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AXIS OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

5 APRIL - 13 APRIL 1941

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G.334143/JH/7/52/50

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LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 575 (6 APRIL 1941)

Operations on 5 April and during the Night of 5/6 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

According to reports so far received, large formations of bombers, dive-bombers and fighters of Luftflotte 4 have been attacking the Jugoslavian capital of Belgrade with devastating effect, as well as airfields in northern Serbia, since early morning on 6 April. Bomber and twin-engined fighter formations of X Fliegerkorps attacked airfields in southern Serbia.

At the same time dive-bomber and fighter formations of VIII Fliegerkorps supported the Army advance from Bulgaria in the direction of Skoplje, in the Struma valley and across the frontier mountains of Thrace.

A large number of enemy aircraft were shot down or destroyed on the ground in the operations over Jugoslavia.

Situation in Southern Theatre

X Fliegerkorps Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance of airfields, roads and ports in the area still held by the enemy was carried out over north-eastern Cyrenaica.

Total Losses - Libya and Mediterranean

German: Nil return  
Enemy: None reported

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

Greece

Ground Situation

5 April: Eleventh Army: Greek patrol activity in the Eleventh Army area. Brisk artillery activity on both sides, particularly in the Osum and Vojussa valleys.

Ninth Army: A Greek attack on the left bank of the Shkumbin river resulted in a small territorial gain. In a counter-attack the Greeks suffered heavy losses and a few prisoners were taken.

Air Situation

5 April: Italian Operations from Albania: 12 aircraft carried out visual and photographic reconnaissance over the Eleventh and Ninth Army front line areas, the Shushice Valley, Bolena (15 km north of Himara), Kalarat (7 km north of Himara), Vranishte (9 km north-north-west of Himara), the Desnice valley sector and the Cerevode-Dobrushe (6 km north-west of Cerevode) - Teqe area.

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Another 7 aircraft carried out reconnaissance over the Jugoslavian frontier and over Scutari and Kukes (northern part of Albania).

15 bombers (Italian Ju 87's) made a successful attack on enemy positions in the Gur i Topit - Glumake (9 km north of Cerevode) and Teqe (14 km north-west of Cerevode).

56 fighters carried out patrols over ports and airfields and escorted bombers.

Italian Operations from Apulia: In the morning and afternoon 2 aircraft carried out reconnaissance along the western coast of Greece as far as Navarino.

6 fighters carried out patrols over Lecce and Taranto.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

21 reconnaissance aircraft  
15 bombers  
62 fighters

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98 aircraft

No Italian or enemy losses reported.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

4 April: After taking Benghazi, German and Italian formations pushed on to Coefia (15 km north-east of Benghazi) and Tocra (60 km north-east of Benghazi). Other motorised units took Antelat (45 km north-east of Zuetina) and Scaleidima (70 km south-east of Benghazi). In his hurried withdrawal, the enemy left behind more than 300 prisoners and several armoured vehicles.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

5 April: Photographic reconnaissance was carried out over airfields, ports and road in the area Tobruk - Sollum - Derna.

Ports:

According to visual reconnaissance there was very little shipping at Sollum and Derna at about midday. There were 3 warships and 8 merchant ships together totalling about 15,000 tons at Tobruk.

Airfields:

Gambut 14 bombers (at 1150 hours)

Derna 8 twin-engined aircraft (at 1200 hours)  
7 single-engined aircraft  
5 damaged aircraft

El Adem 6 Wellingtons  
1 Blenheim  
22 single-engined aircraft  
1 Lysander  
2 damaged aircraft

/Sollum

Sollum                    2 damaged aircraft

There were no aircraft on airfields at Sidi Azeis (25 km north-west of Sollum), Gasr el Arid (50 km west of Bardia), Amseat, Tobruk and Sidi Rezegh (30 km south-south-east of Tobruk).

Vehicle Movements:

There were about 30 vehicles, including 4 which were probably tanks, in the vicinity of Sollum.

About 60 vehicles identified in a radius of 13 km around Gasr el Arid.

No change in the vehicle concentrations in the Tobruk area. Only occasional vehicles on the Tobruk - Derna road, only part of which was covered. However, there were 60 vehicles moving east at the southern exit of Derna.

Miscellaneous:

Field fortifications were observed 10 km north-west of Gasr el Arid.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

1 reconnaissance aircraft

Losses

German:            None  
Enemy:            None reported

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

3 April: Reconnaissance on 3 and 4 April over the Zella sector and of airfields and the coast in the area Zuara (100 km west of Tripoli) - Tripoli - Ras Agodu (?) had nothing fresh to report.

Operations

3 April:            2 bombers effectively attacked Benghazi harbour from 2030 to 2100 hours. Large fires were observed on Berca airfield.

At midday 2 bombers operating in the area Antelat - Sceleidina - Solluch covered German and Italian motorised formations advancing north and north-east.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

4 April:            Visual and photographic reconnaissance over the sea area Rhodes - Alexandria - Casco Channel - Rhodes identified 3 destroyers and 1 merchant ship 80 km north-west of Alexandria at 0700 hours and 2 aircraft carriers, 3 battleships and a number of cruisers and destroyers in Alexandria harbour at 0730 hours.

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Operations

4 April: In an afternoon attack on Iraklion airfield 2 Italian fighters set one aircraft on fire and damaged another. 1 Italian aircraft was shot down by AA.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

3 reconnaissance aircraft  
4 bombers  
7 fighters  
14 aircraft

Enemy Operations

Libya

3 April: Enemy aircraft shot up Italian vehicles in the vicinity of Homs (120 km east of Tripoli) causing slight damage.

Losses

Italian: 1 Cr 42 (AA)  
Enemy: 1 aircraft (destroyed on the ground)

LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 576 (7 April, 1941)

Operations on 6 April and during the Night of 6/7 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

German Territory

During the day two enemy aircraft (one Blenheim and one aircraft of unknown type) flew over Luftgau XVII and dropped several bombs on Graz and Loedersdorf b. Feldbach. Two large fires were caused in warehouses and slight damage was done to a railway truck factory in Graz. One person was killed.

AA defence had no noticeable effect.

Details of the Attack:

1559 - 1635 hours	Graz	10 HE 7 inc.	Bombs were dropped on a railway truck factory, causing slight damage in the wheelwright section. Production was not affected. One person was killed. Bombs fell in the vicinity of the railway station. Two large fires were caused in warehouses. No damage was done to railway installations.
1600 hours	Loedersdorf b. Feldbach	3 inc.	Bombs dropped 150 metres from railway embankment. No damage.

During the night several low-flying aircraft flew over Luftgau XVII reaching Graz and Leoben. No bombs were dropped.

AA defence had no noticeable effect.

Situation in Southern Theatre  
X Fliegerkorps Operations  
Air Situation - Mediterranean

No enemy warships or merchant vessels were observed in the sea area west and south of Sicily.

Fighters carrying out sweeps encountered no enemy aircraft.

Total Losses - Libya and Mediterranean

German:        1 Ju 88 missing  
Enemy:        None reported

Total Losses - South-Eastern Theatre

German:        3 Do 17 (including 2 missing)  
                   6 Ju 87 (including 2 missing)  
                   5 Me 109  
                   4 Me 110 (including 1 missing)  
                   2 Ju 88  
                   1 Hs 126

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21 aircraft

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Enemy:

In the Air:    22 Me 109  
                   11 Hawker Furies  
                   1 biplane  
                   4 aircraft - types not known

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38 aircraft

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By AA:            2 Blenheims  
 On Ground:      28 Do 17  
                   14 Hawker Furies  
                   7 Potez and Breguet aircraft  
                   11 biplanes  
                   17 aircraft - types not known

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77 aircraft

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GRAND TOTAL:    117 aircraft

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I    Ground Situation on 6 April (2000 hours)

(a)    Jugoslavia

Early on the morning of 6 April German Army formations moved over the Bulgarian frontier into Jugoslavia and Greece. Jugoslavian resistance was overcome everywhere in the frontier zone from Kyustendil to the point where the three frontiers meet. Panzer formations moving along the Kyustendil - Kumanovo road reached the area west of the town of Stracin. After overcoming the mountains west of Gorna-Dzhumaya, infantry units reached Carevo-Selo and pursued the enemy in the direction of Kocane.

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A strong Panzer formation advanced westwards from Petrich and is in action against Yugoslavian motorised units.

A mountain division crossed the mountain ridge in the area where the three frontiers meet and reached Rhodopolis (25 km south-west of Petrich). Another mountain division is engaged in heavy fighting at the Rupel Pass. (Struma breakthrough)

Army units have crossed the Greek frontier at several points east of the Struma breakthrough to the Gumuljina area (Komotoni). In this sector the towns of Kato Nevrokopi and Shabin were reached.

(b) Albania

Apart from patrol and artillery activity on the Eleventh and Ninth Army fronts, no operations of any importance took place.

II Air Situation on 6 April (2000 hours)

1. Luftflotte 4 Operations

During the day bomber formations of Luftflotte 4 made four attacks in strength on Belgrade. These took place as follows: in the morning an attack was carried out with 234 bombers and dive-bombers; at midday 57 dive-bombers made another attack; during the afternoon 94 bombers made a further raid, and finally 99 dive-bombers attacked the city in the early evening.

Hits were scored on the citadel, the railway station, on barracks, the power station, and on various parts of the city. Extensive and persistent fires were observed, which were still burning in the evening.

Several air battles took place in the area of operations, 3 enemy fighters being shot down for the loss of one dive-bomber.

A dive-bomber attacked a pontoon bridge which was still under construction (about 15 km south-east of Belgrade) and scored a direct hit (500 kg bomb) on the bridge and several hits on approaches and goods trains.

In the Ljubljana - Zagreb - Klostar - Graz area 65 fighters and about 60 dive-bombers were sent out on free-lance patrols to attack airfields and mobile targets. The airfields at Maribor, Varazdin, Velika Gorica, Brezice and Cerklje (Zirklach) were successfully attacked, 15 enemy aircraft being destroyed or badly damaged.

In addition, several troop trains in the Maribor - Zagreb - Dugo-Selo area were attacked with 6 250 kg and 24 50 kg bombs, and the railway junctions at Zabok (north of Zagreb) and Dugo-Selo (east of Zagreb) were destroyed and lines were cut by direct hits.

Troops and an M.T depot in the castle yard at Ptuj were effectively attacked, as well as troop and cavalry concentrations which were bombed and machine-gunned in a wood to the south of the town. One of the German dive-bombers was lost.

120 fighters from the Arad area (Rumania) successfully carried out patrol and bomber escort operations in the Belgrade area. 15 enemy fighters (Me 109's) were shot down and a further 10 aircraft of unknown types were destroyed on the ground.

Strong bomber and twin-engined fighter formations of Fliegerkorps VIII carried out operations against fortifications in the Struma sector, concentrating on the Rupel Pass area. They also attacked Skopelje (H.Q. of the Third Yugoslav Army) and several enemy marching columns.

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/Fighter

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Fighter formations of Fliegerkorps VIII made successful attacks on the airfields at Kumanovo - Sarlice and Petrovac. 11 Hawker Furies and one biplane were shot down, 10 Hawker Furies were destroyed on the ground, 11 Do 17's set on fire (Sarlice), and 9 Do 17's badly damaged (Petrovac).

Enemy Air Activity on 6 April

At 1450 hours an enemy bomber carried out an unsuccessful attack on the airfield at Arad and was shot down by fighters.

A further enemy bomber attacked the airfield at Timisoara (Temesvar), dropping bombs on the airfield and railway station without causing much damage. Another enemy aircraft was shot down over Deta (south of Timisoara). In the morning several enemy bombers dropped several bombs on Kyustendil, killing 2 soldiers and 80 civilians.

2. X Fliegerkorps Operations on 6 April

At 0735 hours 22 bombers escorted by 15 fighters dive-bombed the airfield at Sarajevo-Rajilivac, dropping 88 250 kg and 220 50 kg bombs. The airfield was attacked again between 1540 and 1545 hours by 18 bombers which dropped 72 250 kg bombs from heights of between 14,500 and 5,100 feet. In both attacks many hits were scored on hangars and quarters with effective results. Bombs also fell on the runway and among aircraft parked on the northern and southern perimeters of the airfield.

Owing to fighter defence 4 bombers attacked the seaplane base at Kumbur as a secondary target and dropped bombs on quarters in the southern part of the target area.

2 bombers attacked troop concentrations at the barracks on the north side of Mostar. Three hits were observed.

At 1205 hours 16 bombers attacked the airfield at Podgorica from a height of a 1,000 feet, dropping 16 500 kg and 256 50 kg bombs. Hits were scored on the north-western area of the airfield. In a second attack on the same airfield 22 bombers dropped 88 250 kg bombs. The majority of the bombs hit the airfield and buildings, others hitting slit trenches in the area.

14 out of 15 bombers had to break off an operation against Blagaj airfield owing to weather conditions. One bomber dropped 1 500 kg and 16 50 kg bombs over the target area at 1740 hours, but the results of this attack are not known.

Strong formations of fighters escorted the bombers and shot down the following aircraft:

- 2 single-engined biplanes, probably Hawker Furies,
- 1 Hawker Fury destroyed on the ground,
- 1 Me 109,
- 1 Me 109 broke off pouring out smoke and was probably shot down,
- 1 Me 109 with blue markings.

11 bombers laid mines in Pireaus harbour during the night of 6/7 April. 9 other aircraft were forced to turn back owing to unfavourable weather conditions and technical difficulties. A ship was hit and destroyed.

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/Defence

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Defence

Pireaus: Strong light and heavy AA fire and 8 - 10 searchlights. Night fighters made an unsuccessful attack.

Sarajevo-Rajlovac: Slight AA fire; 5 fighters of an unknown type were observed, but did not attack.

Podgorisa: 2 fighters (single-engined biplanes); slight, inaccurate AA fire.

Mostar: Weak AA fire; 1 Me 109 with blue markings observed.

Blagaj: One Me 109 made an unsuccessful attack. The aircraft did not use tracer ammunition. After the second attack it broke off pouring out smoke and was probably shot down, but was not seen to hit the ground. AA fire was slight but accurate at high altitudes.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

2 reconnaissance aircraft
111 bombers
43 fighters
<hr/>
156 aircraft
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Losses (X Fliegerkorps)

German:	1 Ju 88
Enemy:	3 biplanes (Hawker Furies ?)
	1 Me 109
	5 three-engined aircraft (S 79 ?) on the ground
	2 Hawker Furies

3. Total Losses (Luftflotte 4 + X Fliegerkorps)

Enemy:

In the Air:	22 Me 109
	11 Hawker Furies
	1 biplane
	4 aircraft, types not known

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38 aircraft

By AA:	2 Blenheims
On the Ground:	28 Do 17
	14 Hawker Furies
	7 Potez and Breguet aircraft
	11 biplanes
	17 aircraft, types not known

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77 aircraft

GRAND TOTAL      117 aircraft

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/German:

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<u>German:</u>	3 Do 17
	6 Ju 87
	5 Me 109
	4 Me 110
	2 Ju 88
	1 Hs 126
	<hr/>
	21 aircraft
	<hr/>

Italian Air Operations on 6 April  
II Squadra Aerea, Albanian Air Force and IV Squadra Aerea

(a) Reconnaissance

Aircraft carried out reconnaissance over the area Pola - Cherso - Mezzo Channel, over airfields at Kicevo, Gostivar and Tetovo, along the Yugoslavian frontier and along the western coast of Greece as far as Navarino. There were no aircraft on the airfields. An enemy merchant ship (3,000 tons) and a small steamship were shot up. 3 destroyers, 3 merchant ships and several seaplanes were observed in the inner roadstead at Kotor.

(b) Operations

63 bombers successfully attacked the following targets in southern Yugoslavia:

Harbour installations at the port of Spalato; barracks and factories at Samodan (north-west of Scutari); an arsenal on the Bay of Kotor (Kataro); Mostar airfield, and an ammunition dump at Opotovo. Large fires and a violent explosion were observed. In the Bay of Kotor a destroyer and a steamship were damaged, one seaplane destroyed and hits scored on harbour installations. During the attack 8 bombers were observed on Mostar airfield and 9 seaplanes at the base at Divulje.

77 fighters carried out patrols over Albania. A further 51 fighters carried out patrols over Taranto, Lecce, Brindisi and Bari and also escorted bombers.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

5 April: British forces are retreating through Derna and Mechili to Tobruk. Several columns have already passed through Derna. Large concentrations, including tanks, were reported at Tobruk.

The enemy continued to offer stubborn resistance at Regima (30 km east of Benghazi). Advance detachments have reached Barce and a point 22° 40' east on the Cyrenaican Gebel. Mechili was still in enemy hands on the evening of 5 April.

1 Australian officer and 50 men were taken prisoner, 3 7.5 cm guns were captured and the guns and equipment of an Italian artillery regiment and an armoured unit were recaptured.

6 April: 1030 hours: German and Italian units have reached the Bir Tengeder area (60 km south of El Mechili). Bir Tocra (north-east of Benghazi) was taken.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

6 April: Results of photographic reconnaissance carried out over the area Derna - Tobruk - Bardia in the morning:

Shipping in Ports:

Derna and Bardia No shipping

Tobruk 1 destroyer,  
1 patrol boat (?),  
6 merchant ships together totalling about 12,500 tons.

Between Derna and Tobruk 1 merchant ship of about 2,000 tons at anchor at Geziret el Maracheb (30 km east-south-east of Bomba).

Aircraft on Airfields:

Derna,  
S & N fields: 7 Blenheim IV's,  
10 single-engined aircraft,  
5 damaged aircraft,  
2 aircraft without engines

Ain el Gazala  
(60 km W Tobruk)  
N & S fields,  
(only partly  
covered): 4 multiple-engined aircraft,  
10 single-engined aircraft,  
4 damaged aircraft.

Bu Amud  
(23 km SSE Tobruk) 17 single-engined aircraft,  
1 multiple-engined aircraft.

Gambut: 7 multiple-engined aircraft,  
2 single-engined aircraft.

There were no aircraft at Bardia-Monastir airfield or on the airfields at Tobruk. Bardia airfield was only partly covered, but no aircraft were identified.

Transport Movements:

The vehicle concentrations at Derna, Tobruk and Bardia remain unchanged. About 20 vehicles on the southern edge of Ain el Gazala. Only slight traffic in both directions on the Derna - Tobruk and Tobruk - Bardia roads.

Miscellaneous:

Tent encampments at Tobruk and Bardia as before.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

6 April: No enemy shipping observed by morning reconnaissance west and south of Sicily in the area Malta - Sfax (eastern coast of Tunisia) - Cape Bon.

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1 aircraft did not return from photographic reconnaissance of the port and airfields at Pireaus.

Operations

6 April: Fighters on sweeps south of Sicily to intercept British ferry aircraft had no contact with the enemy.

Defence

6 April: 2 fighters from Ain Gazala airfield.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

7 reconnaissance aircraft  
3 fighters

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10 aircraft

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Losses

German: 1 Ju 88  
Enemy: None reported

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

5 April: Nothing of importance observed by reconnaissance along the coast of Tripolitania - Zuara - Tunisian frontier.

Operations

5 April: 6 fighters carried out patrols over Tripoli airfield and escorted a convoy.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

5 April: Reconnaissance from Sardinia between 38° 30' latitude and the African coast and 3° longitude sighted a small French merchant ship on a 90° course 36 km north of Cape Tedles at 1725 hours.

Visual and photographic reconnaissance was carried out over Suda Bay - Spelia airfield (north-west Crete) - Cerigo Island - Tobruk - Rhodes. At 0820 hours 2 cruisers, 8 medium and 4 small merchant ships and one large half-sunken merchant ship were observed in Suda Bay.

There were 15 aircraft of unknown type on Spelia airfield at 0825 hours.

At 0835 hours there were 2 cruisers, 2 destroyers and 8 unladen merchant ships of 3 - 10,000 tons on course 180° 36 km north-west of Cape Krio (south-western tip of Crete).

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At 0900 hours reconnaissance in the area Cerigo Island - Alexandria - Caso Island observed a cruiser of 5,000 tons and 3 destroyers on course 145° 150 km south-south-east of Caso.

At 0950 hours there were 7 merchant ships of 5,000 tons each and 6 small merchant ships in Tobruk harbour. 2 cruisers were moving into the port.

1 Hurricane was shot down by a reconnaissance aircraft.

6 April:

1 French ship was observed south of Zembra by morning and afternoon reconnaissance in the area Sicilian Channel - African coast.

Nothing of importance observed by reconnaissance over the south-western Mediterranean.

Operations

5 April:

In face of heavy AA defence, 3 bombers and 2 torpedo bombers attacked the convoy sighted at Cape Krio at 0835 hours. Bomb hits were scored.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

12 reconnaissance aircraft  
5 bombers  
6 fighters

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23 aircraft

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Enemy Operations

Libya

During the night of 4/5 April enemy aircraft made several attacks on Tripoli. Slight damage was done to private houses.

Mediterranean

An enemy reconnaissance aircraft flew over La Spezia on the afternoon of 5 April.

Losses

Italian: None  
Enemy: 1 Hurricane (air battle)

Situation at Sea - Mediterranean

During the night of 2/3 April an Italian submarine attacked a strongly escorted convoy south of Crete and sank one merchant ship for certain. Another merchant ship was probably sunk.

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LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 577 (8 April 1941)

Operations on 7 April and during the Night of 7/8 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

Ground Situation on 7 April (2000 hours)

Jugoslavia

German Army formations continued their advance on the Yugoslavian and Greek fronts. In Yugoslavia they succeeded in routing several Yugoslavian divisions south-east of Skoplje. Approaching German Panzer formations occupied Skoplje in the evening.

An infantry division reached Stip at about 1200 hours and continued its advance in the direction of Veles in the early afternoon.

Elements of the Panzer division located west of Strumica advanced north-west to Radoviste and south-west to Valandovo.

The main force of the mountain division which moved southwards over the mountain ridge at the point where the three frontiers meet is located on the railway line at Rhodopolis. Another mountain division moved round the Rupel Pass to the west and has reached the Struma Valley south of the Rupel Pass directly east of the town of Nea Petritsi.

Army units which advanced into eastern Macedonia and western Thrace have reached Kato Vrontsy and the area north of Xanthi and have taken Gumuljina.

Albania

Italian patrol and artillery activity on the Eleventh and Ninth Army fronts.

On the Albanian-Yugoslavian frontier Yugoslavian forces from Prizren and north of Ochrida Lake attempted to advance into Albania. They were repulsed by the Italians.

Air Situation on 7 April (20.00 hours)

A. German Operations

(1) Luftflotte 4 Operations

During the afternoon 24 bombers attacked Belgrade from heights ranging from 8,000 to 11,500 feet with good results. About 15 fires were observed, including an extensive conflagration at the main railway station, in buildings on the north side of the station, and to the west of the Danube station. In addition, several bombs were seen to explode in the centre of the city.

During the course of the day 26 dive-bombers attacked a railway bridge and railway installations at Indija and scored several direct hits. The railway bridge was destroyed. The same aircraft attacked airfields at Topola and Palanka and factories at Mladenovac with satisfactory results. 14 training aircraft and two others of unknown types were destroyed on the ground.

In the morning 5 bombers made low-level bombing and machine-gun attacks on Novska station, the railway line east of Pakrac, the railway line Brod - Vinkovci, and the Andrijevschi airfield. A train was hit at Novska and the railway tracks were destroyed in several places by bomb hits. Petrol tanks in sidings were shot up.

R E S T R I C T E D

/16 twin-engined

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16 twin-engined fighters made successful attacks on railway transport on the line north-west of Novisad and south of Szeged.

45 fighters escorted the bombers and in various encounters which took place over the Belgrade area and south of Novisad 13 enemy fighters and 8 Bristol Blenheims were shot down, the latter over Hungary (in the area of Szeged and Pecs).

Dive-bomber and twin-engined fighter formations of VIII Fliegerkorps attacked various targets in southern Yugoslavia, including Pristina airfield, Urosevac airfield, Veles railway station, Gradsko railway station, troop concentrations and artillery positions in the Rupel Pass, and infantry and motorised columns north-east of Skoplje.

18 enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground.

Enemy Operations

One enemy aircraft bombed Vilany railway station (Hungary) and 3 other aircraft flew towards Budapest without dropping any bombs.

All four aircraft were shot down.

Total Losses

Enemy Losses:

In the Air:

7 Me 109  
3 Hurricanes  
1 PZL  
2 Ikarus  
8 Bristol Blenheims  
1 Bristol Blenheim (forced landing at Allhau)

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22 aircraft

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On the Ground:

5 Do 17  
1 Bucker  
12 single-engined aircraft  
14 training aircraft  
2 aircraft - types not known

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34 aircraft

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GRAND TOTAL

56 aircraft

German Losses:

1 Me 109  
1 Do 17

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2 aircraft

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B. Italian Air Operations on 7 April

A number of aircraft carried out reconnaissance along the Albanian - Yugoslavian coast and along the western coast of Greece as far as Navarino.

7 steamships of 2 - 3,500 tons were observed in Vranice Bay.

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5 aircraft carried out reconnaissance over the Desnice Valley and the Albanian frontier. 12 aircraft carried out reconnaissance over Podgorica and the Ochrida Lake area. Nothing of particular importance was reported.

27 fighters carried out reconnaissance over Valona, Berat and Devoli.

No operations were reported.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

7 April:

At 1500 hours there were large enemy vehicle and tank concentrations around and east of Ain el Gazala (60 km west of Tobruk). Traffic was slight on the road Gazala - Tmimi - Castel Umm Er Rzem (45 km south-east of Derna). Armoured cars formed the rear of convoys. No enemy forces were observed west of Umm Er Rzem. Axis troops were identified on Derna airfield and east of the town. There was only slight Axis traffic on the road west of Derna. In spite of mines and bad going, the advance along the Trigh el Abd track is continuing (Haseiat - Tengeder). Gadd el Ahmar (50 km south-west of Ain Gazala) was reached. There were large Axis formations in and around Mechili. About 30 enemy vehicles were located west of Mechili. Large Axis columns west of Msus and east of Charruba (100 km east of Benghazi) were advancing on Mechili. Enemy concentrations around Gazala and traffic on roads were very effectively bombed and shot up.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

7 April:

An aircraft sent out in the morning on photographic reconnaissance of airfields, roads and ports in the area Derna - Tobruk - Bardia is missing.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

7 April:

No enemy shipping movements observed in the morning south of Crete and south of Sicily in the area Marettimo - Cape Bon - Sfax.

At 0910 hours 2 twin-engined monoplanes were observed 20 km east of Cape Rosa (Tunisia) At 1005 hours 2 submarines of unknown nationality which dived when the aircraft approached were sighted 90 km north-west of Cap de Fer (Tunisia).

Photographic reconnaissance was carried out over La Valetta harbour and airfields on Malta.

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/La Valetta

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La Valetta

Warships: 3 destroyers, including one without bows,  
1 patrol boat (?),  
6 submarines,  
2 minesweepers,  
1 minesweeper putting out to sea.

The number of submarines in the harbour has increased by one since 1 April.

Merchant Shipping:

The situation has not changed since 1 April, but most of the ships have moved to different berths. The two ships damaged in a bombing raid on 23 March are in the dry docks in French Creek.

Airfields

Ta Venezia: 25 single-engined aircraft

Luca: 11 twin-engined aircraft, probably Wellingtons,  
4 twin-engined aircraft, probably Blenheims,  
1 twin-engined aircraft, probably a Bombay,  
1 single-engined aircraft, probably a Spitfire,  
3 single-engined aircraft with folded-back wings.

Halfar: 8 single-engined aircraft,  
4 single-engined aircraft with folded-back wings.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

8 reconnaissance aircraft

Losses

German: 1 Ju 88 missing  
Enemy: None reported

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

5 April: Nothing of importance was observed by reconnaissance along the coast of Tripolitania - Zuara - Ras Agedir and in the area Tummo Gebel (230 km south of Zuila) - El Afafi - Tibesti caravan route (south-western frontier of Libya).

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

6 April: No enemy warships observed in the sea area Gavdos Island - Caso Island - Alexandria.

RESTRICTED

/7 April:

R E S T R I C T E D

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7 April:

In the morning reconnaissance was carried out in the areas Sciacca - Pantelleria - Kuriat Island - Hammamet Bay - Celibia - Cape Bon - Sciacca and Sciacca - Linosa - Lampedusa - Kerkena - Kuriat Island - Pantelleria. 2 merchant ships on course 240° and 3 powered fishing vessels were observed 4 km south of Lampedusa.

Reconnaissance south of Sicily and south-west of Sardinia to the North African coast could not be carried out properly owing to bad visibility.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

19 reconnaissance aircraft

Enemy Operations

Bombers attacked Rhodes during the night of 5/6 April. The bombs fell on open fields.

During the night 6/7 April enemy aircraft flew over Bari, Cagliari and probably Trapani as well.

Losses:

Italian: None  
Enemy: None reported

LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 578 (9 April 1941)

Operations on 8 April and during the Night of 8/9 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I Ground Situation on 8 April (2000 hours)

(a) German Operations in Yugoslavia and Greece

The German Army formations in Yugoslavia and Greece continued their advance.

A Panzer division advanced westwards from Skoplje and occupied Tetovo, where its main force is located. Elements of this division were moved north to provide flank cover and are engaging enemy forces at Kacanik and Presevo.

Elements of an infantry division advanced south-west from Veles and occupied Prilep. Other elements advanced south-east from Vales along the Vardar Valley and reached Krivolak.

The Panzer division located west of Strumica turned south, broke through enemy fortifications west of Dojran Lake, reached Greek soil and is advancing rapidly on Salonika.

West of Rhodopolis a mountain division is still in action against Greek forces east of Dojran Lake.

R E S T R I C T E D

/Another

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Another mountain division which moved round the Rupel Pass to the west sealed off the pass in the south and elements of the division are advancing on Rhodopolis. Apart from a few strong-points, the Rupel Pass has been taken.

An infantry division is engaging a Greek division south-west of Kato Vrontsy.

Army units have taken Xanthi and are advancing on Sarishaban.

The infantry division which occupied Gumuljina yesterday is moving towards Xanthi.

Early on the morning of 8 April further strong German Army formations launched an attack from the Sofia area in the direction of Nis.

After overcoming Yugoslavian resistance on the frontier at Caribrod, a Panzer division advanced in the direction of Pirot, took this town at 1630 hours, and is continuing its advance on Nis.

After crossing the Yugoslavian frontier north of Caribrod, an infantry division and a mountain division are in action on both sides of Rzana.

In the fighting on 7 and 8 April 30 0 40,000 prisoners were taken and large amount of war material captured in the area around Skoplje. There were 5 Serbian generals among the prisoners.

(b) Italian Operations in Albania - Greek Front

Lively artillery activity on the Eleventh Army front, particularly in the Bence and Osum sectors. Slight patrol activity.

On the Ninth Army front the Greeks attacked between the Tomorice and Devoli Valleys and on the right bank of the Shkumbin Valley. All the attacks were repulsed.

Jugoslavian Front

Jugoslavian forces advanced into northern Albania through the Drin Valley in the direction of Kukes, and were halted by Italian forces north-west of Kukes.

II Air Situation on 8 April (2000 hours)

A. German Operations

(1) Luftflotte 4

Owing to bad weather conditions no operations were carried out during the night of 7/8 April and on 8 April.

Reconnaissance

Photographic and visual reconnaissance showed that Yugoslavian fighter formations had been transferred from the area south of Belgrade to the Belgrade - Novisad area.

Owing to the German advance, the flying units hitherto located in the Skoplje - Nis area have moved back into the area south and south-west of Belgrade.

/Enemy Operations

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

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Enemy Operations

No enemy air activity reported.

Losses

Enemy: None reported  
German: 1 Hs 126 (by AA)

(2) X Fliegerkorps

In the morning 3 Ju 88 on armed reconnaissance in the sea area Crete made glide attacks on a medium merchant ship north-west of Crete. 16 250 kg bombs were dropped. The effect was not observed.

B Italian Air Operations on 8 April

Fighters escorting reconnaissance aircraft shot up vehicles and barracks south of Zara (Jugoslavia).

10 fighters machine-gunned 4 seaplanes at Crappano (28 km north-west of Split) and installations at the Vodice seaplane base.

30 bombers attacked port and railway installations at Sebenico and the seaplane base at Divulje.

10 bombers attacked targets of military importance on the Greek coast. A steamship was hit by a 250 kg bomb in Vrana Bay.

24 fighters carried out patrols over Albania.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

7 April:

With the occupation of Derna, enemy forces in Cyrenaica have been encircled. After heavy fighting Mechili was taken in the morning. There were 2,000 British troops in the vicinity of the town. The Luftwaffe made effective attacks on large enemy concentrations with many vehicles at Ain el Gazala. German and Italian forces occupied Maraua (60 km south-south-west of Apollonia) and Et Neian (60 km east-south-east of Barce). Large enemy columns escaped to Tobruk. According to photographic reconnaissance there are ships in Tobruk harbour, apparently for an evacuation.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

8 April:

Results of photographic reconnaissance carried out in the morning over the area Tobruk - Derna:

R E S T R I C T E D

/Shipping

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Shipping at Tobruk:

The photograph was not clear and it was therefore not possible to make out all the ships in the harbour. The following were identified:

- 1 cargo and passenger ship of about 12,000 tons,
- 1 cargo and passenger ship of about 8,000 tons,
- 1 merchant ship of about 4,000 tons,
- 3 merchant ships together totalling about 6,000 tons.

The total tonnage of about 30,000 tons as compared with 12,500 tons on 6 April indicates that ships are being assembled for the evacuation of troops.

Derna: No shipping

Apart from a few damaged machines, no aircraft were identified on airfields at Tobruk, Ain el Gazala, Bomba and Derna. At 1016 hours 3 enemy fighters took off from Tmimi airfield (6 km west of Bomba).

Vehicle Movements:

Only slight traffic observed on the Tobruk - Derna road. There was a concentration of 200 vehicles and 20 tents on both sides of the road. The concentration of vehicles and tents 10 km west of Tobruk remained unchanged. Apart from a few vehicles in the town, all the vehicle concentrations hitherto reported in and around Derna have disappeared.

1 reconnaissance aircraft has not returned from a flight over Tobruk.

Miscellaneous:

According to various observations, R.A.F. Headquarters has apparently been transferred to Sollum.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

8 April: No enemy shipping movements were identified by morning reconnaissance south and west of Sicily as far as the southern tip of Sardinia.

Operations

8 April: 3 bombers on armed reconnaissance in the sea area Crete made an unsuccessful attack with 16 250 kg bombs on a medium sized merchant ship. 5 bombers returned with their bombs.

4 bombers and 10 fighters escorted convoys.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

8 reconnaissance aircraft
13 bombers
10 fighters
<hr/>
31 aircraft

RESTRICTED

/Enemy Operations

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Enemy Operations

Libya

7 April: At 1440 hours 3 Hurricanes attacked 2 German transport aircraft on Mechili airfield. One of the aircraft was damaged and 2 mechanics were wounded. One Hurricane was shot down in flames by the rear gunner of a German aircraft.

8 April: A Bristol Blenheim was shot down over Mechili.

Losses

<u>German:</u>	1 Ju 88
<u>Enemy:</u>	1 Hurricane
	1 Bristol Blenheim

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

7 April: No enemy warships observed in the sea area Alexandria - south-eastern tip of Crete - Caso Island - Rhodes.

Operations

7 & 8 April: 13 fighters escorted convoys.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

5 reconnaissance aircraft
13 fighters
<hr/>
18 aircraft
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Enemy Operations

Libya

During the night of 6/7 April 2 waves of enemy aircraft bombed Tripoli.

Mediterranean

During the night of 6/7 April airfields on Rhodes were bombed. No damage was caused.

Losses

<u>Italian:</u>	None
<u>Enemy:</u>	None reported

/LUFTWAFFE

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LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 579 (10 April 1941)

Operations on 9 April and during the Night of 9/10 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I Ground Situation on 9 April (2000 hours)

(a) German Operations in Yugoslavia and Greece

On 9 April German Panzer formations advanced through Pirot, occupied Nis and are pushing on in the direction of Belgrade.

Advanced detachments of an Infantry Corps moved through Prilep and reached the town of Bitolj and are continuing their advance in the direction of Florina.

At 0700 hours a Panzer division moved into Salonika and occupied the city. As a result of this action, the Greek Army east of the Vardar surrendered unconditionally.

An Infantry Corps took several thousand prisoners and captured 100 field guns, several hundred machine guns, over 100 new Dornier aircraft engines, a large amount of ammunition and fuel and spare parts for vehicles.

German forces crossed the Styrian-Yugoslavian frontier in the area north of Maribor and took this town, including the district situated on the southern bank of the River Drav. The bridges had been destroyed.

Advanced elements of a German Panzer formation threw a number of bridgeheads over the Mur and Drav rivers between Kotor and Barce. The bridges at Barce were captured undamaged.

During the fighting 500 prisoners (including a Brigadier) were taken.

(b) Italian Operations in Albania

1. Jugoslavian Front

In the Ochrida Lake area an enemy attack was repulsed and the village of Radoszda across the frontier was occupied.

On 8 April a Jugoslavian force attempted to attack Scutari from the sea. The attack was repulsed and one officer and 45 men were taken prisoner.

2. Greek Front

Fighting on the right bank of the Shkumbin continued.

3. Julian Front

Italian patrols reconnoitred in the Jugoslavian frontier area. A Jugoslavian outpost position at Kranjska Gora and another east of Idria were occupied.

R E S T R I C T E D

/Air Situation

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II Air Situation on 9 April (2000 hours)

A Luftwaffe Operations

(1) Luftflotte 4 Operations

During the day bombers attacked airfields at Cilli (Celjo), Bosanska Gradiska and Rovine, destroying one aircraft and damaging 10 others.

Bombers also attacked enemy positions and goods trains in the Maribor - Zagreb - Koprivnica area. An enemy artillery troop and a goods train were destroyed.

South of Novisad air combats took place between German and enemy fighters, 3 of which were shot down.

VIII Fliegerkorps dive-bomber formations attacked enemy artillery positions, troop concentrations and columns in southern Yugoslavia and Greece. Ground attack aircraft supported German infantry.

Enemy Operations

In the early afternoon enemy aircraft flew into Hungary in the direction of Budapest and Balaton without dropping any bombs.

(2) X Fliegerkorps Operations

Between 2100 and 2130 hours 14 German bombers attacked shipping concentrations in Pireaus harbour and in Salamis Bay.

Altogether 56 250 kg bombs were dropped, and the following hits were scored:

merchant ship of 8,000 tons: hit on stern. 1 250 kg bomb  
merchant ship of 6,000 tons: hit near gunwale. 2 250 kg bombs  
merchant ship of 2,000 tons: 2 hits. 2 250 kg bombs  
1 fuel tank. Explosions and flames. 4 250 kg bombs  
Hit on mole. 1 250 kg bomb  
merchant ship of 8,000 tons: near miss astern, probably damaged.  
4 250 kg bombs  
1 tanker. 2 250 kg bombs landed behind and in front of the vessel.  
merchant ship of 10,000 tons: fire observed. 2 250 kg bombs  
merchant ship of 3,000 tons sinking off Salamis Island Point.

4 other aircraft laid mines in Pireaus harbour.

(3) Losses

Enemy:

In the Air: 3 fighters, type not known  
On the Ground: 1 aircraft, type not known

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4 aircraft

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German: 1 Do 17 (missing)

R E S T R I C T E D

/Italian

R E S T R I C T E D

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B Italian Air Operations

Reconnaissance

Aircraft carried out visual and photographic reconnaissance over the Zara area. Reconnaissance was also carried out along the Jugoslavian coast and the western coast of Greece.

Operations

Several bombers and fighters attacked military objectives in the Zara area.

10 bombers attacked Sebenico harbour with good results.

9 fighters shot up military objectives in and north-west of the Podgorica area.  
39 fighters patrolled over the area of operations and escorted bombers.

Enemy Operations

2 enemy aircraft made unsuccessful attacks on ships in Zara harbour.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

7 April: Among the 2,000 British prisoners already reported taken when Mechili fell were 6 Generals and 2 Staff Colonels. The number of prisoners is expected to increase. The amount of material captured cannot yet be estimated.

Heavy fighting preceded the capture of Derna. The garrison was reinforced by air.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

9 April: One aircraft carried out photographic reconnaissance over Tobruk and Sollum. Results not yet available.

Operations

9 April: Bombers attacked Tobruk at about 2000 hours. 10 500 kg and 58 250 kg bombs were dropped.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

9 April: No enemy shipping movements were observed by morning and afternoon reconnaissance over the sea area west of Sicily north of 38° 30' N to extent of range, and by morning reconnaissance south of Sicily to about 35° N.

Operations

9 April: 3 bombers on armed reconnaissance made an unsuccessful attack on an unladen transport ship of 6 - 8,000 tons in the sea area Crete. 12 250 kg bombs were dropped. No other shipping was observed.

/Bombers

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Bombers and fighters were sent out to escort convoys, but owing to bad weather some of the convoys could not be located.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

5 reconnaissance aircraft  
29 bombers  
2 fighters

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36 aircraft

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Losses

German: None  
Enemy: None reported

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

7 April: Nothing of particular importance observed by reconnaissance over the Benghazi - Apollonia coastal area and the mountains to the south.

8 April: Nothing of particular importance observed by reconnaissance along the coast between Tripoli and the Tunisian frontier.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

5 reconnaissance aircraft  
6 fighters

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11 aircraft

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Losses

Italian: None  
Enemy: None reported

LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 580 (11 April 1941)

Operations on 10 April and during the Night of 10/11 April, 1941

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I Ground Situation on 10 April (2000 hours)

(a) German Operations in Yugoslavia and Greece

Early in the morning German Army formations moved forward in the direction of Zagreb from assembly areas established south of the Styrian - Jugoslavian frontier yesterday.

R E S T R I C T E D

/In the

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In the evening a Panzer division entered Zagreb and was welcomed by the population.

In the Jagodina area Panzer formations routed 2 Serbian divisions, taking 5,000 prisoners and capturing 9 artillery troops. These formations encountered strong enemy resistance in their advance towards Belgrade.

Other Army formations are moving through Nis in the direction of Jagodina. Large amounts of war material were captured in Nis.

A Panzer division moved south-west from Nis through Prokuplje in the direction of Pristina.

German forces have taken the northern part of Pristina and are in action against Yugoslavian units.

The main force of the Panzer division located in the Tetovo area turned south and, passing through Bitolj, reached Veve (east of Florina).

Small elements of this division occupied Prizren. At Veve German forces engaged British units for the first time.

A mountain division moved up along the Salonika - Skoplje railway line in the Artzan Lake area.

A Panzer division is holding the Salonika area. The Infantry Corps east of Salonika has taken over the defence of the Greek coast.

(b) Italian Operations in Albania

1. Julian Front

A Yugoslavian attack was repulsed. Italian troops achieved a few local successes. Italian patrols encountered strong enemy resistance.

2. Jugoslavian Front

Jugoslavian attacks on and east of the scutari sector were repulsed.

In their advance on Debar and Struga Italian troops encountered strong enemy resistance.

3. Greek Front

Nothing of particular importance occurred.

II Air Situation on 10 April (2000 hours)

A Luftwaffe Operations

1. Luftflotte 4

Operations were limited on 10 April owing to unfavourable weather conditions. West of Zagreb a dive-bomber attacked a military train travelling in the direction of Ljubljana with one 250 kg bomb and brought it to a standstill.

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/VIII

R E S T R I C T E D

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2. VIII Fliegerkorps

Small dive-bomber formations participated in the ground fighting south of Krivolac (southern Yugoslavia).

10 bombers attacked Kozani (northern Greece) with good results.

3. X Fliegerkorps

6 bombers carried out armed reconnaissance in the sea area Crete. 2 of these aircraft attacked a merchant ship in Suda Bay with 250 kg bombs, scoring near misses. AA defence was very strong.

Total Losses

<u>Enemy:</u>	1 Do 17 (destroyed on the ground)
<u>German:</u>	None reported

B. Italian Air Operations on 10 April

Reconnaissance

Aircraft carried out visual and photographic reconnaissance over Yugoslavia in the Zara, Dubrovnik, Kotor and Split areas and along the Yugoslav-Albanian frontier.

One aircraft carried out reconnaissance along the western coast of Greece.

Operations

30 bombers attacked Sebenico harbour and the seaplane base at Divulje. Results have not yet been reported.

One aircraft bomber Dubrovnik harbour; a barracks was hit.

77 fighters carried out patrols in the areas Taranto - Brindisi - Lecce - Bari and Rimini - Venice - Trieste, the Italian region of Zara and the battle area. Enemy barracks and various military objectives were shot up.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

10 April: At Tobruk the embarkation of enemy troops continued. The enemy has taken up defensive positions 15 km west and south of the town. Ain el Gazala (60 km west of Tobruk) was occupied.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Operations

10 April: At 1200 hours 6 German and 6 Italian dive-bombers with fighter escort attacked large concentrations south of Tobruk. Other enemy concentrations on the western edge of Tobruk were attacked in the afternoon by 8 escorted German dive-bombers.

R E S T R I C T E D

/In the

R E S T R I C T E D

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In the morning aircraft on armed reconnaissance made low-level attacks on roads in the Tobruk area and on the El Adem - Gazala airfield. There was strong AA and fighter defence. 1 Hurricane was shot down. 1 German light bomber was lost.

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

9 April:

Morning reconnaissance in the area El Hammama (30 km west of Apollonia) - Tmimi - El Mechili - Martuba (20 km south-south-east of Derna) observed about 675 vehicles, believed to be enemy transport. About 100 more vehicles were observed moving from El Mechili in the direction of Martuba. Enemy transport convoys were also observed moving along the coastal road in the direction of Martuba. About 100 vehicles were identified between Derna and Ain Gazala.

At 1000 hours a cruiser on an easterly course was observed 9 km north of Ain el Gazala. There were several medium and large merchant ships in Tobruk harbour.

Operations

9 April:

8 bombers attacked Tobruk, scoring hits on 1 light cruiser, 1 medium and 2 small merchant ships and on harbour installations.

Fighters shot down 3 Hurricanes over Delgada (?).

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

9 April:

No enemy warships were observed in the sea area Gavdos Island - Alexandria.

10 April:

There were no enemy shipping movements in the Sicilian Channel.

(section incomplete)

LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 581 (12 April 1941)

Operations on 11 April and during the Night of 11/12 April, 1941

Situation in Southern Theatre

X Fliegerkorps Operations

Air Situation - Libya

During the morning of 11 April reconnaissance was carried out over roads and the coast in the Bardia - Tobruk area.

In the morning and afternoon operations by escorted German and Italian dive-bombers were directed against harbour installations at Tobruk and AA batteries in the vicinity of the town. Effective attacks were made on merchant ships, and hits were scored on a troop transport and quay installations.

German aircraft flew supplies of fuel and food to ground troops.

R E S T R I C T E D

/Air

Air Situation - Mediterranean

At noon reconnaissance sighted a convoy with cruiser and destroyer escort on a southerly course north of Crete.

An attack by German bombers on an enemy cruiser north of Crete was unsuccessful and fighter sweeps over Malta were uneventful.

Fighters escorting a German reconnaissance aircraft shot down 3 Hurricanes over Malta.

An enemy attack on Derna airfield in the morning caused only slight damage. Other enemy low-level fighter attacks were made on advancing German troops in the desert.

Total Losses - Libya and Mediterranean

<u>German:</u>	1 Me 110
	1 Ju 87
	2 aircraft

Enemy: 3 Hurricanes (air battle)

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I Ground Situation on 11 April (2000 hours)

(a) German Operations in Yugoslavia and Greece

German Panzer formations, which occupied Zagreb yesterday, advanced west and south-west to reach Karlovac. Elements of these formations continued the advance westwards to cut the roads leading to the north in the area west of Karlovac.

A mountain division advanced south from Dravograd in the direction of Celje, occupied the town and is continuing its advance towards Zagreb.

Advancing rapidly through Ptuj, an infantry division reached the town of Krapina.

About 30 - 40,000 Serbian troops were encircled by German and Italian Army formations in the area south-east of Ljubljana.

A Panzer division moved forward from the area east of Barcs in Hungary, crossed the Yugoslavian frontier, and occupied Osijek (on the Drav). A motorised division advanced along secondary roads in the direction of Osijek.

SS units advancing from Mariolana (about 80 km north-east of Belgrade) through Vrsac and Alibunar passed through the town of Pancevo.

After hard fighting a Panzer division of the Panzer group advancing through Nis in the direction of Belgrade forced its way forward north of Jagodina and its advanced detachments are about 45 km south of Belgrade.

Elements of armoured formations which occupied Pristina have advanced north-west through Mitrovica into the Kukovica and Bukovica areas.

On the Yugoslav-Albanian frontier German forces have linked up with Italian troops at Debar and Struga. Advanced detachments and SS units of the Infantry Corps located in southern Serbia moved up to the enemy in the area Vevi - Florina, where they are engaged in hard fighting with British troops.

A few divisions moved up in the area north of Salonika.

A mountain division occupied Yiannitsa (40 km north-west of Salonika). Advanced detachments of this division have reached the area directly east of Edhessa and Verroia.

(b) Hungarian Operations in Jugoslavia

On the morning of 11 April Hungarian Army formations advanced southwards over the Yugoslavian frontier in the area between the Danube and Tisza rivers.

(c) Italian Operations

1. Julian Front

Italian forces achieved some local successes east of the point where the three frontiers meet (south of Villach).

Other formations are advancing through Logatec (about 30 km from Gorizia) in the direction of Ljubljana

East of Fiume the Italians occupied Susak.

2. Albanian Front

Local attacks by Serbian forces on Scutari and Kukes were repulsed. The Italians took Struga (northern shore of Ochrida Lake).

No operations of particular importance took place on the other fronts.

II Air Situation on 11 April (2000 hours)

A German Operations

(1) Luftflotte 4

Luftflotte 4 operations were hindered by the weather. During the day 117 bombers, 49 twin-engined fighters and 31 single-engined fighters took off and carried out operations primarily against troop concentrations, transport, railway installations and airfields in northern Jugoslavia south of the line Belgrade - Novisad - Osijek - Zagreb - Ljubljana.

Fighter formations on free-lance patrols in the area north of the Danube did not make contact with the enemy. Enemy AA defence was weak and inaccurate and occasional enemy fighters which were observed made off.

The following targets were attacked:

Enemy columns were bombed and shot up at Samobor (west of Zagreb), at Nova Mesto railway station (west of Zagreb), at Sid (on the line Mitrovica - Vinkovci), in the Ljubljana area, at Ruma airfield, at Banjaluka airfield and on the road between Banjaluka and Gradiska Bosanska. Several military trains were damaged or brought to a standstill south of Karlovac and at Sid. Barrack buildings were set on fire at Bihac (110 km south of Zagreb) and in the southern part of Banjaluka.

The railway station at Plaski (south of Karlovac), a railway station 10 km north-east of Ogulin (south-west of Karlovac) and Brod railway station (hits on engine sheds, workshops and a gasometer) were effectively attacked.

In the attacks on airfields at Novisad, Bijeljina and Ruma, hangars were set on fire, 7 multiple-engined aircraft destroyed on the ground at Bijeljina (south-west of Novisad), and a further 3 single-engined aircraft destroyed at Ruma (south of Novisad).

Industrial installations and public buildings were bombed in the northern and eastern parts of Belgrade, at Vinkovci, Banjaluka and Bos. Brijedor (north-west of Banjaluka). Ljubljana radio station was destroyed by a direct hit.

3 barges on the Sava were bombed about 10 km south-east of Brod, near misses being scored. East of Mitrovica a goods train and its locomotive were destroyed. A direct hit was scored on the Ljubljana - Kocevje road.

Leaflets were dropped in the Zagreb area.

VIII Fliegerkorps

Operations were impossible owing to weather conditions.

(2) X Fliegerkorps

During the night of 11/12 April 46 bombers attacked Pireaus harbour. One merchant ship of medium tonnage was sunk and a further six damaged. It is probable that other vessels were also damaged. In addition, 2 fuel storage installations, a power station and harbour installations were hit. AA defence was very strong.

Total Losses

Enemy:

In the Air:	1 Hurricane
	1 night fighter, type not known
On the Ground:	10 aircraft, types not known

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12 aircraft

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<u>German:</u>	1 Hs 126 (missing on 10 April)
	3 Ju 88 (missing)

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4 aircraft

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Correction to enemy losses given in the report of 9 April:  
 Destroyed on Ground: 7 aircraft, types not known.

B Italian Air Operations on 11 April

13 aircraft carried out armed reconnaissance operations in the Zara area and bombed military targets.

At Sebenico 12 bombers bombed and shot up 4 torpedo boats, 1 steamship and 2 flying-boats, sinking 1 torpedo boat and damaging the other three.

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27 fighters carried out escort operations and patrols in the Zara area and shot up flying-boats and AA positions at Stretto (south of Slosello). 6 flying-boats were set on fire and 2 sunk.

6 fighters shot up enemy positions north of Scutari.

There was only slight air activity on other parts of the front.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

10 April: Axis forces continued their pursuit of the enemy, General Neame, formerly G.O.C. in C. Palestine, was among the Generals taken prisoner at El Mechili.

11 April: The evacuation of troops by sea continued at Tobruk. The town is encircled by German and Italian forces, which approached to within 3 km and occupied one of the two airfields. An advanced detachment was sent out in the direction of Bardia.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

11 April: The Tobruk - Bardia road was clear of the enemy in the morning. There were 2 merchant ships with steam up at the mole.

Operations (German and Italian)

11 April: In the morning 5 Italian and 7 German Ju 87's escorted by German and Italian fighters attacked Tobruk harbour, scoring hits on merchant ships and quay installations.

In the afternoon 9 Italian and German dive-bombers escorted by Italian fighters made an effective attack on Tobruk harbour and AA batteries in the vicinity of the town. A troop transport was hit and smoke was observed. 1 Italian Ju 87 was lost. 1 Hurricane was shot down for certain and another probably destroyed.

2 bombers and 1 transport aircraft supplied ground troops with fuel and food.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

11 April: At 1330 hours 1 cruiser, 2 destroyers and 5 merchant ships on a course of 195° were sighted 27 km east of Gerigo.

A light bomber sent out on photographic reconnaissance over Malta was shot down 30 km north of Gozo and crashed into the sea. Fighters and rescue aircraft searched for the crew. An E-boat which approached the area where the aircraft was shot down from the direction of La Valetta turned back when the aircraft closed in. At 1425 hours a rubber dinghy,

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apparently empty, was sighted east of Gozo. At 1435 hours a small British (?) craft was observed moving at high speed in the direction of La Valetta.

Operations

11 April: At 0840 hours 2 bombers made an unsuccessful dive attack with 4 250 kg bombs on a heavy cruiser 40 km east of Cape Spatha.

Fighter operations to intercept British ferry aircraft in the Malta area were uneventful.

5 fighters escorted a reconnaissance aircraft over Malta. In an air battle with 8 Hurricanes, three enemy aircraft were shot down and another probably destroyed.

2 fighters escorted a convoy.

Defence

11 April: Tobruk: Intense, well aimed AA  
Malta: Medium, badly aimed AA Strong fighter defence.

Intense AA of all calibres from the heavy cruiser attacked 40 km east of Cape Spatha.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

1 reconnaissance aircraft  
15 bombers  
27 fighters  

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43 aircraft  

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Enemy Operations

Libya

11 April: 3 Wellingtons attacked Derna airfield at 0300 hours. One German aircraft was damaged.

Troops advancing in the desert were repeatedly attacked by low-flying enemy fighters.

Losses

German: 1 Me 110  
Enemy: 4 Hurricanes  
2 Hurricanes probably destroyed

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

9 April: Reconnaissance aircraft covered the advancing Axis forces. No enemy troops were identified.

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Reconnaissance over the high ground near Tazerbo (south of Augila) observed enemy troops and aircraft at Kufra. There were 24 vehicles at Zella (75 km south-south-west of Tagrifet).

Operations (see German report)

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

10 April: Towards midday a 5,000 ton cruiser on a northerly course was sighted west of Falconara Island (north of Crete).

11 April: No enemy warships observed in the Sicilian Channel.

Operations

11 April: An air battle developed between 8 fighters on reconnaissance over La Valetta and 5 Hurricanes. There were no losses on either side.

3 small and 2 medium merchant ships were observed in the harbour.

33 fighters escorted Italian convoys.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

11 reconnaissance aircraft  
10 bombers  
29 fighters

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50 aircraft

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Enemy Operations

Mediterranean

During the night of 10/11 April enemy aircraft on a ferry flight to Malta passed over Cagliari (Sardinia).

Losses

Italian: 1 Ju 87  
Enemy: None reported

/LUFTWAFFE

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LUFTWAFFE SITUATION REPORT NO. 582 (13 April 1941)

Operations on 12 April and during the Night of 12/13 April, 1941

Situation in Southern Theatre

X Fliegerkorps Operations

(a) Air Situation - Libya

Photographic reconnaissance was carried out over the coastal area between Tobruk and El Alamein (170 km east of Marsa Matruh).

Dive-bombers sank an enemy auxiliary cruiser in Tobruk harbour.

(b) Air Situation - Mediterranean

No enemy warships were observed in the sea area south of Sicily and around Crete on 12 April.

An unsuccessful attack was made on a small merchant ship west of Crete.

During the night dive-bombers attacked Ta Venezia airfield (Malta). Only part of the results of the attack were observed, but these were seen to be effective.

Other aircraft carried out fighter sweeps over Malta and escorted convoys.

North of Apollonia the crew of an enemy aircraft which made a forced landing in the sea was taken prisoner.

Total Losses - Libya and Mediterranean

German: Nil return  
Enemy: None reported

Situation in South-Eastern Theatre

I Ground Situation on 12 April (2000 hours)

(a) German Operations in Yugoslavia and Greece

Army formations subordinated to Second Army moved up in the Zagreb area. Panzer units have cut the roads leading north west of Karlovac.

The Panzer division located in Zagreb continued its advance south-east in the direction of Sarajevo.

A Panzer division from Osijek reached Ruma (50 km north-west of Belgrade) where it broke enemy resistance after hard fighting. Elements of the division then turned south and south-east in the direction of Valjevo and Zvornik.

After overcoming strong enemy resistance in several places, a Panzer division of Panzergruppe Kleist advanced to a point directly south of Belgrade. Other formations of the Panzergruppe are moving up in the Jagodina, Nis and Pristina areas.

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After hard fighting with British troops, advanced detachments of XXXX Corps and of SS formations captured the heights at Vevi.

Elements of a mountain division occupied Edhessa and Verroia.

A Panzer division from Salonika is advancing into the Katerini area.

2 infantry divisions were moved westwards from the area east of Salonika in the direction of Edhessa and Verroia

(b) Italian Operations

Julian Front:

Fast-moving Italian units advanced north-east from Fiume and established contact with German forces west of Karlovac. Italian garrison troops at Zara occupied Bugliano Island and the town of Camonico (east of Zara).

No operations worth mentioning took place on the Albanian-Jugoslavian and Greek fronts.

II Air Situation on 12 April (2000 hours)

A German Operations

(1) Luftflotte 4

During the morning and afternoon a total of 64 bombers, 28 dive-bombers, 50 twin-engined fighters, 23 single-engined fighters and 2 transport aircraft were operational. Activity was extensively hindered by thick, low-lying cloud and occasional falls of snow. The main targets were enemy airfields, marching columns and railway installations in the area Belgrade - Novisad - Brod - Banjaluka - Sarajevo. Altogether 2 1,000 kg 4 400 kg 226 250 kg and 176 50 kg bombs were dropped in high and low-level attacks.

Fighters on free-lance patrols over the Hungarian Army sector and escorting dive-bombers and transport aircraft did not make contact with the enemy.

Transport aircraft and bombers dropped leaflets in areas of Croatia and Serbia north of the Danube.

Single enemy fighters were observed, but they avoided combat. Ground defence was weak, consisting only of machine-gun fire.

The following targets were attacked:

Airfields at Bijeljina, Banjaluka, Mostar and an airfield south-east of Sarajevo were bombed and machine-gunned. 31 aircraft were destroyed on the ground at Bijeljina airfield (3 Me 109's, 20 twin-engined aircraft and 8 biplanes of unknown type), 6 - 10 aircraft on Mostar airfield and 2 aircraft of an unknown type on the airfield south-east of Sarajevo. In addition, a hangar on Mostar airfield was hit by 2 bombs.

Effective attacks were made on enemy columns in the area between Brod and Sarajevo, at Ruma, and on the Sava river road south of Belgrade.

Several goods and transport trains were destroyed or brought to a standstill and tracks damaged in the area between Brod and Sarajevo. A train was partially destroyed at Titel, and another on the line between Sombor and Novisad. Tracks, wagons in sidings and buildings were attacked

and damaged at Banjaluka and Mostar railway stations.

The cities of Belgrade and Mostar were bombed. A monitor was attacked by dive-bombers on the Danube at Batina (Jugoslav-Hungarian frontier) and sunk by two direct hits.

VIII Fliegerkorps

No operations owing to unfavourable weather conditions.

Enemy Operations

In the morning 3 enemy aircraft penetrated Hungarian territory and dropped some bombs north of Szeged. At 1212 another Jugoslavian aircraft approaching from the direction of Lake Balaton landed 20 km south of Budapest

(2) X Fliegerkorps

Further details have been made known of the attack on Pireaus during the night of 11/12 April.

Between 2031 and 2240 hours 29 bombers made dive and glide attacks from heights ranging from 100 to 5,000 feet on shipping concentrations in Salamis roadstead. The following results were obtained:

1 freighter or passenger ship of 8 - 10,000 tons received 2 direct hits.  
1 hit on the quay wall of Pireaus inner harbour.  
1 freighter of 8 - 10,000 tons; 2 near misses - fire observed on board.  
1 freighter of 8 - 10,000 tons; 4 near misses.  
1 freighter of 6,000 tons; bomb near ship - violent explosion.  
1 freighter of 8,000 tons; 2 direct hits amidships - fire observed on board.  
1 freighter of 6,000 tons; 4 near misses.  
1 freighter of 6 - 8,000 tons; hit twice amidships - heavy pall of smoke.  
1 freighter of about 2,500 tons damaged by bomb hit amidships.  
Merchant shipping in Salamis roadstead was again attacked by 16 bombers between 0300 and 0424 hours. Hits were probably scored on 2 vessels, but results could not be observed owing to searchlights.

Defence

Heavy medium and light AA fire, some of it well aimed. Searchlights directed well.

Total Losses

Enemy:

In the Air:	1 fighter - type unknown
Destroyed on Ground:	39 aircraft (3 Me 109's, the others of unknown types)
Forces landing in Hungary:	1 Bristol Blenheim

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41 aircraft

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German:

1 Ju 87 (forced landing in enemy territory)
1 Me 110 (missing)

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2 aircraft

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B Italian Air Operations on 12 April

Reconnaissance

Aircraft carried out visual and photographic reconnaissance along the Dalmatian Coast.

Operations

12 bombers made effective attacks on several towns in the Zara area.

37 bombers made accurate bombing and machine-gun attacks on the naval base at Sebenico and the seaplane base at Divulje. One destroyer was damaged at Sebenico and a hangar and several buildings hit at Divulje.

36 bombers attacked Podgorica and surrounding districts, destroying 2 bridges and bombing road and rail communications to Virpazar. In addition, enemy frontier positions, troops and MT columns were attacked with good results.

1 Blenheim was destroyed on the ground.

68 fighters carried out patrols and escort operations in the battle area, some of them shooting up enemy columns and military objectives in Jugoslavia.

Libya and Mediterranean Area

Ground Situation - Libya

11 April: British warships bombarded the coastal road at Tmimi (20 km west of Ain el Gazala).

12 April: At 1000 hours Bardia was occupied by German and Italian advanced detachments.

German Operations

Air Situation - Libya

12 April: Photographic reconnaissance was carried out over the area Tobruk - El Alamein (170 km east of Marsa Matruh).

Operations

12 April: An auxiliary cruiser of about 2,000 tons was sunk in Tobruk harbour in a dive-bombing attack.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

12 April: No enemy warships were observed in the sea area south of Sicily and around Crete.

Operations

12 April: No enemy aircraft were encountered in fighter sweeps over Malta.

6 bombers and 8 fighters escorted a convoy.

During armed reconnaissance an unsuccessful attack was made on a merchant ship of 1,000 tons off the western tip of Crete.

At about 2200 hours 8 dive-bombers attacked Ta Venezia airfield, dropping 7 500 kg and 24 50 kg bombs. Bombs fell on the airfield perimeter. A large column of red flame, presumably caused by a burning fuel dump, was observed on the western perimeter of the airfield. Details could not be ascertained owing to bad visibility. 1 bomber is missing.

The occupants of an aircraft from England which made a forced landing in the sea north of Apollonia were taken prisoner. Among them was Major General Carton de Wiart.

Defence

12 April: In the attack on Malta 2 night fighters were clearly recognised. There were about 20 - 30 searchlights, well aimed light AA and moderate heavy AA.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

2 reconnaissance aircraft  
19 bombers  
10 fighters  
  
31 aircraft

Losses

German: 1 Ju 87 missing  
Enemy: None reported

Italian Operations

Air Situation - Libya

Reconnaissance

10 April: Nothing of importance was observed by reconnaissance in the area Tazerbo (550 km south of Agheila) - Zella.

Operations

10 April: Transport aircraft flew supplies to troops fighting in Cyrenaica.

Air Situation - Mediterranean

Reconnaissance

12 April: There were no enemy shipping movements in the Sicilian Channel.

/Operations

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Operations

11 April: 3 torpedo bombers were sent out to attack a convoy observed 20 km west of Kythera Island comprising a 7,000 ton cruiser, 2 destroyers and 5 merchant ships, but the objective could not be located.

1 reconnaissance aircraft is missing.

11 & 12 April: 65 fighters escorted convoys and carried out patrols over Tripoli.

Total Number of Aircraft Operational

10 reconnaissance aircraft  
3 bombers  
65 fighters

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78 aircraft

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Losses

Italian: 1 reconnaissance aircraft  
Enemy: None reported

A.H.B.6 Distribution

Same as Translation VII/104

RESTRICTED