

MOST SECRET

War Diary

22.5.1941.
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

D.S. NAUTILUS
Sunk.

Dutch minelayer NAUTILUS was sunk at 0130 today as result of collision with SS MURRAYFIELD off the Humber. There were no casualties.

Watch for
German
Naval Units.

Aircraft R/C at 1939 today showed that the German battleship and cruiser have left Bergen. The merchant ships did not leave with them. Photographs at 1730 showed 3 destroyers and a catapult ship in Trondheim. Most of the coast was fog bound. F.O. 1st B.C.S.'s Force (HOOD, PRINCE OF WALES and 6 destroyers) (to be known as Battle Cruiser Force) and Force with C. in C. H.F. (KING GEORGE V, VICTORIOUS, GALATEA, AURORA, KENYA, HERMIONE and 7 destroyers) to be known as Battle Fleet, were ordered at 2207B to cover a possible break out of the enemy westward through the Denmark Straits, Iceland Faeroes passage or Faeroes Shetlands passage. The Battle Fleet will operate south of 62° N., and the Battle Cruiser Force north of 62° N. 18th C.S. (BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER and ARETHUSA) are to patrol the Iceland Faeroes passage, west of the mine barrier, and SUFFOLK is to join F.O.I.C.S. in NORFOLK on Denmark Strait patrol. REPULSE is to proceed from the Clyde to Scapa. Air R/C is to be maintained in the Iceland Faeroes Channel, Denmark Straits, Faeroes Shetlands Channel and Coast of Norway.

U.S.
C.G. Cutters.

American Coastguard Cutters FISHGUARD, CULVER, BANFF and HARTLAND arrived at Greenock today.

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SITUATION REPORT

British Air Activity

In order to economise personnel and stores it is proposed to close down the Naval Air Section at Sullom Voe and the Naval Air Station, Stornoway.

Two Hudsons of Coastal Command attacked the enemy naval units at Bergen in the early hours of this morning. Results were not observed. Bad weather caused other Hudsons to return without attacking.

Owing to bad weather all operations by Bomber Command last night were cancelled.

Blenheims today searched for shipping off the Frisian Islands and Danish coast north of Sylt. One small merchant vessel is thought to have been damaged off Borkum.

Enemy Air Operations

SS EMPIRE PROGRESS was bombed and damaged in Totland Bay today.

Mining

Operation
B.S. 61.

PLOVER today laid mines in the East Coast Barrier.

Mines were detonated today in the Thames Estuary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

Faroes.
Site for
Aerodrome.

Yesterday I visited a possible site at Sands 061° 50' N. 006° 48' W. in Island. Construction and transport difficulties would be great but not insuperable. In view of great importance of operating striking force and reconnaissance aircraft from Faroes request (vigorous?) hastening. action may be taken (A.C.D.S. 0932Z/22 to Adty.)

Movements.

REPULSE.

Cancel my 2353B/21. C. in C. W.A. is requested to provide A/S screen for REPULSE. REPULSE is to proceed Scapa, when A/S screen is available, with all convenient despatch. (C. in C. H.F. 0103B/22 to REPULSE)

LEGION, SAGUENAY, and ASSINIBOINE will be required to escort REPULSE from Clyde to Scapa. (C. in C. W.A. 0151/22)

My 0151B/22. Comply with C. in C. H.F. 0103B/22. (C. in C. W.A. 0309B/22 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Sailed REPULSE, LEGION, ASSINIBOINE, SAGUENAY in accordance with my 0555B/22 arrive 277° Dunnet Head 30 miles at 0930/23. Code word FAITH. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1603B/22)

U.S.A.
Coastguard
Cutters.

Arrived American C.G. Cutters FISHGUARD, CULVER, BANFF and HARTLAND. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1950B/22.

/MOOLTAN.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. (contd.)

MOOLTAN.

My 1540B/13. Southend 22/5 departure
MOOLTAN at 1500 escorted by MENDIP and
COTTREMORE. S. of A. 16½ knots. E.T.A.
2200B/24th (C. in C. Nore. 2116B/22 to
C. in C. Rosyth.)

Operations.

Watch for
Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.

Scapa departure R.A.I.B.S. in HOOD with
PRINCE OF WALES, ICARUS, ANTELOPE, ACHATES,
ANTHONY, ELECTRA, ECHO. (A.C.O.S. 0050/22)

Arrived SUFFOLK 0130. (N.O.I.C. Iceland
0915/22.)

A.C.O.S. 2301B/21. P. 31 is proceeding
to patrol 25 miles west of Statlandet.
(Capt. S.9. 0933B/22 to MINERVE)

Unless otherwise ordered ARETHUSA relieves
NORFOLK for fuelling 2000B/26 off Isafjord.
(F.O.C.1st C.A. 0934B/22 to ARETHUSA)

Remain at Hvalfjord. (C. in C.H.F. 0944B/22
to SUFFOLK)

Arrival BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER. (N.O.I.C.
Faroes 1017/22)

Until otherwise ordered by C. in C.H.F.
ARETHUSA will act as a private ship.
(A.C.O.S. 1025Z/22 to C. in C.H.F.)

/Proceed to

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Watch for
Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.
(contd.)

Proceed to join C.S. One. (C. in C.H.F.
2014/22 to SUFFOLK)

ARETHUSA is to proceed to take up N.P. line
TR.58. MANCHESTER on arrival in area is
to take BIRMINGHAM, ARETHUSA under his
orders and dispose ships to patrol (Iceland)?
Faeroes passage westward of mine barrier.

(C. in C. H.F. 2042B/22)

C. in C. H.F.'s 2042/22. Intend to sail
0020B/23 and make good 18 knots.

(ARETHUSA 2130Z/22)

In view of present situation regret Capt
(D) 6 and his destroyers will not be
available for H X 127.

Request you will order them to proceed to
Scapa at best speed after leaving RODNEY.

(C. in C.H.F. 2142B/22)

Sailes ARETHUSA (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2210Z/22)

F.O.C. 1st B.C.S.'s force is to be known as
Battle Cruiser force and force with C. in C.
H.F. as Battle Fleet.

Both forces are to cover possible break out
westward through Denmark Straits, Iceland
Faeroes passage, or Faeroes Shetlands
passage.

Battle fleet will operate south of 062° N.
Battle cruiser force will operate north of
062° N.

If enemy battleships and cruisers are
located in harbour or returning to Germany
Battle Cruiser force is to proceed to
Hvalfjord and Battle fleet to Scapa.

Failing such information F.O.C. 1st B.C.S.
is to use his discretion as to when to
take destroyers in to Hvalfjord to fuel.

(C. in C.H.F. 2207B/22)

/SUFFOLK

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HOMR COMMANDS.

Operations.

SUFFOLK sailed. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2212Z/22)

BIRMINGHAM and MANCHESTER sailed 2200.
S. of A. 21 knots. (N.O.I.C. Faeroes
2213B/22)

Scapa departures C. in C. H.F. in KING
GEORGE V, VICTORIOUS, GALATEA, AURORA,
KENYA, HERMIONE, INGLEFIELD, INTREPID,
ACTIVE, PUNJABI, NESTOR, WINDSOR, LANCE.
(A.C.O.S. 2307/22)

CONQUEROR.

Intend CONQUEROR to sail from Falmouth so
as to arrive Plymouth 1500/23 and leave
Plymouth so as to arrive Portland 1600/24.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1208/22)
Intend to sail for Plymouth CONQUEROR
1030/23. E.T.A. 1500. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth
2208/22)

IRIS
(cable laying
from
Benbecula)

Admiralty's 0036B/21. Report how long
this operation will take and when IRIS
will commence laying. (C. in C. W.A.
1902B/22 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

British Air Activity.

Heligoland
attacked.

Day 19 May. Night 19/20 May, Day 20 May,
and night 20/21 May. All operations
cancelled owing to unfavourable weather.
Day 21 May. This afternoon the naval base
of Heligoland was subjected to a surprise
attack. Details. (H.Q.B.C. 0240/22)

/Patrols

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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd.)

Patrols.

Patrol UNST in operation until 0800.
(C. in C. Rosyth D552/22)

Sunderland A/C will fly following cross
over patrol from about 1045 until 1600
today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0734/22)

My 2302/21. All R/C's encountered very
low visibility and saw nothing. Meteor-
ological flights over Norwegian coast are
being maintained and further R/C's will
be flown when visibility improves.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1054/22)

My 0734/22. Aircraft returning owing to
fog. (C. in C. Rosyth 1156/22)

Blenheim A/C are carrying out meteorological
R/C on Norwegian coast between 60° N. and
62° N. from 1400 till 1700 today.
Patrol HORNLI now in operation.
(C. in C. Rosyth 11438/22)

Request Air R/C be maintained as follows:-
(a) Iceland, Faeroes, Channel.
(b) Denmark Straits (c) Faeroes, Shetlands,
Channel. (d) Norwegian Coast.
(2) Object is to detect enemy battleship
and enemy cruiser breaking out to westward.
(C. in C. H.F. 2043B/22 to Adty.)

Your 2043B/22. Air reconnaissances for
23/5 arranged as follows:-
(A) Iceland - Faeroes by A.O.C. in C.
Coast Command.
(B) Denmark Strait by C. in C. Western
Approaches.
(C) Faeroes - Shetland 18 Group.
(D) Norwegian Coast including PRU 18 Group.
Details follows. (C. in C. Rosyth 2338/22
to C. in C. H.F.)

/Air Attack

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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (contd.)

Air Attack
on Enemy
Warships at
Bergen.

My 1824/21. Owing to low cloud base all
aircraft were unable to locate target.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0628/22)

Merchant Ship
Fighter Unit.

Since M.S.F.U. Ship Detachments include
only one pilot and hours of daylight may
be 22 out of 24, a great strain will be
thrown on the pilot who will be almost
continually at readiness between 500 W.
Long and U.K.
Consider that when Naval Catapult Ships
are present with Convoy it might be
feasible for M.S.F.U. pilot to be given
certain hours of release under the orders
of the Catapult Ship.
May this policy please be considered and
Admiralty views solicited. When no Cata-
pult Ship is present with Convoy it will
be necessary for a lesser degree of
readiness to be accepted for M.S.F.U. air-
craft.
Request decision by signal.
H.Q. 9 Group 1230/22 to H.Q.F.C)

Hatston.

Admiralty 1120B/21. Request the additional
aircraft be sent to Hatston when available.
(C. in C. H.F. 1927B/22 to RANAS)

One Merchant
Vessel
attacked.

On 22/5 one C/A attacked a Merchant Vessel
of about 1000 tons, just North East of
Borkum. Vessel thought to have been
damaged.
Night 22/23. All operations cancelled owing
to weather. (H.Q.B.C. 2337/22)

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FOREIGN STATION.

North Atlantic.

E/Boats
Oran.

My 2221/7 and 1938/10. Reported that German E boats have arrived Oran. Graded C.3. They may be painted in French colours. (N.I.D. 0022B/22 to S.O. Force H).

Operation
"Splice".

My 2120/21 para 2. This Fulmar arrived. Missing Fulmar was leader of 5th flight possibly force-landed near Cape Bon. This indicates that three out of five Fulmars proved unserviceable. (S.O. Force H., 1013/22 to Admty).

W.S.BB.
Operations
"Rocket"
"Tracer".

A.T. 0025B/22.
As REPULSE is not now sailing as escort to ARGUS and Convoy W.S.B.B., SHEFFIELD is to meet convoy and escort ARGUS to Gibraltar. EDINBURGH is to proceed to Gibraltar on completion of patrol and is to escort ARGUS and NEA HELLAS to U.K. as soon as transfer of aircraft is complete about 31/5. "ROCKET" is to be carried out as arranged by S.O. Force "H". "TRACER" is postponed. A.T. 1516B/21 is cancelled. RENOWN will not proceed to U.K. until further orders. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1020B/22 to F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. H.F., S.O. Force H., C.S.18).

FORESIGHT
Force H.

FORESIGHT being shadowed. Force "H" steering east pending further developments. (S.O. Force H., 1046/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

CLYDE

Notifying movements of PANDORA, IMPERIALIST, corvettes, NEA HELLAS, WRESTLER. You will proceed unescorted after passing position (e). Inform me if unable to comply with E.T.A. within 2 hours. (F.O.C.N.A. 1110A/22 to CLYDE).

Corvettes.

Pass through 035° 35' N 015° 00' W thence Gibraltar. My 1210A/21. Para B Track of TRUANT is to be crossed during daylight hours. Estimated your position at 1500B/22 is 040° 10' N 018° 50' W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1139A/22 to FLEUR DE LYS, COREOPSIS, SPIRIA.)

PANDORA.....

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SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Search for
BISMARCK &
PRINZ EUGEN.

At 2023B NORFOLK in 66° 43' N. 26° 38' W. (Denmark Strait) sighted a battleship and a cruiser 6 miles to the N.N.W. steering 240°. SUFFOLK also sighted them at 2258B and was still shadowing them at 2359B. It was subsequently reported that a third smaller ship, thought to be a destroyer was present, and turned away to the north-eastward.

MINERVE is to patrol near 64° 30' N. 1° E. and P.31 near 65° 30' N. 2° E.

Denmark Straits patrol was not flown today on account of weather. Cross over patrol south of Faroes was only flown from 1330 to 1700.

? Raider.

There was further D/F indication this afternoon of an enemy surface unit in approx. 42° 33' N. 11° 15' W, probably homeward bound.

Atlantic
convoy
escorts.

A/S escort for all HX, S.C. and corresponding OB convoys is to be extended as far as about 45° W. in the latitude of Newfoundland as soon as arrangements can be made.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

AVON VALE

Admt'y 1548B/22. AVON VALE will require to boiler clean on arrival Belfast on 28/5. Proposed period 8 days. Is this acceptable. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 1010B/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

FARNDALE

Admt'y's 1548B/22. Subject to satisfactory completion of working up practices, it is anticipated FARNDALE will be ready to sail 26/5.

(R.A.D. 1030/23 to C. in C. W.A., Admt'y).

Admt'y's 1548B/22. When will FARNDALE be ready.

(C. in C. W.A. 1303B/23 to R.A.D. H.F.)

Escort for
H.M. 127

Can two ships of 4th D.F. be detailed to meet and escort H.M. 127 to U.K. arriving in North Channel about 31/5? This would enable redistribution of W.A. Escort Force to be commenced without delay.

(C. in C. W.A. 1147B/23 to C. in C. Plymouth).

Reply. Certainly.

(C. in C. Plymouth 1602/23).

Escorts.

Following alteration to programme for escorts as ordered by my 2254B/23 have become necessary.

(A) On being detached OTTAWA and RESTIGOUCHE are to proceed to St. Johns Newfoundland.

(B) Capt. D.4 is to detail two destroyers of 4th D.F. to proceed in company with PIORUN and meet H.M. 127 further meet signal will be made to Capt. D.4.

(C) My 0234B/22. Two destroyers only of 4th D.F. will now meet LONDON.

(D) OTTAWA to report E.T.A. St. Johns when well clear of convoy.

(C. in C. W.A. 1231B/23 to Capt. D.4. OTTAWA RESTIGOUCHE.)

OTTAWA and RESTIGOUCHE now on escort duty are to be based on St. Johns Newfoundland and have been ordered to proceed direct after being detached in approx 051° 00' N 024° 00' W. Estimated they will arrive 31/5.

(C. in C. W.A. 1237B/23 to C.N.S. Canada).

/D.6.....

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. (contd.)

D.6.

After leaving RODNEY Capt. D.6 and destroyers are to return to Scapa at best speed. (C. in C.W.A. 1311B/23 to Capt. D.6)

Operations.

Patrols by
MINERVE
and P.31.

277. A. MINERVE proceed through 62° N. 01° 30' E. to patrol near 64° 30' N. 01° E.
B.P.31 proceed to patrol near A 65° 30' N. 02° E.
C. Submarines proceed with despatch when north of 61° N.
D. Following T/B/R will be arranged. (F.O.S. 1204B/23 to MINERVE, P.31)

Search for
BISMARCK and
HIPPER.

Join B.C. One who is probably steering to N.W. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2005/23 to ANTELOPE, ANTHONY.)
1 Battleship, 1 cruiser bearing 330° 6 miles course 240° my position 66° 43' 25° 22' W. (NORFOLK 2032B/23) Informing A.I.G.62. Ships and Authorities Area A. H.Q.C.C. (D.D.I.C. 2155B/23).
Proceed when ready to locate enemy reported 066° 50' N. 025° 30' W. course 240° at 1836Z/?23. (N.O.I.C. Iceland, 2037/23 to MALCOLM).
My C. and S. on leaving Reykjavik 250° 23 knots as long as there is a chance of interception. Intend returning to oil (?forthwith) (ANTELOPE 2100Z/23 to F.O.C.1st B.C.S. N.O.I.C. Iceland).
No enemy in sight visibility 8 miles my position 66° 17' N. 25° 42' W. (NORFOLK 2145/23 to Scapa).
My 2129. Enemy is altering course to starboard (SUFFOLK 2152/23 to NORFOLK)

/My 2152

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. (contd.)

Search for
BISMARCK and
HIPPER.
(contd.)

My 2152. Enemy is hidden in rain storm consider he has resumed course my position 066° 25' N. 026° 24' W. X 11. (SUFFOLK 2209B/23 to NORFOLK)

No enemy in sight in the area reading clockwise between 180° and 250° average visibility distance 8 miles and between 000° and 250°. My position 348° 66° N. 26° W. 27 miles. (SUFFOLK 2214B/23 to NORFOLK)

My P.C. and S. 66° 12' N. 26° 25' W. 250° 30 knots. (NORFOLK 2230B/23 to Scapa)

Enemy in sight bearing 232° distance 18 miles. My position 66° 12' N. 27° 5' W. (SUFFOLK 2258B/23 to NORFOLK)

My 2258B both Enemy ships in sight C. and S. 232° 28 knots. My position 066° 09' N. 027° 11" W. (SUFFOLK 2306B/23 to ?)

I bear from you 142° 10 miles steering 200° to cover move of enemy away from ice. (NORFOLK 2311/23 to SUFFOLK) Passed F.O.(S)

My 2306B. Enemy is altering course 20° to port. (SUFFOLK 2341B/23 to Scapa)

My 2341B. Enemy hidden in fog near Ice estimated course 200° my position 065° 56' N. 027° 50' W. (SUFFOLK 2349/23 to Scapa)

Enemy in sight bearing 210 degs. My position 163 66° N. 28° W. 9 (SUFFOLK 2359B/23)

/IRIS

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. (contd.)

IRIS.

Your 1902B/22. Subject to making up shortage of crew IRIS expects to sail 24/5. Operations will take from 8 to 10 days provided weather is suitable.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1131B/23 to C.in C. W.A.)

GIANNA M.

Italian prize GIANNA M. and cargo given into custody of Admiralty Marshal's substitute and prize crew.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1301B/23 to Adty.)

Enemy unit.

Adty. 0328/23. There is further D/F indication of enemy surface unit in approx. 0420 33' N. 0110 15' W. probably homeward bound. (F.O.(S) 1446B/23 to S/M's Area A)

Denmark
Straits.
Possible
passage
inside
Ice.

Study of recent air reconnaissance show that a well built ship could make passage through Denmark Straits about 50 miles inside ice edge. Another channel exists about 55 miles wide at 0660 25' N. 0320 05' W. 18 miles wide at 0670 15' N. 0310 50' W. and 15 miles wide at 0680 20' N. 0280 30' W. A.O.C. R.A.F. considers Air Reconnaissance would establish whether it is possible to reach open sea's latter position if another Catalina were available.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1817/23)

MARQUES DE
COMMILLAS.

1610. A/A on patrol MZCT 2518 cross over through VWEG 4540 VWCT 4520 MZEG 2040.
1717. Sighted 1 MV Spanish vessel MARQUES DE COMMILLAS 10,000 tons C/S 2700 SP 12 KTS Spanish markings on sides.
1735. Sighted 1 MV CASTILLO MON C/S 060 SP 10 KTS position VWCT 4308 Spanish markings.
(Plymouth A.C.Q.Q. 2305/23)

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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Operations.

Patrols and
R/C's.

My 2338/22. (a) Cross over Patrol Two Sorties by Sunderland between 062° 32' N. 008° 47' W - 062° 52' N. 008° 23' W - 063° 38' N. 012° 30' W - 063° 59' N. 012° 00' W. (b) Arranged by C. in C.W.A. (c) Cross over Patrol by Hudson between 060° 41' N. 002° 24' W. - 061° 26' N. 006° 44' W. - 061° 46' N. 006° 10' W. - 060° 18' N. 002° 58' W. (d) R/C of Trondhjem and vicinity. R/C of Bergen and vicinity between Bergen and Stadlandet, and Bergen and Christiansand. Patrol STABRUL - BERT - TROST - STAND - HORNLI. All from First Light. (C. in C. Rosyth 0022/23 to C. in C.H.F) A. LV/G1/23/5. C. Cancel LV/G3/22/5. Following cross-over patrols are to be carried out forthwith by two Catalinas only with the object of locating and shadowing enemy warships which may be attempting to break out into North Atlantic. Depth charges are to be carried and enemy submarines are to be attacked on sight. No. 1 patrol between Z N B B 5503 and H V W M 1438. No. 2 patrol between H V W M 2812 and O F T Y 5632. Patrols are to be maintained to prudent limit of endurance. (A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0055/23) My 2045/22. Request R/C also cover approaches to Iceland particularly Akreyri (C. in C.H.F. 0146B/23 to Adty.) My 0022/23 Para.(D) R/C postponed owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 0630/23 to Adty. C. in C.H.F. A.C.O.S) C. in C. Rosyth's 2338/22 and 0022/23 Air R/C for 23/5 arranged as follows:- * Denmark Strait patrol ordered but not yet confirmed from 66° 25' N. 23° 07' W. on a line 3200 for depth of 100 miles or to ice limit if closer. (C. in C.W.A. 0745B/23 to C. in C.H.F.) * As A.C.H.Q. Plymouth 0055/23.

/A cross over

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British Air Operations.

Patrols and
R/C's.
(contd.)

C. A cross over patrol between the following points, is to be carried out with the object of locating and shadowing an enemy surface raider which may be making for St. Nazaire or Bordeaux. MZEG 4330, WRCT 1130. Aircraft to be on patrol by 1500/23 and to remain until prudent limit of endurance. (H.Q.C.C. 0950/23)

C. in C. Rosyth's 0630/23 is passed to you for information. Begins (X - X 0630/23 attached) Ends. (H.W.R. 1032/23 to ARETHUSA, BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER, F.O.C.N.P. F.O.I.C/Iceland)

A.M. 0328 B/12. D/F Bearings of enemy unit, 19 Groups are flying a patrol from 45° 48' N. 006° 12' W. to 044° 04' N. 005° 48' W. to 044° 16' N. 005° 13' W. to 45° 37' N. 006° 48' W. between 1500 and 2230/23. (C. in C. Plymouth 1054/23 to S/M's on patrol, Plymouth Cmd.)

Onions reconnaissance of Denmark Strait and particularly Akureyri to be given priority over all other commitments. Acknowledge. (A.C.W.A. 1226B/23 to N.O.I.C. Iceland for 30 Wing) My 0022/23 para. (C) - cross over discontinued after 2 sorties owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 1323/23 to C. in C.H.F.) 944 Special Wellington Aircraft proceeded on Met. R/C and if possible R/C of Norwegian Coast from Bergen to Stadlandet. (C. in C. Rosyth 1502/23 to C. in C. H.F. Adty. A.C.O.S.) Hudson taking off 1515 for Denmark Straits via Staagbiorg Huk to carry out R/C between pack ice and Straumes. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 1520/23 to R.A. 1st. C.S.)

/My 0754B/23 ...

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British Air Operations.

Patrols and
R/C's.
(contd.)

My 0754B/23. Cross over patrol flown from 1330 until 1700 and then withdrawn on account of weather. Denmark Straits R/C was not flown on account of weather. (A.C.W.A. 1905B/23 to C. in C.H.F.) 1434 airborne on search area Lorient to St. Nazaire. Patrol ineffective owing to lack of cloud cover. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 1915/23)
One Hudson aircraft left 2118Z/23. to carrying out search of area Z.F.Z.P. 0000 J.B.E.U. 0000 K.B.Z.P. 0000 Z.F.E.U. 0000 (N.O.I.C. Iceland 2120Z/23)

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy F.N.

"Help Agent" H.J.V.F. 4120 (?)
(SOUTHDOWN 0944/23)
Fighter A/C despatched to assist Convoy "Agent" (Rosyth W/T 0951/23)

Convoy F.S.

Fighter A/C despatched to assist Convoy "Booby". (Nore 1013/23)

Dover.

Single enemy aircraft dropped 4 bombs in Dover harbour at 0942/23. No damage or casualties. (V.A. Dover 2144B/23)

Mining.

Thames
Estuary.

S.A. Mines detonated as follows.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness 0957/23 1740/23)

Special mine sweeping arrangements were made to safeguard S.S. MOOLTAN on passage northwards yesterday. Though the channel had been swept during the previous night one acoustic and two magnetic mines were swept in channel in Barrow Deep a short time before vessel passed. One of the latter presumably a mine fitted with period delay mechanism. (C. in C. Nore 1026B/23 to Adty.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. (contd.)

Operation
B.S. 57.

If weather conditions are suitable intend to sail at 2000/23 to lay at 0250/24.
(PLOVER 1150B/23)
B.S. 57 again postponed 24 hours owing to weather. (C. in C. Nore 1522B/23)

Belfast.

At 0814 M.S.T. Whaler SHUSA detonated one large red mine in 0400 15 cables Pile Light. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1530B/23)

Milford
Haven.

Ground mine detonated by TYNEDALE fitted S.A. Gear in 1800 St. Anns Head Light 11 cables. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1740B/23)

Operation
B.S. 62.

Details. Operation to be carried out on 27/5 or as soon after as practicable.
(D.D.O.D.(M) 1905B/23)

Brighton.

Ref. search for mines off Brighton A/C sighted line of 23 buoys or mines P. apparently attached to each other between W.C.R.U. 4752 and W.C.L.J. 4500 (discription. Two marker buoys sighted in position W.C.R.U. 4259. (Plymouth A.C.H.Q. 2242/23)

Enemy Intelligence.

Trondheim.

Photographs taken at 1730/22 show three destroyers and catapult ship in Trondheim harbour. Dense fog on most coasts and pilot considers surface navigation would have been very difficult. (C. in C. Rosyth 0032/23 to C. in C.H.F.)

/? raider

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence. (contd.)

? Raider.

At 1937/22 G.M.T. D/F Bearings indicate enemy surface vessel in area 42° to 43° N. 11° to 13° W. probably homeward bound. (D.D.I.C. 0328B/23 to S/M's on patrol in Plymouth Command.) (H.Q.C.C.)

Brest.

1515/23. Photographic R/C shows both battlecruisers in usual positions. (D.D.I.C. 1839/23)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

S.C. 30

26 ships have arrived under Rear Adm. K. Creighton, 8 allied, 1 neutral, cargoes. (D.S. 626, 23/5)

Ocean Convoys
for Methil
calling West
Coast.

A.M. 1638/8/5, C. in C. Rosyth's 1323/9 and my 2204/11. After discussion with C. in C. Rosyth, agreement has been reached that proposal (C) S. A.M. 1638/8/5 could be implemented (Remarks re A/A ships) Thus, there are now insufficient A/A escorts to enable protection to be given other than by the present method of homeward convoys calling at west coast ports and proceeding in subsequent W.N. convoys. Regret, therefore, that it now appears necessary that existing system must continue. (C. in C. W.A. 1259/23 to Admt.)

W.S.9.A.

My 1841/22. Request immediate confirmation that embarkation dates can be maintained and that vessels will be ready to sail on completion of embarkation programme. (D.S.T. 0314B/23 to P.S.T.O. W. of Scotland)
Your 1841/22. Confirm that dates can be maintained and that vessels should be ready to sail in accordance with programme. (D.S.T.O. Liverpool 1630B/23 to D. of S.T.)

D/G Defects.

Merchant Ships already at sea and bound overseas should not be ordered into a U.K. port on account of defective D.G. equipment, but should be instructed to proceed and effect necessary repairs abroad. (D.T.D. 1810B/23 to C. in C's)

/Atlantic Convoy Escorts ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.5.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. (contd.)

Atlantic
Convoy
Escorts.

Decided to extend A/S escort for all H.X. S.C. and corresponding O.B. Convoys as far as about 45° W. in the latitude of Newfoundland as soon as arrangements can be made. Escorts will be conveniently based in U.K., Iceland and St. John's N.F. C. in C. W.A. requested (a) to reorganise escorts accordingly, allowing for all Canadian destroyers and the corvettes now in Canada operating from St. John's, and (b) to make proposals for the detailed working of the scheme. (A.C.N.S.(H) 2027/23 to C. in C's. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa etc.)