical as regards troops, than that which we have taken up at present. I therefore order that this position as a whole be held, and that all available reserves be used in a decisive battle for it. A defensive victory may have extensive political effects and will disorganise enemy invasion plans, as well as allowing our troops many weeks of rest. The right wing must not be cut off from the Gulf of Gaeta. In order to eliminate penetrations which are a menace to the entire front of the Corps, carefully prepared counter-attacks by strong concentrations of reserves will be carried out at dawn or sundown and also during bad weather, when enemy air operations will not be possible. I expect leaders and troops to hold every foot of ground or retake lost territory as a matter of honour. The strictest action must be taken against every shortcoming. Unit commanders who fail in their position will be used in a lower capacity. I expect the troops of the 10th Army as a whole to prove themselves, as its best divisions have already done.

Adolf Hitler "

Operations Division, Luftflotte 2

28th January, 1944

To:- Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII, General Mahnke

The following Fuehrer Order is for personal information:

"In the next few days the battle for Rome will break out, and will decide the defence of central Italy and the fate of the 10th Army. This battle is however of even greater importance, as the invasion of Europe planned for 1944 has begun with the landing at Nettuno. This is aimed at gaining experience for future operations and at holding down and expending German forces as far away as possible from the base in England, where the bulk of the invasion troops are still at the ready. Every soldier must therefore realise the importance of the battle which the 14th Army has to fight. It is not

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enough to issue orders which are tactically correct and clear. Officers and men of the army, of the Luftwaffe, and of naval units must be imbued with the fanatic will to come through this battle victoriously and not to weaken until the last enemy soldier has been destroyed or driven back into the sea. It must be conducted with inspired hatred towards an enemy who is carrying on a pitiless war of extermination against the German people, who will use any method to achieve this objective, and who is aiming solely at the destruction of Germany and thus of European culture, without any higher ethical purpose whatsoever. The battle must be hard and merciless, not only against the enemy, but also against every officer and man who fails in this decisive hour. As in the battles on Sicily, the river Rapido and at Ortona, the enemy must be made to realise that German fighting strength is unbroken and that the invasion of 1944 is an undertaking which will be smothered in the blood of Anglo-Saxon soldiers.

Adolf Hitler "

In consideration of secrecy, troops will not be notified until shortly before the attack.

Chief of General Staff, Luftflotte 2

29th May, 1944

To:- G.O.C. Luftwaffe Close Support Corps, Southern Area

Operations

1. By extensively denuding other sectors of the front the enemy has concentrated all available forces on his left flank. We too have already concentrated reserves formerly from distant rear areas in Italy almost without exception in this sector.
2. C.in C. South West has still the task of defending central Italy and Rome at all costs.
3. 14th Army will prevent an enemy breakthrough at C position on their right flank and will concentrate all available forces in the Valmontone area to throw back towards the south enemy forces which have pushed forwards in this sector. The consolidation of the Champagne defence position will be resumed with all available resources and by drafting the population of Rome.
4. The 10th Army will prevent an enemy breakthrough towards Rome in the Sacco Valley by concentrating their forces on the right wing. To reinforce the right wing of the Army, the 44th Reichsgrenadier Division 'HuD'. will be withdrawn from their present operational sector as quickly as possible and will take up positions west of the Liri. In face of superior enemy attacks the Army will make a fighting withdrawal to G position over the defence line determined at the C.in C's conference on 27th May, after C. in C. South West has approved the new main defence line. This main defence line must be held for some length of time. Command must therefore gain time to survey the new main defence line adequately and to ensure the planned construction of strong anti-tank defences in the Gaviganao - Anagni sector (a special order concerning the allocation of anti-tank weapons will be issued). In addition, the left wing of LI Mountain Corps may be withdrawn over the intermediary lines only in face of enemy pressure.

Kesselring,
C.in C. South West

4th June, 1944

To:- Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII

Following the surrender of the city of Rome and the establishment of a new line of defence the following urgent measures are ordered:

1. The airfield region 9/VII is to be cleared of supplies. After this task has been carried out the entire ground organisation staff will be at the disposal of C.in C. South West for defence construction. All ground organisation units released from duty will be received in a line to be determined by Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII and C.in C. South, and conducted into areas as ordered by C.in C. South West.
2. All airfield construction work south of the line Piombino - S. Benedetto will cease immediately. Express orders will be issued regarding the destruction of airfields to be evacuated.
3. Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII will immediately compile information on new airfields in the area Perugia - Siena - Pistoia
4. The following will be demolished immediately:
 - (a) Fighter control H.Q. Viterbo - fighter control H.Q. Siena will be occupied for this purpose.
 - (b) All aircraft safety installations and radar equipment south of the line Orbetello - Pescara. Radar equipment will be used to consolidate defences in Northern Italy.
5. Flak defences between Bologna and Florence and light flak defences of bomber bases will be reinforced. 25th Flak Division will have subordinated, for this purpose: Heavy Flak Battery 361 (V) and Light Flak Battery 82 (motorised). Flak Transport Battery 152/IV will bring Heavy Flak Battery 361 into position and will then be sent to G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy.
6. G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy will withdraw some of his flak units and will bring them into position in the receiving lines, i.e. defence positions.
7. Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII will use every available means of transport for withdrawing forces and constructing defences. Airfield construction in Northern Italy may be temporarily suspended for this purpose.
8. All troops of Luftwaffe Rifle Battalions (unattached) 7 and 9 will be assembled and placed at the disposal of Airfield Regional Command 9/VII for airfield destruction.

G.H.Q. Luftflotte 2

4th June, 1944

To:- G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy

1. With a view to the preservation of ancient works of art, the Fuehrer has ordered that the city of Rome must not be turned into a battlefield. This means that it will not be possible to defend the sector Tiber - old Tiber - Tivoli - Subiaco - and from here to C position, which is practically invulnerable as far as tanks are concerned. The Army Group will therefore make a fighting withdrawal from various intermediary lines of defence to a new defence position (Dora position) on the southern edge of the hilly

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terrain east of Orbetello - southern edge of Lago di Bolsena - Narni - Terni - Rieti - Antrodoce - Aquila - southern edge of Gran Sasso - Torre - from here to the Foro position; later, Gran Sasso - south of Montebello leading into C position.

2. The bulk of the Armies must first disengage the enemy - leaving strong rearguards behind - and cross the line Tiber - old Tiber - Subiaco (Line I) - Anton, and must later pass through the Emil line towards the north.

3. On the 14th Army sector Line II must be defended until all units have been reorganised. Until then rearguards, who may withdraw only under enemy pressure, will remain in Line I.

Infantry divisions will be withdrawn from Line II into new defence positions in one movement. The Dora position must be occupied at an early date by units not required for battle, i.e. mainly supply and baggage troops. Motorised divisions must pick up rearguards and inflict heavy personnel and material losses on the enemy by offering stubborn resistance and at the same time saving their own fighting strength as far as possible. Motorised divisions will withdraw only in face of superior enemy pressure and by order of C.in C. South West, falling back, if possible, across the Dora position in one movement. They will be prepared north of this position as strategic reserves.

G.H.Q. 14th Army will prepare the reception of motorised units into Line III as soon as possible. For this purpose the 356th Infantry Division will be placed at the disposal of the 14th Army, after its arrival in the area Lake Bracciano - Tarquinia - Civita Vecchio, and will be used on both sides of the main transport routes running from north to south between Lake Bracciano and Monte Soratte.

4. In the 10th Army sector the time required to allow infantry and motorised units to withdraw must be gained by using mobile mountain troops to hold decisive passes, and by delaying the enemy advance in the area south and south-east of Avezzano for as long as possible. The consolidated C position offers the 10th Army the possibility of holding up the enemy for some time and reorganising their units.

5. In consideration of the fact that the terrain in the 10th Army sector is more favourable for defence, forces will be concentrated in the 14th Army sector. The following formations are therefore available for operations in the Dora position:-

(a) 14th Army H.Q.:

I Paratroop Corps H.Q.
LXXVI Armoured Corps H.Q.
65th Infantry Division
92nd Infantry Division
334th Infantry Division
362nd Infantry Division
3rd Panzer Grenadier Division
15th Panzer Grenadier Division
Hermann Goering Paratroop Panzer Division
4th Paratroop Division
and 356th Infantry Division after its arrival in the Civita Vecchia area

In addition, 20th Luftwaffe Field Division will be made available for reception on the right wing.

(b)

(b) 10th Army H.Q.:

XIV Armoured Corps H.Q.
LI Mountain Corps H.Q.
44th Reichsgrenadier Division 'HwD'
71st Infantry Division
94th Infantry Division
278th Infantry Division
305th Infantry Division
1st Paratroop Division
5th Mountain Division
114th Infantry Division
29th Panzer Grenadier Division
90th Panzer Grenadier Division

The following will be prepared as Army Group reserves after reaching D position:

26th Armoured Division in the area of Orvieto,
20th Luftwaffe Field Division - concentration area has
yet to be decided.

6. The Armies will immediately order survey staffs to confirm the exact course of the Dora position. In this survey it is important that terrain be found which will offer security against tanks and which will aid economy in men.

Intermediary lines must also be surveyed as soon as possible. Army H.Q. will issue instructions regarding further intermediary and switch lines. Survey results will be submitted to C.in C. South West; in the case of the Dora position a report must be handed in by 12th June at the latest. Contact point of the Dora position east of Terni will be decided by 14th and 10th Army H.Q. as soon as possible.

7. The consolidation of the Dora position must be commenced as soon as possible. For this purpose all evacuated baggage and supply troops and men returning from leave who belong to infantry divisions will be brought forward only as far as the Dora position for the time being, and will be used for construction work. In addition, the greatest possible use will be made of the civilian population.

8. Great importance is attached to demolition between the various lines and in front of the Dora position. Explosives and mines required for the execution of this demolition work will be prepared by the Armies at an early date. The concentrated use of mines is stressed once again.

All pioneer forces, in so far as they are not indispensable to rearguards, will be withdrawn as soon as possible for these operations.

The Armies will make special demolition plans, according to which planned demolitions will be carried out in the Army area. The commander of technical troops with C.in C. South West will continue to be responsible for the demolition of installations, and close contact is to be maintained with this officer.

9. The disengaging movements of the Armies demand an extreme degree of guidance and surveillance both as regards transport discipline and air cover. Special route commanders will therefore be appointed and will be given authority over all members of the armed forces, as stated in Fuehrer Order No.5. The names of these route commanders (staff officers) and their sectors are to be reported to Army Group by June 6th. For the time being Major Eckert, commander of Field Police with C. in C. South West, will carry out the duties of route commander on the Via Flaminna. He has been instructed to maintain close contact with 14th Army H.Q.

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All units will appoint special officers to supervise anti-aircraft arrangements and in particular, camouflage measures. All available forces will be used for anti-aircraft duties by day.

Kesselring,
C. in C. South West

11th June, 1944

To:- G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy

1. The general Line Orbetello - Terni - north of Pescara will be held. However, strong enemy superiority may necessitate a gradual withdrawal into the Appenine position. Every effort will be made for the immediate preparation of measures necessary for this movement.

2. Orders for the defence of the Appenine position:

(a) G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy:

(i) The army will be covered and directly supported by close support formations and anti-aircraft artillery.

(ii) Supply routes, railways and airfields in the southern area of Northern Italy will be protected.

(iii) Anti-aircraft artillery will be used for coastal defence in cooperation with the competent authorities.

(iv) Boundaries between G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy and the 25th Flak Division:

French border to Crissolo - Carmagnola - river Tanaro to the south of Asti (crossing to the 25th Flak Division) - Tanaro as far as junction with the Po - Po as far as estuary (Po crossings to the 25th Flak Division).

(b) 25th Flak Division:-

(i) Protection of airfields, supply routes, railways and industrial installations in the northern area of Northern Italy.

(ii) Anti-aircraft artillery will be used for coastal defence on the Adriatic coast to the north of the Po in cooperation with the competent authorities.

(c) Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy:

(i) Operations against bomber formations from southern Italy entering and leaving the Reich.

(ii) Air defence of the entire area of Northern Italy.

(iii) Cover against enemy air attacks on the army.

Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy will be directly subordinate to G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy when the Appenine defence position (Gothic line) has been captured.

3. Feldluftgau XXVIII:

(a) South of the Appenines operations by only the following flying formations can be expected:

- (i) Up to 5 night ground attack Staffeln (only in full moon period).
- (ii) 3 close reconnaissance Staffeln,
- (iii) Occasional operations by 4 fighter Gruppen.

The strength of ground organisation and amounts of supplies will be adapted to the strength of operational forces. All unnecessary stocks and supply services which are superfluous to requirements for planned operations will be brought back immediately over the Appenine passes. Preparations will be made for the return of remaining supplies.

(b) Preparations will be made for the suspension of all ground organisation consolidation south of the line Genoa - Rimini (including Rimini airfield). Construction units which were being used for this purpose will be placed at the disposal of C.in C. South West for the consolidation of the Appenine position and coastal defences.

(c) Feldluftgau XXVIII, in cooperation with Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy will survey further airfields in the area of Northern Italy, especially on the southern border of the Alps and in the southern Alpine valleys.

Inquiries will be made into the possibilities of withdrawing and dispersing (if possible into deep shelters or tunnels) the extensive supply depots in Northern Italy, on the southern borders of the Alps, and in Alpine valleys.

(d) In all fresh surveys of battle headquarters, camps etc., the greatest possible consideration must be given to existing signals networks, so that the construction of extensive new signals communications may be avoided.

(e) Feldluftgau XXVIII will make suggestions for the use of the two airfield regional commands to be withdrawn from the southern area.

4. Battle headquarters to be prepared:

(a) Luftflottenkommando 2 - for the time being at Malcesine.

Advanced battle headquarters:

Monte Ricco (Monselice)
Tabiano, near Parma.

(b) G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy:

Casalchio, near Bologna (at present occupied by 25th Flak Division)

(c) 25th Flak Division:

The Verona area (in cooperation with Luftflotte 2 Signals H.Q.)

(d) Feldluftgau XXVIII

Treviso.

(e) Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy:

Fighter control headquarters, central region.

5. All preparations for the withdrawal will be made so that the execution of the movement may be begun without delay after the arrival of the relevant Luftflotte order.

The strength of the staff working on these measures must be limited to the absolute minimum, and will be determined by written orders. Telephone conversations in connection with the withdrawal are forbidden.

Operations Division, Luftflotte 2

23rd June, 1944

To:- G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy

Order regarding conduct of operations by Luftflotte 2

1. The enemy is resuming his attack on a broad front between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Perugia area. Further to the east as far as the Adriatic he is following up our withdrawals. Enemy concentration areas are situated on both sides of Lake Trasimene. The resumption of attacks to the north of Grosseto and the commencement of attacks on the Adriatic sector can be expected at any time. Temporary lulls indicate preparations.

Landings must be expected in the Leghorn - La Spezia and Genoa areas, as well as small scale landing operations behind the left wing of the army, probably in the Rimini area.

2. C.in C. South West will direct the decisive defensive battle in the line which has now been reached on the southern edge of Lake Trasimene. Small reserves will stand ready to oppose enemy landings in the west and east.

3. Luftflotte 2 will give direct support to the battle with the weak air forces of which they still dispose, and with the flak and signals forces still available south of the Appenines, which have maintained their strength during the defensive battles of the last few weeks.

If no other operations are ordered, fighter forces and flak units operating north of the Appenines will cover army supply lines in the area from the frontier of the Appenines.

Luftflotte 2 will participate in the elimination of partisans by using strong forces of aircraft not required for other duties.

4. Orders for G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy:

(a) Air and artillery support of our front, using all available flak units (motorised).

(b) Protection of transport bottlenecks behind the army front approximately in the area Siena - Arezzo - Pessaro, with 7 heavy A.A. batteries.

(c) Defence of the coastal area Piombino - Leghorn with 2 heavy A.A. batteries.

(d) Defence of supply lines Florence - Bologna with Flak Regiment Mitte, which has been subordinated for this purpose. Subordination to the

25th Flak Division has been terminated. Local subordination arrangements will be made by mutual agreement.

(e) Defence of the Arno valley and the southern exits of the Appenines with remaining batteries.

(f) Precautionary preparations will be made for the transfer of units mentioned in (b) and (c) in case enemy air force concentrations are moved into the area of the southern edge of the Appenines - half-way to the mountain ridge/Via Emilia.

If a battle should take place in the Appenine position it is intended to withdraw motorised forces into the area of Northern Italy.

(g) Flak units which have lost their equipment will be re-equipped in the Lucca - Florence area. A number of guns have been brought into the area by Luftflotte 2 for this purpose.

Personnel deficiencies in these batteries will be made good by replacements from units which cannot receive equipment at present. In addition, 4 general purpose batteries (each 120 men strong) will be formed from these units and will be used for constructing positions under the command of Luftflotte 2, until 1st August, 1944.

All remaining personnel, if possible complete units with full officer complements, will be sent to Flak Reserve 2 (Sassuolo) as quickly as possible. Here they will be subordinated to the 25th Flak Division and used by General von Hippel in operations against partisans, until re-equipped with guns which are at present en route from Germany.

(h) Reconnaissance and security measures:

Close Reconnaissance Gruppe 11 will carry out coastal reconnaissance in the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Adriatic as far as Civita Vecchia - Pescara, photographic reconnaissance of enemy harbours near the front, and reconnaissance of our own front.

Photographic reconnaissance of remaining Tyrrhenian jumping-off harbours for landings.

Photographic reconnaissance, Bizerta:

Day and night reconnaissance over sea areas to protect our eastern and western coasts against enemy landings will be carried out by Long Range Reconnaissance Gruppe 122, by order of Luftflotte 2.

(j) Night ground attack operations against targets near the front will be carried out by 1/ and 2/ Night Ground Attack Gruppe and 2/ Night Ground Attack Gruppe 2 from the Forli - Ravenna area in the full moon period. Preparations will be made for occasional operations by small forces from Florence.

Caselle will continue to be the reserve base of night ground attack formations. Casabianca will serve the same purpose when further night ground attack Staffeln are brought up.

(k) Cooperation with Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy by operations in forward Appenine areas.

(l) Available signals services in our area will be maintained if commanded by Luftflotte 2 Signals H.Q. and necessary for our operations.

Signals services which are not required will be dismantled and sent back. Extensive preparations will be made for the dismantling and despatch of signals installations in the proximity of the front.

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(m) Rear boundary for the operation of units of 25th Flak Division and for transport columns:

La Spezia (for G.O.C.) - Piacenza (for 25th Flak Division) - Via Emilia (towns and railway installations for 25th Flak Division) - Rimini (for G.O.C.).

25th Flak Division will carry out airfield defence between the Appenines and Via Emilia.

The former battle headquarters of 25th Flak Division will be prepared as battle headquarters for G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy, as ordered by Luftflotte 2 on 11th June, 1944.

(n) Baggage units and all other types of rear services will remain as close to units in the field as the tactical and transport situations permit. The rear boundary will not be crossed in any circumstances.

C.in C. Luftflotte 2 reserves the right to requisition rear services, baggage columns and strong points of all types.

5. Duties of the 25th Flak Division:

(a) Defence of supply lines and also of objectives in Northern Italy especially ordered in cooperation with G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy, using the anti-aircraft and smoke troop forces at present subordinated, as far as the frontier. Fresh allocations of forces cannot be expected for the time being.

(b) Preparations for operations by strong A.A. forces, irrespective of defence tasks, in case of enemy landings in the area Rimini (town inclusive) - Trieste - Fiume. Forces will be concentrated in the area Rimini - Ravenna.

Cooperation with army coastal defence sections in the specified area, and also on the Ligurian coast, is especially important.

(c) Ground survey for reinforced anti-aircraft cover on the Po crossings and on the railway line from Verona to Brenner.

(d) Units to be despatched by G.O.C. Flak Reserve 2 (Sassuolo) will be re-equipped with weapons being sent to Luftflotte 2 (see 4(g)).

(e) German and Italian A.A. reserve troops will be trained for units for G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy and 25th Flak Division.

(f) Training and personnel establishment of the Italian A.A. Brigade. C.in C. Luftflotte 2 will decide according to the situation and suggestions by O.C. 25th Flak Division the allocation to these units of weapons beyond the amount required for training.

(g) Speedy and effective organisation of flak repair units with the object of increasing efficiency to the maximum, and modernising methods of operation.

6. Duties of Jagdfliegerfuehrer Northern Italy:

(a) Operations against enemy air forces in the following order of priority:

- (i) Operations against the Reich.
- (ii) Operations by 4-engined aircraft in the area of Northern Italy.
- (iii) Operations in the area Lucca - Florence.

/(iv)

(iv) Fighter sweeps into the area Siena - Arezzo.

(iv) is of decisive importance for successful army operations and, in so far as the other orders permit, every effort should be made to carry it out with all available forces.

(b) Training and equipment of Italian fighter Gruppen according to the situation with respect to officers and aircraft.

(c) An additional fighter control headquarters will be set up directly north of Verona based on the existing signals installations. This H.Q. will be occupied by forces released from the area Rome - Viterbo - Siena.

Signals and accommodation plans will be submitted to C.in C. Luftflotte 2 through Luftflotte 2 Signals H.Q. as quickly as possible. Construction will not be permitted before his decision has been made.

(d) Close, constructive cooperation with Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII to improve the aircraft plotting service. All possible methods of plotting aircraft will be exploited, including those formerly not in general use. Questions regarding authority will be referred to C.in C. Luftflotte 2.

7. Duties of Feldluftgaukommando XXVIII:

(a) Maintenance of all installations and execution of all orders in the Northern Italy area as hitherto.

(b) Accelerated construction, manning, supply and provision with signals communications of all airfields and runways in the area of the Alps on this side of the German border as emergency and intermediary landing places for fighter units.

(c) Accelerated supplementary construction of all bomber bases in Northern Italy for fighter operations in cooperation with Jagdfuehrer Northern Italy.

In the following order:

(i) Milan area - Piacenza - Forli - Ravenna - Vicenza.

(ii) Venetia.

(iii) Piedmont

First stage:

Possibility of manning each airfield provided for one bomber Gruppe with one fighter Gruppe without any other aircraft in occupation. (occupation - 1 fighter Gruppe).

Second stage:

Manning of each airfield provided for one bomber Gruppe with an additional fighter Gruppe. (occupation - 1 bomber Gruppe and 1 fighter Gruppe).

(d) Maintenance of airfields in the Arno valley required for close reconnaissance Staffeln and night ground attack operations (also fighter emergency landing fields) in cooperation with and according to the specifications of G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy. All other Luftwaffe installations south of the Appenines and in the area south of Rimini (town included) will be destroyed if army units do not wish to use them. If the army does wish to use these installations full responsibility for their destruction will be taken by the army units concerned.

/Preparations

Preparations will be made for the quick destruction of installations situated south of the Alps and in a 30km. belt to the Adriatic.

(e) Installation of supply depots secure from air attack in the area of the Alps, in accordance with instructions issued by Chief O.M. Luftflotte 2.

Investigation of and report on supply depots secure from air attack at the Luftwaffe's disposal, including the installation of an air park in the frontier provinces adjoining the Reich, in cooperation with German Luftgaukommandos.

(f) Extensive evacuation of Piedmont and the area east of the line Forli - Padua - Portogruaro. Ground Attack Geschwader 4 will remain in the Airasca - Leval-digi area. Provision has been made for transfer to Ferrara and Poggio in case of a landing on the Adriatic coast.

Caselle, and eventually Casabianca, will continue to be reserve airfields for night ground attack formations (see 4(i)).

(g) Material south of the Appenines which is not required in view of the present situation will be sent to the rear. This movement will receive top priority in consideration of the transport situation as well as the general raw material and supply situations, and the importance of salvaging aircraft and vehicles.

(h) In accordance with orders issued by G.O.C. Luftwaffe in Central Italy, all forces south of the Appenines which have become free because of limitation of territory and operations will be returned to Northern Italy.

An Airfield Regional Command will be set up in the area of the Alps. Only absolutely essential ground organisation H.Q. will be left in the area south of the Appenines. Plans of the new Airfield Regional Command organisation will be submitted to C.in C. Luftflotte 2 before being put into effect.

(i) The reorganisation of the aircraft plotting service (6(d)) will be carried out as quickly as possible in accordance with instructions issued by Luftflotte 2 Signals H.Q. Signals centres which have been planned, and those in the process of construction in Northern Italy and the Alps area, will be completed as quickly as possible in accordance with orders issued by Luftflotte 2 Signals H.Q.

The new fighter control H.Q. will be constructed in accordance with paragraph 6(c).

(k) The reorganisation of M/T repair units will be continued as quickly as possible with a view to increasing efficiency and introducing new methods of operation.

(l) Paragraph 4 applies to ground organisation units, repair services and supply establishments operational in the area of the front.

8. No new duties for O.C. Luftflotte troops.

9. General von Hippel and all Luftflotte 2 H.Q.s will operate against partisans, in accordance with partisan combat orders Nos. 1 and 2.

10. Wherever possible all newly planned battle headquarters will be built up on existing signals networks and are subject to approval by Luftflotte 2.

11. All headquarters commanders and senior officers of Luftflotte 2 will ensure that everything possible is done to repel air attacks and other enemy operations in accordance with orders which have been issued repeatedly.

/Every

Every available weapon is to be brought into action. No weapon or method is to be left untried in these operations.

Every man at the front and in rear areas, whether soldier or not, will consider himself a soldier at all times, on and off duty, and will act accordingly whenever circumstances indicate that he can or must fight. The desire for battle is the symbol of the title "German man". Only slaves wait for the order to fight.

Officers and officials of all ranks will concern themselves in creating the basis for the realisation of this theory, and will impress it on every man by personal example.

12. Moreover, every officer and official will ensure that signs of disorder and bad discipline are put down, acting by virtue of their untiring devotion to duty and regardless of orders, authority, rank, and branch of service. The most important duty of officers and officials is to intervene in other units whenever necessary in the cause of good order.

A soldier's external bearing and his internal feelings are identical. A soldier commits an offence if he allows himself to relax. Smartness in saluting, appearance, manner of speaking and so on, reflect the soldier's fighting spirit. Officers and officials will prevent external signs of a slackening in military discipline and order, by especially strict action even in slight matters, and will correct such signs if already in existence.

Personal example and the feeling that it is one's duty to be continually alert are also of importance in this matter. The honour of superiors and leaders lies only in duty, from which officers and officials will never absolve themselves.

C. in C. Luftflotte 2

23rd June, 1944

To:- OKW Operations Staff

General survey of the partisan situation and its effect on
units of the new Italian armed forces

I. Aroused by enemy appeals, partisan activity in central and Northern Italy, and particularly in the Appenines, has increased considerably as the enemy offensive progresses. Moreover, partisan groups have received considerable reinforcements lately following the Italian government's call-up of certain age groups for work in Germany. As partisan activity increases stricter leadership of separate groups and of bands as a whole according to a cohesive plan can be recognised. The majority of partisan groups are lead by former Badoglio officers. It appears that groups in the country have not yet become imbued with Communist principles.

Anglo-American liaison officers and escaped prisoners of war formerly in Italian camps assist with the direction of groups. These partisan groups possess an efficient signals network and are in constant communication with the enemy, using numerous radio stations. Partisan groups receive extensive enemy supplies by air, and agents and sabotage troops are also dropped.

Even though a state of general revolt has not yet been reached, it is a possibility which is becoming apparent in some areas (Grosseto, Macerata, the Pentremoli and Cuneo area). The fact that the Republican Fascist

/government

government has no authority, and that some of its executive have gone over to partisan bands is an additional difficulty which is of considerable assistance to the guerillas. German resources for operations against the partisan bands are greatly limited owing to the situation, which demands that every soldier be used at the front and that the majority of troops in the rear operate supply services. Even the highest ranking SS and police officers in Italy have only inadequate German forces at their disposal. However, the Army Group has at least succeeded in keeping vital supply routes open and preventing large scale acts of sabotage by using all available forces. More extensive operations have been commenced against partisan groups, especially in the Appenine area, to protect the consolidation of the Gothic line. However, the forces being used for this purpose are still slight. Partisan activity in areas near the front consists mainly of raids on single runners, troops and supply vehicles. In a number of cases the quick transfer of reserves to the threatened front has suffered considerable delay through the occupation or destruction of traffic bottlenecks. In two instances groups operating from the rear have directly participated in fighting around the main defence line. Cases have occurred of Italian citizens attacking German fighting troops in the rear, especially in the larger towns.

In rear areas partisan activity consists mainly of interrupting work on the Gothic line, holding up supply transport, especially on the railways, isolated attacks on supply services, terrorisation of collaborating elements of the population, and operations against Italian state and Fascist authorities.

In conclusion it can be stated that we have so far been successful in holding down partisan movements to a certain extent, but that the situation is becoming more acute day by day, as the Italian mountain regions are ideal for guerilla warfare. The Italian government's plan to take action against partisan bands by using militia units armed by us is certain to fail. The militia itself is entirely unreliable and is absolutely unusable, being representative of the hated Mussolini regime. The Army Group has ordered stricter measures to be taken in the war against partisans. These would be more effective if cooperation by the present Italian government in all these questions were excluded completely.

II. No estimate can yet be given of the effect that these partisan bands have had on units of the new Italian armed forces. However, it is clear that several units (up to company strength) have recently gone over to partisan bands, some taking their arms with them.

Operations on Elba have once again proved the absolute unreliability and uselessness of the Italian soldier in all types of fighting, and although it does not appear possible to disarm all Italian units at once owing to lack of forces and for political reasons, C. in C. South West intends to disarm Italian units gradually, troop by troop, and to detail them for work on fortifications, road and railway maintenance, etc. Regular reports will be made concerning this subject. In addition, the reliability of militia subordinate to senior SS and police officers in Italy will also be investigated. Relevant measures have been introduced.

C. in C. South West

To:- Luftflotte 2

14th August, 1944

Air reconnaissance in advance of targets in and around harbour requested for the special operation by small craft against Ancona. The attack is dependent on the weather situation. Aircraft operations and report for morning announcement of plans, code-word "Seadog", requested in good time so that this may be passed on to vessels through Naval Communications Officer, Venice by evening. Vessels will move into jumping-off harbours tonight.

Naval C. in C. West Adriatic

To:- G.H.Q. Luftflotte 2

18th August, 1944

I. Developments with Army Group B make it appear possible that the 19th Army will be cut off in the near future. In amplification of existing orders, OKW has commanded:

With the exception of those forces remaining in Toulon and Marseilles, Army Group G will break off contact with the enemy, and link up with the southern flank of Army Group B following the line Sens - Dijon - Swiss border. Units (LXII Reserve Army Corps) will fall back on the Italian - French Alpine position and will be subordinate to C.in C. South West, who will immediately take over the defence of the French - Italian Alpine position from the Swiss border as far as the Ligurian Sea. When withdrawing, all material which will assist the enemy in his pursuit must be destroyed. Not a single locomotive, bridge, power station or repair shop must fall into enemy hands undamaged. Strong points and defence areas on the southern and western coasts of France will hold out to the last man.

II. The Navy will support defence of strong points and defence areas, by using all available naval forces and as soon as this is no longer possible, crews and weapons will be made available for the defence of the land front.

III. Luftflotte 3 orders:

1. Personnel

- (a) Duties: support of Army Group B - in so far as is necessary - in defence of strong points in Army Group B sectors.
- (b) Flying units and ground services with the exception of those in the 2nd Fliegerdivision mentioned in paragraph IV, are to be withdrawn by Luftflotte 3 to its own command area.
- (c) Ground organisations are directed to destroy completely all Luftwaffe installations left behind.

2. Anti-aircraft

- (a) Anti-aircraft forces in fortresses and defence areas on the southern coast of France are to be left in the fortresses with ample supplies.
- (b) The rest of the forces of the 5th Flak Brigade, including brigade staff, will withdraw with the 19th Army to the line Sens - Dijon Swiss border. Luftflotte 3 will issue all necessary orders.

(c) Duties:

(aa) Anti-aircraft forces in fortresses and defence areas will guarantee air defence in these areas, and they must participate in ground fighting whenever necessary.

(bb) Forces retiring with G.H.Q. LXII Reserve Army Corps and the 19th Army will protect withdrawals against air reconnaissance and attacks, with special attention to the protection of narrow crossings (specially those over the Rhone), road junctions, rest areas, and routes through towns, by intensive concentration of all available light and heavy batteries.

(cc) Anti-aircraft defences will be prepared for supply routes leading to the new defence lines. Luftflotte 2 will bring up all additional forces possible from their own command area.

(dd) As the smooth progress of withdrawals depends mainly on the successful driving off of enemy air attacks, every anti-aircraft unit possible will be used for air defence. Only when no other alternative remains will anti-aircraft battery groups be used to repulse enemy armoured forces which have broken through, and they will operate mainly in the flank and rear of our movements.

IV. 2nd Fliegerdivision (including H.Q. Flight and II/J.G. 77 but excluding Jagdfuehrer (fighter control H.Q.) Southern France and J.Gr. 200) is subordinated to Luftflotte 2 with immediate effect, and will be transferred with all its air transport and field guns by Luftflotte 2 to its own area. With these forces Luftflotte 2 will continue to operate against enemy shipping concentrations and landing forces.

OKL Operations Staff

4th September, 1944

To:- Chief of General Staff, Luftflotte 2

Subject:- Aircraft fuel situation in September

The aircraft fuel situation for September is as follows:

1. Reconstructed hydrogenation plants have once more been heavily hit by enemy attacks, thus causing a further reduction in the possible September output of aircraft fuel from German production.
2. The loss of the Rumanian oilfields has resulted in a further drop in production, and has caused Chief of OKW to stop the allocation of aircraft fuel for September, so that stocks may be replenished.
3. Only limited amounts of fuel can be allocated to consumers in September by transferring stocks from Norway, Finland and Serbia.
4. Aircraft fuel production in the current month is so low that consignments provided for this period will have to be reduced considerably. Every excess is a strain on Luftflottan stocks which have already practically reached the irreducible minimum.

/Owing

Owing to this situation extreme economy must be practised on all fronts. Increased allocations are out of the question. Moreover, it is quite possible that not even existing consignments can be maintained owing to enemy action.

An order concerning further operational restrictions will follow.

OKL, Chief of General Staff

/Estimate

Estimate of the situation for the period 1st - 15th September, 1944

A. The enemy

1. Land situation and forces

On the southern front the enemy succeeded in slowly gaining ground in the Adriatic coastal sector through colossal material superiority and simultaneous use of light naval forces and bombardment of the main defence line. However, he was not able to force a breakthrough into the Po plain. In the central and western sectors he pushed slowly forward to the outer defences of the Gothic line and attacked north of Florence with strong concentrations of forces, especially in the Futa Pass area. He has not yet reached the Gothic line proper in these sectors.

The front line on September 15th:

6km. NNW Viareggio - 11km. NE Viareggio - 12km. NNE Lucca - 14km. NE Montecatini - 20km. NE Prato - 18km. E San Lorenzo - 32km. N Arezzo - 18km. Sansepolcro - 12km. NNE Mercatello - 15km. NW Urbino - Gemmano - 2km. W Corriano - 8km. NW Catollica.

On the front in the West the enemy is still moving up and advancing against weak forces in the area of the Alpine passes. In the coastal sector he is exerting stronger pressure in the direction of the former Franco - Italian frontier, aided by daily bombardments by cruisers and destroyers, which are aimed at wiping out our pockets of resistance.

The front line on September 15th:

Mentone - Castillon - 6km. W Sospel - to the north as far as the Franco-Italian frontier - along the frontier - to Vrancon - E Modane - Franco - Italian frontier as far as the Swiss frontier.

Enemy air activity has once again proved the enemy's absolute air superiority in Italy. Large numbers of ground attack aircraft have been operating over the front line in cooperation with attacks by ground forces. Our supply routes over the Appenines and the Alps, and in the Po valley were continually exposed to attacks, which in some cases caused considerable delays. Large numbers of heavy bombers were also operational, especially in the Ostmark area. In addition to daily fighter-bomber attacks against our harbours on both coasts, the enemy carried out a large scale operation against Genoa harbour on 4th September, probably with the object of eliminating dockyards and the submarine base which is under construction there. In any case, the enemy met with complete success. In addition to all the transport submarines in port, most of the other naval vessels and merchant shipping there were lost.

Air surveillance of coastal routes continued to be absolute. Fortunately, however, enemy attacks on our convoys were not successful. Cooperation between aircraft and light naval forces against our coastal convoys has increased again as the nights become darker.

According to agents' reports, enemy naval forces have been weakened by the withdrawal of the majority of auxiliary aircraft carriers. It is presumed that there are only 2 auxiliary aircraft carriers left in the Mediterranean area, and that the only battleships still in the area are French and Italian. The number of heavy and light cruisers and destroyers will have remained approximately the same. These forces have carried out further coastal bombardment operations against the main defence line in the west, and also on the Adriatic coast.

/It

It appears that a number of torpedo boats and gun boats have been withdrawn from the Aegean area and that more patrol boats have recently taken over surveillance duties and carried out an increasing number of attacks on our coastal convoys. Leghorn is presumably being used as an operational base for these naval forces.

Enemy minesweeping operations were carried out by day and night off the Adriatic coast as far as the main defence line, and also in the sea area off the west front.

Enemy submarine activity has not been confirmed.

Movements through the Straits of Gibraltar continued as usual; convoys were still leaving in full strength, so it can be estimated that the total amount of merchant shipping in the Mediterranean has remained the same. Owing to the lack of reconnaissance, the whereabouts of shipping could not be confirmed. Ancona and Leghorn in particular have been used extensively for supply purposes.

2. Enemy plans.

By bringing up fresh divisions and by attempting to hold down our forces by attacks on the remaining sectors of the front (especially in the Florence area) to prevent reinforcement of the eastern sector, the enemy hopes to force the decisive breakthrough on the Adriatic coast into the Po valley, in spite of strong German resistance. There have been no noticeable signs that the enemy will attempt to turn our line (particularly on the Adriatic sector) by landings in the rear.

Enemy preparations on the western Italian front hint at an early breakthrough attempt, particularly in the coastal sector (with the support of warships).

Developments in the Balkans, which have forced our High Command to withdraw forces from the Aegean and Greece owing to Bulgaria's breach of faith, will result in the enemy gaining without a fight the Albanian and southern Dalmation coasts as well as the Greek coast. Recent enemy landings on the southern Dalmation Islands and on Pag indicate the Anglo-American intention (which we have always assumed) to set up strong points there before the Russians break through to the Adriatic. Similarly, the Anglo-Americans will occupy the Aegean Islands in order to control access to the Mediterranean from the north, even if the Russians succeed in reaching the Aegean coast in their thrust towards Salonika. Beyond this I doubt if the enemy still intends to carry out in the Istrian area the landings which have often been mentioned by agents. In any case there are no apparent indications of a large scale operation of this type at present. His efforts on the Adriatic sector of the front still indicate his intention to occupy the northern Adriatic by land operations through the Po valley. In addition I would refer to my estimate of the situation in this sector on August 31st.

B. Our situation.

1. The Navy

The heavy enemy raid of 4th September on Genoa caused considerable losses amongst west coast naval forces. During this attack the following vessels were lost:

2 torpedo boats, 3 anti-submarine craft, 3 motor boats, 6 patrol vessels and other small boats.

At the time of the raid these vessels and several harbour patrol craft based on Genoa were lying in the repair yards on the east side of the harbour.

Coastal defence naval forces carried out convoy escort, patrol and reconnaissance operations which extended over western and southern sea areas. Small craft (E-boats, etc.) carried out further operations with special weapons in the western landing area. These were unsuccessful however, as the enemy withdrew towards the west during the night, leaving only escort vessels off our coast. It is hoped that torpedo boats will meet with success in operations against enemy supply routes, which have been planned for the coming new moon period.

The route to the south inside our defence system was blocked as far as the main defence line by completion of the minefields. The coast behind the main defence line south of the Magra estuary, which is exposed to landings, was further secured by the laying of cable mines.

On the Italian east coast defences provided for the protection of our coastal routes were extended northwards as far as the Po estuary by order of Admiral Adriatic. The plan to cover the loophole which the enemy had found in our defence system, and from which he regularly bombarded our coastline, by using the 2 available motor torpedo boats, was foiled by enemy escort vessels, which engaged our craft just before they had reached the firing position.

Further cable mine defences were laid at Cesenataico - Rimini, and also west of the Tagliamento.

Shipping movements on convoy routes along both coasts were carried out according to plan. In addition to fighter-bomber attacks at night, convoys were engaged in several actions with enemy torpedo craft, which caused the loss of 2 barges off Savona and 1 submarine chaser off Rapallo. The Navy took over supply movements on canals and the Po between Venice and the 10th Army area, as the Speer transport fleet has hitherto not been capable of carrying out tasks allotted to it.

German submarine operations in the Mediterranean have practically ceased. Pola remains the only submarine base for the three craft which are operating in the Aegean. The bases at Spezia and Genoa have been closed down, after 7 submarines nearing completion, 4 submarines for special operations and 1 transport submarine were sunk, and a further transport submarine damaged during the raid on Genoa. No further work will be carried out on the second transport submarine.

The consolidation of coastal defences, already in progress to reinforce coastal artillery in the west behind the main defence line, has been brought to a standstill as a result of the withdrawal of the Todt Organisation. (Due to lack of fuel and material as well as because of priority for the construction of the Alpine foothills position). As far as possible pioneers will complete coastal battery positions with material still available.

As has been done in other theatres of operations, naval crews in Italy, who are without ships, will be brought together for training in land warfare, and will then support Army divisions. An order has been issued for the establishment of the first 3 companies in the Spezia area. OKM has agreed in principle to naval personnel remaining in Italy.

During the period covered by the report, naval units claimed 8 aircraft destroyed and 3 probables.

The following transport shipping was sunk by the enemy:

2 coastal vessels, 3 steamships, 1 tug during the raid on Genoa, 1 armed barge, 1 motor coaster, 1 freight pinnace by night fighter-bombers, 2 armed barges by M.T.B's, and on the east coast - 1 tug, 1 motor coaster, 1 lighter by fighter-bombers during the day.

2. Army and Luftwaffe:

Our divisions, which have been in action and without relief for some time, have by exemplary fighting effectively held up the enemy advance on the southern front and prevented a breakthrough. This excellent performance is worthy of the highest recognition in view of the enemy's overwhelming material superiority and his continual air attacks, which we are not in a position to oppose. On the southern front there are 23 fully equipped and constantly reinforced enemy divisions facing 16 decimated German divisions. On the western front 3 weak divisions are holding the line against twice as many enemy divisions. On the coast 2 naval companies acting as infantry and a mobile naval battery from the south of France are cooperating with the reserve infantry division, forming the backbone of the sector.

The expected Luftwaffe reinforcements did not arrive. The few reconnaissance aircraft still available were used in repeated attempts to gain the necessary information regarding enemy movements, especially those at sea. Some night ground attack aircraft still at our disposal carried out several sorties to relieve troops at the front. The Luftflottenkommando was withdrawn and the German A.O.C. in C. Italy took over the Luftwaffe in the Italian theatre.

C. The Italian Navy:

Assault craft of X M.T.B. Flotilla continued to cooperate with our vessels in operations against the bridgehead in the south of France.

The comb-out of Italian units produced no noteworthy result, which is only to be expected in view of the uncooperative and delaying tactics of the Italians. At this point an investigation should be made regarding the fact that for the same reason - inactivity - the Italian Air Force was disbanded by C. in C. Luftflotte 2 and only a few good elements retained for duty in rear areas.

Italian Navy departments are dominated by questions of prestige and authority and lack of confidence in the German cause. Only the fact that our High Command has been relieved to a certain extent by the anti-partisan operations of X Division under the command of Commander Prince Borghese has kept me from disbanding the Italian Navy, which in effect consists only of departments and headquarters, and making suitable use of the men.

Partisan activity has increased again, especially in the area of the Alpine foothills. Even if some areas formerly threatened by partisans appear to be quietened for the present by the transfer of strong German units (e.g. the Turin - Cuneo area), the strength of these partisans has been confirmed as increasing week by week, so that the possibility of a sudden armed rising in Italy must now be taken into account. In this event the reliability of the Italian army, and especially units of divisions in the Army in Liguria, is subject to extreme doubt.

D. Conclusion:

The general war situation has been rendered more acute through the breach of faith committed by Bulgaria and Finland. In the west the position set up along the line Seine - Sens - Dijon - Swiss frontier could not be held. After the fall of Paris the enemy pushed forward as far as the German and Dutch frontiers, cutting off large numbers of German troops.

These events have caused a further perceptible reduction in the strength of German front line units, so that all available reserves will have to be used to defend the borders of the Reich against the enemy. The necessity of withdrawing troops from the Italian front for other theatres of operations seems to me to be a growing probability. This however would necessitate falling back on the Alpine foothills position. If these measures are carried

out the Tyrrhenian Sea will be lost, and any further naval activity in the western Mediterranean prevented. Plans submitted by Italian Naval H.Q. for this event have been approved by OKM, and will free a large number of marines for other duties. Moreover, German Naval H.Q. Italy has prepared plans to remove if possible most of the weapons, valuable equipment and other material from threatened coastal areas. It is intended to use sailors not already in action for land operations in Italy, as has already been done at home by C.in C. Navy. It will then be possible to hold defensive positions, and army units will be freed for other operations. Orders have already been issued regarding the establishment of the first three companies in the Spezia area.

The situation in the Balkans is still not completely clear, and may cause the Slavs and Croats still cooperating with us to break away at any time. Moreover, the giving up of the entire Balkan area and the formation of a front line along the Danube to Fiume or Trieste must be expected in view of this state of affairs. If the Etsch position were held we would still occupy the northern sector of the Adriatic.

Naval tasks in the area could then be carried out under the orders of the German Naval H.Q. (Admiral Adriatic) or under joint Italian observation. In this case a staff would be released for other duties.

Naval and coastal defence duties will continue as hitherto until these measures are introduced. As long as opportunities to attack exist, every available unit will be used to hold down enemy forces and prevent landings behind the front line. In addition, the German Naval H.Q. in the western sector command area will take over the preparation of naval units not already in action for operations on land. It is expected that they will prove themselves especially well.

•Loewisch

/Appendix

Proposals for conduct of air warfare in the
Italian theatre of war.

1. Enemy air activity is constantly increasing in the Italian theatre of war. Deployment of enemy air forces in Italy and Corsica permit day operations in good weather in the following strength:

Ground attack aircraft	about	1000
T.E. aircraft	"	250
Fighters	"	80 (not including fighter escort)
Close reconnaissance aircraft	"	80
Night fighters	"	20
Intruder aircraft	"	20

Attacks by 4-engine aircraft can be carried out against targets in Italy with an average of 700 aircraft. Previously most objectives for 4-engine aircraft lay outside Italy. Up to 200 4-engine aircraft were even diverted from the bomber stream to Germany to attack targets in Italy.

Inadequate defences, especially as regards flying forces, oppose this increased enemy air activity.

2. A considerable, even if not a decisive alteration in enemy offensive tactics and a lessening of their effect can be achieved by bringing in the following flying forces and anti-aircraft forces:

(a) Bringing in a German Me 262 Jagdgruppe

The operation of this Gruppe in conjunction with the Italian fighter Geschwader which is being formed and of which one Gruppe has been operating for some weeks, will not have any great numerical successes against bomber formations which fly in with strong fighter cover. On the other hand it will compel the enemy to use an increased number of fighters on escort duty. Fighter-bomber attacks can no longer be carried out with the unconcern prevalent till now. However, it is an important fact that the morale of heavily engaged ground troops is raised by the appearance of German fighter forces with modern aircraft types.

(b) Transfer to Italy of the Italian Me 163 unit which is being formed. Operations by the Me 163 unit against isolated enemy 4-engine aircraft which fly over the Udine area after an attack on Germany, promise success.

(c) Three light anti-aircraft batteries will be brought up for the additional protection of transport installations, especially the Brenner route and Po crossings and for the defence occupied airfields. This will again prove that defence against enemy attacks on the Brenner route, even using the strongest forces, will not guarantee supplies and reinforcements for the three Armies, the Navy and the Air Force on the southern front, unless the route leading into the Brenner Pass to the north is similarly protected by Luftflotte Reich.

3. Armed reconnaissance and tactical reconnaissance in Italy will be possible only at heavy cost, owing to enemy air superiority. Increasingly greater difficulties are being experienced in the necessary continuous photographic reconnaissance of enemy harbours in the Mediterranean. The demand of C. in C. South West for intensification of armed air reconnaissance and tactical air reconnaissance, along with reconnaissance of harbours in Italy and Southern France, cannot be nearly met with the present aircraft types and will probably peter out altogether, as has happened in the west. If reconnaissance and photographic surveillance are insisted upon, the re-equipment of a close reconnaissance Staffel with Me 262s and the allocation of an Arado 234 unit

/must

must take place shortly. This has already been proposed by the German A.O.C. in C. Italy, and has been postponed for the time being by OKL. After these forces have been re-equipped and allocated, reconnaissance boundaries between Luftflotte 4 and the German A.O.C. in C. Italy will be altered.

Southern Adriatic and eastern Sicilian harbours will be added to the area of the German A.O.C. in C. Italy, if this is practicable.

4. The idea that members of the Italian armed forces are not treated according to international law --- at least by their Italian opponents --- opposes the use of Italian flying formations over enemy territory; e.g. the use of the Italian fighter Geschwader as fighter-bombers. It appears that a clarification is necessary as to whether the enemy can be held to the covenant of the Geneva convention, if necessary by the threat of reprisals against captured Badoglio Italians, so far as any of these have been taken prisoner.

5. The sector of the German A.O.C. in C. Italy will be extended for the following reasons.

- (a) Protection of the Brenner area is more practical if under one control.
- (b) Additional accommodation is necessary to carry out the dispersal of supply and reinforcement services over the area of the Alpine plain as ordered by OKL. If transfer takes place into the areas of Luftgau VII and XVII, the German A.O.C. in C. in Italy will have only limited authority regarding the use of these supply and reinforcement services for his own requirements, as they will be subordinate to Luftflotte Reich in every respect.

The proposal for territorial expansion into the sector of Luftgau VII as far as Innsbruck is more likely to be agreed to since this area is of no importance for the defence of Germany against air attacks, owing to the lack of ground organisation.

6. The extensive relinquishment to date of personnel has caused a considerable decrease of efficiency in all units concerned. Further relinquishments of personnel which have already been ordered mean not only a further decrease of efficiency but in many cases are a threat to serviceability. Personnel relinquishments, to a lesser degree, are possible for only a few anti-aircraft units. When flying units are brought up, additional airfields and increased aircraft reporting service will be required for signals units and ground organisations. This will mean the allocation of airfield garrisons and aircraft reporting units.

A.H.B.6 Distribution

Same as for Translation VII/80